



# RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL

## CABINET

***Tuesday, 1st September, 2015 at 4.30 pm***  
***at the Council Offices, Farnborough***

Councillor P.J. Moyle  
Councillor K.H. Muschamp, Deputy Leader and Business, Safety and  
Regulation Portfolio Holder

Councillor Hughes, Health and Housing Portfolio  
Councillor Sue Carter  
Councillor P.G. Taylor, Corporate Services Portfolio Holder  
Councillor R.L.G. Dibbs  
Councillor A. Jackman

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of .

The Cabinet considered the following matters at the above-mentioned meeting. All executive decisions of the Cabinet shall become effective, subject to the call-in procedure, from **15<sup>th</sup> September 2015**.

37. **MINUTES –**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 14th July, 2017 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

38. **CONTRACTOR ANNUAL SERVICE PLANS 2015/16 –**  
(Environment and Service Delivery/Leisure and Youth)

(1) **Places for People Leisure –**

The Cabinet received the Corporate Director's Report No. CD1509 and the Places for People (PfP) Leisure Delivery Plan 2015-16. The Report advised that PfP had performed well on the contract during the previous year. PfP and the Council had continued to work in partnership on the Megarider bus ticket and £1 summer holiday swimming initiatives.

Duncan Mackay, the local Contract Manager, attended the meeting to present the Leisure Delivery Plan. There were a number of positive messages in the Delivery Plan. PFP had been named, for the third year running, UK Active's Leisure Centre Operator of the Year and had been the first organisation in the United Kingdom to receive a Quest Stretch validation in sports development. There had been an increase in attendance on the swimming lesson programmes and the number of casual swimmers had also gone up. There had been considerable investment in the leisure facilities at Farnborough Leisure Centre and Aldershot Pools, including £110,000 spent on replacement fitness equipment at Farnborough and a £60,000 refurbishment to the fitness facility at Aldershot. LED lighting had continued to be introduced at both sites. PFP's customer advisers and marketing teams had continued to produce high quality marketing material and had worked closely with the Council's Communications Team in a number of areas. Social media had been used increasingly in contacting existing and potential new customers. The price of gym membership had been cut significantly in order to compete with other local providers and this had seen a sharp increase in take-up.

The main issues for 2015-16 included continuing to enhance and improve the range of activities on offer to local residents, carrying out further improvement works at the facilities and working with the Council and other local partners to provide support to community safety initiatives and disadvantaged groups.

The Cabinet welcomed the Delivery Plan and the positive work carried out by PFP across the Borough. There was some discussion on the increased use of technology in tracking students' progress with swimming lessons and how this might be rolled out and across other types of lessons. An enquiry was also made about visitor numbers to the Aldershot Lido and whether it had been adversely affected by the recent changeable weather.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED** that the Places for People Leisure Delivery Plan 2015-16, as set out in the Corporate Director's Report No. CD1509, be endorsed.

**(2) Team Rushmoor –**

The Cabinet received the Corporate Director's Report No. CD1510 and the Team Rushmoor (Veolia) Service Plan for 2015-16. Members were reminded that the current contract was due to end in March 2017. Highlights in the Report included the continued growth of the brown bin garden waste collection scheme, the refurbishment of the Cove Green public toilets and securing the Silver Gilt award for Aldershot Town Centre in the South and South East In Bloom competition and the Gold award for the Aldershot Crematorium.

John Stockings, Veolia's Contract Manager, attended the meeting to present the Service Plan. The Cabinet was advised that there had been some issues in the winter due, mainly, to persistent strong winds which had caused litter to be spread over large areas. Whilst the Transport Industry had, generally, suffered a shortage in qualified LGV (Large Goods Vehicle) drivers, Veolia had overcome this by providing in-house driver training. Staff turnover had remained low at less than 1% of the workforce.

Issues for 2015-16 included working in partnership to reduce contamination, which continued to be a problem for the recycling service, utilising new software that had been introduced in relation to bulky waste collections and continuing to invest in renewing vehicles that were past their useful life. Preparing a comprehensive bid to retain the work at the contract retendering stage was also a key priority for Veolia in the coming year.

The Cabinet was satisfied at the level of service provided by Veolia under the contract and thanks were expressed to Mr Stockings, personally, as this was to be his final report to the Council before retirement.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED** that Team Rushmoor/Veolia's Service Plan for 2015-16, as set out in the Corporate Director's Report No. CD1510, be endorsed.

