

Minutes of Cabinet

6 November 2019

Present:

Councillor I.T.E. Harvey, Leader and Council Policy co-ordination
Councillor A.C. Harman, Deputy Leader and Finance
Councillor M.M. Attewell, Community Wellbeing and Housing
Councillor R.O. Barratt, Environment and Compliance
Councillor J.R. Boughtflower, Corporate Management
Councillor O. Rybinski, Economic Development, Customer Service, Estates
and Transport

Councillors in attendance:

Councillor I.J. Beardsmore – Special Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning
Councillor C. Bateson
Councillor I.J. Beardsmore
Councillor L. E. Nichols

2644 Minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 25 September 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

2645 Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

2646 Leader's announcements

The following are the latest service updates from various Council departments.

The Council is consulting on a new Local Plan for the Borough which will set out how much development we need for the next 15 years and where it should go. Residents are being asked for their views on the proposed draft policies and possible development sites set out by the Council and have until 7 January 2020 to respond. The consultation is being promoted on the Council's website, on social media, in the Bulletin magazine, via the press, on the notice boards and in libraries.

The hard work and achievements of local businesses was celebrated at the Spelthorne Means Business Awards dinner at Shepperton Studios on 17 October. Awards were presented in twelve categories from a short-list of finalists and the accolade of 'best business in Spelthorne' was given to Quality Fruit Veg and Flowers from Shepperton.

The Council has announced the purchase of the Oast House in Staines-upon-Thames. Comprising of a historic Grade II listed building and car park, the

property sits adjacent to Staines Railway Station with fast links to London Waterloo. The purchase represents another significant step in the Council's wider plan to rejuvenate Staines-upon-Thames.

The Council has announced that the multi-storey car park in Ashford will continue to be free to use until the beginning of next year following the disruption caused by development work at the former Brooklands College site.

The Council has protected Staines Park for current and future generations to enjoy by signing a 'Deed of Dedication' with Fields in Trust, an independent charity which champions the country's parks and green spaces. A grant of £15,000 has been received from the London Marathon Charitable Trust for the creation of a fitness trail in the park plus an additional £5,000 from Fields in Trust for other improvements.

A planning application has been approved to build a new emergency accommodation facility in Ashford on the site of the former Harper House. The new facility will provide significantly improved facilities for up to 20 local families. The target for completion is early 2021.

Meadhurst Primary School won this year's Spelthorne schools quiz in a close contest which tested the contestants' knowledge on everything from politics to Harry Potter. Runners-up were Staines Preparatory School in 2nd place and Riverbridge Primary School in 3rd place.

Leisure Services hosted four creative workshops during the October school holidays to give young people a flavour of the skills and techniques used in the creative industries. The full-day workshops were run by industry professionals and subsidised by Better Neighbourhood grants from Cllr Colin Barnard, Cllr Nichola Cornes, Cllr Susan Doran, Cllr Vivienne Leighton and Cllr Robin Sider BEM.

The Council has appealed for information following the vandalism of the 'silent soldier' in Memorial Gardens in Staines-upon-Thames.

2647 A Masterplan for Staines - Key Decision

Cabinet considered a report on a proposal for a Staines-upon-Thames Masterplan.

Proceeding with a Masterplan brings a number of advantages, as set out in Paragraph 2.4 of the report, including setting out an ambitious and deliverable overall vision for the transformation and regeneration of the whole town.

Alternative options considered, and rejected, by Cabinet:

- Do nothing and continue with ad-hoc decision making
- Deliver masterplan using in-house resource

Resolved to:

1. agree to go out to tender for a Staines-upon-Thames Masterplan; and

2. agree that the Deputy Chief Executive (Finance), in consultation with the Leader, be given delegated authority to enter into a contract to appoint the external advisors.

Reasons for Decision

The production of a Masterplan for Staines-upon-Thames will help shape and develop the town alongside the new Local Plan which is being reviewed, and which will be adopted in 2021.

It will set a clear vision and strategy for the transformation and regeneration of the centre of the town, focusing on deliverable outcomes and policies in an holistic way.

It will set out our expectations of developers, investors and the local community and will be rooted in commercial reality.

2648 Council Tax Exemption for Young People Leaving Care

Cabinet considered a report on a proposal to provide a council tax exemption to care leavers living in independent accommodation from 18 up until the age of 25.

Alternative options considered, and rejected, by the Cabinet:

- A variance on the scheme could be proposed *i.e.* a different level of discount, or for a shorter time.
- Do nothing

Resolved:

1. that Care Leavers living in independent accommodation be exempt from Council Tax until the age of 25 from April 2020; and
2. to note that from January 2020 Everyone Active, who operate Spelthorne and Sunbury Leisure Centres, will provide free swimming for children in care and care leavers up to age of 25

Reason for Decision

Care leavers who are living independently for the first time find managing their own finances extremely challenging, due to issues such as limited family support. This can mean that care leavers may fall into debt and financial difficulty.

2649 Public Space Protection Orders - Unauthorised Mooring

Cabinet received a report on the responses to consultation on unauthorised Mooring and a proposed Public Space Protection Order (PSPO).

Spelthorne, Elmbridge and Runnymede Borough Councils are considering options along a specified area of the River Thames due to the unreasonable and persistent nature of mooring without consent, which is having a detrimental effect on those living in the locality.

Resolved to:

1. note the Consultation responses; and
2. agree that the results of the initial stakeholder consultation are considered with Elmbridge BC and Runnymede BC to propose next steps and thereafter to report back to Cabinet.

