

MINUTES OF CABINET

Tuesday, 18 July 2023
(7:01 - 8:08 pm)

Present: Cllr Darren Rodwell (Chair), Cllr Saima Ashraf (Deputy Chair), Cllr Dominic Twomey (Deputy Chair), Cllr Cameron Geddes, Cllr Kashif Haroon, Cllr Jane Jones, Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe and Cllr Maureen Worby

Also Present: Cllr John Dulwich

Apologies: Cllr Sade Bright and Cllr Syed Ghani

18. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

19. Minutes (20 June 2023)

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2023 were confirmed as correct.

20. Medium Term Financial Strategy and Reserves Policy 2023/24 to 2027/28

Further to Minute 78(ii)(b) (20 February 2023), the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core Services introduced a report on the Council's draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Reserves Policy for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28 in relation to General Fund expenditure.

The Cabinet Member explained that the draft MTFS had been developed against the backdrop of the uncertainty caused by the Government. The cost-of-living crisis, inflation and delays to Fair Funding reforms and Business Rates retention arrangements were all impacting on the Council's finances. Although the Council retained a strong internal focus on its finances, the Cabinet Member commented that the increasing demand for services, the Council's commitments in its Corporate Plan and updated assumptions that underpinned the financial planning meant that the updated MTFS now projected a cumulative funding gap of £28.3m over the five-year period, which represented a significant increase on the position reported in February 2023. In order to bridge that gap, the Cabinet Member referred to both existing and new savings proposals, the implementation of transformation programmes and the need to continue to identify new investment opportunities to help secure long-term sustainability and deliver regeneration for the Borough.

The revenue overspend for 2022/23 meant that the General Fund and Budget Support reserves totalled £18.274m which, although sufficient, meant that there was very little scope to cover unforeseen additional expenditure in the future. With that in mind, the Cabinet Member referred to the proposed Reserves Policy 2023/24 to 2027/28 and the approach to budget setting for 2024/25 and expressed his view that a new Labour Government would introduce the Fair Funding reforms that were needed to properly finance the work of local authorities.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 to 2027/28 as set out at Appendix A to the report;
- (ii) Approve the Reserves Policy 2023/24 to 2027/28 as set out at Appendix C to the report; and
- (iii) Endorse the proposed approach to ensure the financial health of the Council over the medium term.

21. ELWA Waste Disposal Contract - Outline Business Case

The Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Climate Change reported on the East London Waste Authority (ELWA) Outline Business Case (OBC), which set out proposals relating to the preferred serviced delivery model for the future management of waste when ELWA's current 25-year Integrated Waste Management Strategy (IWMS) Contract expired in December 2027.

The Cabinet Member explained that whilst the four constituent Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Newham and Redbridge were responsible for the collection of waste within their respective boundaries, ELWA had been established in 1985 as the statutory waste disposal authority for the four Boroughs.

By Minute 72 (18 January 2022), the Cabinet had endorsed ELWA's Joint Resources and Waste Strategy 2027-2057, developed jointly by ELWA and the four constituent Boroughs, which set out the direction of travel for the future management of waste across the four constituent Boroughs. The key objectives within that strategy were reducing future waste arisings, increasing recycling rates, reducing carbon impact, maximising opportunities for local regeneration, increasing social value and managing waste in the most economically efficient way possible. The OBC set out a detailed analysis of the options considered and proposed procurement plan to deliver those objectives. The Cabinet Member advised that the preferred option (Option 2) would mean that the current pre-treatment of residual (black bag) waste at ELWA's mechanical biological treatment (MBT) facilities at Jenkins Lane and Frog Island would cease and, instead, those facilities would be converted into waste reception facilities where waste delivered by the constituent Councils would be bulked and then transported elsewhere to be treated by merchant contractors. The report also set out proposals in respect of the future lease arrangements for the Council's Frizlands Lane Reuse and Recycling Centre (RRC) to enable ELWA and the incumbent contractor(s) to continue to use the site under the new arrangements.

Cabinet Members expressed the view that they would prefer that the responsibility for waste disposal services was at a local level, in order for the Council to be able to determine the best arrangements for Barking and Dagenham residents. However, in acknowledging that ELWA was the statutory waste disposal authority for the area, the consensus was that Option 2 set out in the OBC represented the best way forward.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree to support the East London Waste Authority's (ELWA) Outline Business Case (OBC) at Appendix 1 to the report;
- (ii) Agree in principle to the Frizlands Lane RRC being made available as a site to the new contractor by way of a property agreement, subject to a future report relating to relevant property arrangements as required; and
- (iii) Note the programme of work that ELWA intended to undertake in relation to the expiry and demobilisation of the current IWMS Contract, which shall include ELWA carrying out any required site inspections on behalf of the Council in relation to the Frizlands Lane RRC.

22. Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25 - Options and Consultation

The Chair advised that the report had been withdrawn to enable further consideration to be given to technical aspects of the system requirements.

23. Parking and Cost-of-Living Proposals

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration introduced a report on two initiatives associated with the Council's parking policies that would help support local residents during the current cost-of-living crisis.

The first proposal related to the doubling of the time that visitors to Council-owned car parks and on-street secondary shopping parades could park free-of-charge once they had registered, while the second would entitle residents in new Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) areas to apply for 10 free visitor parking sessions. The Cabinet Member commented that although the proposals were relatively small gestures, they represented practical ways to help ease the pressures on residents' finances and promote a more positive CPZ programme, while continuing to uphold the principles of the Council's parking policies.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree to extend the 'free' parking periods at Council-owned car parks from 1 hour to 2 hours and at secondary shopping parades (on-street) from 30 minutes to 1 hour in respect of all existing and future pay-by-phone locations; and
- (ii) Agree that households within future CPZ areas be offered 10 free visitor parking sessions in the first year.

24. New Build Schemes - Approval of Disposals, Head Leases and Loan Facility Agreements

Further to Minute 8 (20 June 2023), the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development introduced a report on proposals to progress the disposal of a further 583 new homes across three new residential developments, led by Be First, as part of the Gascoigne Estate Renewal Programme.

The Cabinet Member advised that, as with the previous report, all three development sites were to be transferred, by way of leases, to the Barking and

Dagenham Reside Regeneration Ltd (Reside) structure of companies who would be responsible for the letting and ongoing management of the properties. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the developments offered a varied supply of housing, with more than 58% to be let on Affordable Housing tenures in line with the Council's commitment to providing affordable, high quality new homes for those on its housing waiting / transfer lists.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Approve, in principle, the disposal of the schemes listed below by the granting of long leases to the appropriate Reside entity (either Barking and Dagenham Homes Ltd (company no. 12090374), B&D Reside Weavers LLP (registered no. OC416198) or Barking and Dagenham Reside Regeneration Ltd (company no. 09512728)):
 - Gascoigne West Phase 1 (Block Cargo IG11 7DE, Block Carrier IG11 7NE, Block Forge IG11 7NH);
 - Gascoigne East Phase 2, Block E2 (Herring Court IG11 7YT, Leleu Court IG11 7YW, Mather Court IG11 7YX, Shuckford Court IG11 7YY, Tide Street IG11 7NJ, Ketch Street IG11 7RY);
 - Gascoigne East Phase 2 Block F1 and F2 (Fifeshire Court IG11 7YP, Cutter Court IG11 7XB, Sailor Court IG11 7YR, Ewars Marsh Court IG11 7WZ, Mizzen Street IG11 7RZ).
- (ii) Approve, in principle, the draft Heads of Terms and loans for each of the listed schemes to the appropriate Reside entity, as set out in section 2 of the report;
- (iii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Finance and Investment, in consultation with the Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth, to agree and finalise the terms of the loans, leases and any other associated documents, and to take any steps necessary to ensure compliance with s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Subsidy Control Act 2022; and
- (iv) Delegate authority to the Chief Legal Officer, in consultation with the Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth, to execute all the legal agreements, contracts, and other documents on behalf of the Council in order to implement the arrangements.

25. Procurement of Apprenticeship Training Provision

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core Services presented a report on proposals relating to the procurement of a four-year contract for the provision of apprenticeship training and assessment programmes via the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) Framework with effect from 1 August 2023.

The Cabinet Member advised that the Council and locally maintained schools contributed 0.5% of their pay bills towards an apprenticeship levy, with the Council alone having spent almost £½ million on apprenticeship training and assessments during 2022. The analysis of procurement options had identified the YPO as the preferred route and the Cabinet Member was particularly pleased to report that many local training providers were already affiliated to the YPO. He also

confirmed that the new contract would not only expand the opportunities for local residents wishing to pursue an apprenticeship but also assist the Council to meet its own target of 5% of the workforce undertaking an apprenticeship across all services.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree that the Council proceeds with the procurement of a four-year contract for the provision of apprenticeship training via the YPO Framework, in accordance with the strategy set out in the report; and
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Director of Workforce Change, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core Services and the Chief Legal Officer, to award and enter into all contracts and other necessary or ancillary agreements with YPO and service providers to fully implement and effect the proposals.

