

# MINUTES OF CABINET

Tuesday, 22 October 2013  
(5:00 - 5:10 pm)

**Present:** Councillor L A Smith (Chair), Councillor R Gill (Deputy Chair), Councillor J L Alexander, Councillor C Geddes, Councillor L A Reason, Councillor P T Waker, Councillor J R White and Councillor M M Worby

**Also Present:** Councillor J E McDermott

**Apologies:** Councillor H J Collins

## 42. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

## 43. Minutes (24 September 2013)

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2013 were confirmed as correct.

## 44. Budget Monitoring 2013/14 - April to August 2013 (Month 5)

The Cabinet Member for Finance presented a report on the Council's capital and revenue position for the 2013/14 financial year, as at 31 August 2013.

The General Fund continued to show a projected end of year surplus of £7.0m against the total approved budget of £178.3m, exceeding the planned surplus of £5.2m, while the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) continued to show a projected break-even position. The Capital Programme showed a projected spend of £139.2m against the total revised budget of £142.1m.

The Cabinet Member also referred to a number of proposed adjustments to budgets in relation to Locality Services, the new Barking Leisure Centre site, re-profiling of Housing General Fund budgets, the staff pay award and additional funding for highways improvement works. In respect of the latter, the Cabinet Member advised that he wished to withdraw the proposal pending further consideration of the business case.

**Cabinet resolved:**

- (i) To note the projected outturn position of the Council's General Fund revenue budget at 31 August 2013, as detailed in paragraphs 2.3 to 2.9 and Appendix A of the report;
- (ii) To note the progress against the 2013/14 savings targets at 31 August 2013, as detailed in paragraph 2.10 and Appendix B of the report;
- (iii) To note the position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) at 31 August 2013, as detailed in paragraph 2.11 and Appendix C of the report;

- (iv) To approve a revenue budget increase of £0.689m within the HRA in respect of Locality Services, as detailed in paragraph 2.11 of the report;
- (v) To note the projected outturn position of the Council's Capital Programme at 31 August 2013, as detailed in paragraph 2.12 and Appendix D of the report;
- (vi) To approve the use of £250,000 Section 106 monies to meet the cost of archaeological works at the Barking Leisure Centre site, as detailed in paragraph 2.12 of the report;
- (vii) To approve the re-profiling of Housing General Fund budgets as detailed in Appendix E of the report; and
- (viii) To approve the transfer from Central Expenses to Council directorates of the £1m provision for the 1% increase in staff pay, as detailed in paragraph 2.9 of the report.

#### **45. Hate Crime Strategy and Delivery Plan 2013 to 2016**

The Cabinet Member for Crime, Justice and Communities presented the Barking and Dagenham Community Safety Partnership's Hate Crime Strategy and Delivery Plan 2013 to 2016.

The Cabinet Member advised that the Strategy's overall vision was to "ensure that the Community Safety Partnership has an effective, co-ordinated community response to hate crime" and this was underpinned by three key objectives aimed at preventing hate crimes, increasing the reporting of hate crimes and improving the operational response to hate crime.

**Cabinet resolved:**

- (i) To adopt the Community Safety Partnership's Hate Crime Strategy and Delivery Plan 2013 to 2016, as attached to the report, and agree to its implementation; and
- (ii) To note that the other Crime and Disorder Act responsible authorities have been asked to adopt the Strategy and agree its implementation.

#### **46. Growth Strategy 2013 to 2023**

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration introduced the Growth Strategy for the Borough covering the period 2013 to 2023, which presented the vision, direction and deliverables for regeneration in the Borough over that period of time, as well as specific deliverables for the next three years.

Cabinet **resolved** to approve the Barking and Dagenham Growth Strategy as appended to the report.

#### **47. Transport Projects to Deliver Growth**

Further to Minute 46 above, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration presented a

report on a number of specific transport projects that had been identified as being crucial to the delivery of the Council's regeneration plans for the London Riverside area which encompassed Barking Town Centre, Barking Riverside and the South Dagenham areas of Beam Park, Chequers Corner and Dagenham Dock.

The Cabinet Member explained that the projects would be embodied in the Council's emerging Local Plan and the Growth Strategy 2013-2023 and he outlined a number of actions that the Council should take to support the delivery of the projects.

**Cabinet resolved:**

- (i) To support and lobby for the following key transport projects to assist the regeneration of London Riverside and to improve transport conditions in the Borough:
  - A13 improvements
  - Barking to Stratford direct rail link
  - Gallions Reach road crossing and Silvertown Crossing
  - London Overground extension
  - Barking Station improvements
  - East London Transit
- (ii) To approve the actions to support the delivery of the above transport projects, as detailed in paragraph 2.53 of the report.

#### **48. Becontree Heath Master Plan and Land Sales**

Further to Minute 144 (24 April 2012), the Cabinet Member for Regeneration presented a report on the comprehensive master plan that had been developed for the regeneration of the Becontree Heath area.

The Cabinet Member referred to the proposals for the nine specific sites that had been identified for redevelopment / improvement in the area and the steps required to deliver each project. These included the sale of the Becontree Leisure Centre car park and a vacant strip of Council-owned land to Wm Morrison Supermarkets plc (known as "Morrisons") to facilitate the expansion of the supermarket and options for the former Ship and Anchor Public House site, the details of which were set out in a private and confidential appendix to the report.

