

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 18th November, 2024.

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

Also present:- Councillors Dhillon and Hulme

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Bedi

PART 1

61. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

62. Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st October 2024

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 21st October 2024 be approved as a correct record.

63. Progress Update Improvement and Recovery Plan

The Leader of the Council introduced a report that provided an update on the progress being made against the Secretary of State Directions and the overall Council recovery plan.

The Council had been notified on 22nd October 2024 that the Secretary of State was minded to issue new Directions to extend the intervention until November 2026, with an opportunity for the Council to respond in writing.

The report summarised the progress made and identified, at a high level, the next steps to continue the improvement over the next two years. The authority needed to show it was putting in place the foundations for recovery and transformation towards becoming a Best Value Council. A full action plan was being prepared and would come to a future meeting of the Cabinet for consideration. The links between the recovery and improvement programme and the development of the Target Operating Model, about which there was a separate report elsewhere on the agenda, were noted. The Leader commented on a number of areas where progress had been made over the past year including improvements to HR policies and procedures such as the roll-out of a new staff appraisal system, new performance management framework with quarterly reports to Cabinet and steps forward on the financial improvement programme. Lead Members welcomed the good pockets of community engagement that had been identified and agreed involving residents and stakeholders more fully in future was a priority.

The Cabinet agreed the recommendations in the report.

Resolved –

- (a) That the update provided in Appendix A to the report be agreed.
- (b) That it be noted that a full action plan was being developed in line with the most recent directions and proposed extension of the intervention. This would be brought to a future Cabinet Meeting before the end of the municipal year.

64. Target Operating Model - Direction of Travel update

The Lead Member for Finance, Council Assets and Transformation introduced a report that set out the progress made on developing Phase I of the Target Operating Model (TOM) direction of travel. It set out the principles for how, as part of Phase I, the Council would operate in new and different ways in the future and be more agile, effective and efficient in the way it delivered services. The report also outlined the way forward for Phase II of the TOM programme.

The Lead Member emphasised the importance of the TOM to the Council's future sustainability and the alignment to the recovery and improvement programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy. Key aspects of the proposed operating model included that the Council would be smaller and more flexible, operating out of fewer buildings; offer fewer and more consistent points of access; take a digital first approach; and focus on the Council shaping Slough as a place, working closely with partners. Lead Members noted the Commissioner's comments on the report, particularly the importance of a new operating model to the future of the authority and the need to develop the TOM without further delay, ensuring sufficient resources and project management was in place.

Following a request to speak, Councillor Hulme was invited to address the Cabinet to comment on the report. She expressed her concern about the lack of underlying data, particularly equality data, to inform decisions on the future shape of Council services and operations and suggested that further consideration be given to the practical steps that could be taken to fill this gap. The Cabinet noted the comments and the Leader highlighted that improving the use of data and evidence based decision making was a priority. He asked officers to consider the issues raised as part of the next phase of the development of the TOM.

The Cabinet agreed that the direction of travel set out put the Council on the right path, however, the scale of the challenge was acknowledged in view of the financial position of the authority and the amount of work to be done to reshape services and Council operations. It would be important to ensure the approach was resident focused and public and stakeholder engagement at appropriate stages of the TOM development should be built into Phase II.

The importance of identifying and managing risks, and putting in place appropriate contingency plans, should be a priority as part of the robust project management of the TOM.

At the conclusion of the discussion the recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the direction of travel around which the new model for Slough Borough Council would be built as set out in Section 2, Section 3 and Appendix 2 of the report be approved.
- (b) That the proposed stakeholder engagement process set out in Section 3.11 of the report be approved.

65. Digital, Data and Technology Update

The Lead Member for I.T., Customer Services, Revenue & Benefits, Procurement and Performance introduced a report that set out the progress made on the ICT Modernisation Programme that had been agreed in March 2022 to respond to the Direction requiring the Council to improve IT, digital and data to support the wider transformation of the authority.

The Cabinet noted the update on the delivery of the programme to date, which had initially focused on fixing the foundations of the service. Significant work had been undertaken on projects such as improving the IT infrastructure, the Astro portal and improving website accessibility. The next phase would focus on how digital and data would support business transformation. The report described the strategic principles and approach being applied to the digital enablement of business transformation and the alignment to the Target Operating Model (TOM) and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The proposed strategic principles were approved as follows:

- Digitally enabled services are user-centred, holistic and joined up.
- Sound data informs decisions.
- Services are trusted.
- Services deliver assured value for taxpayers' money.
- Delivery is agile.

