

**MINUTES OF CABINET**

**MEETING DATE** **Wednesday, 16 September 2020**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillors Paul Foster (Chair), Michael Titherington (Vice-Chair), Aniela Bylinski Gelder, Bill Evans, Susan Jones and Matthew Tomlinson

**OFFICERS:** Gary Hall (Interim Chief Executive), Andrew Daniels (Shared Service Lead - Communications and Visitor Economy), Paul Hussey (Director of Customer and Digital), Jennifer Mullin (Director of Neighbourhoods and Development), Jonathan Noad (Director of Planning and Property), James Thomson (Deputy Director of Finance), Neil Anderson (Assistant Director of Projects and Development), Darren Cranshaw (Assistant Director of Scrutiny & Democratic Services), Chris Moister (Director of Governance) and Clare Gornall (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

**OTHER MEMBERS AND OFFICERS:** Councillors Bell, Bretherton, Clark, Ogilvie, Mrs Smith (Opposition Leader), P Smith, Turner, Walton, Alty, Mrs Green, M Green, Hancock, Howarth, Trafford, and Wooldridge.

**PUBLIC:** 0

**122 Apologies for Absence**

There were none.

**123 Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

**124 Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday, 5 August 2020 were agreed.

**125 Cabinet Forward Plan**

The Leader presented the twelve month Cabinet forward plan from 1 September 2020 – 31 August 21.

**Decision made (Unanimously):**

That the Cabinet forward plan be noted.

**126 Urgent Decisions Taken Due to COVID-19 Pandemic**

The Leader presented a report of the Assistant Director of Scrutiny and Democratic Services informing the Cabinet of the urgent decisions taken in accordance with the Council's Constitution due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Decision made (unanimously):**

That Cabinet notes the report.

**127 Period 1 (April - June) Quarterly Performance Monitoring Report 2020/21**

The Leader presented a report of the Interim Chief Executive providing a summary of performance against the Corporate Plan during quarter 1 (April – June) 2020-2021.

He also presented comments and recommendations made by the Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel at its meeting on 14 September 2020, which were as follows:

1. the Panel thanks the Leader and Interim Chief Executive for their detailed report and answering the Panel's questions.
2. the Panel looks forward to receiving a copy of the Benefits Realisation Plan once complete.
3. the Panel welcomes the strategic review of council assets and the reassurance that the resources and skills are now in place.
4. the Panel requests that the evaluation of 'Active Streets' and any details of any further roll-out be provided to members.
5. information on progress with the Leyland Loop be provided to members of the Panel.
6. the Panel commends the council's approach to supporting residents during the pandemic and the reassurance that the Council will continue to support residents.

The Leader of the Council praised the Council's performance during Quarter 1 2020/21 in light of the CO-VID 19 pandemic and thanked officers for their hard work during a challenging period. He stressed that the pandemic is still ongoing and that the recovery had yet to commence.

Members and non-members of the Cabinet discussed and commented upon the report. A comment was made with regard to slippage on Member Development due to CO-VID 19 and whether PDPs / training could now be resumed given the Council's recent investment in technology such as iPads. The Director of Governance indicated that progress had merely been delayed due to the pandemic and that officers were now looking at using the new software to facilitate this. Further to this the Leader of the Council confirmed that a hybrid meeting of the Member Development Steering Group would be held in the next 2-3 weeks.

Councillor Walton expressed concern about the closure of project MH2K and its effect on the mental health of young people. The Interim Chief Executive clarified

that although this project had closed, the work of the Council in this area had not. It was agreed Cllr Walton would receive further detail about this following the meeting.

An enquiry was made regarding delays on the work of Green Links due to furloughed staff. The Leader of the Council indicated that he was confident the Council would soon get back on track.

**Decision made (unanimously):**

1. That Cabinet accepts the recommendations of the Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel made at its meeting on 14 September 2020.
2. That Cabinet welcomes the report and thanks officers for their hard work during a challenging period.
3. That, following detailed consideration and comments, Cabinet notes the report.