**39. FINANCIAL MATTERS –**  
(Leader of the Council)

**(1) Revenue Budget Monitoring and Forecasting 2015/16 – Position at July, 2015 –**

The Cabinet considered the Head of Financial Services' Report No. FIN1515, which set out the anticipated financial position for 2015/16, based on the monitoring exercise carried out during July 2015. The Report explained that, in the monitoring exercise, service managers had identified a net overspend of approximately £43,000 against their non-salary budgets. Corporate variances included staff salary savings, which totalled around £360,000. The Report identified the Business Rate Retention Scheme as being the cause of the greatest variances affecting the first quarter, though this was mostly down to timing issues and would not affect the Council's financial position in the longer term.

It was proposed to make three transfers to reserves to mitigate risks of fluctuations in income and expenditure, to increase the revenue contributions towards capital expenditure in respect of income generating proposals within the Council's 8-Point Plan and to cover future mercury abatement measures at the Council's crematorium. The Report listed a number of financial risks facing the Council but it was anticipated that the Stability and Resilience Reserve would offer an element of protection for the Council from these. The major risks identified included that the Council might not achieve the savings targets required, that projects would not deliver efficiency savings to timescale and that income streams might deteriorate due to the economic climate, including planning fees, parking income and rents.

Members considered the Report and expressed their satisfaction with both the current revenue budget position and the measures put in place to ensure future financial stability. The purpose and use of reserves was also discussed.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED** that

- (i) the Head of Financial Services' Report No. FIN1515 be noted;

- (ii) the virements and supplementary estimates, as set out in the Report, be approved;
- (iii) The initial estimates for the use of the Service Improvement Fund, as set out in the Report, be approved;
- (iv) the creation of a reserve for mercury abatement measures, as set out in the Report, be approved; and
- (v) the increase in revenue contributions to capital outlay, subject to the final outturn position, as set out in the Report, be approved.

**(2) Capital Programme Monitoring 2015/16 – Position at July, 2015 –**

The Cabinet received the Head of Financial Services' Report No. FIN1516, which provided the latest forecast regarding the Council's Capital Programme for 2015/16. The Report advised that the Programme, including slippages and variations, totalled £11,394,000. The recent monitoring exercise had identified a number of areas of slippage, including improvement works at the Brickfield Country Park and playground refurbishments at Manor Park and the Municipal Gardens in Aldershot.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED** that the latest Capital Programme monitoring position, as set out in the Head of Financial Services' Report No. FIN1516, be noted.

**40. CORPORATE STRATEGY AND CORPORATE PLAN 2015/16 - QUARTER ONE MONITORING –**  
(Environment and Service Delivery)

The Cabinet received the Directors' Management Board's Report No. DMB1504, which gave an update on performance management monitoring information against the Corporate Plan for the first quarter of the 2015/16 financial year.

The Chief Executive gave Members an update on strategic and performance management data on many areas, including demographics, crime, economic data and housing completions. Members also heard about key initiatives and service measures under the themes of:

- People and communities
- Prosperity
- Place
- Leadership
- Good value services

It was noted that 87.9% of the indicators were on target, 11.1% were in question as to whether they would achieve the action or indicator and 1.0% were unable to achieve elements of the target. The Chief Executive gave a summary of key projects that were ongoing and responded to Members' questions.

**The Cabinet NOTED** the Directors' Management Board Report No. DMB1504 and the performance made against the Corporate Plan in the first quarter of the 2015/16 municipal year.

41. **BUILDING CONTROL FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2014/15 AND CHARGES FOR 2015/16 –**  
(Environment and Service Delivery)

The Cabinet considered the Head of Planning's Report No. PLN1543, which set out the Building Control Financial Statement for its fee earning work for the year ended 31st March, 2015 and also reviewed the current charges for building control work. It was reported that Building Control's fee income for 2014/15 had resulted in an operating deficit of £24,709 which had increased the rolling deficit to £31,201. It was reported that, to try to improve the robustness of the service in a challenging financial environment, the Council had negotiated with Hart District Council to provide a joint Building Control Service, which had been in operation since 1st July, 2015. Whilst it was anticipated that this arrangement would provide a better service in due course, in the short term it was proving difficult to recruit additional qualified Building Control Officers. In light of these changes, it was proposed that fees should remain unaltered at the present time. It was proposed to introduce a single fee structure across the two authorities in due course.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED** that the financial statement for Building Control for 2014/15 be endorsed and the current charging structure remain unaltered for the time being.

