

CABINET

At a meeting of Cabinet held on
15 July 2020

(Present)

Councillor Baines (Chairman)
Councillors Bell, Bond, Bowden, Burns, Charlton,
Groucutt, Murphy, McCauley and Quinn

123 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

124 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

Item	Title	Member(s)	Interest
11	Parkside Planning Inquiry	Councillor Baines	Declared a prejudicial interest in the item

125 MINUTES

* **Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 24 June 2020 be approved and signed.**

126 PERFORMANCE REPORT OUTTURN 2019/20

A report was submitted which provided an analysis of performance for each of the Council's Portfolios. The report was grouped by individual Portfolio with each Portfolio section containing the following:

- i) Key Priorities;
- ii) A summary of progress in terms of delivery against key priorities;
- iii) A performance indicator tracking table showing performance against indicators in the year to date, direction of travel and comparative performance; and
- iv) A summary of progress against key performance indicators, what is going well, what is proving challenging and what is being done to improve performance.

Future performance reports would be structured to reflect performance against Council priorities.

The Performance Indicator and Target Setting report to Cabinet at its meeting held on 27 May 2020, alerted Cabinet to the fact that the Covid-19 pandemic significantly impeded the Council's ability to set meaningful targets for 2020/21 and review its measures of performance.

Although the impact on outturn performance for 2019/20 of the Covid-19 pandemic was limited, the majority of indicators were now being impacted to varying degrees by the current situation. Work was now beginning to be undertaken to ensure that future performance management arrangements form a part of the Council's reset and recovery activity.

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This work would involve a review of the draft Council Plan, which would incorporate reset and recovery activity within the associated action plan, as well as a revised performance framework with measures and targets reflecting the desired outcomes of the new plan. This revised performance framework would form the basis of future performance reporting to Cabinet over the course of 2020/21.

The Council remained committed to the regular monitoring and reporting of performance information to ensure the delivery of efficient, effective and value for money services that meet the needs and expectations of the customers and communities it serves.

* **Resolved that:**

- (1) **the current performance position be noted; and**
- (2) **Cabinet to work with appropriate Executive Directors to further address any deficits in current performance.**

127 **INTRODUCTION OF A MUTUALLY AGREED RESIGNATION SCHEME (MARS)**

A report was submitted which sought approval of a Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS), in order that it can be used to over specific periods of time, to be determined by the Chief Executive, where the need to address identified budgetary issues arises.

The MARS has been developed to offer an additional tool that could be used to help the Council meet savings identified as part of its budgetary strategy.

Cabinet were informed that the Council had a range of policies and procedures that allow employees to exit the organisation, but many were linked to statutory schemes such as redundancy or Local Government Pension Regulations. The MARS would be an addition to these policies and would differ in that it was non contractual and voluntary for employees to apply. It also had no pension implications and was more flexible in use for the Council as and when it was required.

The Scheme was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

* **Resolved that the introduction of a Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS) be approved.**

128 **BUSINESS CASE FOR MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTED TENANCY PROVISION**

A report was submitted which sought approval to progress the development of a Supported Tenancy Scheme for people requiring support with Mental Health needs within the borough.

Cabinet were informed that a working group between the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Council had been brought together to look at Mental Health provision within the borough; in particular in relation to improving the throughput of mental health service users from secure provision to community settings.

This had been an issue for St Helens in that service users get 'stuck' in high cost secure provision due to the lack of adequate capacity within the borough for alternative, more

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appropriate, care settings in the community. There was also a health system pressure identified from this category of service users presenting at A&E.

The proposed development would offer a mix of short-term tenancies and a crisis provision.

* **Resolved that:**

- (1) **the development of a Supported Tenancy Scheme be entered into for people who need support with Mental Health issues within the borough with St Helens CCG and Torus; and**
- (2) **£30k of capital investment in the Mental Health Supported Tenancy Scheme be committed with Torus and St Helens CCG.**

129 NEW EDUCATIONAL PREMISES FOR ASHURST PRIMARY SCHOOL

A report was submitted which informed Cabinet of the increased estimated cost in respect of the construction of new educational premises at Ashurst Primary School.