**Reasons for Decision**

The Council's performance framework sets out the process for reporting progress against the objectives of the Corporate Plan. Robust monitoring ensures that the Council continues to deliver its priorities and achieves the best outcomes for residents.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

**128 South Ribble Housing Strategy and Prevention of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy**

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and City Deal presented a report of the Director of Planning and Property detailing two draft strategies for consideration and approval as follows:

- Draft South Ribble Housing Strategy 2020-2025
- Draft Prevention of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 (including South Ribble Homelessness Review 2020)

Councillor Bretherton enquired as to whether there was any interest in the borough in self and custom build housing. It was agreed that the Director of Planning and Property provide the relevant figures after the meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and City Deal confirmed that all 7 responses to the consultation on the Housing Strategy had been detailed in full in the report. The Leader of the Council indicated that both strategies presented were excellent and timely, particularly the Prevention of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy in light of the challenges ahead arising from the pandemic.

**Decision made (unanimously):**

1. That Cabinet notes the consultation that has been undertaken on the two draft strategies, the comments and feedback received during the consultation period and the improvements made to each of the strategies based on the feedback received.
2. That Cabinet endorses the approval and adoption of the of each of the strategies to deliver the Council's priorities for housing in South Ribble.

### **Reasons for Decision**

1. To enable the Council to achieve its housing priorities and direct resources to delivering specified actions as identified in each of the strategies.
2. To enable a clear vision and strategic approach to the Council's housing services for the borough to 2025.
3. To meet the Council's statutory duty under the Homelessness Act 2002 to carry out review of homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough and to publish a strategy to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.

### **Alternative options considered and rejected**

1. The Cabinet could have chosen not to adopt the South Ribble Housing Strategy 2020-2025. However, the Housing Framework 2017-2020 is now out of date with the housing landscape having changed since this document was approved. Given the strong priorities for housing in the Council's Corporate Plan it is important to set a clear vision and strategic approach for housing across the borough and to be able to respond to opportunities and challenges that may arise.
2. The Cabinet could have chosen not to adopt the Prevention of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, however it is a legal requirement to have a strategy, pursuant to the Homelessness Act 2002, and this was therefore rejected.

## **129 South Ribble Extra Care Scheme**

The Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Leisure presented a report of the Director of Planning and Property, the purpose of which was to provide Cabinet with an update on plans to bring forward an extra care scheme within South Ribble; identify and recommend a preferred site for the development of an extra care scheme; and to seek approval to procure and finance a consultant team to undertake a feasibility study and prepare a business case for the scheme.

The Cabinet Member referred to a visit to a similar facility at Chorley, with which he was very impressed. He said he hoped that once the feasibility study had been completed the scheme would commence in 2020/21.

The Leader of the Council reported that with regard to funding, it was expected that Homes England would be announcing their next tranche next week. The Interim Chief Executive indicated that it may be possible to link the scheme to the Town Deal but this would need to be looked at.

In response to an enquiry with regard to sites for development generally and in particular a new site for the Leisure Centre, the Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Leisure confirmed a potential site was being considered.

It was confirmed that the detailed revenue costs regarding the Extra Care Scheme would be presented to Cabinet for approval in due course.

#### **Decision made (unanimously):**

1. That Cabinet approves the recommended site West Paddock for the development of an extra care scheme.
2. That Cabinet approves the procurement of a suitable consultant team to undertake a feasibility study and develop a business case into the scope and viability of an extra care team to be built on land at West Paddock including for financial and legal advice where required.
3. That Cabinet approves a revenue budget figure of £50,000 to allow for the initial feasibility study, business case, financial and legal advice.
4. That Cabinet requests that officers work with Homes England on the funding of an Extra Care Scheme in the South Ribble Borough.
5. To bring back to Cabinet a report detailing the initial feasibility study and business case to progress an extra care scheme.

#### **Reasons for Decision**

1. To meet a key Corporate Plan objective of supporting communities, through the provision of quality new affordable homes enabling elderly residents within the Borough to live healthier and independently for longer.
2. South Ribble has an ageing population with residents living longer and often presenting with more complex care and support needs. Extra Care housing enables residents to draw on care and support to meet their needs whilst retaining an independence not possible within the traditional residential care environment.
3. Lancashire County Council's Housing with Care and Support Strategy 2018-2025 sets a strategic aim to have at least 1 extra care scheme in each district by 2025 highlighting a need for at least 204 extra care homes in South Ribble by this time.
4. Before the Council can look to develop its extra care plans any further, a decision needs to be taken to identify the site location for a scheme. The chosen site must be of a suitable size and location to accommodate this type of development.
5. On confirmation of a chosen site, the Council can proceed with the first stage of the project which will involve the preparation of a feasibility study and business case. Once complete, this work will be reported back to Cabinet.