42. **ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY –**  
(Corporate Services)

The Cabinet considered the Solicitor to the Council's Report No. LEG1515, which set out a proposal to develop a three-year asset management strategy. The aim of the strategy would be to ensure better use of the Council's property assets and would include a policy of seeking to invest in the acquisition of commercial and, potentially, residential properties, with the intention of achieving additional revenue streams. The strategy could also provide direct intervention in town centre regeneration through strategic acquisitions.

It was reported that this proposal had been developed following some work by consultants, Montague Evans, in 2014. The Council had commissioned the company to assess the health of the Council's property portfolio. In the report, Montague Evans considered the following:

- The composition of the Council's portfolio
- A review of the types of assets and their potential

- The Council's key corporate plan objectives and how they link to its property portfolio
- Areas for potential change and evolution of the property portfolio through a business plan

Following receipt of the report, research had been carried out to establish whether any other local authorities, that had already developed successful asset management strategies, would be willing to assist the Council in the development of its strategy. As a result of this exercise, it was now proposed that the Council should establish an arrangement with Eastleigh Borough Council to work collaboratively to develop an approach and produce an asset management strategy that met the stated strategic objectives set out in the Montague Evans report. Eastleigh Borough Council had generated around £6.5 million per annum in additional revenue over the previous five years and was seen as a beacon of good practice in this field. The cost of the preparation of the asset management strategy would be £30,000 over a six to eight week period. This amount would be drawn from the Service Improvement Fund. Once a draft strategy had been prepared, this would be brought back to the Cabinet and would also be the subject of a Member workshop. Ongoing support would then be available from the Eastleigh Borough Council Estates Team to the Council to implement the strategy, at the rates set out in the Report.

Members considered the Report and expressed support for the approach being proposed.

**43. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC –**

**RESOLVED:** That, taking into account the public interest test, the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the under mentioned items to avoid the disclosure of exempt information within the paragraph of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 indicated against the items:

<b>Minute Nos.</b>	<b>Schedule 12A Para. Nos.</b>	<b>Categories</b>
44	3	Information relating to financial or business affairs

**THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC**

**44. NO. 12 ARTHUR STREET, ALDERSHOT - FUTURE USE –**  
(Corporate Services)

The Cabinet considered the Solicitor to the Council's Exempt Report No. LEG1516, which set out options for the future use of the property at No. 12 Arthur Street, Aldershot. It was explained that the property had been the original office for the charity Relate until they had moved to new premises at Nos. 35 - 39 High Street, Aldershot in 2011. Since then, the property had been vacant and was currently in a poor state of repair. In light of the Council's 8-Point Plan, which required better use of property and assets, it was not considered appropriate to allow the property to deteriorate further. Various options had been considered but it was proposed that the

most appropriate course of action would be to apply for prior approval to change the use of the premises from an office to three domestic flatted units. The property could then be sold with prior approval granted for flats and this would realise a higher value than if marketed as offices. Alternatively, the Council could undertake to carry out the conversion works itself and then sell the three converted flats on the open market or, if the Council had formed a housing company, rent the properties out to gain income.

Members were advised that this option would achieve the highest possible return from the disposal of the property. It was likely that, in light of current legislation, the Council would need to set up a company if choosing this option, as the Council would be seen to be trading. It was likely that, in bringing forward its proposed asset management strategy, the Council would be requiring to set up such a company in any case.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED that**

- (i) the Solicitor to the Council be authorised to:
  - take all preliminary steps to enable a prior approval application to be submitted for the redevelopment of No. 12 Arthur Street, Aldershot as three residential flats; and
  - subject to the issue of a trading company being resolved, to take all necessary steps to convert the property to flats and, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, to either dispose of the flats to generate a capital receipt or hold them as a property asset for future letting; and
- (ii) that expenditure in the sum of £8,000 be authorised towards the professional fees and the prior approval application fee.

The Meeting closed at 6.12 pm.

D.E. CLIFFORD  
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

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