

Cabinet

Minutes



Monday 5 July 2021

PRESENT

Councillor Stephen Cowan, Leader of the Council
Councillor Adam Connell, Cabinet Member for Public Services Reform
Councillor Wesley Harcourt, Cabinet Member for the Environment
Councillor Andrew Jones, Cabinet Member for the Economy

IN ATTENDANCE VIRTUALLY

Councillor Sue Fennimore, Deputy Leader
Councillor Larry Culhane, Cabinet Member for Children and Education
Councillor Lisa Homan, Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor Sharon Holder, Cabinet Member for Strategy

INTRODUCTION

Councillor Stephen Cowan, the Leader of the Council, explained that due to the pandemic and the rapid spread of the Delta variant in H&F only four Cabinet Members were in attendance at the first Cabinet meeting back at the Council's offices since March 2020. The decision to take the minimum number of Cabinet Members in attendance was for safety reasons; however, the meeting was fully quorate. The other Cabinet Members and officers were in attendance virtually via Zoom.

The Leader stressed that it was deeply concerning the spread of the virus and the fact that only 55% of the borough's population had received the first dose of the vaccine. The Council strongly advised everyone to continue wearing masks, wash and sanitise hands regularly and respect the 2m social distancing. Everyone needed to take measures to ensure this coming winter would not have a repeat of the high level of infection rates recorded on the previous winter.

The Leader noted that today was the 73rd anniversary of the foundation of the NHS. Since the start of the pandemic, the NHS staff had been on the frontline in the battle against COVID-19 and had kept people safe in very difficult circumstances. The NHS and care workers should be celebrated as they had made the whole country proud.

1. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 4 MAY 2021

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 4 May 2021 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record of the proceedings, and that the outstanding actions be noted.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ben Coleman and Max Schmid.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Sue Fennimore subsequently declared a significant interest in respect of Items 10 and 11 on the agenda as she was a member of the board of OnSide Youth Zone. As she had joined the meeting virtually via Zoom, she did not participate in the discussion and vote thereon.

4. RESTORATION OF HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE

The Leader stated that this was a comprehensive report setting out several potential delivery models for the restoration of Hammersmith Bridge and funding options available to the Council, with a preference identified. Hammersmith Bridge would continue to require long term on-going monitoring and maintenance; therefore one of the proposals was to develop a toll or road charging scheme in order to finance the Council's contribution to the restoration and future maintenance of the bridge. He added that Hammersmith Bridge was a unique, Grade 2* listed suspension structure. Reopening the bridge, would restore an iconic, nationally significant heritage asset located within the borough.

The Leader complimented Sharon Lea, the Strategic Director for the Environment, and her team, for putting forward several options. Once a more extensive survey was carried out the best option would be chosen.

Councillor Wesley Harcourt reiterated that the Council was very keen to reopen the bridge as soon as possible. Apart from being a national monument, this bridge was an essential link between the north and the south of the borough.

AGREED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

1. That Appendices 1 and 2 to this report are not for publication on the basis that they contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings as set out in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

2. That the Council further develops proposals for delivery model options as recommended in the report included at Appendix 2.
3. That the Council continues to explore the possibility of the establishment of a charitable trust and the potential for its involvement in delivery of the Project alongside other entities and funding options.
4. That the Cabinet agrees that the recommended preferred option for the Project (subject to additional work required in respect of recommendations 2 and 3) at this stage is a long-term contract with a private sector counterparty for the design, restoration, operation and maintenance of Hammersmith Bridge.
5. That Cabinet agrees that a toll or road charging scheme should be developed in order to finance the Council's contribution to the restoration and future maintenance and notes that the approval of the Secretary of State is required for a toll and the approval of the Mayor of London for a road charging scheme.
6. That the Council enters into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with TfL and the Department for Transport
7. That Cabinet delegates authority to the Strategic Director for the Environment in consultation with the Director of Finance to take all the necessary steps to pursue the options in 1-6.

5. INVESTING IN OUR THIRD SECTOR

The Leader stated that he was extremely grateful to the third sector as it was a key community partner in improving the health and wellbeing of residents and creating a more inclusive, prosperous, and resilient borough. He also praised the immeasurable response of the borough's community and voluntary sector to the unprecedented challenges of the global Covid-19 pandemic, who had worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to provide frontline services and support to residents. This report reaffirmed the Council's strong commitment to continued significant investment in the local third sector. It included the process for continuous improvement in the Council's approach to funding in light of Covid-19 learning.