Reasons for Decision

To engage with the community on a proposed change to enforcement on the River Thames.

To work in partnership with other councils to achieve a consistent approach to mooring enforcement in this area.

2650 Decision making in respect of Council property and the role of the Property and Investment Committee

Cabinet considered a report on a proposal to set up a Property and Investment Committee as a Cabinet Sub-Committee.

The existing process of decision making has been appropriate and sufficient for many years, but due to dramatic changes in the Council's property portfolio over the last few years it is now apparent that it is no longer 'fit for purpose'. Cabinet considered how decision making is structured in the future to ensure that the Council can make fully informed and transparent decisions but at a speed that is acceptable within a fast moving and commercial environment.

Alternative options considered, and rejected, by the Cabinet:

- Leave arrangements as they are

Resolved to approve the set up and Terms of Reference of the Property and Investment Committee as a Cabinet Sub-Committee.

Reason for Decision

To update and streamline the decision making process for dealing with asset transactions whilst providing a clear audit trail for decisions

2651 Urgent Action

Cabinet noted the urgent action taken on 8 October 2019 by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, to agree a letting within the Porter Building, Slough. The matter, which was not a Key Decision was considered as urgent action because the proposed tenant required completion of the letting before the Cabinet was next due to meet.

2652 Urgent items

The Leader welcomed Councillor Ian Beardsmore to the Cabinet as the special portfolio holder for Strategic Planning. Councillor Beardsmore commented on the Local Plan consultation which had opened on 5 November

and how the housing requirement policy set by government would impact the Borough. He provided feedback on a meeting that he and the Leader had attended with Housing ministers in an attempt to reduce the impact on Spelthorne of what the government was asking the Council to deliver.

2653 Exempt Business

Resolved to move the exclusion of the Press and Public for the following items in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 and by the Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006.

2654 Exempt report: Redevelopment Costs for Harper House - Key Decision

(Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))

Cabinet considered an exempt report seeking approval of the costs for the redevelopment of Harper House.

A revised capital programme provision and an increased net financing cost was required as a result of the redesign of Harper House following feedback from Homes England.

Alternative options considered, and rejected, by the Cabinet:

- Delay works
- Do nothing

Resolved to:

1. recommend to Council the approval of a supplementary estimate of increase in the existing capital programme provision of £400k for the demolition and rebuild of Harper House, for the reasons set out in the report, and in line with the Order of Costs Estimate in Appendix 1;
2. authorise the Chief Financial Officer to make prudent financing arrangements for the project;
3. authorise the Head of Corporate Governance to enter into any legal documentation necessary to implement this construction project, including any legal agreements required in order to receive grant funding from Homes England; and
4. authorise the Portfolio Holder for Community Wellbeing and Group Head for Regeneration and Growth to authorise the appointment of a suitable contractor to undertake these works.

Reasons for Decision:

To take advantage of a time-limited grant funding programme.

To improve the quality and quantum of accommodation within the Borough for vulnerable homeless households.

To align Spelthorne Borough Council with the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

**2655 Exempt report: Procurement of provider of housing management and resident support services at Harper House
(Paragraph 2 – Information relating to any individual)**

Cabinet considered an exempt report on the procurement of a provider of housing management and resident support services at Harper House.

Alternative options considered, and rejected, by the Cabinet:

- Recruit internally to provide a housing management and resident support service in-house
- do nothing and manage Harper House on existing resources available to Housing

Resolved to:

1. note the benefits of procuring a managed service provider to provide a housing management and resident support service at the rebuild Harper House;
2. authorise the Group Head for Community Wellbeing to determine the provider to be appointed, in consultation with the Corporate Procurement Manager, the Portfolio Holder for Community Wellbeing & Housing and the Chief Financial Officer; and
3. authorise the Head of Corporate Governance to enter into any legal documentation necessary to appoint the new provider.

Reason for Decision

To allow sufficient time to appoint the provider up to six months prior to the anticipated practical completion of the rebuilds, so as to be party to key decisions to be made on the furniture, fixtures and fittings, as well as the operational logistics of running the accommodation.

NOTES:-

- (1) ***Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are reminded that under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16, the “call-in” procedure shall not apply to recommendations the Cabinet makes to the Council. The matters on which recommendations have been made to the Council, if any, are identified with an asterisk [*] in the above Minutes.***
- (2) ***Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are entitled to call in decisions taken by the Cabinet for scrutiny before they are***

implemented, other than any recommendations covered under (1) above.

- (3) Within five working days of the date on which a decision of the Cabinet or a Cabinet Member is published, not less than three members [one of whom must be the Chairman] of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are able to "call in" a decision;***
- (4) To avoid delay in considering an item "called in", an extraordinary meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be convened within seven days of a "call in" being received if an ordinary meeting is not scheduled in that period;***
- (5) When calling in a Cabinet decision for review the members doing so should in their notice of "call in":-***
 - Outline their reasons for requiring a review;***
 - Indicate any further information they consider the Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to have before it in order to conduct a review in addition to the written report made by officers to the Cabinet;***
 - Indicate whether, where the decision was taken collectively by the Cabinet, they wish the Leader or his nominee (who should normally be the Cabinet Member) or where the decision was taken by a Cabinet Member, the member of the Cabinet making the decision, to attend the committee meeting; and***
 - Indicate whether the officer making the report to the Cabinet or the Cabinet Member taking the decision or his/her representative should attend the meeting.***
- (6) The deadline of five working days for "call in" by Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the above decisions by the Cabinet is the close of business on 14 November 2019.***