

Minutes of the meeting of the CABINET held on TUESDAY 7 MARCH 2017 at 6.45 pm

Present: Councillor Marland (Chair)
Councillors Gifford, Gowans, Legg, Long, Middleton, Nolan and O'Neill

Present: C Mills (Chief Executive), M Bracey (Corporate Director - People), N Jones (Corporate Director - Resources), D Sharkey (Corporate Director - Place), S Bridglalsingh (Service Director [Legal and Democratic Services]), T Blackburne-Maze (Service Director (Public Realm)), G King (Programme Manager (Waste Strategy)), D Proctor (Waste Contracts Manager) and T Milner (Committee Manager)

Also Present: Councillors Bald, Bint, Crooks, A Geary, D Hopkins, D McCall, McDonald, McLean and Miles, and 7 members of the public.

C131 CABINET ANNOUNCEMENTS

None received.

C132 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7 February 2017 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record, subject to £110k being changed to £110m in the penultimate paragraph of Minute C117.

C133 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

None received.

C134 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(a) Question from Ms J Green to Councillor Gowans (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

The Leader indicated that the Waste Team had responded directly to Ms Green's question in respect of an article in the MK Citizen relating to the waste service provision in Woburn Sands and Milton Keynes.

- (b) Question from Mr A Francis to Councillor Gowans (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

In response to a question from Mr Francis, the Leader indicated that the Corporate Director – Place and Service Director (Public Realm) had organised a meeting with ZED Pods to look at the opportunities of providing additional temporary accommodation units to the housing stock in Milton Keynes.

- (c) Question from Alderwoman H Saunders to Councillor Gifford (Cabinet member for Place)

In response to a question from Alderwoman H Saunders, the Leader indicated that the Corporate Director - Place would ensure appropriate discussion takes place with a view to reopening the Wolverton Library.

C135

COUNCILLOR ITEM FROM COUNCILLOR CROOKS TO COUNCILLOR GOWANS (CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC REALM)

Councillor Crooks asked Councillor Gowans (Cabinet member for Public Realm), to address yet further delays on improvements to Fen Street, affecting both residents and the new Brooklands Campus of Walton High School.

Councillor Gowans, the Cabinet member for Public Realm thanked Councillor Crooks for the item and indicated that a meeting had been scheduled for 30 March 2017 to discuss and try to resolve the issues with the developers. He reassured Councillor Crooks that officers were taking the issues seriously, and confirmed that a handover meeting would be provided to the new incumbent officer in order to provide continuity of service provision.

C136

COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS

None received.

C137

WASTE STRATEGY TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT - REFERENCE FROM SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: 25 JANUARY 2017

The Cabinet considered the findings of the Waste Task and Finish Scrutiny Committee Group which were presented by Councillor D McCall, Chair of the Task and Finish Group.

It was reported that the Task and Finish Group had been established by the Council's Scrutiny Management Committee to review development of the Council's new Waste Strategy with the purpose of providing local Councillor input, customer feedback and comments.

Councillor McCall asked if Cabinet would particularly take into consideration the 2nd recommendation in the report 'That Cabinet should not change the current waste collection system and

associated services unless significant savings can be brought about for the Council with the adoption of any new Waste Strategy', when considering approving the draft Waste Strategy'.

The Cabinet received a written response from Councillor Gowans the Cabinet member for Public Realm.

C138

APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT WASTE STRATEGY

The Cabinet considered the draft Waste Strategy which was introduced by Councillor Gowans, the Cabinet member for Public Realm.

It was reported that the waste services provided by the Council were mostly statutory and were currently mainly outsourced using a number of contracts. The two largest contracts - for Waste Collection and Residual Waste Treatment - had a number of years to run, 2023 and 2031 respectively. This placed a constraint on the options being considered as part of the Strategy, since making significant changes could require contractual variations to be made or the breaking of contracts which could have significant financial implications for the Council.

It was also reported that Council had had a Waste Strategy since 1999, which had been periodically updated and reviewed. A major review had been undertaken in 2005 and the Strategy had received minor updates since, but a more fundamental review was now necessary due to the financial challenges facing the Council. Therefore, the vision for the new Strategy was "To deliver a high quality waste service that provides value for money and costs substantially less than it did in 2016". The 2017/18 Budget included the New Homes Bonus for the implementation of the Waste Strategy and this funding would be used to meet the £0.383m one-off revenue costs and £0.4m capital cost of implementation of charging for green waste.

Councillor Gowans indicated that following a wide-ranging review of options that had been undertaken to identify and consider all waste-related services provided by the Council, the preferred waste collection option for the duration of this Strategy was a combination which retained the current weekly pink and black sack collections, the current collection contract length and implemented a system of charging for garden waste collection. These options gave the best return on investment and had less risk than other options. It was also anticipated that they could be introduced relatively quickly.

Councillor Gowans stated that the existing waste services contractors, Serco, Amey and Viridor, had been consulted and had provided assistance in the development of the options and financial estimates which had assisted with the assessment of the Strategy. The preparation of the policy had also been scrutinised by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Waste Strategy Task and Finish Group.

Councillor D McCall, Chair of the Waste Strategy Task and Finish Group, indicated that he was pleased to learn that the Council was looking to retain the pink sacks, however, he was disappointed to hear about the charges of green bins, especially the potential for an increase in the disposal of food waste in the black sacks and the potential increase of on the tonnage of refuse going to land-fill and the impact it could have in respect of fly-tipping.

Councillor D McCall also highlighted the impact on those residents who were on a low income and asked if the Cabinet would consider a reduction in the green bin charge for those people.

Councillor Gowans the Cabinet member for Public Realm, referred to his written response and indicated that he had taken on board all of the issues raised, but an estimated saving of £29m would have to be made. Councillor Gowans agreed that he would look into a reduction for low income families in respect of the green bins.

