

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 21st October, 2024.

Present:- Councillors Chahal (Vice-Chair), E. Ahmed, Bedi, Manku, Shah and Shaik

Also present:- Councillor Stedmond

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Smith, Kelly and Wright

PART 1

47. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

48. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th September 2024

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16th September 2024 be approved as a correct record.

49. 2024/25 Q1 Corporate Performance Report

The Lead Member for I.T., Customer Services, Revenues & Benefits, Procurement and Performance introduced a report that set out the quarterly performance report to the end of July 2024.

It was the first report against a revised set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the 2024/25 corporate balanced scorecard. The Chief Executive stated that the revised KPIs aligned with the Council's strategic priorities in the Corporate Plan. A set of Recovery Success Measures was also under development that would drive the Phase 2 Recovery Plan and complement the existing performance framework.

Performance overall remained variable with 14 (30%) of the 47 KPIs performing either at or better than target; 2 (4%) marginally worse than target; and 13 (28%) indicators performing below the red KPI threshold. The remaining 16 indicators were monitored for trends. Two further metrics were in development – percentage of refuse bins collected on time and the percentage of customer facing enquiry box emails responded to within 5 working days.

Lead Members welcomed the new measures and particularly highlighted the importance of improving customer service and responsiveness. A number of questions were asked about the practical actions being taken to improve performance in this area and the Director of Strategy, Change and Resident Engagement outlined some of the steps being taken. Customer service teams were split into service areas to help build knowledge and response

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times were closely monitored. Customer service improvement was closely linked to the new target operating model that was being developed.

The Cabinet discussed a range of other issues including performance on specific measures such as the rise in interim staff costs, void properties, the staff appraisal system and the next steps to use data to support evidence based decision making.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Cabinet noted the report.

Resolved – That the Council's current performance and mitigating actions as measured by the key performance indicators within the corporate management information report and scorecard be noted.

50. Adult Carers Strategy 2023/26 Annual Progress Report

The Cabinet considered a progress report on the Slough Adult Carers Strategy 2023-26 which had been approved by Cabinet in September 2023.

The strategy set out how the Council, working with partners and carers, would support and encourage carers to manage their own health and wellbeing and ensure that the right support was available at the right time. The appendix to the report provided a detailed overview of progress. The carers support service had been brought back in house during the year. Highlights from the first year of delivery included the establishment of the Carers Forum, successful bid to the Accelerated Reform Fund and setting up of an unpaid male carers group, which had been a gap identified in the strategy. ASCOF / SACE data showed that there had been significant improvements in regard to carers in the town.

The Cabinet welcomed the positive progress that was evident in a number of key areas of the strategy. Lead Members commented on the vital role that carers played in the town and highlighted that their contribution should be recognised. The strong engagement and co-production through the steering group and other forums was an important part of the approach being taken. The report set out some of the challenges faced to delivery which included limited resources and some delays in recruiting to the Carers Support and Development Officer post.

The Cabinet noted the report and wished to record their thanks to the Council officers, partners and carers themselves for the progress made during year 1.

Resolved – That progress made during year 1 in the delivery of the Carers Strategy Action Plan as set out within Appendix 1 to the report be noted.

51. Tackling the Exploitation of Children and Young Adults 2024-2026

The Lead Member for Education and Children's Services introduced a report that sought approval of the Slough partnership strategy '*Tackling the Exploitation of Children and Young Adults*'.

The strategy outlined a two-year plan through which the Slough Safeguarding Partnership would strengthen the safeguarding response to child and young adults in Slough who were exposed to the risks of exploitation, violence and harms outside the home. An implementation group had been established to oversee delivery.

The Cabinet welcomed the production of the report and discussed the consultation with children in developing the strategy. Officers highlighted the importance of having a candid dialogue with children and young people and some of their views and perspectives were set out in paragraph 6.3 of the report. Enhancing children and young adults' voice and influence was also a priority in the strategy. More generally, previous Ofsted inspections had stated that children and young people felt they hadn't been listened to in the past and engagement and collaboration with them was a key priority across children's services in Slough.

Members asked a number of questions about the strategy including about the work being done to address the problem of online exploitation. These risks were recognised and a partnership approach was being taken with Thames Valley Police, community groups and others.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Cabinet approved the strategy.

Resolved – That the Slough partnership strategy '*Tackling the Exploitation of children and young adults*' as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

52. Proposed Adoption of the Slough Trading Estate Simplified Planning Zone (SPZ) 2024

The Cabinet considered a report that sought approval for adoption of the Simplified Planning Zone (SPZ) for 2024-2034 for the Slough Trading Estate. The new SPZ would come into effect upon the expiration of the current SPZ on 24th November 2024 and would run for 10 years from that date.

The importance of the trading estate to the town and its economy was recognised and the development of a new SPZ was a significant milestone that would contribute to the long-term prosperity of the borough. It was stated that this was the only SPZ in the country and provided a clear planning basis to support future growth and development.

Lead Members discussed the differences between the current and proposed new SPZ. There was a shift in the types of businesses on the trading estate, for example an increase in the number data centres. Whilst the new SPZ was

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in part a continuation of current scheme it had been updated to meet the requirements of the next ten years and included some significant changes such as the emphasis on the environment and sustainability. The proposed SPZ included a detailed design code to support high quality development and the scheme included specifications on matters such as the maximum heights of buildings in certain parts of the zone.

In response to questions from Lead Members about the local benefits and the S106 agreement it was noted that it included £4.3m worth of highway works that would be agreed by the Council and funded by SEGRO. There was also a £2m skills and training package and support for enterprise and new start-ups.

