

CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING Tuesday 29th September 2020

PRESENT: Councillor Brett (Chair); Councillors Daalat Ali, Emsley, Iftikhar Ahmed, Heakin, Rowbotham and Wardle

OFFICERS: Steve Rumbelow (Chief Executive), Neil Thornton (Director of Resources), Mark Widdup (Director of Neighbourhoods), Gail Hopper (Director of Children's Services), John Searle (Director of Economy), Andrea Fallon (Director of Public Health), Julie Murphy (Chief Finance Officer), Samantha Smith (Deputy Chief Finance Officer), Fay Davies (Children's Services Directorate), Nick Barton and Abigail Mills (Economy Directorate) and Alison James (Resources Directorate)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Linda Robinson and Councillor Dearnley

36 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Blundell and Councillor Neil Emmott.

37 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

38 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

39 MINUTES

Resolved:

1. That the Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 25th August 2020 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

40 OBJECTION TO TRAFFIC ORDERS - BURY AND ROCHDALE OLD ROAD, ROCHDALE

Resolved:

1. That this item be withdrawn from Agenda to enable further discussion to take place between the Portfolio Holder and Townships and that it be referred back to Townships as necessary following those discussions.

41 SECTION 106 FORMAL SPORT

Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Economy seeking approval for the allocation of Section 106 Formal Sport contributions to be allocated to a project at Heywood St. James FC (Phoenix Park).

Alternatives considered:

The Council is required to spend s106 Formal Sport contributions in accordance with legal agreements and local and national planning policy. Not delivering projects as set out in s106 legal agreements would result in contributions being returned to developers and a loss of facilities for residents of the borough.

Resolved:

1. That the allocation of funds from relevant Section 106 receipts to support the replacement of changing facilities at Heywood St. James FC (Phoenix Park) as detailed within the report be approved.

Reasons for the decision:

In accordance with the relevant Council policies, the allocation of s106 Formal Sport contributions received from new residential developments are considered on a strategic and Boroughwide basis. As such, when the specific use of the contribution is not agreed in the Section 106 agreement, this requires Cabinet approval.

The recommendations relating to the allocation of Formal Sport contributions in this report are guided by the Playing Pitch Strategy in consultation with elected member for the wards in which the contributions are generated.

42 ADOPTION OF REVISED STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Economy which advised that the Government had released updated planning guidance encouraging Local Planning Authorities to update their Statement of Community (SCI) as soon as possible to allow plan making to progress during the Covid-19 outbreak.

The Council's current SCI, adopted in October 2019, sets out how the local community may be involved when preparing key planning policy documents and determining planning applications. It is important, in the interests of clarity for stakeholders and to avoid the potential for legal challenge, that the SCI is up to date and reflects present national planning legislation and the Council's own current procedures.

The draft revised SCI was published for public consultation for a period of six weeks from 13th July 2020 to 24th August 2020 to allow for stakeholders and members of the public to comment and provide input. The report outlined the consultation responses and any proposed changes. The SCI document was recommended for adoption.

Alternatives considered:

It is a legal requirement for the Council to produce a SCI and to carry out consultation on planning policies and planning applications in line with the SCI. The only alternative possible would be to not adopt the revised SCI;

failure to adopt an up to date SCI could leave the Council open to legal challenge.

Resolved:

1. That the representations and officers' responses to representations received following consultation and the proposed changes to the SCI be noted;
2. That the adoption of the revised SCI (August 2020) be approved.

Reasons for the decision:

Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to produce a Statement of Community Involvement, which should explain how they will engage local communities and other interested parties in producing their Local Plan and determining planning applications.

43 INCLUSIVE SKILLS, WORK AND HEALTH PLAN 2021-2023

Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Economy which presented the Inclusive Skills, Work and Health Plan setting out the need to support the borough's adult population and business community to be able to take advantage of the economic growth opportunities identified in the recently adopted Borough Growth Plan

The Plan recognises the co-dependency between health and employment, and the role skills plays in securing better employment and earning better wages.

The Plan aims to maximise the benefits for Rochdale of the significant budgets devolved to Greater Manchester and recognises that this brings opportunities as well as challenges.

Alternatives considered:

The alternative of not having a cohesive and comprehensive Plan would lead to an un-co-ordinated, inefficient and ineffective range of skills, employment and health activities by the private, public and voluntary sector, that do not meet the needs of borough residents or businesses. The lack of a Plan hinders the ability of the Council to bid for external funding to support our objectives.

Resolved:

1. That the Inclusive Skills, Work and Health Plan 2021-2023 be approved;
2. That the levers at the council's disposal to contribute to the objectives in the Plan be supported.

