

MINUTES OF CABINET

1 JUNE 2020

PRESENT:

Councillors Lowe (Chairman), Mrs Crane, Poole, Roberts, Ms Robbins and Mrs Simpson-Vince.

Councillors Mrs A'Barrow, Mrs Allanach, Bearne, Brader, Mrs Brown, Douglas, Miss Dumbleton, Eccleson, Ellis, Gillias, Keeling, Miss Lawrence, Lewis, Mistry, Mrs O'Rourke, Mrs New, Picker, Sandison and Srivastava were also in attendance.

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2020 were approved by the Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 11 of Part 1 – Transfer of land – Long Furlong, Rugby – Councillor Roberts (non -pecuniary interest as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being a Warwickshire County Councillor).

Item 11 of Part 1 – Transfer of land – Long Furlong, Rugby – Councillor Mrs Simpson-Vince (non -pecuniary interest as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being a Warwickshire County Councillor and a trustee of Rugby Secondary Free School).

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following questions were received in accordance with the Council's procedure for public questions. Both questions were read by the Executive Director.

(a) Mr Brook asked the following question of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

It was reported on 26th February 2020 that in the course of approving the Council budget at the meeting of 25th February 2020 that leader of the council, Cllr Seb Lowe said, in relation to the climate emergency:

"This will mean residents will need to consider how they can reduce their own impact on the environment."

As the leading experts and organisations on climate change are agreed that the best way to tackle the climate crisis is to engage in system change, rather than relying on the personal changes of residents, will Rugby Borough Council commit to their response to the climate emergency making changes to the

systems that the people of Rugby live in, to make Green choices the easy choice?

Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, responded as follows:

My previous comments referred to the fact that responding to the Climate Emergency will involve all of us having to reconsider our individual actions and the broader environmental impact which they can have. A view which is also advocated by numerous experts and specialist organisations.

Successful climate action will involve a wide variety of stakeholders – communities, businesses and government bodies – all working together to enable and enact behavioural change. To this end, I can confirm that the Council will, wherever possible, ensure that Green choices are available and easily accessible for all stakeholders.

(b) Ms Pickup asked the following question of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

Is Rugby Borough Council committed to access for all of its citizens to Public Open Space? How is it going to address the imbalance between the different Wards and deficiency in the provision in some Wards, such as Benn and New Bilton.

In light of Oakfield Recreation Ground having lost its playing pitches to development, and half of its green space area, how does RBC intend to honour the standards as set out in its Open Spaces Strategy and Open Space Audit (In particular distance thresholds for Sports Pitches and other outdoor sports facilities of 850 metres. Also for Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space 700 metres, Allotments 700 metres, Urban Park and Gardens 800 metres)?

Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, responded as follows:

The Borough Council is committed to ensuring that residents have access to open space near to their home. We have adopted open space standards that are one consideration among many when the planning committee determine planning applications, and it is these standards that have enabled the council to secure the transfer of part of the Oakfield Recreation ground, thus potentially increasing the accessible open space available to residents of Benn and New Bilton. This issue highlights the difference between open space and accessible open space, which is a matter that is particularly relevant at the Oakfield site.

It should be noted that the open space standards do not apply to existing development. There are different standards that apply to existing development, and these are known as the ANGSt standard. These recommend that everyone, wherever they live, should have accessible natural greenspace:

- of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes walk) from home;
- at least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometre of home;
- one accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home; and
- one accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home; plus
- a minimum of one hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population.

The council's open spaces standards are used to secure accessible open space through new development and the ANGSt standards apply for all existing development.

Item considered not within a specific portfolio

5. COVID19 RESPONSE

Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director (Part 1 – agenda item 5) concerning the Council's response to the COVID19 pandemic.

All Group Leaders wished to place on record their thanks to all Council employees for their hard work during this time, as well as all other key workers in the Borough and communities for their support.

RESOLVED THAT - the response from the Council to COVID 19 be noted and specifically the following;

COUNCIL COVID-19 RESPONSE

1. The strategic response as detailed within this report.
2. The support provided to residents through the establishment of the Food Bank and Shielding Hub.
3. As detailed within this report the response from staff to ensure the continuation of vital services.
4. The Council continues to maintain its strategic response as the COVID-19 emergency remains in place.

COUNCIL RECOVERY RESPONSE

As outlined within this report the focus on four key areas within the Council's recovery planning;

- Economy
- Climate
- Health & Communities
- Organisation

Note: this decision is not subject to call-in.

Corporate Resources Portfolio

6. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2019/20 – YEAR END

Cabinet considered the supplementary report of the Interim Chief Financial Officer (Part 1- agenda item 6) concerning the Council's financial and performance position as at 2019/20.

