

Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 9 September 2015 at 7.00 pm

The deadline for call-in is Friday 18 September at 5.00pm

Present: Councillors John Kent (Chair), Barbara Rice (Vice-Chair), Oliver Gerrish, Victoria Holloway, Bukky Okunade, Jane Potheary, Gerard Rice, Richard Speight (from 7.30 pm) and Lynn Worrall

In attendance: David Bull, Interim Chief Executive & Director of Planning and Transportation
Steve Cox, Assistant Chief Executive
Carmel Littleton, Director of Children's Services
Roger Harris, Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning
Kathryn Adedeji, Head of Housing - Investment and Development
Sean Clark, Head of Corporate Finance
Mike Heath, Head of Environment
Karen Wheeler, Head of Strategy & Communications
David Lawson, Deputy Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer
Stephanie Cox, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

32. Minutes

The Minutes of Cabinet, held on 8 July 2015, were approved as a correct record.

33. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

34. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

35. Statements by the Leader

The Leader welcomed Councillor Potheary to her first meeting of Cabinet, as portfolio holder for Communities and Public Protection.

The Leader further thanked Mr David Bull for his work as Interim Chief Executive, as this was his last meeting in this capacity.

36. Month 3 / Quarter 1 Corporate Performance Report 2015-16

Councillor Holloway, Cabinet Member for Central Services, introduced the report which summarised performance against the Corporate Scorecard 2015-16, a basket of key performance indicators (KPI's), as at Month 3/Quarter 1 (end of June 2015). Members were informed that at the end of Month 3, 72.5% of these indicators were either meeting or within an acceptable tolerance of their target, and that this figure was lower than usual at this stage of the year.

The Cabinet Member reported that the KPI's needed to be considered against the backdrop of reduced resources, which had begun to have an impact on corporate performance, and that in light of this all 'red' KPI's had been put into focus so that Portfolio Holders could monitor these carefully. Members were advised that Cabinet would continue to receive an update each month, with a more detailed report referred to Cabinet every quarter.

Councillor B. Rice reported that the target for self-directed support was below the provisional year-end target but performance was expected to increase with one-off direct payments and that the service was reviewing its strategy for personal budgets through the delivery of the Care Act 2014. Members were further advised that performance should also be viewed alongside direct payments, which was the second part of the indicator, as Thurrock continued to be one of the best performers nationally with 32% of self-directed support service users gaining their support through a direct payment, compared to the national average of 27%.

Councillor B. Rice further highlighted that the 77% June indicator of older people still at home following discharge was below the year-end target of 91%, and that although a slight dip had been anticipated with the introduction of the Care Act 2014, the service faced a number of pressures which included:

- The amount of people who required hospital admissions were increasing, especially with the aging population.
- Complexity of need
- Pressure on beds
- That cuts to five social worker posts had not helped with discharges.

Councillor B. Rice explained that as a result of such pressures she was less confident that the target would be met by the end of the year.

Councillor J. Kent reported that the percentage of primary schools judged "good" or better was 71.4% but felt that the indicator was skewed as those schools who had amalgamated could not be included in the figures, which included Arthur Bugler Infant and Junior Schools (which had both been judged as "good"). Members were advised that Benyon Primary School and Horndon Primary School, which were also both judged as "good", were not included

within the figures and that if they had been the indicator would have been higher.

Councillor J. Kent explained that there was little that could be done to encourage Ofsted to inspect schools early, which he felt would in turn increase the percentage of “good” or outstanding schools in Thurrock, but requested the Director of Children’s Services to write to Ofsted to encourage them to inspect some schools sooner.

Councillor Worrall requested that Cabinet review a detailed breakdown by department of the percentage of complaints resolved within timescale for the Council so that trends could be identified.

Councillor J. Kent explained that the Information Manager held this information which was regularly shared with Directors Board, and suggested that this more detailed information also be presented to Cabinet for consideration, to which all Members were in agreement.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Cabinet comments and notes the performance at this early stage in the year and identifies, where it feels necessary, any further areas of concern on which to focus.**
- 2. That the report be referred to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- 3. That Cabinet recommends the areas In Focus to be circulated as appropriate to relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs.**

37. Petitions submitted by Members of the Public

There were no petitions submitted.

38. Questions from Non-Executive Members

No questions were submitted.

39. Matters Referred to the Cabinet for Consideration by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Leader of the Council informed Members that the following matters had been referred by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and both had been scheduled on the Forward Plan for October Cabinet.