A high level strategic action was appended to the report and a more detailed action plan was scheduled to be considered by Cabinet in March 2025.

Following a request to speak, Councillor Hulme was invited to address Cabinet to comment on the report. She queried whether sufficient resources were available to deliver the programme and whether the pace of implementation was fast enough given the scale of the challenge. It was noted that 4.6m had been approved in March 2022 to deliver the programme and it was forecast the full amount would be spent by the end of 2024/25. The Director of Digital, Data and Technology stated that there was a request for resources in the MTFS and this funding would be drawn down when business cases for the specific projects were approved.

Cabinet - 18.11.24

The Cabinet welcomed the report and recognised that IT was a major enabler of Council services. Lead Members agreed it was important to increase the pace of delivery and to fully align with the TOM and MTFS. The recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the progress made on the ICT Modernisation Programme as set out in Appendix A to the report, and the refocusing of work on digital strategy to be fully joined up with the development of the Target Operating Model (TOM) be noted;
- (b) That the Digital, Data and Technology Strategic Principles at Appendix B to the report be approved.
- (c) That the high-level strategic action plan at Appendix C be noted, and that a further report be brought back to Cabinet in March 2025 providing a further updated action plan aligned with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and TOM routemap;
- (d) That the progress made on the LGA Digital 360 Review recommendations, which were the subject of the update provided in May 2024, and the alignment between the forward plan and those recommendations be noted.

66. General Fund Revenue Budget 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2028/29

The Lead Member for Finance, Council Assets and Transformation introduced a report that set out the draft budget for 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2025/26 to 2028/29 as a basis for consultation.

The report included a summary of changes to the MTFS since the update to Cabinet in July 2024, draft revenue budgets for each directorate for 2025/26, the draft capital programme for 2025/26 to 2029/30 and the draft Treasury Management Strategy. The context for setting the budget remained very challenging and it was noted there was still a gap of £17.35m in the revenue budget for 2025/26. Further work would take place to close the gap and a report would come to Cabinet in January 2025. The draft budget would be issued for public consultation and for scrutiny.

The Executive Director for Finance & Commercial summarised key aspects of the draft budget including £31m of growth proposals in 2025/26 and savings proposals of £10.8m. Members also noted the position regarding Exceptional Financial Support from the Government. It was noted that such support would all have to be funded by the Council through either borrowing or capital receipts. Government support was 'minded to' not guaranteed therefore the Council had to demonstrate it was taking all the steps it could to move to a sustainable financial position in the medium term. The Government had yet to announce the Local Government Finance Settlement and this would also influence the

Cabinet - 18.11.24

final budget position that would come forward for Member approval in the new year.

Lead Members asked about the alignment between the MTFS and Target Operating Model (TOM). In response it was noted that the TOM was not yet at a stage where it could be fully aligned for 2025/26 but it would be in future years of the MTFS and there would be opportunities for future savings from the TOM work which could be built into the MTFS.

The Cabinet commended the work of officers from across the Council to prepare the draft budget for consultation and the recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

That the following be approved as a basis for consultation:

- (a) Phase one 2025/26 budget proposals for revenue;
- (b) Phase two 2025/26 budget proposals for revenue will be presented to Cabinet in January to reduce the £17.351m projected gap prior to the local government finance settlement due in December;
- (c) Draft five-year capital programme for 2025/26 to 2029/30;
- (d) Update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2028/29;

Cabinet agreed to note the following:

- (e) Updated Treasury Management Strategy.
- (f) That the Chief Executive and Executive Director, Finance and Commercial and Commissioners continue conversations with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and His Majesty's Treasury (HMT) on terms for Exceptional Financial Support for 2025/26.

67. Budget Management Report Quarter 2

The Lead Member for Finance, Council Assets and Transformation introduced a report that set out the Council's current and forecast financial position for 2024/25 as at the end of the second quarter to 30th September 2024. The report also detailed the management controls and activity to support financial resilience and longer-term financial sustainability.

