

MINUTES OF CABINET

Tuesday, 19 March 2024
(7:01 - 7:56 pm)

Present: Cllr Darren Rodwell (Chair), Cllr Dominic Twomey (Deputy Chair), Cllr Sade Bright, Cllr Cameron Geddes, Cllr Syed Ghani, Cllr Kashif Haroon, Cllr Jane Jones, Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe and Cllr Maureen Worby;

Apologies: Cllr Saima Ashraf and Cllr John Dulwich

95. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

96. Minutes (19 February 2024)

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2024 were confirmed as correct.

97. Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 (Period 10, January 2024) and Q3 Capital Programme Update

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core Services introduced the Council's revenue budget monitoring report for the 2023/24 financial year as of 31 January 2024 (period 10) and the quarter 3 Capital Programme update.

The Council's General Fund revised revenue budget for 2023/24 was £194.46m and the forecast outturn position at the end of January projected a net overspend of £6.016m after transfers to and from reserves, which represented a significant improvement of £3.32m on the position reported for period 9. The Cabinet Member commented on the main reasons behind the improved position and the key organisational risks which could still affect the end-of-year position, as well as the projected impact on reserves in order to achieve a balanced budget position at the year end.

Reflecting on the past year, the Cabinet Member remarked on the considerable work that had been undertaken to minimise the level of overspend, which had been projected as high as £14.579m in the period 4 report, and reiterated his call on the Government to properly fund the local government sector to protect social care and other essential services.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) showed a projected overspend of circa £5.396m for 2023/24, up from £5.005m at period 9, and it was noted that any end-of-year deficit would be met via a drawdown from the current HRA reserve of £18.4m.

The 2023/24 Capital Programme showed a project end-of-year spend of £361.832m against the revised budget of £339.042m.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Note the projected £6.016m revenue overspend forecast at Period 10 for the General Fund for the 2023/24 financial year, as set out in sections 2 and 3 and Appendix A of the report, and the net projected year end drawdown of £2.366m reserves to support the in-year position;
- (ii) Note the projected £5.396m revenue overspend forecast for the Housing Revenue Account, as set out in section 6 and Appendix A of the report;
- (iii) Note the projected returns for the Investment and Acquisition Strategy as set out in section 4 and Appendix A of the report;
- (iv) Note the movement in Reserve drawdown as indicated in section 5 of the report and that the Cabinet shall be asked to approve the drawdown of reserves to support any overspends at final outturn (post March 2024), subject to finalisation of the actual spend against budget; and
- (v) Note the Q3 Capital Monitoring update as set out in section 7 and Appendix B of the report.

98. Allocation of Strategic CIL for Uber Boat Thames Clipper Services

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development presented a report on an application from Barking Riverside Limited (BRL) for funding via the Council's Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) to support extended Thames Clipper Uber Boat services at Barking Riverside.

By Minute 51 (17 October 2023), the Cabinet had approved revised arrangements for the allocation of SCIL and other planning-related funding aimed at supporting the delivery of new infrastructure as part of the Council's growth agenda. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the application from BRL fully met that criteria and would extend the current peak-time only weekday and all-day weekend service to also provide an all-day weekday service. The extended service would provide an improved service for Borough residents, help to boost visitor numbers and enhance local business trading conditions, while the proposed three-year funding arrangement, which would be matched by BRL and other parties, would enable an all-day service at Barking Riverside to become commercially viable, without subsidy, going forward.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Support the proposal for £450,000 to be allocated over three years to part-fund extended services for Uber Boat by Thames Clipper (UBTC) services at Barking Riverside;
- (ii) Note the proposed draft letter of support to BRL setting out the in-principle allocation of the funding, conditional on remaining funding being found by BRL;
- (iii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth to take any steps necessary to ensure compliance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022; and

- (iv) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth, in consultation with the Head of Legal, to execute all agreements, contracts and other documents on behalf of the Council in order to implement the allocation of SCIL funding.

99. Procurement of 0-19 Integrated Healthy Child Programme Contract

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration introduced a report on the proposed procurement of a new integrated 0-19 Healthy Child Programme (HCP) service, to commence from 1 January 2025.

It was noted that the HCP brought together health, education and other main partners to deliver an effective programme of prevention and support for the Borough's children and young people. The main elements of the programme related to health visiting, school nursing and the national Child Measurement Programme and aligned with the Council's 'Best Chance in Life' priorities as well as other existing initiatives, facilities and programmes operating in the Borough.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree that the Council proceeds with the procurement of a contract for the provision of a 0-19 Healthy Child Programme (Health Visiting, School Nursing and National Child Weight Measurement Programme) in accordance with the strategy set out in the report; and
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Children and Adults, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration, the Strategic Director, Resources and the Head of Legal, to conduct the procurement and award and enter into the contract and all other necessary or ancillary agreements, including periods of extension, to fully implement and effect the proposals.

100. Procurement of Specialist Intervention Service (SIS) Family Contact Services

The Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Disabilities introduced a report on proposals to procure a new four-year Framework Agreement for the provision of Family Contact services, commencing 1 September 2024.

The Cabinet Member explained that the Council had a duty under section 34 of the Children Act 1989 to make arrangements for children in its care to have reasonable contact with their parents and 'other persons', as prescribed within the Act. The service was led by the Council's in-house Specialist Intervention Service (SIS) Family Time Family Contact Team who used a mixed model of in-house delivery supported by externally commissioned accredited Family Contact providers via a Framework Agreement. The current 'call off contracts' in place with providers would be extended until 31 August 2024 to provide sufficient time to complete the procurement of the new Framework.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree that the Council proceeds with the establishment of a four-year framework contract for the provision of SIS Family Contact Services and

invite providers to apply to be on the Framework, in accordance with the strategy set out in the report;

- (ii) Agree that the Council enters into two new 'call off contracts' under the current framework for a period of two years;
- (iii) Approve a new waiver under paragraph 35.5 (g) of the Council's Contract Rules (for below-threshold contracts), to extend contracts for three providers (on the preferred providers list) for the three-month period 1 June to 31 August 2024; and
- (iv) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Children and Adults, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Disabilities and the Head of Legal, to award and enter into the access agreement and all other ancillary call-off agreements upon conclusion of the procurement process as appropriate.

