

CABINET

Tuesday, 22 January 2013
(5:00 - 6:30 pm)

Present: Councillor R Gill (Deputy Chair in the Chair), Councillor J L Alexander, Councillor M A McCarthy, Councillor L A Reason, Councillor P T Waker, Councillor J R White and Councillor M M Worby

Also Present: Councillor S Ashraf, Councillor P Burgon, Councillor G Letchford, Councillor J E McDermott, Councillor J Ogungbose, Councillor A Salam and Councillor D Twomey

Apologies: Councillor L A Smith, Councillor H J Collins and Councillor C Geddes

78. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

79. Minutes (19 December 2012)

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2012 were confirmed as correct.

80. Budget Monitoring 2012/13 - April to November 2012

The Cabinet Member for Finance presented a report on the Council's revenue and capital budget position for the 2012/13 financial year as at 30 November 2012.

The General Fund was now projected to achieve an end of year under spend of £1.135m which would result in the General Fund balance increasing to £15.5m (which corrected figures that appeared in the summary section of the report). The Cabinet Member advised that, further to Minute 49 (13 November 2012), the level of risk associated with the Local Authority Error Rate had reduced as a result of the error rate being brought down to 0.40% from 0.46%.

With regard to Housing General Fund expenditure, the Corporate Director of Housing and Environment referred to the significant pressures arising from the Council's obligations to the homeless, particularly in respect of the costs of bed and breakfast accommodation. He advised that the number of placements in bed and breakfast accommodation had been reduced to approximately 100 from a previous high of almost 300 but the benefit cap on that type of accommodation, coupled with the proposed changes by Government to benefit rules, meant that the issue would continue to be closely monitored. In respect of the benefit rule changes, it was noted that several Councils, including Croydon, were taking part in a pilot to test the changes.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) continued to show a projected break-even position, although there were significant pressure areas within that overall position which were being mitigated through other means such as the investment of HRA surpluses. The Cabinet Member for Environment referred to the £138,000 pressure as a result to delays in the implementation of the Garage Strategy

approved by Cabinet on 22 May 2012 (Minute 4) and sought clarification of the arrangements for ensuring that income generation targets put forward as part of the annual budget process were achieved. The Deputy Chief Financial Officer referred to the schedule at Appendix B to the report relating to savings targets within General Fund estimates but it was noted that similar information relating to the HRA was not included. Officers were asked to prepare a detailed report for consideration by Cabinet Members on all income generation targets, to include the arrangements for ensuring that they were realistic and achievable in the first place as well as the ongoing monitoring.

The Capital Programme forecast reflected further slippage on the position reported at the last meeting, primarily due to delays in the School Places Programme.

Cabinet **agreed**:

- (i) To note the projected outturn position for 2012/13 of the Council's revenue budget at 30 November 2012, as detailed in paragraphs 2.3 to 2.11 and Appendix A of the report;
- (ii) To note the progress against the 2012/13 savings targets at 30 November 2012, as detailed in paragraph 2.12 and Appendix B of the report;
- (iii) To note the position for the HRA at 30 November 2012, as detailed in paragraph 2.13 and Appendix C of the report; and
- (iv) To note the projected outturn position for 2012/13 of the Council's capital budget at 30 November 2012, as detailed in paragraph 2.14 and Appendices D and E of the report.

81. ICT Strategy 2012 - 2017

The ICT and Information Governance Officer presented a report introducing a draft, five-year ICT Strategy which was underpinned by the following five design principles:

- Continue to implement channel shift to support service delivery that is "online by default" in order to achieve savings. This would mean that online delivery would be implemented wherever it was practical, affordable and appropriate.
- Ensure that appropriate access methods were in place for residents and service users who were digitally excluded, including mediated access to online services.
- Make effective use of the tools and systems that were already in place and ensure that staff had appropriate skills.
- Provide staff with appropriate tools to carry out their work.
- Make use of shared services, shared platforms and cloud computing whenever possible, including the use of standard products and processes when implementing new systems.