The Council's financial position continued to be very challenging, however, a balanced outturn on the General Fund revenue budget was still forecast for 2024/25, taking account of the £11.4m of mitigations agreed during Quarter 1. Further action had been taken during Quarter 2 to contain pressures in

Cabinet - 18.11.24

demand led services such as adult social care and temporary accommodation. It was noted that the staff pay award for 2024/25 had been settled within the £2.6m set aside with the £1.2m balance used to offset some of the pressures elsewhere in the budget. The Lead Member emphasised the importance of balancing the 2024/25 budget to avoid adding further pressure to an already challenging position for 2025/26. The range of measures put in place to control expenditure and proactively manage the budget were noted.

Following a request to speak, Councillor Hulme was invited to address the Cabinet. She asked about the underlying factors that were driving the very significant overspend on the temporary accommodation budget. The Executive Director for Regeneration, Housing & Environment responded with a detailed summary of the reasons for the increase in demand, which was a problem across the local government sector and particularly in and around London. The substantial increase in evictions from the private rented sector meant many more people presented to the Council seeking support, particularly families. The rise in evictions was driven by national policies and factors and the Council was taking the action it could to seek to prevent evictions and to reduce the costs of providing temporary accommodation to eligible people.

The demand pressures were likely to continue for the foreseeable future therefore the Council needed to continue to monitor and take mitigating action to seek to balance the overall position.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Quarter 2 report was noted and recommendations agreed.

Resolved –

That the following be approved:

1. **General Fund (Revenue)** – A balanced outturn on an approved budget of £160.202m. This includes the £11.4m of mitigations identified during Quarter 1 that is now being proactively managed within services. Further action has been identified to contain pressures that have arisen during Q2 including the curtailment of a number of projects. The 24/25 Pay award has been settled within the £2.6m set aside for this and the balance of £1.228m has been used to offset pressures.
2. Virements in accordance with the council's constitution and includes mitigations agreed in Quarter 1 that require Cabinet approval. The values shown are the net impact on departments forecast allowing for offsetting underspends. These are funded through the Recovery Actions agreed at Q1, other underspends and further actions proposed for the second half of 2024/25.

Cabinet - 18.11.24

3. In addition to the virements in the table below, there are a further 2 virements required, as follows:

- A £250k saving on Fees and Charges across all directorates is held in contingency, and should be distributed; and
- A £2.660m figure held in contingency in respect of the pay award needs distributing, noting this is offset by the saving on the pay award in the table below.

Cabinet Virements to approve (Revenue)	£m	Temporary or Permanent
Operational Matters		
Supporting vulnerable young people through investment in EHCP processing, Educational Psychologist and Home to School Transport	1.353	Temporary (addressed in MTFS)
Supporting increasing number of vulnerable adults	3.603	Temporary (addressed in MTFS)
Temporary Accommodation	4.401	Temporary (addressed in MTFS)
Procured additional external resources to fund the balance sheet review and interims to deliver the backlog accounts	0.600	Temporary
Other Recovery Actions from Q1	-2.963	Temporary
Reduction in Slough Children First contract costs	-2.166	Temporary
Reduction in Non-Departmental Cost and Balance Sheet contributions	-3.735	Temporary
Reduction in assumed use of 2024/25 Pay Award (including SCF)	-1.228	Permanent
Removal of historic saving in respect of the integration of support services	0.235	Permanent
Deferral of purchase of Library Stock	-0.100	Temporary
TOTAL	0.000	

4. **General Fund (GF) (Capital)** – The revised capital budget is £35.428m with a projected outturn of £25.294m resulting in underspend of £10.134m. This compares to a £1.868m forecast underspend in Quarter 1.

5. Approve the following virement which require Cabinet approval in accordance with the council's constitution.

Cabinet Virements to approve (Capital)	£m
Arbour Vale capital works – Release unused contingency from the car park budget and increase the classroom budget	0.500

