

MINUTES OF CABINET

Tuesday, 21 January 2020
(7:01 - 8:18 pm)

Present: Cllr Darren Rodwell (Chair), Cllr Sade Bright, Cllr Dominic Twomey (Deputy Chair), Cllr Evelyn Carpenter, Cllr Cameron Geddes, Cllr Syed Ghani, Cllr Margaret Mullane and Cllr Maureen Worby

Apologies: Cllr Saima Ashraf and Cllr Lynda Rice

90. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

91. Minutes (18 December 2019)

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2019 were confirmed as correct.

92. Budget Monitoring 2019/20 - April to November (Month 8)

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Core Services presented a report on the Council's revenue budget monitoring position for the 2019/20 financial year as at 30 November 2019 (Month 8).

The General Fund showed a projected end of year overspend of £8.318m against the budget of £148.82m, which represented an increase in the projected overspend of £0.755m on the position at Month 7 once other movements were taken into account. The Cabinet Member referred to the key pressures in the Looked After Children service in the current year, which amounted to over £5m, and advised on the intention to increase the base budget for Care and Support services by circa £10m for 2020/21 to mitigate the ongoing demand pressures.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Note the projected revenue outturn for Council services as set out in sections 2 to 11 and Appendix A to the report; and
- (ii) Note the implications for the reserves position and the need to identify in-year action in relation to General Fund expenditure.

93. Housing for Vulnerable People Programme

The Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration introduced a report on the Council's Housing for Vulnerable People programme and the set of commitments that would guide its delivery.

The Cabinet Member advised that three major strategies covering the areas of 'Inclusive Growth', 'Prevention, Independence and Resilience' and 'Participation and Engagement' were being developed and the provision of housing for vulnerable people would be a key aspect within those strategies. A series of

workstreams had been established to focus on demand modelling, process and operational improvements, ratification and monitoring of housing pathways, policy and supply, with the overriding aim of ensuring that 'no-one's left behind'. The Cabinet Member also drew attention to the commitments that had been developed, which included the need for all major new housing projects to consider the needs of vulnerable people, the provision of specialist and future-proofed accommodation and ensuring a holistic approach was taken when assessing a vulnerable person's needs.

Cabinet Members spoke in strong support of the programme and alluded to other initiatives and projects across the Borough that were helping the Council to meet its responsibilities as a corporate parent.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Note the background and aims of the Housing for Vulnerable People Programme as set out in section 2 of the report; and
- (ii) Endorse the commitments set out in section 3 of the report.

94. Review of School Places and Capital Investment - Update January 2020

Further to Minute 36 (16 July 2019), the Cabinet Member for Educational Attainment and School Improvement presented an update report on school expansion and improvement projects aimed at addressing the current and future demand for places in the Borough, as well as the latest funding issues.

The pupil population across primary and secondary level had increased by 38.5% since January 2010 (from 30,967 to 42,889) and was predicted to increase by a further 16.6%, to over 50,000 pupils, by 2023/24. The Cabinet Member commended the continuing efforts of officers, Headteachers and Governing Bodies in ensuring that every child in the Borough had a school place and stressed the need for regeneration plans for the Borough to take full account of additional infrastructure needs. Reference was made to the impact of population growth on other services, such as refuse collection, while the importance of the planning approval process in ensuring that new developments were properly supported by infrastructure was also highlighted.

The Cabinet Member also referred to plans to review the current Alternative Provision for pupils not in mainstream school, additional funding to support the new Greatfields School development and issues relating to the provision of places for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Note the latest position regarding forecast pupil population over the next five years, as detailed in section 2 of the report;
- (ii) Approve the Future Planning Programme for Basic Need 2019 to 2027 (revised January 2020) as set out at Appendix A to the report;
- (iii) Approve the inclusion in the Capital Programme of £7.3m from Basic Need

Grant to support the development of Greatfields Secondary and Primary school facilities and address some outstanding matters at previously expanded schools;

- (iv) Delegate authority to the Director of People and Resilience, as advised by the Procurement Board, to consider and approve the final procurement strategies for each project; and
- (v) Delegate authority to the Director of People and Resilience, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Educational Attainment and School Improvement, the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Law and Governance, to conduct the procurements and award the respective project contracts.

95. Procurement of Refuse / Recycling Wheeled Bins and Bags

The Cabinet Member for Public Realm presented a report on the procurement of new waste receptacles as part of the Council's commitment, under its Waste Strategy 2016-2020, to reduce waste volumes, increase reuse and recycling levels and enhance operational efficiency across the Borough.

The Cabinet Member referred to the alternative procurement options that had been considered and the benefits of pursuing the preferred route via the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation framework.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree the procurement of domestic and commercial refuse and recycling bins, including refurbishment, refuse and recycling sacks / bags, via the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation Refuse and Recycling Products Framework, in accordance with the strategy set out in the report; and
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Director of My Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Realm and the Director of Law and Governance, to carry out the procurements and award the contract(s) to the successful bidder(s).

96. Procurement of Private Hire Vehicle Services for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

The Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration presented a report on the proposal for the Council to lead on a joint procurement, with the London Borough of Redbridge, for the provision of private hire vehicle transport services (with and without Passenger Assistants) for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and vulnerable adults.

The Cabinet Member explained that the Department for Education was in the process of reviewing its guidance to local authorities in respect of home-to-school travel and transport. Therefore, any changes to the statutory guidance would be reflected in the procurement arrangements, with the new service expected to commence from 1 September 2020.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree that the Council acts as the lead borough for the procurement of a four-year framework contract, on behalf of itself and the London Borough of Redbridge, for the provision of private hire transport services (with and without passenger assistants) for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and vulnerable adults, in accordance with strategy set out in the report; and
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Director of People and Resilience, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Educational Attainment and School Improvement, the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Law and Governance, to award and enter into the contract and access agreements.

97. Council Tax Support Scheme 2020/21

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Core Services introduced a report on the local Council Tax Support (CTS) Reduction Scheme for 2020/21.

The Cabinet Member advised that while the fundamentals of the scheme would be unchanged from 2019/20, the £50,000 budget to support those in exceptional hardship would be kept under review and could be increased if deemed appropriate.

Cabinet **resolved** to recommend the Assembly to agree that the Council Tax Support Scheme implemented for 2019/20 be retained for 2020/21.

98. Calculation and Setting of the Council Tax Base for 2020/21

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Core Services introduced the annual Council Tax Base setting report for the 2020/21 financial year.

The Council Tax Base had increased by circa 1,195 compared to 2019/20, equivalent to an additional £1.5m of income based on the current rate of Council Tax. The Cabinet Member stressed, however, that the increasing demand pressures on services, coupled the Government's woeful underfunding of public services, meant that the Council would be forced to consider implementing the maximum permissible increase when determining the level of Council Tax for 2020/21.

The Leader referred to the various reports that had been considered during the evening which reflected the Council's aspirations for growth and improving the lives of local people. He reiterated the criticisms of the Government and point to the fact that the Borough was being deprived of much needed funding, equivalent to approx. 35,000 additional residents, due to the Government's use of out-of-date population figures when determining the funding settlement.

Cabinet **resolved** to agree that, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Council as its Tax Base for the year 2020/21 shall be 51,204.07 Band 'D' properties.