## **Alternative options considered and rejected**

1. Do nothing – the Council could have chosen not to develop an extra care scheme; however, this option was rejected as it would not achieve this Council's priorities, the County Council's priorities and would not address the housing needs of the borough's ageing population.
2. Alternative site – an alternative site could have been chosen to develop a scheme. This option was rejected. A number of sites have been considered during the identification process, however these sites have been discounted due to site suitability, location and deliverability.

### **130 Worden Park Overflow Car Park**

The Cabinet Member for Environment presented a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development requesting Cabinet approval to accept the most economically advantageous tender and to spend the allocated budget for the proposed works to the reinforced grass overflow car park at Worden Park, Leyland. The report relates only to the proposed physical works to the overflow car park.

The Cabinet Member outlined a proposed timetable for the work, i.e. it was hoped that work would take around 10 weeks, starting end Sept/early Oct and completed in mid-late January 2021. Following settlement work, it was anticipated that the car park would re-open for March/April 2021. She confirmed that the cost of £104,095.32 quoted in Table 1 was a fixed price for the work.

Assurances were given that the Council would take all possible legal protections for the Council within the terms of the business contract and that all technical specifications would be subject to appropriate checks during installation.

#### **Decision made (unanimously):**

That Cabinet agrees:

1. That tender no.2 in Table 1 is accepted for the construction works at the overflow car park in Worden Park and the contract awarded to this bidder accordingly.
2. That permission is granted to spend the budget of £120,000 in the capital programme for these works.

#### **Reasons for Decision**

1. Council approved the current corporate plan 2018/2023 in February 2019. The Corporate plan identifies a series of key programmes under a number of headings including Health and Wellbeing. The capital improvement programme for green links, parks and open spaces approved in February 2019 includes £120,000 for works to the overflow car park at Worden Park and the scheme was included in the Green Links Cabinet report of June 2019.

2. Areas of the car park's surface require attention following 24 months of heavy usage and the layout of the car park requires amendments to deter excess speed and antisocial behaviour by some drivers using the car park.

### **Alternative options considered and rejected**

1. Two alternative options were considered, firstly, the option of doing nothing and continuing with the car park in its current layout and condition. This was rejected as the current roadways have become uneven in places and therefore require relaying. The open nature of the car park has also encouraged excess speeds and antisocial behaviour by some drivers which requires addressing to maintain a safe environment for visitors.
2. Secondly, the option of replacing the reinforced grass surface with a macadam surface was considered. Whilst this would provide a surface suitable for constant high use, it would not be in-keeping with planning requirements and constructing a surface for continuous high usage would only be required for usage beyond that required for the park.

## **131 McKenzie Arms Development**

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets presented a report of the Director of Planning and Property bringing forward to Cabinet the proposed development of 15 homes for affordable rent at the former McKenzie Arms site which achieved full planning permission at Planning Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

The report sought approval to move to the next stage of the project which included appointing a partner to work with the Council to take the project through to the construction and delivery phase. This will be achieved through the adoption of a suitable procurement strategy. The report also informed the Cabinet how the day to day operation of the new homes at the McKenzie Arms development will be run and managed on an ongoing basis.

The Cabinet Member highlighted the fact that the homes would be social rented housing and that he hoped building would begin early next year.

He also responded to a query about the terms of the development and potential 'right to buy'. He explained that options such indemnity insurance were being explored to protect the Council from such risks.

### **Decision made (unanimously):**

1. Cabinet welcomes the decision taken by Planning Committee on 27 August 2020 to approve the application for the development of 15 new homes for affordable rent of the former McKenzie arms site.
2. Cabinet approves an increase to the capital budget from £2.217m to £2.253m to deliver the scheme and agrees to commit Section 106 commuted sums funding to cover this additional £36k forecast cost.
3. Cabinet requests that Officers undertake an open procurement route evaluated based on cost, quality and social value for the project which allows

for the new affordable housing development achieving the Passivhaus standard which represents the very highest quality in terms of environmental outcomes.