6. **Housing Revenue Account (HRA Revenue)** – An underspend of £3.478m is forecast, in line with budget. This compares to a £3.734m forecast underspend in Quarter 1.
7. **Housing Revenue Account (HRA Capital)** – The revised capital budget is £25.003m with a projected outturn of £19.641m resulting in an underspend of £5.362m. This compares to a £8.062m forecast underspend in Quarter 1.
8. **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)** – There is an overspend of £0.254m in the Schools Block due to higher than anticipated costs for growth in 2024/25. Further details are set out in para. 8 of this report including the risks This compares to a forecast overspend of £0.155m in Quarter 1.
9. **Council Tax and Business Rates collection** – As at the 30 September, actual Council Tax collected was 54.26% (target 55.50%) and actual Business Rate collected was 57.41% (target 56.60%).
10. **Sundry Debt** – Total outstanding sundry debt including adult social care debt as at the 30 September 2024 was £9.743m. Based on the age profile of the debt, £5.914m is the calculated bad debt provision (61%).
11. **Financial Resilience** – The Council was committed to improving financial resilience, moving towards financial sustainability and improvement in governance and process as laid out in the Directions issued by Government and a capitalisation direction for exceptional finance support in 2024/25.
12. Once the Council had concluded the outstanding financial accounts, a formal financial resilience statement would be prepared.

68. Slough Older People Strategy Annual Update 2023-24

The Lead Member for Adult Social Care introduced a report that updated the Cabinet on the progress of the Slough Older People Strategy 2023-26 which had been approved by Cabinet in November 2023.

The strategy set out how the Council, working with partners and experts by experience, would support and encourage older people to manage their own health needs and wellbeing and ensure that right support was available to them at the right time. Appendix 1 to the report included a detailed progress

Cabinet - 18.11.24

report on year one of delivery of the strategy and annual updates would continue to be provided in the future.

The highlights from delivery in year one were summarised and included the creation of the steering group and a range of task and finish groups that had proved successful in engaging volunteers, partners, providers and others leading to a significant amount of mutual learning; events had been organised for Demetia Action Week in May 2024; and a significant amount of work had been undertaken to map relevant older peoples plans and other strategic activity.

The Cabinet welcomed the progress that had been made and thanked officers for the achievements during the first year.

Resolved – That the progress made during year 1 in delivering the Older People Strategy Action Plan as set out within the report at Appendix 1 be noted.

69. Slough Adult Learning Disability Strategy 2023 - 28 Annual Progress Report

The Lead Member for Adult Social Care introduced a report that updated the Cabinet on the progress of the Slough Adult Learning Disability Strategy 2023-28 that had been approved in November 2023.

The strategy set out how the Council, working with partners, would seek to reduce health inequalities for adults with learning disabilities and adults with learning disabilities with autism so that more people could live a good quality of life and as independently as possible. Some of the highlights from the first year of delivery included the establishment of the Learning Disability Partnership Board, enhanced relationships with stakeholders and planning of a Technology Enabled Care pilot project for Supported Living services.

The Cabinet particularly welcomed the strong engagement with service users and stakeholders in the ongoing implementation of the strategy to ensure services were shaped to best meet people's needs. Good progress was being made and Lead Members thanked officers for the achievements during the first year. Further annual reports would be provided in the future. The report was noted.

Resolved – That the progress made during year 1 in the delivery of the Slough Adult Learning Disability Strategy 2023-2028 Action Plan as set out within the report at Appendix 1 be noted.

70. Re-procurement of Integrated Health and Wellbeing Service

The Lead Member for Equalities, Public Health and Public Protection introduced a report that sought approval to award the Integrated Health and Wellbeing Service (IHWS) to Solutions 4 Health. The current contract was set

Cabinet - 18.11.24

to expire on 31st March 2025 with the new contract due to commence on 1st April 2025.

The recommendation followed a competitive procurement process in accordance with the relevant regulations. The Cabinet considered and noted the Part II Appendix 3 during Part I of the meeting without disclosing any of the exempt information.

The service had been established in April 2020 by amalgamating a number of independently commissioned services into a single lead provider. It delivered services including weight management support, oral health promotion in children, smoking cessation support, alcohol advice, falls prevention and the promotion of physical activity. The IHWS had been redesigned following a comprehensive service review and the changes were summarised. Areas for improvement had been identified including enhanced outreach and engagement; effective behaviour change techniques and robust data collection practices.

The contract would be for five years with an option to extend by a further two years. The cost was £700,000 per annum with a total of £4.9m over the seven year period. It would be jointly funded by the ring-fenced Public Health Grant and Better Care Fund.

After due consideration the Cabinet agreed the contract award to Solutions 4 Health.

Resolved –

- (a) That the outcome of a Competitive Process in accordance with The Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023 for the procurement of the IHWS be approved;
- (b) That the award of the contract to Solutions 4 Health to commence from 1st April 2025 be approved. The contract would be for a period of five years, with an option to extend for a period of up to 24 months at a value of £700,000 per annum, and total contract value of £4,900,000 over the seven-year contract period.