AGREED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

1. That Cabinet approves:
 - an annual 3SIF budget of £3,318,100 for two years (1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023)
 - funding renewal for projects set out in appendix 1 until 31 March 2023. Total value of these grant awards £2,153,838 per year.
 - the allocation of £160,000 per year for Fast Track small grants until 31 March 2023.

2. That Cabinet notes the continuation of the three Advice Forum contracts that run to 31 March 2028, at a value of £729,672 per year, and that these continue to offer critical services to residents.
3. That Cabinet approves the borough's subscription to the London Councils' Grants Programme, as agreed by London Councils' Leaders' Committee, at an annual value of £140,000.
4. That Cabinet agrees to delegate the decision to enter into, or, extend a grant agreement to the Strategic Director of Social Care, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, for the organisations listed in appendix 1; those awarded new infrastructure delivery agreements and successful fast track applicants.
5. That Cabinet agrees to delegate the decision to enter into new agreements, up to the total value of £134,590 per year, in 2021/22 and 2022/23, to the Strategic Director of Social Care, in consultation with the Deputy Leader for replacement projects where organisational change has taken place – to continue meeting outcomes.

Reason for decision:

As set out in the report.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As outlined in the report.

Record of any conflict of interest:

None.

Note of dispensation in respect of any declared conflict of interest:

None.

6. ENDING MODERN SLAVERY IN HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM: OUR STRATEGY FOR A COORDINATED COMMUNITY RESPONSE 2021-2026

The Leader stated that this report outlined the Council's response to tackling modern slavery. He stressed that everyone needed to work together to end this totally unacceptable crime.

AGREED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

1. That approval be given to the contents and publication of Ending Modern Slavery in Hammersmith & Fulham: Our Strategy for a Coordinated Community Response 2021-2026, attached as Appendix 1.
2. To note that once the Strategy has been approved an accessible version of the strategy will be developed to be published at the same time.

Reason for decision:

As set out in the report.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As outlined in the report.

Record of any conflict of interest:

None.

Note of dispensation in respect of any declared conflict of interest:

None.

7. HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY & THE TENANCY STRATEGY 2021

The Leader stated that both Councillor Fennimore and Councillor Homan had worked extensively on this subject, which was one of the Council's key priorities. This strategy described the Council's approach and identified the objectives for the prevention of homelessness and ending rough sleeping in the borough.

AGREED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

1. To Adopt the:
 - a) Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (Appendix A); and
 - b) Tenancy Strategy (Appendix B).
2. To note the summary and analysis of responses to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, and Tenancy Strategy in the consultation Summary Report (Appendixes D and E).
3. To note the Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix D).

Reason for decision:

As set out in the report.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As outlined in the report.

Record of any conflict of interest:

None.

Note of dispensation in respect of any declared conflict of interest:

None.

8. ANNUAL EMERGENCY & BUSINESS CONTINUITY REPORT

Councillor Wesley Harcourt presented the report and stated that the ability to respond and recover quickly from an incident was a measure of resilience and an important aspect of building safer and stronger communities. This report provided an overview of activity over the previous year and the priorities and work plan for the forthcoming year to ensure continuous improvement in the service. He thanked the Emergency Planning Team for their extensive work done over the past year.

NOTED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

1. To note that appendix 3 is not for publication on the basis that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as set out in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).
2. That Cabinet notes the report and the work plan for 2020-2021.

Reason for decision:

As set out in the report.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As outlined in the report.

Record of any conflict of interest:

None.

Note of dispensation in respect of any declared conflict of interest:

None.

9. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FOR WASTE COLLECTION, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANSING SERVICES

Councillor Wesley Harcourt stated that this report requested approval for a procurement strategy for the waste collection, recycling and street cleansing services, currently provided by Serco, from 30 January 2023 to October 2032.

In response to a question from Councillor Adam Connell, Councillor Harcourt replied that the Council had declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency, which had as a key area to reduce waste. The selected service provider would need to be committed to minimise the levels of household waste produced and increase the percentage of waste collected that could be recycled. There should also be a proactive engagement with residents about a more ecological food waste disposal, and also to work with residents to reduce the amount of wasted food they produced.

AGREED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

1. To note that Appendix 1 is exempt from disclosure on the grounds that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information) under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.
2. To approve in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Order (CSO) 18.1 the procurement strategy for the waste collection, recycling and street cleansing services. The contract is estimated to start on 30th January 2023 to October 2032, with options to extend for a further eight years.
3. To delegate authority to the Strategic Director for the Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Environment, to approve minor changes to the procurement process or to the evaluation methodology as set out in procurement strategy, for operational reasons if required.