At its meeting held on 18 September 2019, Cabinet approved that new educational premises should be constructed on the existing site of Ashurst Primary School. The construction of a new school was proposed in order to address suitability issues (including undersized classrooms), a smaller than recommended hall, a lack of circulation routes, and the condition of the original pre-cast concrete roof panels that were allowing significant water ingress.

Kier North West Ltd had been appointed through the Scape Group framework to develop the scheme. The initial estimated cost of the scheme was £6.022m. Following additional site surveys, cost reviews and design changes, the estimated scheme cost had increased to £7.177m (an overall increase of £1.155m). Additional provision had been made for potential costs associated with COVID-19 (e.g. changes to construction practices to maintain social distancing), and the risk of additional works being required which cannot be anticipated or finalised at this stage (e.g. asbestos, ground conditions due to historical mine workings etc).

The updated costs in respect of the scheme were set out in the report, along with the original estimated cost that was presented to Cabinet on 18 September 2019.

The Cabinet was informed that the decision was a Key Decision and details had been published in accordance with the provisions within the Constitution.

* **Resolved that:**

- (1) **the allocation of £1.155m of currently uncommitted funding within the Children's Services capital programme in respect of the increased estimated costs associated with the construction of a new school on the Ashurst Primary School site be approved; and**
- (2) **a planning application be submitted in respect of the proposed construction of the new school premises. The process will include a public consultation.**

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130 SUPPORTED LODGINGS

A report was submitted which sought approval to expand the Council's existing supported lodgings arrangements for children who were leaving care. This would enable more placements to be provided. In addition, the provision would be tiered so that support was available for young people with different levels of need.

It was proposed that the existing contract for the provision of supported lodgings was amended to reflect the expanded service specification. It was also proposed that the contract management and monitoring arrangements transfer from the Place Services Department, where those functions were currently undertaken, to Children's Services. This would enable Children's Social Care to directly oversee and monitor the performance of the provider and ensure the provision meets the needs of care leavers.

The Cabinet was informed that the decision was a Key Decision and details had been published in accordance with the provisions within the Constitution.

* **Resolved that:**

- (1) **the expansion of the existing supported lodgings provision for young people leaving care be approved; and**
- (2) **the existing contract for the provision of supported lodgings be revised and expanded to reflect the new arrangements.**

131 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

* **Resolved that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item for the reason stated:**

<u>Minute</u>	<u>Reason (under the Local Government Act 1972)</u>
132	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information) (Para 3 of Schedule 12A)

Councillor Baines here left the meeting.

The following Minute was a Key Decision but notice had not been given in the Public Notice of Key Decisions. The Cabinet was able to make a decision in relation to the item as the provisions relating to the General Exceptions in the Council's Constitution had been met.

132 PARKSIDE PLANNING INQUIRY

A report was submitted which provided details of the details of the 'Call in' by the Secretary of State of Housing and Local Communities relating to the former Parkside Colliery site, applications relating to Parkside Link Road (PLR) and the Phase 1 development of the Parkside site. A 'call in' meant that the decision on both applications would be taken by the Secretary of State following a Public Inquiry.

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- * **Resolved that:**
- (1) the payment of all costs that are reasonably incurred by the Council in its capacity as Local Planning Authority in connection with the Parkside Call in Inquiry and the promotion of the Parkside Link Road application be authorised;**
 - (2) the payment of all costs that are reasonably incurred by the Council in its capacity as Applicant in connection with the Parkside Call in Inquiry and the promotion of the Parkside Link Road application be authorised;**
 - (3) the contribution of the sum set out in the report be authorised in order to contribute towards the costs incurred by the JV defending the planning application for Phase 1 development of the Parkside site at a planning inquiry; and**
 - (4) the creation of a reserve of £100K be authorised for use in meeting any costs overrun associated with an extended planning inquiry.**

Note:

The Chief Executive and Executive Director, Place Services declared a personal interest in respect of Item 11, and in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Employees left the meeting.

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