Reasons for the decision:

The borough's skills, employment and health levels are below the Greater Manchester average on most of the key indicators. Significant economic growth opportunities have been identified in the borough's Growth Plan and it is important that these directly benefit borough residents. There is substantial evidence to link being out of work with poorer physical and mental health conditions, risks of homelessness and higher mortality rates. If everyone had a decent job, health outcomes would improve significantly and inequalities reduce.

44 FINANCIAL UPDATE (PERIOD 4) 2020/2021

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer which presented the Council's forecast 2020/21 financial position as at the end of July 2020.

Alternatives considered:

Not reporting on financial performance puts at risk the achievement of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. Effective budget management is critical to ensuring financial resources are spent in line with the budget and are targeted towards the Council's priorities. Monitoring enables the early identification of variations against the plan and facilitates timely corrective action.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet the forecast 2020/21 financial positions for Revenue, Capital, and the Collection Fund as at the end of July 2020 be noted;
2. That the utilisation of the 3rd tranche of emergency Covid 19 funding of £2,416k detailed in section 4.1.1. of the report be approved;
3. That the forecast Health & Social Care Pool Budget position as detailed in section 4.2. of the report be noted;
4. That the Budget Pressure requests in section 4.3 of the report be approved;
5. That the procurement process in relation to the use of the Insurance Reserve for the Town Hall restoration project be approved;
6. That the forecast unachieved savings target in section 4.4 of the report be noted;
7. That the net Capital budget changes of £2,277k detailed in section 4.6.2 of the report be noted;
8. That the Capital re-phasing of £23,407k detailed in section 4.6.3. of the report be noted;
9. That the request to change the use of Capital Budget as detailed in section 4.6.5. of the report be approved.
10. That the forecast 2020/21 Collection Fund position detailed in section 4.7 of the report be noted.

Reasons for the decision:

Cabinet Members should be kept updated on the financial position of the authority, as effective budget management is critical to ensuring financial resources are spent in line with the budget and are targeted towards the Council's priorities.

The report focuses on the forecast 2020/21 financial position as at the end July 2020.

45 REVENUE BUDGET 2021/22 TO 2023/24 AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22 TO 2025/26

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer which presented updates on the Revenue Budget 2021/22 to 2023/24 and the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy; to outline proposed changes to the Council's Capital Programme 2020/21 and to outline the Council's proposed Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2025/26, as a basis for consultation.

Alternatives considered:

The Council is legally obliged to set a balanced budget. The budget setting process is complex and must be undertaken in a planned way. It is equally important that assumptions used in the preparation of the budget are agreed, reasonable and consistently applied by all services.

Resolved:

1. That the updated Revenue Budget position 2021/22 to 2023/24 be noted;
2. That the Council's updated Medium Term Financial Strategy be noted;
3. That the proposed changes to the Capital Programme 2020/21 as detailed in the report be approved;
4. That the Capital Programme 2021/22, and provisional programmes for 2022/23 to 2025/26, be approved as a basis for consultation, subject to confirmation of grant funding allocations, as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report.

Reasons for the decision:

Cabinet members are required to recommend a balanced 2021/22 Revenue Budget to Budget Council, and provisional budgets for 2022/23 to 2023/24. The Council is required to set a balanced budget for 2021/22 by 11th March 2021.

The Revenue budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy Capital Programme provide key parts of the budget setting process.

46 DISCRETIONARY FEES AND CHARGES 2021/2022

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer which advised that Discretionary Fees and Charges are reviewed on an annual basis. At Cabinet

28th July a 2% general increase in Discretionary Fees and Charges for 2021/22 was agreed for planning purposes, subject to exemptions to be agreed.

This report detailed the proposed Discretionary Fees and Charges for 2021/22, as a basis for consultation, and detailed those charges proposed to be exempt from the general 2% increase.

Alternatives considered:

The alternative is not to review or increase our fees and charges. This would potentially reduce the income available to the Council and make it more difficult to achieve a balanced budget.

Resolved:

1. That the updated Discretionary Fees and Charges for 2020/21, as detailed within the report, be approved as a basis for consultation;
2. That the charges exempt from the general 2% increase, as set out in paragraph 4.3. of the report be approved.

Reasons for the decision:

The fees and charges in the report have been proposed by each Directorate, taking into account the 2% general uplift in Discretionary Fees and Charges agreed at Cabinet on 28th July 2020.

It was recommended not to apply a 2% increase to the fees and charges detailed in paragraph 4.3. of the report.

47 NEED FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES 2021 - 2024

Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Children's Services which provided details about the need for Primary School Places 2021-2024.

Alternatives considered:

Alternatives are constantly under review and any impacts of the current pandemic on house building rates or timing of new developments will have knock on effects on school capacity.

