



RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

*Tuesday, 20th October, 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 **3rd November 2015**.

51. **MINUTES –**

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

52. **PROCUREMENT SERVICE AND BETTER PROCUREMENT PROJECT –**
(Corporate Services)

The Cabinet considered the Head of Strategy, Engagement and Organisational Development's Report No. SEO1501, which set out progress with the Council's Better Procurement Project and proposed changes to the resourcing arrangements for the Council's procurement service.

Members were reminded that the Better Procurement Project was aimed at achieving better value for money and delivering cost reductions when procuring goods and services in connection with the services that the Council provided. Over

the previous year, the service had been working well and the Council's new contract standing orders had been put in place. Additionally, 64 staff had received training in good procurement practices and requirements and over £165,000 of cost reductions and benefits had been achieved during this time. At present, the Council's procurement service was provided by a part time procurement officer along with additional resources provided by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. Whilst this arrangement had worked well, it was felt that, in the longer term, this may not be the most effective way to deliver this service. The Council's procurement officer had become increasingly involved in supporting the re-procurement of the Council's waste, street cleansing and grounds maintenance services and this was, currently, taking around a third of the officer's time and was likely to continue for the next twelve to fifteen months. In light of this and to make the Council's Procurement Service sustainable, it was now proposed to create a junior part qualified procurement officer post, on an initial two year contract. After this, the Council would carry out a review and, if the role was found to delivering a net benefit, the Council could consider retaining the post for a further period. It was not considered that this post would be suitable to be filled using the apprenticeship scheme.

The Cabinet expressed support for the procurement function and the good work that had been carried out in the previous year or so. It was felt that the proposal would be the most cost effective way to sustain a good service into the future.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that the appointment of an additional procurement resource, as set out in paragraph 4.2 of the Head of Strategy, Engagement and Organisational Development's Report No. SEO1501, be approved.

53. **COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME - CONSULTATION –**
(Concessions and Community Support)

The Cabinet considered the Corporate Director's Report No. CD1513, which set out a proposal to undertake a public consultation in respect of the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme in order to inform any decision to review or amend the Scheme for the 2016/17 financial year.

Members were reminded that the local Council Tax Support Scheme had replaced the previous national Council Tax Benefit Regulations from 1st April, 2013 onwards. The Council had devised its Scheme at this time and this sought a minimum 8% contribution towards the Council Tax bill for those of working age, with up to 100% relief available to those of pensionable age. The local scheme had proved effective and Council Tax collection rates had remained stable during this time, whilst scheme costs had dropped. Members were informed that the Government's ongoing welfare reform programme would, potentially, have an impact on the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme and, for this reason, it was necessary to consider making changes to the Scheme. To ensure that these changes would be transparent, it would be necessary to carry out public consultation around options. Whilst the timescale was tight, the consultation and subsequent amendment of the Scheme would be possible within the current budget cycle, so long as the public consultation was commenced during November. The Welfare Reform Task and Finish Group would continue to have a key role in following this process through.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the undertaking of public consultation on options around the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme be approved;
- (ii) the Corporate Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Concessions and Community Support and following discussion with the Welfare Reform Task and Finish Group, be authorised to agree the details of the consultation paper; and

the outcome of the consultation and any subsequent proposals be reported to the Cabinet during January 2016.

54. **APPLICATIONS FOR DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF –**
(Corporate Services)

The Cabinet considered the Corporate Director's Report No. CD1511 which set out details of six applications for rate relief from the Twins and Multiple Births Association (TAMBA) (2nd Floor, Manor House, Church Hill, Aldershot), the Batten Disease Family Association (Office 1, The Old Library, Boundary Road, Farnborough), the British Heart Foundation (shops in Aldershot and Farnborough), Affinity Trust (Alexandra Terrace, Alexandra Road, Aldershot), Chance for Childhood (Suites 2 L & M, Westmead House, Farnborough) and Places for People Leisure Limited (Farnborough Leisure Centre and Aldershot Pools Complex).

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) 20% top-up discretionary relief be awarded to Twins and Multiple Births Association from the start of occupation to the end of the current rating list;
- (ii) 20% top-up discretionary relief be awarded to the Batten Disease Family Association for part-year 2014/15 and for year 2015/16;
- (iii) 20% top-up discretionary relief be awarded to the British Heart Foundation from year 2015/16 to the end of the current rating list;
- (iv) 20% top-up discretionary relief be awarded to Affinity Trust for year 2015/16;
- (v) the application for discretionary rate relief from Chance for Childhood be refused on the grounds that they could not demonstrate a sufficient local benefit; and
- (vi) 100% discretionary relief be awarded to Places for People Leisure Limited from part-year 2012/13 to the end of the current rating list.

NOTE: Cr. P.G. Taylor declared a personal but non prejudicial interest in this item in respect of his involvement with The Triangle bookshop and café, which was currently in receipt of discretionary rate relief and,

in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, remained in the meeting during the discussion and voting thereon.

