

Report from the Leader of the Council on the work of the Cabinet

Meetings held in September 2019

This is my report as the Leader of the Council on the work of the Cabinet. It is an overview of the main business considered by the Cabinet at its two extraordinary meetings held on 11 September and ordinary meeting of 25 September 2019. At the latter meeting, we also considered reports on a proposed new extension at Fordbridge day centre, the appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel member and an exempt report on investment acquisition X. These all included recommendations to Council and are therefore dealt with earlier on this agenda.

Extraordinary Cabinets – 11 September 2019

- 1. Heathrow - Response to Airport Expansion Consultation - Key Decision**
- 1.1 At our first extraordinary meeting on this date, we considered the recommendation from the extraordinary Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 3 September, a petition from Stanwell Green Lungs and a report including detailed responses to Heathrow's airport expansion proposals and key issues and benefits.
- 1.2 We agreed not to take the action the petition requested for reasons provided at the meeting and stated in full in the minutes of the meeting.
- 1.3 As the borough which is probably most heavily impacted by the proposed expanded airport, the Council needs to ensure it protects the quality of life of its residents, and makes Heathrow Airport Limited fully aware of the Council's requirements for airport expansion.
- 1.4 We agreed that we can only re-affirm the Council's support for a third runway and appropriate and proportionate expansion, subject to:
 - a) endorsing the 16 requirements as recommended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which are set out in full in the minutes of the meeting;
 - b) expressly reiterating our demands that our impacted communities be properly compensated via the Wider Property Offer Zone scheme; and
 - c) seeking to further explore the Heathrow West proposal and to ascertain if this is a viable proposition.
- 1.5 We also agreed the covering letter and detailed responses as part of our consultation submission to Heathrow.

2. Exempt report – Investment Acquisition W

- 2.1 At our second extraordinary meeting on 11 September, we considered an urgent exempt report on an opportunity to acquire a strategic asset with a steady income stream in the short term and the opportunity to generate greater income streams for the Council in the future.
- 2.2 We agreed to:
 1. Approve the acquisition of the investment asset identified as W;
 2. Formally agree the offer submitted, and authorise the Chief Executive to undertake any necessary subsequent negotiations (including a further bid if required) and complete the acquisition of the asset (in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Finance);
 3. Authorise the Chief Finance Officer to decide (i) the most financially advantageous funding arrangements for the purchase, (ii) the most tax efficient method of holding the asset, and overall to ensure the acquisition is prudentially affordable;
 4. Authorise the Head of Corporate Governance to enter into any legal documentation necessary to acquire the asset;
 5. Exempt Contract Standing Orders in respect of our advisors.

Cabinet – 25 September 2019

1. Recommendations from the Local Plan Working Party

- 1.1 We considered the recommendations from the Local Plan Working Party on Local Plan consultation documents and noted there would be further opportunities to amend and adjust the documents as work on the Local Plan progressed.
- 1.2 We agreed:
 1. the Consultation Strategy, with minor amendments to be delegated to the Strategic Planning Manager and changes of any significance to be referred to the Working Party for agreement;
 2. the general content and scope of the draft policies to be published for consultation, subject to the final wording of the draft policies to be agreed by the Working Party prior to consultation;
 3. the draft allocations to be published for consultation, subject to inclusion of the changes agreed to at the supplementary meeting and final wording to be agreed by the Working Party prior to consultation; and
 4. the evidence base documents be published to support the consultation.

2. Financial Monitoring Reports

- 2.1 We noted the capital and revenue monitoring reports on expenditure for the period from April to June 2019.
- 2.2 Overall the projected outturn position for the capital programme was an underspend of £35.3m, primarily due to slippage on the following development works:
- Spelthorne Leisure Centre
 - Thameside House
 - West Wing
 - Whitehouse Hostel
 - Ashford Hospital
- 2.3 The underspend would be carried forward to fund the future works.
- 2.4 Overall the projected outturn position for the revenue budget was an underspend of £2.766m, primarily due to the following areas:
- Reduced revenue impact (borrowing costs) as a result of slipped capital development schemes £1.5m
 - Slippage on the ring-fenced Economic Development schemes £0.7m
 - Business Rates refund £0.4m
- 2.5 The first two items above would be carried forward to be spent in future years.
- 2.6 The balance on the projected outturn was made up of various smaller over/underspends which were set out in the report.

Councillor Ian Harvey
Leader of the Council

24 October 2019