- Thurrock Primary Care referred by the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Grays South and Rail Station Regeneration referred by the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

40. Shaping the Council and Budget Progress Update (Decision: 01104408)

Councillor J. Kent, the Leader of the Council, introduced the report which set out the pressures in 2015/16 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with a need to meet an estimated budget gap of over £28 million for the four years between 2016/17 and 2019/20. In introducing the report he raised the following key points:

- That there were considerable budget pressures as the government grant settlement had reduced by one third, from £40 million to £30 million and it was expected that the core grant would reduce by a further £10 million to a total of £20 million in 2016/17.
- That cross-party consensus had been reached during the budget review panel process, where Group Leaders and Deputy Group Leaders had met with Senior Managers to discuss issues and possible solutions with a view to looking ahead over the next 2-3 years.
- That this year the authority faced additional pressures due to the shortfall in Serco Terms and Conditions targets and the impact of the Sita recycling arrangements.
- That due to the Serco contract coming back in-house, 400 people were expected to return to direct employment at the Council, but that £3 million of savings were expected to be delivered from December 2015 which would go back into the General Fund.

Councillor J. Kent felt that in March 2016 the Council would be well prepared to meet the challenges to come.

Councillor Okunade felt that the budget review panel process had been a useful tool in identifying the pressures in her portfolio.

Councillor B. Rice emphasised that it was important to understand what the government grant settlement cuts meant for local residents and reported that the total gross spend on older persons had reduced by approximately one third per person, from:

2009-10 – £1495
2010-11 – £1381
2011-12 – £1342
2012-13 – £1122
2013-14 – £1106

Councillor B. Rice further emphasised that the budget savings that needed to be delivered by the Council were a result of national government cuts to local government grants, and that this would impact across all service areas including education and social care.

Councillor J. Kent observed that it was important to view the cumulative savings that had been delivered over the past five years, and that despite the

considerable cut to the local government grant settlement, Thurrock had delivered a balanced budget and built up reserves.

RESOLVED:

1. **That Cabinet note the current financial position and potential pressures in both 2015/16 and 2016/17 and to agree for officers to bring back options to address the pressures for member consideration in the Autumn.**
2. **That Cabinet support the governance arrangements for the Serco transition as set out in paragraph 3.12 with a further update report to be brought back to Cabinet in October.**

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report
This decision is subject to call-in

41. Borrowing and Investment Performance and Policy Review 2014/15 (Decision: 01104409)

Councillor J. Kent, the Leader of the Council, introduced the report which reviewed borrowing and investment activity for 2014/15 and reported the treasury outturn position for 2014/15 in accordance with the revised CIPFA Prudential Code.

Members were advised that £0.75 million had been borrowed from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) in order to assist with the refurbishment of Grays Magistrates Court and the Council had acted in a smarter way to reschedule debts, which had saved £15.5 million to help build reserves.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Head of Corporate Finance for delivering the considerable level of savings.

RESOLVED:

In line with the Treasury Management Policy Statement approved by Council on 26 February 2014 and the CIPFA Code of Practice, the Cabinet is asked to comment on the borrowing and investment performance for 2014/15.

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report
This decision is subject to call-in

42. Grays Town Centre Traffic Management (Decision: 01104410)

Councillor Gerrish, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, introduced the report which set out the results of the public consultation and appraised the proposed changes to the Grays Town Centre traffic management scheme. The Cabinet Member felt that it was exciting and long

overdue to introduce a two-way traffic system in Grays and reported that the vast majority of residents (81%) supported the proposal for two-way traffic in Crown Road.

Councillor J. Kent felt that it was important the Council listened to residents' views through the Public Consultation and agreed that the proposed removal of the Orsett Road laybys in favour of a cycle lane should not proceed at this stage as there were further discussions to be had between residents and local businesses so as not to prejudice parking.

Councillor J. Kent further reported that he was also concerned about the signalling of the existing width restriction on Bridge Road as the railway bridge was weak and needed to be protected, in addition to the fact that the pavement in that area was very narrow, and he did not want to jeopardise the safety of pedestrians. He remarked that both issues needed to be addressed but the proposal was a major milestone for the revitalisation of Grays, alongside other developments such as the Grays Magistrates Court and Level Crossing.

Councillor Worrall welcomed the proposal which would allow drivers to turn left out of the multi-story car park on Crown Road and felt that this would boost the retail sector in Grays.

Councillor Gerrish advised that engineers were working with partners and Network Rail to consider the strength of the bridge in order to ensure it was safe and agreed that the phased approach was good news for Grays Town Centre and bus users.