The ICT and Information Governance Officer explained that the draft Strategy was a strategic document and individual projects to be delivered under the umbrella of the Strategy would be progressed through the Council's Modernisation and

Improvement Programme Board (MIPB). The MIPB would have the responsibility for ensuring that there was an explicit link between service delivery to customers, ICT service costs and the impact of the ICT service on operational cost and effectiveness. Cabinet Members commented that they would nevertheless expect all strategies to contain, as a minimum, high-level financial information covering historical costs, current budget provision and projected costs for key projects expected to be delivered over the life of the strategy. Other issues that arose during the course of the discussions related to:

- a) The need for customers to be able to log in to the Council's website at a single point and undertake all related transactions, such as payments for Council services. In that respect, officers referred to the development of the 'My Account' facility and it was noted that the Corporate Management Team had recently endorsed proposals to extend that facility to services such as housing, benefits, parking, leisure and adult social care;
- b) The need to keep pace with trend changes and new technological developments in relation to customer interaction. Officers confirmed that there was a general commitment to ensuring that services were compatible with all devices used to access the internet, such as smartphones;
- c) New services being evaluated post-implementation to ascertain uptake levels, costs of implementation, value for money etc.. In that regard, officers were asked to present a report to Cabinet Members on the 'My Account' facility; and
- d) Future ICT equipment roll-outs to offer choice to suits individuals' needs and requirements, rather than a "one size fits all" approach. As an example of previous poor practice, the Cabinet Member for Environment referred to the roll-out of laptops and printers to Councillors several years ago while, on the positive side, Councillor McDermott referred to the potential benefits if iPads were to be made available to Councillors.

Cabinet **agreed** to reconsider the Strategy at its next meeting in the light of the additional financial and other information that was requested.

82. New Abbey Leisure Centre - Contract Award

Further to Minute 28 (23 August 2011), the Cabinet Member for Finance introduced a report on proposals to progress the development of the new leisure centre in Barking Town Centre.

The Cabinet Member outlined the work that had taken place to date which included the appointment of S&P Architects, who had also acted as design consultant on the Becontree Leisure Centre project, and the tendering of the construction contract for the new leisure centre via the Council's Construction Framework Agreement. The Divisional Director of Culture and Sport gave examples of the significant increase in membership and participation levels at the Becontree Leisure Centre since its opening in 2011 and confirmed that a similar level of uptake was anticipated at the new leisure centre. Councillor Ashraf asked whether the facilities and activities at the new centre would be better suited to individuals' cultural and religious backgrounds. The Divisional Director confirmed that those factors had been taken into account during the design phase of the

project and the staffing and sessional arrangements would also be more considerate to individuals' requirements. The Divisional Director undertook to continue to liaise with Councillor Ashraf on her concerns and to also liaise with Councillor McDermott regarding the Elderberries group.

With regard to the construction of the new leisure centre, officers confirmed that the tender had included a requirement for residents of the Borough to be employed on the construction project. The Cabinet Member for Health suggested that all large construction contracts let by the Council should, in future, require contractors to fund apprenticeships for local residents. The Cabinet Member for Health also commented on car parking in the area, as there would be a reduction in available spaces as a consequence of the new development and also because a number of previous developments in the area had not met required levels. The Divisional Director of Regeneration advised that the Council's Local Development Framework had been reviewed in the light of the shortfall in the area and he outlined several new opportunities that would help to meet demand in the area.

The Cabinet Member for Finance referred to the total budget projection of £12.98m, of which approximately £10.5m related to the construction costs. Officers agreed to provide Cabinet Members with the comparative information from the procurement exercise.

Cabinet agreed:

- (i) To the placing of an order in the sum of £10,493,937 (excluding public realm works) with Willmott Dixon Construction Limited to construct a leisure centre, as detailed in the report;
- (ii) To the placing of an order in the sum of £345,000 with Willmott Dixon Construction Limited to implement the public realm works surrounding the new leisure centre;
- (iii) That the total cost of preparing the site, building the leisure centre and equipping it (up to £12,980,000) be funded in accordance with the proposals set out in section 5 of the report;
- (iv) To continue the appointment of the existing Design Team and Project Manager through to the completion of the project, as set out in section 2 of the report;
- (v) To the design and development parameters for the leisure centre detailed in section 2 of the report;
- (vi) In principle, that the new centre be named 'Abbey Leisure Centre' and authorised the Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make the final decision on the matter;
- (vii) That officers seek to recover from the proposed purchaser the costs associated with maintaining and securing the Goresbrook Leisure Centre site from 1 January 2013 until its disposal, which otherwise would be met from the capital receipt from the sale of that site; and

- (viii) That the Abbey Sports Centre site be marketed with immediate effect with a view to completing disposal on or around the opening of the new leisure centre and to authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance and Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to agree terms and enter into all necessary legal documentation regarding the disposal.

83. Disposal of Former Mayesbrook Nursing Home, Bevan Avenue, Barking

The Cabinet Member for Finance presented a report on proposals to market the former Mayesbrook Nursing Home site for disposal.