55. STAFFING - HOUSING OPTIONS TEAM –
(Corporate Services)

The Cabinet considered the Head of Environmental Health and Housing's Report No. EHH1511, which set out a proposal to alter the staffing responsibilities within the Housing Options Team and create a new part time post. Members heard that the Senior Housing Officer had left recently and this had prompted a review of responsibilities within the team. This had identified that some of the Senior Housing Officer's current responsibilities around the Council's functions under the Home Finder Scheme were both time consuming and mainly administrative. It was, therefore, proposed to create a new part time post of sixteen hours per week to manage these responsibilities. This would free up time to enable the Senior Housing Officer to be more effective in supporting and managing the team in an environment of increasing demand. Members were told that the option to employ an apprentice had been considered but, with the work likely to remain for the foreseeable future, this would involve training a new member of staff every eighteen months. The Housing Options Team was already very busy and this was also the reason that it was not proposed to pass the Home Finder duties to current team members.

The Cabinet was supportive of the work carried out by the Housing Options Team and considered that the proposal would be the most effective solution to ensure the continued smooth running of the team.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that the recruitment of a part time Housing Allocation Assistant, on the terms set out in the Head of Environmental Health and Housing's Report No. EHH1511, be approved.

56. 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:

Minute Nos.	Schedule 12A Para. Nos.	Categories
57 and 58	3	Information relating to financial or business affairs

57. APPLICATIONS FOR SECTION 49 REMISSION OF NON-DOMESTIC RATES –
(Concessions and Community Support)

The Cabinet considered the Corporate Director's Exempt Report No. CD1512, which set out two applications for the remission of non-domestic rates on the grounds of hardship.

Members assessed the application from Ms. Anusha Sareen T/A Mangobean of No. 52 High Street, Aldershot, taking into account the evidence of financial hardship supplied and whether it was in the interests of local taxpayers to subsidise the business. The Cabinet took into account the nature and circumstances of the business and the availability of alternative facilities in the area. It was noted that this was a new business that had not claimed hardship relief previously. It was explained that various factors, including significant water works that had been carried out immediately outside of the premises, had affected trade detrimentally since starting the franchise in January, 2015.

Members also assessed the application from Sovereign Snooker Limited of Snooker Hall Sovereign House, No. 1A Camp Road, Farnborough, taking into account the evidence of financial hardship supplied and whether it was in the interests of local taxpayers to subsidise the business. The Cabinet took into account the nature and circumstances of the business and the availability of alternative facilities in the area. It was noted that the Cabinet had agreed 25% hardship relief for the year 2014/15. In this case, Members felt that the club continued to provide a worthwhile community facility despite making losses in each of the previous three years.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) 50% hardship relief be granted to Ms. Anusha Sareen T/A Mangobean for 2015/16; and
- (ii) 25% hardship relief be granted to Sovereign Snooker Limited for 2015/16.

THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC

**58. ACQUISITION OF SITE FOR COUNCIL DEPOT –
(Corporate Services)**

The Cabinet considered the Solicitor to the Council's Exempt Report No. LEG1518, which sought approval for the purchase of a specific local premises to provide a Council depot in connection with waste collection and street cleansing services.

Members heard how, for a number of years, the Council's waste collection and street cleansing service had operated from a depot in Doman Road, Camberley. This depot was owned by Surrey Heath Borough Council. It was reported, however, that there was no formal arrangement in place and that Surrey Heath's use of the depot was likely to intensify. Also, in recent months, the Council had been engaging in competitive dialogue with potential bidders for the renewal of the contracts in respect of waste collection and street cleansing, during which the Council had stated it would provide its own depot from the start of the contract. For these reasons, the need to secure a suitable site for a Rushmoor depot was now a high priority for the Council. It was reported that a suitable site had previously been identified and its purchase had been agreed by the Cabinet in June, 2015 but this had not proceeded due to the negotiated asking price not representing best value to the Council. Since then, the Council had been actively seeking an alternative suitable premises and the proposed site was considered to meet the Council's requirements. It was reported that the premises could not be publically identified at

this stage as this might jeopardise negotiations. The purchase price had been recommended by the Council's professional valuer and was considered to represent best value.

The Cabinet RESOLVED that

- (i) the Solicitor to the Council be authorised to:
 - purchase the premises specified in the Solicitor to the Council's Exempt Report No. LEG 1518, on the terms specified in that Report;
 - apply for a certificate of proposed lawfulness of use of the premises as a depot and planning permission for the operational development of the depot facility;
 - incur costs, up to the figure specified in the Solicitor to the Council's Exempt Report No. LEG 1518, to enable all necessary steps to be taken, within a time frame, to enable a start on site by May, 2016;
 - take any other related actions or enter into any related contracts or agreements to secure the provision of a depot on the site, in accordance with the competitive dialogue process;
- (ii) the Head of Community and Environmental Services be authorised to:
 - procure all building and site layout works;
 - apply for the necessary environmental permits and consents;
and
- (iii) the sum of £1.5 million (plus VAT) be authorised and added to the capital programme in respect of the redevelopment costs of the depot.

NOTE: Cr. K.H. Muschamp declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item due to his relationship with the owner of the site and, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, left the meeting during the discussion and voting thereon

The Meeting closed at 5.44 pm.

D.E. CLIFFORD
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