RESOLVED:

- 1. It is recommended that Phase 1 is implemented; including the design and construction of:**
 - **Signalising the existing width restriction Bridge Road, to encourage Grays south traffic to avoid Orsett Road. Reviewing the capacity of the bridge to accommodate buses.**
 - **Allowing all turning movement at the Stanley Road/Clarence Road junction.**
 - **A 12 month suspension of the east bound bus lane on Crown Road to allow the multi-storey traffic to legally turn left and leave in an easterly direction.**
 - **Better cycle links**
 - **Banning HGV's from turning left from Derby Road to London Road at the Theatre**
 - **"Kiss and Ride" facility to drop off at the Rail Station**
 - **Additional cycle parking**
 - **Improvements to the public realm at the northern end of the High Street**
 - **Gateway/Welcome schemes at the main entry points**

2. **It is also recommended that as part of the Phase 1 works the following options are developed and implemented, subject to further discussions with stakeholders:**
 - **Providing a Bus gate at Argent Street/Wouldham Road to allow bus services to pass from Bridge Road, along Argent Street and onto London Road.**
 - **Exploring an alternative access to Town Centre car parking via Hogg Lane and Titan Quarry**
 - **Closing the Morrison's Hogg Lane egress in favour of a roundabout at Seally Road/Eastern Way junction. (Subject to further consultation with Morrisons supermarket).**

3. **It is recommended that the phase 2 works are designed and implemented following monitoring of the impact of the phase 1 works, to determine whether the new traffic flows can be successfully managed. The phase 2 works will include changing Orsett Road to two-way between Derby Road and Stanley Road. The monitoring of the phase 1 works will be reviewed and phase 2 will proceed in consultation with the leader of the Council and portfolio holder.**

4. **It is recommended that the proposed removal of the Orsett Road laybys in favour of a cycle lane does not proceed at this stage and that there are further discussions with businesses to agree a cycling scheme that does not prejudice parking as part of the phase 2 works.**

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report
This decision is subject to call-in

43. Annual Parking Report 2015 (Decision: 01104411)

Councillor Pothecary, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, presented the Annual Parking Report and outlined the performance of parking services for 2015 in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004. In introducing the report the following key points were highlighted:

- Seven full-time Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) covered three controlled parking zones (CPZs), two permit parkins areas, 10 off-street car parks and off street and on street car parking, in addition to enforcement at Morrison's supermarket car park in Grays by agreement.
- In 2014-15 over 9,000 penalty charge notices had been issued.
- The number of residents' and visitors' parking permits issued had increased significantly from 2424 to 2992 respectively in 2013/14 to 2731 and 3251 respectively in 2014/15.
- That temporary staff had been employed to cover unforeseen staff absences in parking services and new management put in place to address issues and improve efficiency.

- That the service was considering improvements to parking software and hardware in addition to investigating the feasibility of increasing the supply of chargeable spaces, the employment of more Civil Enforcement Officers and pay-by-phone opportunities.
- That HGV parking enforcement remained a priority for the service and officers were working closely with the port and partners to ensure that HGV's did not cause a nuisance to residents.
- That a School Pilot Scheme had begun where schools had been offered the opportunity to be trained to enforce outside of schools and educate the parents of the legality of where they could park.

Councillor Speight arrived at the meeting at 7.30 pm.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Cabinet approves the publication of the Annual Parking Report for 2015, in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004.**
- 2. That Cabinet approve that Senior Officers continue to review the service and enforcement with a view to improve efficiency.**
- 3. That the Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee be consulted on the possible impact of any proposed car parking charges for 2016/17 on parking in Grays prior to any changes being agreed.**

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report
This decision is subject to call-in

44. Transfer of Commissioning Responsibility for 0-5 Healthy Child Programme from NHS England to Local Authority, 1 October 2015 (Decision: 01104412)

Councillor B. Rice, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, explained that as part of the reforms detailed within the Health and Social Care Act 2012, commissioning responsibility for most public health functions transferred to local authorities in April 2013. In introducing the report the Cabinet Member reported that Commissioning responsibility for the Healthy Child Programme age 5-19 was included within this, whilst commissioning of the Healthy Child Programme ages 0 – 5 was retained by NHS England to deliver the new service vision set out in the Health Visitor Implementation Plan by April 2015. Members were advised that the transfer of commissioning responsibilities for the 0 – 5 Healthy Child Programme from NHS England to local authorities would be from 1 October 2015 and that this would create more opportunities for Thurrock.

Councillor Okunade echoed the sentiments raised and explained that the commissioning responsibility would be a seamless transition with no impact on service delivery.

Councillor Worrall recognised the positive effects the Tilbury Active Scheme had made to residents' health outcomes and welcomed the fact that obesity rates had fallen in Tilbury. She added that anyone who took part in any of the health initiatives would have a longer-term benefit for the Council and thereby were cost-effective.

Councillor J. Kent welcomed the targeted work that had been undertaken in Tilbury and questioned whether there was a way of measuring health outcomes to identify which schemes were working and where they had been successful.

Councillor B. Rice commended the work of the new Director of Public Health and added that he was good at breaking down the statistics. She reported that statistics were available for initiatives such as smoking cessation and the reduction of obesity rates in order to identify which initiatives were cost-effective and how health inequalities between wards in Thurrock were being reduced.