**Cabinet resolved:**

- (i) To agree the Becontree Heath master plan proposals as set out in the report, which include the potential sites identified for redevelopment, the Merry Fiddlers Public Realm improvements, the procurement of a Developer Partner for Althorne Way and other potential sites and the commencement of enveloping works to Stour Road and Gosfield Road housing blocks;
- (ii) To authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the Chief Finance Officer and the Cabinet Member for Finance, to agree the terms of the sale to Morrisons of the Becontree

Leisure Centre car park and a vacant strip of land, shown edged purple and green respectively on the map at Appendix B to the report, and to enter into all necessary agreements;

- (iii) To authorise officers to begin negotiations with the owners of the former Ship and Anchor Public House site, with the option of acquiring the privately owned land and marketing the site for a commercial use;
- (iv) To agree that Becontree Heath be included as a potential pilot project under the proposed borough-wide Energy Companies Obligation (ECO) retrofitting scheme partnership with British Gas, which is to be the subject of a detailed report to the next meeting of Cabinet on 19 November 2013;
- (v) To note that a further report will be presented to Cabinet in due course to seek the necessary approvals, including the allocation of funding for the redevelopment works, to enable the delivery of the Becontree Heath master plan proposals; and
- (vi) To agree that consultation be carried out with local residents and businesses on the proposals.

#### **49. Parking Modernisation Programme**

The Cabinet Member for Crime, Justice and Communities presented a report which gave an update on the implementation of phase 1 of the Parking Modernisation programme as well as proposals to spend a further £1.18m over the next three years to implement the final phases of the programme and new parking schemes across the Borough.

Cabinet **resolved**:

- (i) To approve a three-year capital investment programme for 2013/14 - 2015/16 totalling £1.18m to be funded through borrowing, the main elements of the programme being:
  - (a) £0.51m for the development and implementation of parking schemes, as outlined in paragraph 3.4 of the report.
  - (b) £0.67m for the final phases of the Parking Modernisation Programme, as outlined in paragraph 4.7 of the report.
- (ii) To approve the implementation of cashless payment methods as set out in the report, subject to the Corporate Director of Housing and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Crime, Justice and Communities, being authorised to vary the implementation arrangements in response to comments received from the draft Traffic Order public consultation.

#### **50. Business Rates Pooling Opportunity**

The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced a report on the proposal to make an application to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for Barking and Dagenham, Basildon, Havering and Thurrock Councils to enter into a business rates pool.

The Cabinet Member explained that pooling arrangements between ‘top-up’ authorities and ‘tariff’ authorities could generate significant financial benefits and a recent review concluded that a pool between the four authorities could generate an additional £13.2m over the four year period 2014/15 to 2017/18. Thurrock Council had been nominated as Lead Authority for the pool and a Memorandum of Understanding had been drafted, as part of the DCLG’s application criteria, which contained provisions to ensure that the additional funding generated via the pool was shared appropriately and that none of the participating authorities would be worse off than if they were outside the pool.

The Cabinet congratulated all those involved in the project and asked officers to ensure that the project received appropriate publicity.

**Cabinet resolved:**

- (i) To approve the creation of a business rates pool with the London Borough of Havering, Thurrock Council and Basildon District Council from 1 April 2014;
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, to agree the operational details of the pooling arrangements with the participating councils; and
- (iii) To authorise the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to make any amendments to the draft Memorandum of Understanding, attached at Appendix A to the report, as may be required by the Secretary of State, and to enter into the final Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the Council.

## **51. Proposal to Regularise Property Leasing Arrangements**

The Cabinet Member for Finance presented a report on proposals to formalise and regularise property leasing arrangements to provide a transparent and consistent approach to the leasing of Council property assets.

The Cabinet Member advised that a new policy would apply to all Council property leasing arrangements, except for those associated with Community Asset Transfers driven by the Council in respect of community centres and future Transfer of Assets or Services as part of the Community Right to Bid or the Community Right to Challenge elements of the Localism Act 2011. The policy would be based on the principle of full market rent but with a mechanism for third parties to apply for financial support towards rent that would be linked to the delivery of corporate and departmental objectives. Although the detail of the policy was still to be determined, the Cabinet Member suggested that funding support arrangements would be on a three-year basis and subject to ongoing monitoring and review.

**Cabinet resolved:**

- (i) To agree that future leases with third parties in respect of Council property assets be at a market rent, with rent subsidy levels considered through the submission of a business case; and

- (ii) To authorise the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Finance and Crime, Justice and Communities, to agree the formal policy and scoring mechanism, linked to the delivery of Council priorities, by which rent subsidy levels shall be determined.

**52. Sale of Footpath Land to Facilitate the Former Barking Magistrates Court Development**

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration presented a report on the proposed sale of footpath land to facilitate the redevelopment of the former Barking Magistrates Court in Barking Town Centre.

Cabinet **resolved** to approve the freehold sale of the area of footpath land adjacent to the former Barking Magistrates Court, shown hatched on the plan at Appendix 1 to the report, to Chrisfys Properties on the terms set out in the report.

**53. Award of Contract for the Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Uniform**

Further to Minute 86 (22 January 2013), the Cabinet Member for Finance presented a report on the outcome of the procurement of a contract for the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) and uniform.

Cabinet **resolved**:

- (i) To award the three-year Term Contract for the Provision of Personal Protective Equipment and Uniform (Lots, 1, 2 and 3) to Rexel UK Limited (trading as Parker Merchanting) with effect from 1 August 2013, with the option of a one-year extension subject to satisfactory performance, on the terms set out in the report; and
- (ii) Authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to enter into and execute the contract with Rexel UK Limited.