The Cabinet Member advised that the site was no longer required for its former purposes and had been identified as suitable for new housing. The sale of the site would enable the Council to make efficiency savings through the cessation of the costs associated with owning the property and would enable transformation of a site that presently featured a derelict building into a residential development, providing a mixture of dwelling types.

The Cabinet Member outlined the three options on which offers would be invited and confirmed that Ward Councillors would continue to be consulted on the project.

Cabinet **agreed**:

- (i) The disposal of the Council's freehold interest in the former Mayesbrook Nursing Home site shown edged red on the plan at Appendix 1 to the report;
- (ii) To authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Divisional Director of Finance and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to negotiate terms for disposal of the freehold interest in the property, for either a capital receipt at the maximum price that can reasonably be negotiated (subject to the proposed sale being at open market value) or the provision of housing units to the Council, with no capital receipt, in exchange for the property; and
- (iii) That the decision to dispose of the property be the subject of a further report to the Cabinet in the light of the offers received.

84. Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule

Further to Minute 114 (14 February 2012), the Cabinet Member for Regeneration reported on the latest phase of the process to implement a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which would largely take over from Section 106 planning agreements as the primary means of obtaining a contribution from developers towards new infrastructure requirements as a consequence of new developments.

The Cabinet Member referred to the changes that had been made in the light of responses to the initial, preliminary draft consultation process and advised that the next stage of the statutory process would involve consultation on the draft CIL and then submission for independent examination.

Cabinet **agreed to recommend the Assembly** to approve the Barking and Dagenham Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule for consultation and submission for examination.

85. Proposed Amalgamation of Rush Green Infant and Junior Schools

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services introduced a report on the proposed amalgamation of Rush Green Infant and Junior Schools to form a Primary School effective from the next school term.

The Cabinet Member referred to the key benefits of amalgamation and the Corporate Director of Children's Services confirmed that the two Governing Bodies had voted in favour of the amalgamation the previous evening.

Cabinet **agreed** the amalgamation of Rush Green Infant and Junior Schools to create an all-through Primary School with effect from 1 April 2013, via the closure of the existing Infant School and expansion of the premises and age range of the existing Junior School.

86. Contract for Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Uniform

The Cabinet Member for Finance presented a report on proposals to procure a contract for the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) and uniform, led by the Council on behalf of East London Solutions.

The Cabinet Member explained that the contract would assist the Council in meeting its commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of employees and was expected to achieve cost efficiencies through economies of scale.

Cabinet **agreed**:

- (i) The procurement of a three-year Term Contract for supply of PPE and Uniform commencing 1 May 2013, with the option of a one-year extension to 30 April 2017 subject to satisfactory performance of the appointed contractor, on the terms detailed in the report; and
- (ii) That a further report be presented on the outcome of the procurement exercise in order for the Cabinet to award the contract.

87. Contract for Provision of Taxi Services for Children with Special Educational and Complex Needs

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services introduced a report seeking approval to procure a new contract to provide taxi services to children with special educational and complex needs.

The Cabinet Member advised that it was originally intended to participate in a joint borough arrangement with the Newham Council, but that option had not proved successful. As a consequence, the existing contract was extended to 30 April 2013 to enable the proposed procurement to be completed.

Cabinet **agreed**:

- (i) The procurement of a four-year Framework Agreement for the provision of taxi services for children with special educational and complex needs from 1 May 2013, as detailed in the report; and
- (ii) That a further report be presented on the outcome of the procurement exercise in order for the Cabinet to appoint the successful tenderer(s) to the Framework Agreement.

88. Contract for Provision of Community Alcohol Services

The Cabinet Member for Crime, Justice and Communities presented a report on the proposed re-tendering of the Community Alcohol Services contract.

The Cabinet Member referred to the key achievements of the service, which included a 136% increase in the amount of people accessing alcohol treatment. It was noted that a draft Alcohol Strategy would be presented to the next meeting of the Cabinet, reflecting the Council's strong approach to tackling alcohol-related crime and disorder in the Borough.

Cabinet agreed:

- (i) The procurement of a three-year contract for the provision of Community Alcohol Services to a maximum value of £2,233,085 commencing 1 June 2013, with an option to extend for a further period of up to two years dependent upon satisfactory performance by the appointed provider and availability of funding, on the terms detailed in the report; and
- (ii) That the Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Crime, Justice and Communities, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Divisional Director of Finance, be authorised to award the contract on conclusion of the procurement process.