71. Procurement of the provision of Domestic Abuse Services for Slough residents

The Lead Member for Equalities, Public Health and Public Protection introduced a report that sought approval to award the contract for the provision of Slough Domestic Abuse Services to Cranstoun following a procurement process.

The contract with Cranstoun would be for three years and would commence in April 2025 with two options to extend for one year each, subject to satisfactory performance. The existing contract with Hestia would be extended for a short period to ensure sufficient time was available to successfully mobilise the new

Cabinet - 18.11.24

service from April 2025 and avoid any gap in provision. The total value of the contract was £1,254,755 which was £250,951 per annum from the general fund.

Details of the procurement exercise were summarised and the Cabinet considered and noted the Part II appendix during Part I of the meeting without disclosing any of the exempt information.

The purpose of the contract was to provide support and advocacy for victims/survivors of domestic abuse living in Slough including support in court proceedings and for those seeking refuge after fleeing from domestic abuse.

The Cabinet recognised the important services that would be provided through the contract and noted the thorough procurement process that had been undertaken. Lead Members agreed to award the contract to Cranstoun on the terms proposed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the award of the contract to Cranstoun for a period of three years, with an option of two further extension periods of one year each subject to satisfactory performance, at a value of £250,951.00 per annum and total contract value of £1,254,755.00 over the five-year contract period be approved, to be funded through the council's general fund for this specific purpose.
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Executive Director of Public Health and Public Protection in consultation with the Lead Member for Equalities, Public Health and Public Protection to finalise and enter into the contract with Cranstoun.
- (c) That delegated authority be given to the Director of Public Health and Public Protection in consultation with the Lead Member for Equalities, Public Health and Public Protection to extend the existing domestic abuse services contract with Hestia Housing and Support for a period of 3 months from 1st January 2025 until 31st March 2025 at the current agreed contractual rate to prevent a gap in service provision during mobilisation of the new service.

72. Recommendations of Cabinet Committee: Asset management strategy, asset disposal and office accommodation update

The Lead Member for Finance, Council Assets and Transformation introduced a report that contained the recommendations of the Cabinet Committee from its meeting held on 14th November 2024 in relation to the Asset Management Strategy; amended target for the asset disposal programme; and office accommodation update.

The Part II Appendix was noted during Part I of the meeting without disclosing any of the exempt information.

Cabinet - 18.11.24

Lead Members noted that the Cabinet Committee had agreed the revised high-level principles for the Asset Management Strategy; the introduction of a Corporate Landlord Model; and decision to retain Observatory House, The Curve and Britwell Centre for the foreseeable future with consideration being given to making them public facing access points. The revised strategy would reset the original approach and would be aligned to the Target Operating Model. Lead Members welcomed the decision to retain The Curve. The decision followed due process to assess the options, which was essential to consider for all Council's assets to ensure best value.

The recommendations to Cabinet were to confirm that the former civic offices at St Martins Place (SMP) be designated as surplus to requirements and marketed for sale with a delegation to proceed with disposal. SMP had closed in 2019 when the Council moved its back office functions to Observatory House. The building was costing the Council approximately £576k per annum to retain, which was mainly for security and business rates. With the decision to retain Observatory House, SMP was confirmed as being surplus to requirements. The Cabinet therefore agreed the recommendation to progress the disposal of SMP.

Authorisation was also sought to procure a contractor to conduct an external assessment of the asset disposal programme and to conduct feasibility studies about making the retained buildings suitable for public facing services. This was agreed.

Resolved –

That it be noted that at its meeting on 14th November 2024 the Cabinet Committee:

- (a) Agreed the revised high-level principles as set out within this report to establish a Asset Management Strategy.
- (b) Agreed the introduction of the Corporate Landlord Model (Appendix A to the report).
- (c) Noted the revision in the disposals forecast following an internal review to cover the financial years 2025-2027 of General Fund assets, that is set to generate a net return of circa £27.4m, a full list of sites to be published at Cabinet in Q4 of Financial Year 24/25.
- (d) Agreed that Observatory House, The Curve and Britwell Centre were to be retained for the foreseeable future, with consideration being given to making these key public-facing access points.