Resolved:

1. That the expansion of the Primary school estate as detailed within the report be supported;
2. That the opening of a consultation on proposals to address the need for extra Reception places be approved;
3. That the provision of a new Primary school needed as part of the junction 19 development, which will be required to be provided through

- developer contributions and using the Free school Presumption route be noted;
4. That the capital expenditure on bulge classes in north Pennines and Middleton be approved.

Reasons for the decision:

The council has a statutory duty to provide education and school places to all school aged children living in the borough and consequently has a duty to plan adequately for predicted pupil numbers.

Current housing development plans along with the housing allocations defined in the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, GMSF (currently still under consultation) dictate that pupil numbers in Rochdale may continue to grow in some localities and plans must be put in place to create the needed school capacity. New housing build rates have been above those required to be delivered by the GMSF for two years.

Parental choice creates a situation where parents who can, are more likely to travel longer distances to school, this means that spare capacity is more likely to be concentrated in fewer schools and consequently over supply of school places is a consideration. Falling birth rates and increased housing mean that places are constantly under review.

48 SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES 2021 AND 2022

Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Children's Services which provided details about the need for Secondary School Places 2021 and 2022.

Alternatives considered:

The council must meet its statutory duty to offer all borough pupils a place in Secondary schools and the report details the preferred option of the early opening of the Edgar Wood Academy and the backup plan for additional capacity.

Resolved:

1. That the release of funds from Basic Need capital funding to deliver additional places at Wardle Academy for 2021 and 2022 as detailed in appendix 1. of the report be approved;
2. That it be noted that the delivery of much needed Secondary schools through the central government Free School programme leaves the council dependent on timings and decisions by central government with regards to the delivery of those schools, and consequently puts at risk delivery of its statutory duty to offer a school place to every child living in the borough;
3. That the release of funds from Basic Need capital funding to meet the need to deliver 120 additional places for September 2021 in existing borough Secondary schools, as detailed in appendix 1. Of the report be approved;

4. That the release of funds from Basic Need capital funding to support the delivery of the new Edgar Wood academy be approved, if the DfE deem that the early opening in temporary accommodation is deliverable for 2021.

Reasons for the Decision:

The council has a statutory duty to offer every pupil living in the borough, who applies, a Secondary school place. Where the council offers a school place that is over the statutory "safe walking distance" for the age of that child the council is required to provide free school transport. Because bus transport in the area is provided through Transport for Greater Manchester, any child offered a school place, which is over the statutory distance criteria, is offered a free bus pass that is provided from council funds. The council receives no central government funding for school bus transport.

The council does receive Basic Need funding to provide additional school places for both permanent and temporary school building expansions and bulge classes. The allocation of Basic Need funding from central government is reported annually to the council Cabinet and the report this year was approved on 31st March 2020.

A shortage of Secondary school places is forecast for 2021 and 2022 intakes, and for school intakes in every following year until the time that the two new mainstream school are delivered.

49 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:

That the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following three items of business, in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

Reasons for the decision:

Should the press and public remain there may be a disclosure of information that is deemed to be exempt under Parts 1 and 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

50 SECONDARY SCHOOL PROVISION - 2021 AND 2022

Cabinet considered the restricted appendix to the report of the Director of Children's Services which provided details about the need for Secondary School Places 2021 and 2022.

Alternatives considered:

The council must meet its statutory duty to offer all borough pupils a place in Secondary schools and the report details the preferred option of the early opening of the Edgar Wood Academy and the backup plan for additional capacity.

Resolved:

1. That the funding allocations for schemes as detailed in the appendix to the report be noted.

Reasons for the Decision:

The council has a statutory duty to offer every pupil living in the borough, who applies, a Secondary school place. Where the council offers a school place that is over the statutory "safe walking distance" for the age of that child the council is required to provide free school transport. Because bus transport in the area is provided through Transport for Greater Manchester, any child offered a school place, which is over the statutory distance criteria, is offered a free bus pass that is provided from council funds. The council receives no central government funding for school bus transport.

The council does receive Basic Need funding to provide additional school places for both permanent and temporary school building expansions and bulge classes. The allocation of Basic Need funding from central government is reported annually to the council Cabinet and the report this year was approved on 31st March 2020.

A shortage of Secondary school places is forecast for 2021 and 2022 intakes, and for school intakes in every following year until the time that the two new mainstream schools are delivered.

51 LITTLEBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Children's Services relating to Littleborough Primary School being included in the Priority School Building Programme.

Alternatives considered:

The school site could be retained as it is and it may come forward at a later date if a further round of the Priority School Building Programme occurs. Mitigation works currently being carried out will need ongoing maintenance and will incur considerable expenditure to Council buildings, Link4Life and schools.

Resolved:

1. That the recommendations detailed within the report be supported and approved.

Reasons for the recommendation:

To provide facilities on the site within the parameters set out within the report.