26. Direct Award of Elements of the All-Age Care Technology Service Contract

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration introduced a report on the direct award of elements of the Council's all-age Care Technology service.

By Minute 85 (15 February 2021), the Cabinet had approved arrangements for the procurement of an Innovation Partner for the management and delivery of an all-age Care Technology solution. The new service went live in May 2022 with the successful transfer of 2,440 residents from the former Careline service to the new contractor. A series of immediate benefits were achieved via the new service; however, it later became apparent that the contractor was not able to fully support the Council's vision and ambition for care technology in two of the three service elements of the contract. As a consequence and in order for the Council to continue to meet its obligations under the Care Act 2014, discussions were held with three prospective providers and Alcove were identified as the preferred provider.

The Cabinet Member spoke on the significant benefits to the Council of embracing technological advancements in the way that it provides services to local residents, and especially those most vulnerable, in the most efficient and effective manner. With that in mind, the Cabinet Member spoke on the recent success of Lewis Sheldrake, Lead Commissioner in Adult Services, who received a £10,000 scholarship for winning the Local Government Challenge, labelled 'The Apprentice' of local government, at the LGA Conference for his "AI Labs" project, which involved safely and ethically using artificial intelligence to address challenges faced by local government.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Approve the direct award of a contract to Alcove for the management and delivery of the terminated aspects of the All-Age Care Technology service, in accordance with the strategy set out in the report; and
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Children and Adults, in

consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration and the Chief Legal Officer, to award and enter into the contract and any extension periods with Alcove to fully implement and effect the proposals.

27. Procurement Strategy for Fire Doors Replacement Project

Further to Minute 82 (20 February 2023), the Cabinet Member for Community Leadership and Engagement presented a report on the proposed procurement arrangements for the replacement of fire doors and associated works in the Council's high-rise estate.

The Cabinet Member advised that the works would be carried out in phases via the BDMS/BDTP Housing Repairs and Associated Services Framework in accordance with Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and also confirmed that leaseholders would only be recharged a proportion of the works to communal doors and associated installation works, and would not be recharged in relation to the re-fitting of new front entrance doors.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree that the Council proceeds with the procurement of a contract for replacement fire doors and associated works in accordance with the strategy set out in the report; and
- (ii) Authorise the Strategic Director of My Place, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member(s), the Strategic Director, Finance and Investment and the Chief Legal Officer, and subject to endorsement by Procurement Board, to conduct the procurement and award and enter into the contract(s) and all other necessary or ancillary agreements to fully implement and effect the proposals.

28. Contract for Supported Living Services

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration introduced a report on the procurement of a new Supported Living Services contract effective from April 2024.

The Cabinet Member advised that the Council had a statutory duty to ensure that vulnerable adults had access to supported accommodation, enabling them to live as independent life as possible in a safe environment where they were supported to achieve and maintain their independence. The current Supported Living contract model was no longer considered fit-for-purpose, primarily as the block contract element had been found to be financially inefficient. The intention, therefore, was to procure via a maximum four-year Framework Agreement to attract a range of contractors able to provide a responsive service that could meet individual needs, without any guarantees of work.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree that the Council proceeds with the procurement of a maximum four-year framework contract for Supported Living Services in accordance with

the strategy set out in the report; and

- (ii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Children and Adults, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration and the Chief Legal Officer, to award and enter into the contract(s) for the framework agreement and all other necessary or ancillary agreements with the successful bidders to fully implement and effect the proposals.

29. Philip Gregory, Strategic Director, Finance and Investment

The Leader placed on record the Council's appreciation to Philip Gregory, Strategic Director, Finance and Investment, who was attending his last Council meeting before taking up a similar role in his hometown of Sheffield.

The Leader referred to the significant contribution that Philip had made since he joined the Council in late 2019 and extended the Council's very best wishes for the future.

30. Death of Lord Bob Kerslake

The Leader paid tribute to Lord Bob Kerslake, who sadly passed away on 1 July 2023 following a short battle with cancer.

Lord Kerslake had given eminent service to the local and national government sectors for over 40 years and was knighted for his services to local government in 2005 before receiving a crossbench peerage in 2015. Lord Kerslake had also been a prominent figure in Barking and Dagenham in recent years, having been appointed as Chair of the Council's regeneration and development company, Be First, on its inception in 2017 and, more recently, Chair of the Barking and Dagenham Trading Partnership.

The Leader asked those present to join him in a minute's applause in recognition of Lord Kerslake's commitment to public service and the high esteem in which he was held.