

Minutes of Extraordinary Cabinet

22 July 2020

Present:

Councillor J.R. Boughtflower, Leader
Councillor J. McIlroy, Deputy Leader
Councillor M.M. Attewell, Portfolio Holder for Community Wellbeing and
Housing
Councillor R.O. Barratt, Portfolio Holder for Compliance, Waste and Risk
Councillor S. Buttar, Portfolio Holder for Finance
Councillor R. Chandler, Portfolio Holder for Leisure Services and New Leisure
Centre Development
Councillor A.J. Mitchell, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic
Development
Councillor R.J. Noble, Portfolio Holder for Communications and Corporate
Management

Councillors in attendance:

Councillor C. Bateson, A. Brar, R.D. Dunn, S.A. Dunn, K.M. Grant, H. Harvey,
I.T.E. Harvey, D. Saliagopoulos, R.A. Smith-Ainsley, B.B. Spoor and
R.W. Sider BEM.

2730 Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

2731 Recommendation from Licensing Committee

An amendment to the Business and Planning Bill which was given Royal Assent, on this date, provided for Pavement Licensing to be a non-executive function. Therefore the Licensing Committee had the authority to agree the Policy and no longer needed to recommend the Policy to Cabinet for approval.

This item was therefore withdrawn from the agenda.

2732 Exempt Business

Resolved to move the exclusion of the Press and Public for the following item 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.

2733 Exempt report - Re-opening of Spelthorne Leisure Centres - request for funding - Key Decision

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

The Cabinet considered an exempt report on a request for funding to enable the re-opening of Spelthorne Leisure Centres.

The Cabinet noted that the Council's two leisure centres in Sunbury-on-Thames and Staines-upon-Thames play a very important role in supporting the health and wellbeing of many of the borough's residents. Both centres were popular with users and catered for a wide range of needs.

Sports and Leisure Management Limited (SLM), one of the biggest leisure centre operators in the UK, had a contract with the Council to operate these two sites. The exempt report outlined some of the background leading up to a request from SLM for financial assistance from Spelthorne.

Following extensive discussions with SLM on the level of support needed to reopen the Council's Leisure Centres from 25 July, and analysis of their forecast figures, Council officers had formulated all the options available in the report before Cabinet.

Alternative options considered and rejected by the Cabinet:

- Provide no financial support to SLM and enforce the requirements of the contract
- Agree to forgo the monthly Management Fee payable to the Council under the current contract for a specified period of time (for example 3, 4, 6 or 9 months)
- Agree to provide additional funding to open just one leisure centre
- Agree to provide additional funding to keep both leisure centres open
- Agree to provide SLM with a loan to cover the costs of opening both LCs
- Not to accept any of the above options and undertake further negotiations with SLM to seek an alternative agreement

Resolved to:

1. note the contents of the report;
2. approve the proposed financial support package with Sports and Leisure Management Ltd. as outlined in section 2.10 of the report, to enable the reopening of the Council's Leisure Centres from 1 August 2020; and
3. authorise the Joint Group Head for Community Wellbeing, and the Group Head of Corporate Governance to finalise any necessary documentation.

Reason for Decision

Sports and Leisure Management have indicated that without financial support from the Council they will not be able to reopen the leisure centres and that they may have to remain closed indefinitely due to the limitations placed on them by the Government's guidance to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

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