101. Woodward Road and 12 Thames Road - Approval of Disposals, Head Lease and Loan Facility Agreement

Further to Minute 90 (19 February 2024), the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development introduced a report on proposals to progress the disposal of a further 212 new homes built at the Woodward Road and 12 Thames Road redevelopment projects.

The Cabinet Member advised that, as with previous reports, the properties would be disposed of by way of long leases and associated loans to the Barking and Dagenham Reside Regeneration Ltd (Reside) or Barking and Dagenham Homes Ltd (BDHL) structure of companies following practical completion over the coming months.

The Cabinet Member also referred to the intention to apply a service charge to all new London Affordable Rent (LAR) properties and to existing Reside LAR properties (as they came up for renewal), following the decisions by Cabinet to apply a service charge to LAR properties at the Beam Park and Gascoigne East Phase 3B developments (Minutes 34 and 35, 19 September 2023 refer).

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Approve, in principle, the disposal of the New Build schemes below by the granting of long leases to the to the appropriate Reside or BDHL entity identified in the report;

Woodward Road

- Flat 1 - Flat 4, 1 Centenary Road, Dagenham, RM9 4DA
- Flat 1 - Flat 4, 2 Centenary Road, Dagenham, RM9 4DA
- 1, 3 - 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26 and 28 Centenary Road, Dagenham, RM9 4DA
- Flat 1 - Flat 19, 22 Centenary Road, Dagenham, RM9 4DA
- Flat 1 - Flat 11, 28 Centenary Road, Dagenham, RM9 4DA

12 Thames Road

- Flat 1 - 87 Woolmore Court, Thames Road
 - Flat 1 - 35 Blackaby Court, Crossness Road
 - Flat 1 - 24, Fewell Court, Crossness Road
- (ii) Approve, in principle, the indicative draft Heads of Terms for leases and loans for the Woodward Road and 12 Thames Road developments to the appropriate Reside or BDHL entity, as set out in section 2 of the report;
- (iii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Resources 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 provided that such action does not materially affect the approvals granted by Cabinet;
- (iv) Delegate authority to the Head of Legal, in consultation with the Strategic Director, Resources, to execute all agreements, contracts and other documents on behalf of the Council in order to implement the arrangements; and
- (v) Approve the application of a service charge to all new London Affordable Rent (LAR) properties and to existing Reside LAR properties as they came up for renewal.

102. Debt Management Performance 2023/24 (Quarter 3)

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core Services presented the latest debt management performance report covering the third quarter of the 2023/24 financial year.

The Cabinet Member referred to the main highlights within the report which showed that overall collection rates had increased by 7% on last year (equivalent to an additional £21.6m of income). The Cabinet Member stressed the importance of maximising collection of both in-year and older debts in order for the Council to continue to provide much needed services to the local community, whilst also acknowledging the difficulties that many faced as a consequence of the Government's mishandling of the economy which had led to the cost-of-living crisis.

Cabinet **resolved** to note the performance of the debt management function carried out by the Council's Collection service, including the improvements in collection in some areas and the challenges in others.

103. Direct Award of Social Care Case Management System Contract

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration introduced a report on proposals to directly award a contract for an initial five-year term, with an option to extend by a further two years, for the Liquid Logic IT system from System C.

The Cabinet Member advised that the Liquid Logic system was a key business application for both Adults and Children's Social Care with a reach extending into

other Council service areas and external agencies, such as Schools, NHS Trusts and the Police. The system was also used by neighbouring local authorities, thereby enabling smoother data sharing in order to protect vulnerable people, and in view of those synergies and the financial and resource implications associated with going out to full tender, the preferred option was to directly award a new contract to System C.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree that the Council proceeds with the direct award of a contract for an initial five-year term, with an option to extend by a further two years, for the Liquid Logic System from System C in accordance with the strategy set out in the report; and
- (ii) Authorise the Strategic Director, Children and Adults, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration, the Strategic Director, Resources and the Head of Legal, to award and enter into the contract(s) and all other necessary or ancillary agreements to fully implement and effect the proposals including any periods of extension.

104. Death of Councillor Steve Curran, former Leader of Hounslow Council

The Chair paid tribute to Councillor Steve Curran, former Leader of Hounslow Council, who sadly passed away on 18 March 2024 following a long illness.

The Chair spoke on his personal friendship with Mr Curran and extended the Council's condolences to Mr Curran's family and friends.

105. James Coulstock, Interim Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth

The Chair placed on record the Council's appreciation to James Coulstock, Interim Strategic Director, Inclusive Growth, who was attending his last meeting of the Cabinet before taking up an appointment at Swindon Council.

The Chair referred to the significant contribution that James had made during his time as Interim Strategic Director and in his previous role as Be First's Deputy Chief Planning Officer and extended the Council's very best wishes for the future. Several other Members also gave their own personal tributes to Mr Coulstock for his advice, dedication and support throughout his time in Barking and Dagenham

106. Lesley Burke, Leader's PA

The Chair also paid tribute to Lesley Burke, Personal Assistant to the Leader, who was leaving the Council later in the week and he extended the Council's very best wishes in her retirement.