That the following recommendations from the Cabinet Committee be approved:

- (e) Confirmed the former civic offices at St Martins Place as surplus to requirements and that they be marketed for sale.

- (f) Delegated authority to the Executive Director of Regeneration, Housing & Environment, in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance, Council Assets and Transformation and the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial, to negotiate the terms of and enter into the contract and any associated documentation in connection with the disposal of the former civic offices at St Martins Place, subject to this demonstrating best consideration reasonably obtainable.
- (g) Authorised procurement of a contractor to conduct an external assessment of the asset disposal programme and its feasibility and of a contractor(s) to commission feasibility studies for retained buildings for the purpose for making them suitable for public facing services.

73. Recommendations of Cabinet Committee: Update on Nova House / Ground Rent Estates 5 Ltd (GRE5) Business Plan

The Lead Member for Finance, Council Assets and Transformation introduced a report that set out the recommendations of the Cabinet Committee from its meeting held on 14th November 2024 in relation the Ground Rent Estates 5 (GRE5) which owned the freehold of Nova House, a block of 68 apartments in Slough town centre.

Lead Members were reminded of the background to the acquisition of GRE5 by the Council for £1 in 2018 in the interests of the safety of residents of the block due to concerns about the capacity and ability of the former owners to undertake the substantial remediation works to ACM cladding and other fire safety defects which were identified in inspections of the building following the Grenfell Tower fire. The update report detailed the progress since 2018 and it was noted that the remediation works were nearing completion. The total expenditure was £33.7m, an increase from the £30.6m in the previous update report due to an element of irrecoverable VAT and extension of the programme to January 2025 including the 'waking watch'. After extensive work the Council had successfully secure funding of £30.9m to date, mainly through a combination of a successful insurance claim and Homes England funding. The shortfall was currently £2.3m and work was continuing to close the gap.

An updated business plan has been considered by Company Board members and submitted to the Council as Shareholder for approval. The plan for 2024/25 to 2027/28 was appended to the report and had been considered and recommended by the Cabinet Committee. The key aspects of the plan were summarised and Lead Members asked about the exit strategy. It was noted that following completion of the works to Nova House an exit strategy would be developed by the company, in conjunction with the Council, that sought to obtain maximum value for the freehold interest in GRE5.

The Cabinet welcomed the progress that had been made to nearly complete the remediation works and the recover the vast majority of the costs incurred. The business plan was approved.

Resolved –

- (a) Noted the current position, including the latest estimate of the final financial exposure of Slough Borough Council (SBC).
- (b) Approved the GRE5 Business Plan appended at Appendix 1 for 2025/26 and note the GRE5 Business Plan for the period from April 2026 to March 2028.

74. High Needs Block Programme - Haybrook College

The Leader of the Council introduced a report that sought approval for the expansion of Haybrook College.

The Council had a duty to ensure every resident pupil including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) were offered a suitable school place to meet their needs. Haybrook Academy was an 'Alternative Provision' academy which provided SBCs only specialist support for secondary age children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs, including children with SEND. The proposed expansion followed the approval in June 2024 to fund an expansion project at Arbour Vale School. The Council was working towards a 5-year delivery programme required for a new special school. In the meantime it was necessary to expand provision within existing schools and 'Alternative Provision' to ensure local pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans continued to be offered a local school place over the coming years.

The Cabinet first considered and approved an expansion of the school in 2017, however that decision was never implemented and was for a different purpose. Following a redesign to meet current needs the project has obtained planning approval and Haybrook College had procured contractors. Cabinet was asked to approve the disposal of land by way of lease at nil value and the provision of capital grant to fund the works.

Details of the expansion were summarised and Lead Members welcomed the proposal which was important to ensure the necessary places for local pupils. A number of questions were asked about whether there was sufficient provision to meet current and future demand. Officers responded to the points raised and stated that a full strategy on SEND provision would come back to Cabinet at a later date. The recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) Agreed that a conditional capital grant of up to £3.2m (plus £0.3m that has already been committed/spent under officer delegation) be awarded to Haybrook College Trust to deliver the expansion project they have tendered and as shown in Appendix 1,

Cabinet - 18.11.24

- (b) Approved the disposal of 3,700m² of land as shown in Appendix 2 and being land adjacent to Haybrook College at nil value to the Haybrook College Trust via a standard academy lease (of the combined area consisting of the College site and expansion land),
- (c) Delegated authority to the Executive Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Lead Member for Education and Children's Services, to agree the final legal documentation to dispose of the land and the final budget for the Haybrook College expansion project subject to it being no higher than £3.75m in total.

