

Cabinet

Minutes



Monday 1 November 2021

NOTE: This meeting was held remotely. A recording of the meeting can be watched at on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8Q8NOPskml>

PRESENT

Councillor Stephen Cowan, Leader of the Council
Councillor Max Schmid, Cabinet Member for Finance and Commercial Services
Councillor Adam Connell, Cabinet Member for Public Services Reform
Councillor Lisa Homan, Cabinet Member for Housing

IN ATTENDANCE VIRTUALLY

Councillor Sue Fennimore, Deputy Leader
Councillor Ben Coleman, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care
Councillor Larry Culhane, Cabinet Member for Children and Education
Councillor Wesley Harcourt, Cabinet Member for the Environment

INTRODUCTION

The Leader introduced the meeting and explained that in order to minimise the risk of Covid-19 infection there was a minimum number of Cabinet Members in attendance. However he assured that the meeting was fully quorate. Other members of Cabinet were in attendance virtually via Zoom.

The Leader stressed that throughout the pandemic the Council took every measure to keep people safe, taking the lead right from the beginning on a variety of safety measures, even before the Government intervention. While there had been great success with the vaccine programme there was a rapid increase on the Covid-19 infection rates and admissions to intensive care units. The great majority of admissions were from non-vaccinated people. Therefore, the Leader urged everyone to get vaccinated to protect themselves and their loved ones, as well as to safeguard our economy.

1. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 11 OCTOBER 2021

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 11 October 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 virtual absence were received from Councillor Andrew Jones and Councillor Sharon Holder.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

4. 2021/22 CORPORATE REVENUE MONITOR - MONTH 4 (JULY 2021)

Councillor Max Schmid gave a brief introduction outlining the slight improvement on the previous Month 2 report, presented at Cabinet in September. Having an underspend in the midst of a pandemic and continuing Government austerity was truly astounding. He congratulated officers for achieving such an accomplishment and for delivering high quality services while maintaining ruthless financial efficiency .

The Leader stated that since 2010 the Council's budget had been reduced by one third. Therefore, he thanked the finance and the senior management teams for producing consistent balanced budgets and saving a vast amount of money while improving and extending the number of services provided. This had been done by eliminating wastage and bureaucracy to deliver cutting-edge services.

AGREED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

1. To note General Fund forecast underspend of £2.260m.
2. To note that the forecast draw down from the Housing Revenue Account general balance will be £0.320m less than budgeted.
3. To note the in-year Dedicated Schools Grant overspend of £1.810m.
4. To approve the General Fund virement of £0.310m as detailed in Appendix 9.

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.

5. DIGITAL STRATEGY - MOVING TO A MODERN CLOUD-BASED SERVICE

Councillor Max Schmid reported that as financial uncertainty in the coming years would continue, officers were looking for new ways of saving money. This report outlined a new business solution that would support hybrid working, save money and enable a productive agile workforce equipped with the technology needed to work in a modern and flexible way. Other benefits included energy efficiency, which would benefit the environment, and more resiliency against cyber-attacks.

AGREED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

That Cabinet:

1. Notes Appendix A 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. Approves total one-off investment of up to £1.799m to be funded from the IT and Technology reserve.
3. Approves Azure cloud hosting services to be commissioned from Microsoft via Trustmarque. These costs are contained in exempt Appendix A.
4. Approves a Change Control Notice to be issued to BT to procure the necessary exit management services via the Managed Compute Lot 3 agreement. These costs are contained in exempt Appendix A.
5. Approves the additional technical and project management staff resource to be procured to complete the migration. These costs are contained in exempt Appendix A.
6. Notes that a separate procurement strategy has been approved to utilise the GCloud 12 framework to secure an Azure migration and ongoing support partner. The costs are contained in exempt Appendix A.

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. FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

The Key Decision List was noted.

7. DISCUSSION OF EXEMPT ELEMENTS (IF REQUIRED)

There was no discussion of exempt elements.

AOB

Climate Change

The Leader acknowledged the importance of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) which was currently taking place in Glasgow. The conference was being attended by world leaders discussing ways to accelerate action to tackle the climate crisis through collaboration between governments, businesses, and the society.

The Leader stressed that this calamity was the biggest challenge ever faced by any generation. Immediate collaborative action was required to defeat this problem. This Council was sending a very strong message to COP26 for politicians to take action. In Hammersmith & Fulham the Council had declared that the whole borough would be climate neutral by 2030 and numerous actions were being taken to achieve this target.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm
Meeting ended: 7.16 pm

Chair