Councillor Speight felt that the initiatives would make savings across the public sector and be cost effective in the long-term.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet approves the variation of the contract Thurrock CCG (clinical commissioning group) hold with NELFT (North East London Foundation Trust) for the provision of community services within Thurrock, including Public Health services, to include commissioning responsibility for the 0-5 HCP.

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report
This decision is subject to call-in

45. Housing Estate Regeneration and Local Growth Fund Update (Decision: 01104413)

Councillor Worrall, Cabinet Member for Housing, introduced the report which updated Members on the progress that had been made on the housing estate regeneration programme and the next steps required to prepare for and facilitate the procurement of a regeneration partner to assist in the programme's delivery. In introducing the report the Cabinet Member highlighted the following key points:

- That the Council had been successful in securing additional borrowing and HCA grant for developments across the Borough.
- That it was proposed to increase the Tops Club development in Grays from 16 units to 40 units and re-provide a play area.
- That it was important a play area remained in Seabrooke Rise as residents had campaigned for this and a replacement site needed to be secured.

- That the former Prince of Wales public house site in South Ockendon had been secured to facilitate regeneration of the Flowers Estate.

The Cabinet Member explained that she was passionate about providing low-cost, high quality housing.

Councillor G. Rice welcomed the fact that the under-utilised garage site was being utilised in Defoe Parade, Chadwell St. Mary but felt that parking should be considered in all schemes to mitigate any problems for residents. In response the Cabinet Member assured Members that this would be taken into consideration.

RESOLVED:

- 1. Cabinet to note the progress of the Housing Development Programme being funded by Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) through the programmes under the Local Growth Fund and approve the feasibility studies for these potential developments.**
- 2. Cabinet to endorse the exploration of potential additional Growth Fund Bids with HCA to support the housing estate regeneration plans within the borough.**
- 3. Cabinet to approve the consideration being given to the use of sites identified within the Council's emerging Grays Town Centre master plan to facilitate the development of new, high quality housing and the wider housing regeneration proposals for the Seabrooke Rise Estate.**
- 4. Cabinet to approve, subject to consultation with residents, the development of the extended Tops Club site in South Grays and re-location of community play area to support the on-going regeneration of the Seabrooke Rise estate.**
- 5. Cabinet to note the progress in relation to the potential joint development of the Riverside/Rippleside site on Argent Street, South Grays and approve for the inclusion of the Council-owned part of the site within the Seabrooke Rise estate regeneration plans if a joint development with the adjacent owners is not deliverable.**
- 6. Cabinet to note the progress that has been achieved on the Housing Estate Regeneration programme and the publication of the Prior Information Notice (PIN) in relation to the proposed housing regeneration opportunity.**
- 7. Cabinet to note the HRA's acquisition of the former Prince of Wales public house in South Ockendon as a strategically**

important development site to facilitate the wider estate regeneration plans for the Flowers estate.

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report
This decision is subject to call-in

46. Community Delivery of Environmental Services in Parks and Open Spaces (Decision: 01104414)

Councillor G. Rice, Cabinet Member for the Environment, introduced the report which set out how a number of activities and services that the Council has delivered but could no longer fully fund may be able to be delivered by the third sector. He explained that a number of community groups had come forward, which included the Grays Beach Café and Friends of Hardie Park, who had expressed an interest in taking over the day-to-day running of these areas.

Councillor J. Kent recognised the work of the Blooming Marvels in Stanford-le-Hope and felt that they had a positive impact on the community. He thanked the group for all that they had done and explained that the Blooming Marvels had requested £5,000 to enable them to deliver projects and that the Friends of Hardie Park had bid for £16,000 so that they could improve the parks water drainage system.

Councillor J. Kent felt that such investments would make community delivery sustainable in the longer-term and instructed officers to investigate whether Section 106 monies could be used in order to meet such requests.

Councillor Speight echoed the sentiments raised and commended the proposal. He welcomed the fact that community groups could drive forward projects and be able to access funding from others that the Council could not.

Councillor Worrall remarked that residents could not fail to miss the positive changes at Grays Beach by the Grays Beach Café and welcomed the fact that community groups overcame so much to create a lasting impact, for example with vandalised play areas. She added that she hoped the initiative would encourage others to come forward in their communities.

Councillor G. Rice advised that he was the Council appointed representative on the Veolia North Thames Trust and explained that the charity was able to help communities deliver environmental projects. He called on all residents to take pride in their community and encouraged residents to litter pick outside their homes.

Councillor G. Rice further assured Members that he would work with officers to identify whether community groups could be allocated small pots of funding to deliver environmental services.

RESOLVED:

That officers be authorised to enter into detailed negotiations with groups who have expressed an interest in developing community based services and report back as appropriate.

Reason for Decision - as stated in the report
This decision is subject to call-in

The meeting finished at 7.58 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**