4. To bring back to Cabinet a further report to approve the contractor to deliver the McKenzie Arms project.
5. That Cabinet requests Officers to explore Homes England funding if a new round of funding becomes available.
6. That Cabinet notes the advice received in relation to the Right to Buy implications and to agree to resolve the issue of a potential overage claim through the purchase of indemnity insurance if required.
7. That Cabinet notes the outcome of the audit in to the original purchase of the McKenzie Arms site.

### **Reasons for Decision**

The development of the McKenzie Arms site represents a key priority within the Council's revised Corporate Plan which is to deliver an increased number of affordable homes for rent in the South Ribble Borough.

To take the McKenzie Arms project forward, these key decisions needed to be taken by Cabinet.

### **Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

An alternative option would be to nothing. This was rejected as it would not deliver the Council's Corporate Plan objectives and would leave the site underutilised. In addition, the Council currently has large sums of Section 106 funding and some of this funding has been committed to delivering the scheme. If this funding is not utilised the Council would be open to risk of having to pay it back to the relevant developer.

## **132 Budget Monitoring 2020-21 - Quarter 1**

The Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets) presented a report of the Deputy Director of Finance (Section 151 officer) explaining the Council's overall financial position for quarter 1 of the financial year 2020-21. He stressed that due to the circumstances surrounding CO-VID 19 re-profiling may need to take place again.

Councillor Bretherton asked a question with regard to the Bellis Way Playground. He said that there had been forecast of £20k and the budget was now £30k. The Director of Neighbourhoods and Development confirmed that the budget was £30k (match funding). The Cabinet Member for Environment agreed to investigate and report back after the meeting.

### **Decision made (unanimously):**

1. Cabinet notes and accepts the recommendations of the Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel made at its meeting on 14 September 2020.
2. Cabinet notes the contents of this report including the forecast £29,000 underspend in 2020/21.
3. Cabinet approves the allocation of the £150,000 staffing savings target and the £37,000 residual shared services savings target against the £499,000 forecast staffing underspend.
4. Cabinet approves the use of general reserves for one-off increases to the revenue budget in relation to the following items:
  - a) Dial-a-ride £20,000
  - b) IDOX Enterprise and Capability Review £26,000
  - c) Extra Care preparatory work £50,000
5. Cabinet approves the re-profiled budgets for the capital programme, which reflects forecasted underspend against the existing budgets, as detailed in Appendix C.

### **Reasons for Decision**

The Cabinet's decisions reflect the recommendations of the Section 151 officer, which will ensure the Council's best overall financial position.

The overall forecast for 2020/21 for the revenue budget is a net surplus of £29,000.

A summary of the variances by directorate is shown in Table 1, and a detailed list of the main variances within each directorate is shown in Table 2.

In addition, it is requested that £67,000 (Table 3) is allocated against the current general fund balance of £4.239m leaving £4.172m remaining. It should be noted that this use of the general fund will be reviewed throughout the financial year and may not be required if further underspends are identified in 2020/21.

The forecasts for staffing costs are an overall saving of £499,000. It is recommended to allocate the full £150,000 staffing savings target. Also, it is recommended to allocate an additional £37,000 from the areas of forecasted underspending to cover the deficit against the shared services savings figure.

The report outlines the impact Covid-19 has had on the budget in 2020/21 including the additional grant funding received and the management of the business grant schemes.

The total capital spend including commitments in 2020/21 is £2.768m, which is 29% of the total budget of £9,614. Appendix C gives the details for individual schemes and the revised forecasts, both for 2020/21 and the following 3 years.

Cabinet approved a number of one – off revenue budget increases for the following reasons:

#### Dial-a-ride

A delegated decision was approved in June to provide grant support of £20,000 per year to the delivery of Dial-a-Ride service in South Ribble. It is requested to use the general reserve to fund the cost in 2020-21.

#### IDOX Enterprise and Capability Review £26,000

In January 2020 Cabinet approved this capital scheme for £146,000, which has been added to the capital programme. Approval was also given to fund one-off revenue setup costs of £20,000 using the surplus in 2019-20. However, at outturn the cost was expected to be higher but we did not yet have the exact figure. Therefore no carry forward request was made and instead it is now requested to use the general reserve to fund the confirmed cost.