75. Adaptive Street Lighting Policy 2024

The Lead Member for Environment, Environmental Services and Open Spaces introduced a report that sought agreement to adopt the Adaptive Street Lighting Policy. Streetlighting covered all illuminated highways lighting, inclusive of streetlights, bollards, traffic lights and other illuminated highway signs.

The report summarised the results of the three streetlighting trials that had taken place to test different lighting profiles. The ability to vary lighting intensity over different operating times created an opportunity to reduce the carbon emissions associated with energy consumption and reduce light pollution levels. Adaptive lighting could also reduce streetlighting costs which had risen from £350k in 2020/21 to a peak of £965k in 2022/23 due to the sharp rises in wholesale energy costs. It was noted that observations during the trials suggested that in practice even a 30% reduction in energy to LED street lighting would not be obviously noticeable to most people if introduced gradually over the nighttime period. The data and information from the trials had informed the proposed policy that was set out fully in Appendix 3 to the report.

Lead Members highlighted the importance of ensuring adequate lighting remained in place and recognised the opportunity of using adaptive lighting to reduce carbon emissions, energy usage and costs. The previous investment in LED street lighting provided the technological capability to implement an adaptive streetlighting regime. The Cabinet welcomed the fact that data collected from the trials had informed the proposed policy. The recommendations were then agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the implementation of a boroughwide adaptive streetlighting regime (Option 2: lighting profile 1) be approved.
- (b) That a boroughwide Adaptive Street Lighting Policy be adopted and delegated authority be given to the Director of Environment and Infrastructure in consultation with Lead Members of Environment and

Cabinet - 18.11.24

Highways to develop an action plan to ensure a robust future proofed street lighting network is maintained within Slough.

76. HRA acquisition of flats 1-10, Rigby Lodge, 1 Aldborough Spur, Slough, SL1 3EW to provide Temporary Accommodation

The Lead Member for Finance, Council Assets and Transformation introduced a report that recommended that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) proceed with the acquisition of the freehold of 10 flats forming Rigby Lodge, 1 Aldborough Spur, Slough, SL1 3EW for the sum of £1,450,000 plus acquisition costs estimated at £115,000.

The Cabinet noted the Part II appendices during Part I of the meeting without disclosing any of the exempt information.

The acquisition would assist the Council in the provision of social housing and Rigby Lodge could be used for temporary accommodation to relieve some of the current pressures in the availability of such properties. The proposal to purchase Rigby Lodge was referenced in the HRA 30yr Business Plan and Medium-Term Budgets for 2024/25 that had been approved by Council in March 2024. In addition to the acquisition costs an estimated £290,000 would be required to refurbish the flats resulting in total costs of £1,855,000 over two years which was within the £2m budget provision in the HRA Business Plan.

The Cabinet welcomed the principle of using HRA capital investment to seek to address the revenue pressures on the temporary accommodation budget. After due consideration the recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the acquisition of the freehold of 1-10 Rigby Lodge, 1 Aldborough Spur, Slough, SL1 3EW be agreed.
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Executive Director of Regeneration, Housing & Environment, in consultation with the Lead Member for Financial Oversight and Council Assets and the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial, to negotiate the terms of and enter into the contract and any associated documentation in connection with the acquisition of the asset, subject to this being consistent with the assumptions in this report.

77. Exclusion of Press and Public

All business was conducted in Part I of the meeting without disclosing any of the exempt information, therefore it was not necessary to exclude the press and public.

Cabinet - 18.11.24

78. Re-procurement of Integrated Health and Wellbeing Service - Appendix C

Resolved – That the Part II Appendix be noted.

79. Procurement of the provision of Domestic Abuse Services for Slough residents - Appendix A

Resolved – That the Part II Appendix be noted.

80. Recommendations of Cabinet Committee: Asset management strategy, asset disposal and office accommodation update - Appendix

Resolved – That the Part II Appendix be noted.

81. HRA acquisition of flats 1-10, Rigby Lodge,1 Aldborough Spur, Slough, SL1 3EW to provide Temporary Accommodation - Appendices

Resolved – That the Part II Appendices be noted.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.54 pm)