The Cabinet also heard from Councillors Bald, Bint and A Geary during consideration of the matter.

The Leader, on behalf of the Cabinet expressed his thanks to the Service Director (Public Realm) and the wider team for all the hard work put into the report and particularly for engaging and seeking the appropriate legal advice on Waste Strategy.

RESOLVED -

1. That the Waste Strategy be approved, subject to:
 - (a) implementing garden waste charging from September 2017 at an annual price of £33 per bin, with a delegated authority given to the Cabinet Member to Public Realm to establish a discount scheme for people in receipt of benefits;
 - (b) not implementing the Waste Strategy until the MK Waste Recovery Park is in full operation;
 - (c) a full implementation and communications plan for the Strategy be developed by the Service Director for Public Realm in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Realm; and
 - (d) the new Strategy be reviewed after not less than twelve months from this decision for its effectiveness, performance against projections, and specifically the impact on the MK Waste Recovery Park.
2. That resource allocation and spend approval of £0.4m be approved as an addition to the Capital Programme 2017/18.

C139

HIGHWAYS ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Cabinet considered the revised Highways Asset Management Policy which was introduced by Councillor Gowans, the responsible Cabinet member for Public Realm.

It was reported that the Council's Highways Infrastructure was an important Council asset, valued at £5.5 billion. The overall condition of the network was very good when compared with other areas of the country. The Council's principal road condition indicator showed that less than 1 % of highways were in need of structural repair and that consequently, insurance claims related to damage caused by defects had been in decline for a number of years with a payment figure for the period April 2016 to February 2017 of £114.

It was also reported that the current state of the network had been made possible by the asset management approach that the Council had undertaken. The existing Policy and Strategy was agreed in November 2015. Consistent with the Highways commitment published in the Council Plan, and to ensure the approach was in line with recently published national guidance, the Policy had therefore been reviewed.

The Cabinet also heard from Councillors Bint, Long, McLean and Nolan, and 1 member of the public during consideration of the matter.

RESOLVED -

That the revised Highways Asset Management Policy be adopted.

C140

REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - TO END OF FEBRUARY 2017

The Cabinet considered Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring report to end of February 2017 which was introduced by Councillor Middleton, the responsible Cabinet member for Resources and Innovation. It was reported that:

- (a) The General Fund revenue forecast outturn was forecasting an over-spend of £3.099m, after the use of (£8.541m) one-off resources which was a decrease in the forecast overspend of (£0.029m) since the previous Period (Period 10). The main reasons for the overspend were the delay to the opening of the Residual Waste Treatment Facility, cost of Temporary Accommodation, Home to School Transport and an overall increase in Children's Social Care for the number of Looked After Children.
- (b) The Dedicated Schools Grant was reporting a forecast overspend of £1.095m against budget, a small increase in the forecast of £0.060m since the previous period;
- (c) The Housing Revenue Account was reporting a (£1.035m) surplus since Period 10; and

- (d) The Capital Programme had spend approval of £263.667m. The forecast outturn was projected to be £116.615m, an overall variation of £147.062m (compared to £140.907m in the previous Period 9).

Councillor Middleton expressed his thanks to Councillor Gowans, Cabinet member for Public Realm, for his work and input on the report.

RESOLVED -

1. That the current forecast outturn of £3.099m, after the use of (£8.627m) one-off resources and the mitigating management actions which are currently underway to minimise the over-spend be noted.
2. That the one-off resources held in the Council reserves largely been used to offset emerging risks and higher levels of demand in a number of service areas.

C141

REVISIONS TO CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND SPEND APPROVALS REPORT

The Cabinet considered granting spend approval for schemes and amendments to existing schemes within the 2016/17 Capital Programme.

It was reported that the changes outlined had resulted in a revised Capital Programme for 2017/18 of £127m. Against this programme, £62.08m of spend approval had been given to enable individual projects to commence or continue.

It was also reported that the Milton Keynes Tariff, which forward funded infrastructure in the expansion areas, was unchanged for 2016/17 at £23.03m with the total spend approval for these contributions at £9.65m.

Councillor Middleton, the responsible Cabinet member for Resources and Innovation, indicated that the Cabinet was continuing to invest in the Public Realm and highways schemes, highlighting the following:

- (a) Spend approval requests for Street Lighting Column Replacement and LED conversions of £4.22m in 2017/18 for the continuation of street lighting column replacements and the conversion to LED lamps, funded from Prudential Borrowing.
- (b) Spend approval request for a Surface Dressing Programme of £1.97m in 2017/18 for the resurfacing of roads throughout the borough, funded from the Single Capital Pot Grant.
- (c) Spend approval request for the Low Emission Bus Scheme - Bus Provision of £1.63m in 2017/18 for the provision of 11 electric buses for the second fully electric bus service for

Milton Keynes route 4 which was funded from Low Emission Vehicles and Infrastructure Grant.

- (d) Spend approval request for Investment in LED lighting on Estates of £1.9m in 2017/18 for the commencement of a programme to convert Estates lighting to LED lamps to be funded from the New Homes Bonus Grant.

RESOLVED -

1. That the spend approval requests for the Capital Programme 2017/18 be approved.
2. That the revised funding position for the Capital Programme 2017/18 be noted.
3. That the amended resource allocation and spend approvals for the Tariff Programme 2017/18 be approved.
4. That the spend approval requests for the Tariff Programme 2017/18 be approved.
5. That the current position of the Tariff Programme 2017/18 be noted.

C142

PROCUREMENT AND COMMISSIONING

That the Minutes of Procurement and Commissioning held on 3 January 2017 be received.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 8.20 PM