Reason for decision:

As set out in the report.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As outlined in the report.

Record of any conflict of interest:

None.

Note of dispensation in respect of any declared conflict of interest:

None.

10. EDUCATION CITY - LAND APPROPRIATION

Councillor Sue Fennimore subsequently declared a significant interest in respect of this item, as she was a member of the board of OnSide Youth Zone. As she had joined the meeting virtually via Zoom, she did not participate in the discussion and vote thereon.

Councillor Andrew Jones stated that this report and the next one on the agenda – Investing in White City – where part of a substantial development that would bring significant benefits to the local economy, including 132 new homes, which would be 100% affordable, and to create a new mixed used education hub to include a high-quality primary school, new and expanded nursery for 75 children, new adult education facilities, new youth zone facilities and a new office for educational charities. The development would contribute to the borough's ambitions to maintain, improve, and further accelerate standards for education in the borough, which was one of the aims of the Industrial Strategy.

The Leader thanked Councillor Jones for his excellent work and added that the Industrial Strategy aimed to promote a model of inclusive growth which recognised the key role of schools in equipping residents with the skills and capability to benefit from the dynamism of the local economy. Learning spaces that facilitate the borough's children acquiring the skills necessary to compete successfully in the future knowledge economy would be critical.

Councillor Connell acknowledged the enormous benefit this scheme would bring to the community.

AGREED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

1. To note that Appendix 2 is exempt from disclosure on the grounds that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information) under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.
2. To resolve that the areas of land at the Education City development referred to in this **report and shown edged red on the plans at Appendix 1** ("the Land") are no longer required for the mixed education and health purposes for which they are currently held.
3. To approve the appropriation of the Land pursuant to section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 for the planning purposes of facilitating redevelopment for residential and other uses pursuant to section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
4. To approve the use of powers to override easements and other rights in respect of the land pursuant to section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

Reason for decision:

As set out in the report.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As outlined in the report.

Record of any conflict of interest:

None.

Note of dispensation in respect of any declared conflict of interest:

None.

11. INVESTING IN WHITE CITY

Councillor Sue Fennimore subsequently declared a significant interest in respect of this item, as she was a member of the board of OnSide Youth Zone. As she had joined the meeting virtually via Zoom, she did not participate in the discussion and vote thereon.

This report is related to the previous one on this agenda: Education City – Land Appropriation.

AGREED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

1. To note that appendices 1, 4, 5 and 7 are not for publication on the basis that they contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as set out in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).
2. To approve a capital budget of £2,701,500 for the White City Central project, to pursue the comprehensive redevelopment proposals including the full design, surveys and project management fees up to planning submission and procurement of the main contractor and feasibility and refurbishment works to the former NHS Health Centre, expected funding of the scheme as set out in Appendix 1.
3. To approve an investment of up to £39m in the form of development financing to EdCity Office Ltd to fund the cost of development and construction of the office building thereby facilitating the comprehensive development and regeneration of the site to provide 132 new affordable homes, a new school, new nursery, adult education centre and youth facilities.
4. To approve a corresponding capital budget of up to £39 million to be funded by an increase in the council's Capital Financing Requirement.
5. To delegate authority to the Strategic Director for the Economy in consultation with the Director of Finance and Head of Law to take all necessary steps to facilitate the decision in 3, including agreeing the final contractual terms for the investment facility (based on the heads terms in appendix 5) and subject to completing the assessment of the checklist of the six key subsidy principles (appendix 4).
6. To approve the conditions imposed by the Department for Education for the Education City project as set out in appendix 6.
7. To note the approach to engagement and consultation with residents and stakeholders at White City during the next stage of the design process up to planning submission.

8. To note the council entering into negotiations with the Department for Education with regards to the Section 77 application in respect of Randolph Beresford Nursery for the White City Central Project.
9. To note that the council has secured £900,000 from the MHLG land release funds that will reduce the overall contribution to costs of the Education City project from the council and development partner Ark.

Reason for decision:

As set out in the report.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As outlined in the report.

Record of any conflict of interest:

None.

Note of dispensation in respect of any declared conflict of interest:

None.

12. FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

The Key Decision List was noted.

13. DISCUSSION OF EXEMPT ELEMENTS (IF REQUIRED)

There was no discussion of exempt elements.

Meeting started: 7.04 pm
Meeting ended: 7.47 pm

Chair