#### Extra Care preparatory work £50,000

The capital programme includes a £10m budget for constructing a new Extra Care facility. As per the Extra Care Scheme report, it is requested to use the general reserve to create a revenue budget of £50,000 for the initial feasibility study and business case as well as financial and legal advice.

#### **Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

None, for the reasons given above.

#### **133 Exclusion of Press and Public**

##### **Decision made (unanimously):**

That the press and public be excluded from this meeting.

#### **134 Vehicle Procurement**

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets presented a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development detailing the Council's vehicle and plant replacement programme, which includes for the replacement of five refuse collection vehicles, two compact sweepers and one four wheel drive five cylinder ride on mower. The report requests approval to commit capital expenditure and accept the most economically advantageous tenders for the procurement of the vehicles.

A question was asked with regard to the implementation of increasing the environmental impact from the current 5%. The Cabinet Member for Environment indicated that would fall under her portfolio and the Climate Emergency Task Group. However, in practice it would be over a number of years.

##### **Decision made (unanimously):**

That Cabinet agrees:

1. To award the tender for vehicle specification 1 (1 No Open Back Electric Twin Split Lifts Refuse Collection Vehicle) to tenderer No.3
2. To award the tender for vehicle specification 2 (1 No Open Back Trade Waste Lift Refuse Collection Vehicle) to tenderer No.6
3. To award the tender for vehicle specification 3 ( 3 No Standard Twin Pack Triple Electric Split Lifts Refuse Collection Vehicle) to tenderer No.2

4. To award the tender for vehicle specification 4 ( 2 No Compact Sweepers) to tenderer No.4
5. To award the tender for (1 No Four Wheel Drive, Five Cylinder, Ride on Mower) to tenderer No.1
6. To approve capital expenditure as detailed in paragraph 7 of the confidential report in compliance with financial regulations.

### **Reasons for Decision**

To enable the continued delivery of services to residents of the borough through the provision of effective and suitable vehicles. It also presents the opportunity to reduce the current levels of particulates released in to the air and reduce air pollution within the borough.

The tenderers represent the most economically advantageous for the Council.

### **Alternative options considered and rejected**

The retention of the existing vehicles was considered however maintenance costs for these vehicles has now started to show a steep increase, and over time these will become unreliable leading to a deterioration in the service provided to residents. It would also remove the opportunity to reduce the current levels of particulates released in to the air and reduce air pollution within the borough.

Consideration has also been given to the contract hire of vehicles, an exercise was carried out to identify the whole life costs of the existing vehicles, which in the case of the refuse vehicles is £28,100 per year over a seven year period compared to an average price of £43,100 per year for contract hire identifying an increase of 30% over outright purchase and in house maintenance.

## **135 Disposal of land at Four Oaks Road, Walton Summit**

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets presented an original report and supplementary report of the Director of Planning and Property with regard to disposal of land at Four Oaks Road, Walton Summit. The supplementary informed Members of a development in the process subsequent to the publication of the agenda.

Members discussed the matter outlined in the supplementary report.

### **Decision made (unanimously):**

That Cabinet agrees the disposal of approximately 1.03 acres of land at Four Oaks Road, Walton Summit and delegates responsibility for agreeing the disposal process to the Director of Planning and Property in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

### **Reasons for Decision**

The Cabinet felt strongly that the matter referred to in the supplementary report required further consideration prior to a final decision being taken.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

An alternative option would have been to proceed as per the original report, however this was rejected for the reasons given above.

**136 Financial support for SERCO due to Corona Virus crisis**

The Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Leisure presented a report of the Assistant Director for Projects and Development to update members on the negotiations between Serco Leisure Operating Ltd (SLOL) and the council officers with regard to the council offering financial support to the leisure provider.

**Decision made (unanimously):**

That Cabinet approves the recommendations detailed at paragraphs 3, 4 5 and 6 of the confidential report.

**Reasons for Decision**

There may be legal and contractual issues for the Council arising from not reaching an agreement.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

None, for the reasons given above.

Chair

Date