

## **CABINET**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING Tuesday, 25 January 2022**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Neil Emmott (Chair); Councillors Daalat Ali, Iftikhar Ahmed, Blundell, O'Rourke and Wardle.

**OFFICERS:** S. Rumbelow (Chief Executive), A. Ibrahim (Assistant Director – Legal, Governance and Workforce/Monitoring Officer), J. Murphy (Chief Finance Officer), M. Robinson (Interim Director of Economy), M. Ashworth (Head of Commercial, Economy & Resources, Finance), N. Hine (Policy and Performance Directorate), A. James (Resources Directorate), J. Jenkinson (Resources Directorate), J. Oliver (Environmental Management), Anjalee Pawsker, (Communications), and H. Walton (Performance and Improvement).

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillor Dearnley and one member of the public.

#### **87 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Rachel Massey, Councillor Meredith, Councillor Rowbotham, and Councillor Susan Smith.

#### **88 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021 be approved as a correct record.

#### **89 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **90 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items of business for consideration.

#### **91 DIGITAL EXPERIENCE STRATEGY 2022 – 2025**

Consideration was given to a report of the Leader of the Council / Director of Neighbourhoods which sought approval of the Digital Experience Strategy 2022 - 2025.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Facilities welcomed the report and highlighted that the Strategy was inclusive and recognised the needs of all residents.

## **RESOLVED:**

- I. That the Digital Experience Strategy 2022 - 2025 be approved.
- II. That the Director of Neighbourhoods be authorised to deliver the Digital Experience Strategy.
- III. That the actions currently underway to develop a linked Digital Delivery Plan be noted.

## **Reasons for Decision**

Digital transformation was taking place at pace because it enabled services to be delivered more efficiently, at less cost, with less effort and in a joined-up way. Residents and businesses had increased expectations of how services should be delivered online. Education, welfare, health and work were increasingly being delivered online. It was recognised that there were numerous, wide-ranging yet interlinked aspects to address simultaneously to enable effective digital transformation.

People of all ages needed to develop basic digital skills to support them to get online and efforts needed to be made to inspire citizens to pursue careers in the digital sector. It was vital that people were assisted to ensure that they had a positive digital experience across all areas of their life: health and wellbeing, education, and employment.

Health and social care must be enhanced and transformed through technology, enabling people to maximise their full potential and gain independence. Everyone in the borough, irrespective of age, needs, location or situation, should be enabled to use digital technology to interact and share with others and participate in civic and community life. All areas of the borough required increased and reliable mobile coverage and faster broadband connectivity. It was vitally important that all citizens and businesses were safe when using digital services.

The borough had to be an attractive place for digital businesses, offering high speed connectivity, local digital talent and a range of support. The Council had to lead by example in maximising the use of innovative technology to improve services. A particular issue highlighted during the Covid pandemic, was that a significant proportion of the borough was digitally excluded because they lacked internet access and/or had low level digital skills. Common reasons for this were: age, low income, disability, learning difficulties, ethnic origin, location, culture and language. Addressing digital inclusion was therefore the top priority for the strategy.

## **Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

**To continue without a strategy** - the progress made so far had been piecemeal and lacked a cohesive form. Successful and effective digital transformation required the drawing together of multiple issues, and therefore it was recommended that a strategy which drew together issues thematically was required.

## **92 REVIEW OF BULKY WASTE CHARGES**

Consideration was given to a report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Facilities / Director of Neighbourhoods that proposed the introduction of a free bulky waste collection service in 2022/23.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Facilities welcomed the report and explained that the introduction of a free collection scheme would remove barriers to services, and thereby assist the Council to tackle the scourge of fly-tipping.

Members noted that fly-tipping was particularly prevalent in areas where rental turnover was high, and raised concerns in relation to rogue landlords and letting agents exacerbating the issue.

In concluding, the Leader said he was hopeful that the proposed scheme would be a first step to reduce the rate of fly-tipping in the Borough.

### **RESOLVED:**

- I. That two free bulky waste collections be available to each household, each year.
- II. That a bulky waste collection could consist of up to three items only.
- III. That the number of free collections would be linked to a property rather than an individual.
- IV. That a chargeable service be made available for households that exceeded the limit of free collections and / or required additional item to be collected. The charge to be £11 for up to three items and £2.50 for each additional item.
- V. That a request of £137,000 from public contingency be made to fund the proposed bulky waste collection service. The request for funding would be subject to approval at the Council 2022/ 23 budget setting meeting.

## **Reasons for Decision**

To ensure a free bulky waste collection service could be offered to residents within the scope of the Council's budget.

## **Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

**To continue operating chargeable bulky waste collections** – this option was not recommended as councillors had indicated that they did not wish to continue with the current system.

### **93 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC RESOLVED:**

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

Reason for the Decision - should the press and public remain during consideration of the items, there may be a disclosure of information that was deemed to be exempt under Part 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **94 ROCHDALE RAIL CORRIDOR - LAND ASSEMBLY STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to a report of the Cabinet Member for Economy and Communications / Interim Director (Economy), Planning and Development in relation to Rochdale Rail Corridor – Land Assembly Strategy.

The Rail Corridor Strategy and a regeneration masterplan were being delivered by the Council and Rochdale Development Agency, in collaboration with the Greater Manchester Station Alliance.

Cabinet was provided with an update on progress, including the completion of feasibility studies and due diligence. The report sought approval for proposals and partnering arrangements to progress the next phase of regeneration.

It was highlighted that the separate schemes within the Strategy would be considered on an individual basis and the specific details would be presented to Members for further consideration.

Cabinet welcomed the report and noted that the overarching objective of the regeneration schemes was to create a comprehensive renewal that brought about physical, economic and sustainable change, created additional homes, employment space, investment in infrastructure, promoted active and sustainable travel, and improved the lives of Rochdale residents, businesses and visitors.

**RESOLVED:** That the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

**Reasons for Decision**

The reasons for the decision were set out in the report.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

The alternative options considered were set out in the report.

**95 PROPERTY GROWTH QUARTER 2 UPDATE 2021/22**

Consideration was given to a report of the Cabinet Member for Economy and Communications / Director of Resources in relation to the Council's property investments.

**RESOLVED:** That the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

**Reasons for Decision**

The reasons for the decision were set out in the report.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

The alternative options considered were set out in the report.