RESOLVED THAT -

(1) the Council's anticipated financial position for 2019/20 in Sections 1, 2 and 3 and Appendices 1 and 2 be noted;

(2) performance data included in Section 6 and Appendix 3 be noted; and

(3) IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -

- (a) supplementary revenue budgets of £0.331m for 2020/21 as a result of carry forwards from 2019/20 at Appendix 4 be approved;
- (b) General Fund transfer of business rates surplus (£0.634m) to the Business Rates Equalisation Reserve as per section 2.3 be approved;
- (c) General Fund Movement in Reserves as detailed in Tables 3 – 6 and Appendix 6 be approved;
- (d) supplementary capital budgets for 2020/21, as a result of carry forwards from 2019/20, as follows (see Appendices 1 & 2) budgets be approved;
 - a. General Fund - £3.445m
 - b. HRA - £12.349m
- (e) a supplementary General Fund capital budget of £0.250m for 2020/21 for Queens Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre Athletics Track Renovation to be met from S106 contributions be approved;
- (f) a supplementary General Fund capital budget of £0.601m for 2019/20 for Long Lawford Sports Pavilion and Cawston Community Hall to be met from S106 contributions be approved;
- (g) estimated amount to be provided to mitigate future risks – See section 2.6 and Summary Reserves at Appendix 7 be approved; and
- (h) Reserves forecast at Appendix 5 be noted.

7. APPOINTMENTS TO WORKING PARTIES 2020/21

Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director (Part 1 – agenda item 7) concerning appointments to working parties for the 2020/21 municipal year.

RESOLVED THAT - the membership of all working parties re-established for the 2020/21 municipal year remain unchanged from last year.

Communities and Homes Portfolio

8. COMMUNITY GRANTS ALLOCATIONS FOR 2020/21

Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Communities and Homes (Part 1 – agenda item 8) concerning community grants allocations for 2020/21.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the recommendations made by the Grants Working Party to allocate the funding for the 2020-21 community grants, as summarised in appendices 2-6, be approved;

(2) the delivery time for funded projects to be completed be extended from 12 months to 24 months, due to the impact of the current Covid-19 crisis;

(3) expressions of interest (according to eligibility criteria to be agreed), be invited from the Benn Partnership Centre; Overslade Community Association; New Bilton Community Association; Long Lawford Community Association, the Newbold Community Partnership and Hill Street Community Centre) with a view to their utilising the unallocated £17,581.70 from 2019/20 to provide additional support to community associations to help with resilience and in particular to develop enhanced digital offers to their communities to support their recovery from the Covid-19 crisis. The resulting projects then be presented to the Grants Working Party for consideration; and

(4) the balance of £2,439.64 from the 2020/21 Community Projects Fund be made available for other (non-SLA) community organisations and allocated subject to expressions of interest (according to criteria to be agreed). The resulting projects then be presented to the Grants Working Party for consideration.

Note: this decision is not subject to call-in.

9. ACCESS TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES – ECO-FLEX STATEMENT OF INTENT FOR RUGBY

Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Communities and Homes (Part 1 – agenda item 9) concerning the adoption of a statement of intent with regard to energy efficiency measures.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the statement of intent and proposed governance process (appendix 1) to enable the delivery of Eco-Flex measures to support residents of private-sector housing in Rugby be adopted; and
- (2) a supplementary General Fund revenue budget of £10,000 for ECO3 assessments for 2020/21, to be met from the Climate Change Emergency reserve, be approved; and
- (3) delegated authority be given to the Head of Communities and Homes in consultation with the Monitoring Officer to enter into any legal agreements arising from this report.

Items considered en bloc

10. TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2019/20 – ANNUAL REPORT

Cabinet considered the report of the Interim Chief Financial Officer (Part 1 – agenda item 10) concerning treasury management activities for 2019/20.

RESOLVED THAT -

- (1) the Treasury Management report for 2019/20 be noted;
- (2) the actual treasury management indicators (Appendix A) be noted; and

(3) IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT the amended Treasury Management Indicator for principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days be approved.

11. TRANSFER OF LAND OWNERSHIP – LONG FURLONG, RUGBY

Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Environment and Public Realm (Part 1 – agenda item 11) concerning the transfer of a piece of land in Long Furlong, Rugby, from Warwickshire County Council to this Council.

RESOLVED THAT - IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -

(1) the offer to transfer the land on Long Furlong, Rugby as open space be accepted in line with the planning conditions for the new Rugby Free School, from Warwickshire County Council; and

(2) the land be protected with Fields in Trust designation.

CHAIRMAN