The Cabinet welcomed the SPZ and agreed that it contributed to creating the right environment for the economic growth and development of the town. The recommendation to delegate authority to formally adopt the SPZ subject to completion of the S106 was agreed.

Resolved – That it be agreed to delegate the adoption of the Simplified Planning Zone for the period 2024 to 2034 to the Chief Planning Officer, subject to the signing of a Section 106 Legal Agreement and agreed to delegate responsibility of varying the Road Widening Lines (pursuant to the Highways Act 1980) to facilitate highway safety, transport and cycleway improvements within the Trading Estate.

53. Recommendations of Cabinet Committee - Disposal of the Council's land at the Haymill site (land off Littlebrook Avenue, Slough)

The Lead Member for Finance, Council Assets and Transformation introduced a report that sought agreement to a series of recommendations associated with the proposed disposal of the Council's land at the Haymill site, land off Littlebrook Avenue, Slough, SL1 6LZ.

The report had been considered by the Cabinet Committee on 17th October 2024 and it had been agreed to recommend approval to Cabinet. The Part II appendices were considered in resolving the matters in the Part I report without disclosing any of the exempt information. The Cabinet briefly went into Part II and asked questions about the due diligence carried out and profit share arrangements to which Officers responded.

The background to the site was summarised and it was noted that the Council and Slough Urban Renewal (SUR) had had the intention to develop the site within the SUR partnership. The Council's capital programme was paused and reviewed following the Section 114 notice in 2021 and a strategy was agreed to reduce financial commitments and realise sale receipts at the earliest opportunity, including sites optioned to SUR. The proposed disposal route for the Haymill site was consistent with the strategy adopted. After considering the options, the Cabinet Committee had therefore supported the recommendations for disposal.

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The Cabinet sought assurance on a number of issues including the steps taken to achieve best value from any disposal and that there be no negative impact on the adjacent Haybrook College. Officers responded to both points, setting out the robust process undertaken to evaluate the options and secure best value. The land in question was split from the college site so there would be no negative impact arising from the proposed decision.

After due consideration the Cabinet agreed the recommendations from the Cabinet Committee.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Draft Formal Site Development Plan at Appendix 1 to the report be approved and the disposal of the Haymill site in accordance with the Sale Heads of Terms at Appendix 4 be agreed.
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Executive Director of Regeneration, Housing and Environment, in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance, Council Assets and Transformation and the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial to (i) approve the final form of the Draft Formal Site Development Plan that is presented to the SUR Business Board; and (ii) to approve the final terms of the documentation required to give effect to the Draft Formal Site Development Plan (iii) approve any amendments required to any boundary structure, fence line or footprint including the granting or reserving of any rights required to facilitate the expansion of the adjoining Haybrook College.

54. Recommendations of Cabinet Committee - Disposal of Slough County Court, Chalvey Park, Slough

The Lead Member for Finance, Council Assets and Transformation introduced a report that recommended the disposal of Slough County Court, Chalvey Park, Slough and sought approval to market the asset for disposal under the Council's Asset Disposal Strategy.

The report had been considered by the Cabinet Committee at its meeting held on 17th October 2024 and it had been agreed to recommend the disposal to Cabinet. The Part II appendices were considered in resolving the matters in the Part I report without disclosing any of the exempt information.

It was noted that a public question had been submitted under the Executive Procedure Rules, however, the questioner was not present at the meeting and would therefore receive a written reply.

The Cabinet considered the recommendation from the Cabinet Committee to dispose of the property via auction. It was noted that the disposal of the freehold would have no operational impact and would generate a capital receipt for the Council. The Cabinet agreed the recommendations.

Resolved –

- (a) That the marketing and disposal of the asset referred to in Appendix A known as Slough County Court, Chalvey Park, Slough be agreed by way of auction as recommended within the report in Appendix A.
- (b) That it be noted that the Reserve Price would be in-line with the Red Book Valuation and would include a 10% adjustment to the price, upwards and downwards (within Appendix C to the report).

55. References from Scrutiny

The Cabinet considered the recommendations from the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee (CISC) from its meeting held on 24th September 2024 in relation to the Target Operating Model for Slough Borough Council.

The recommendations were as follows:

1. That the Cabinet place Slough residents at the centre of the development of the TOM by asking for a Communications and Engagement plan to be developed and implemented as soon after its Cabinet meeting in November as is possible.
2. That the Cabinet sets out its expectations for the quality of resident engagement, prior to that engagement commencing, by defining/adopting a set of community engagement standards. The [Scottish] National standards for community engagement offer a useful model for this purpose.
3. That the Slide Pack/any communications material is re-written in plain English for residents

After discussion and due consideration the recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the recommended responses (Table 1 Column iii of the report, as noted above) to each recommendation (Table 1, column i) with reference to the options in Section 2.4; be approved.
- (b) That the related actions agreed by CISC in Section 2.5 of the report be noted.

56. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved – That the matters in Part II of the agenda be considered and resolved during Part I, without disclosing any of the exempt

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information, but that the Part II reports remain restricted as they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 the Schedule 12A the Local Government Act 1972.

The following is a summary of the matters considered during Part II of the agenda:

57. Disposal of Slough County Court, Chalvey Park, Slough - Appendices

Resolved – That the Part II appendices be noted.

58. Disposal of the Council's land at the Haymill site (land off Littlebrook Avenue, Slough) - Appendices

Resolved – That the Part II appendices be noted.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.30 pm)