

THE CABINET
Monday, 15th June, 2020

Present:- Councillor Watson(in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Allen, Beck, Hoddinott, Lelliott, and Roche

Also in attendance Councillor Steele (Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Read.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Lelliott declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Covid-19 Discretionary Business Grants Scheme).

9. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

10. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meetings of the Cabinet held on 23 March and 11 May 2020 be approved as true and correct records of the proceedings.

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:

That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the Agenda Items 13 and 15 on the grounds that the appendices of the reports involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of such Act indicated, as now amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

12. ROTHERHAM'S ALL AGE AUTISM STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2020 -2023

Consideration was given to a report which presented Rotherham's All Age Autism Strategy and Implementation Plan 2020 -2023 for approval. It was reported that the strategy was grounded in the vision and passion expressed in the Council Plan and in the Rotherham's Integrated Health and Social Care Place Plan, which was based on the values of ensuring collaboration and co-production.

The strategy would support and progress the outcomes outlined in the Integrated Health and Social Care Place Plan and the Councils Housing Strategy, as well as using a 'whole life approach' which was referred to in the Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Furthermore, the strategy was based on a clear co-produced vision and identified key activity focused on 5 areas:

- Starting Well: All Rotherham's autistic children and young people are healthy and safe from harm
- Developing Well: All Rotherham's autistic children and young people start school ready to learn for life
- Moving on well to independence: Rotherham's autistic children and young people are provided with the same opportunities to thrive going into adulthood.
- Living well: Autistic adults living in Rotherham will get the right support when needed
- Ageing well: Autistic adults living in Rotherham will be better supported as they grow old

It was further reported that the new All Age Autism Strategy and Implementation Plan provided an overarching framework for the Council, NHS Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and partners. It identified priority areas based on the national requirements and local findings. It was proposed that both the Strategy and the accompanying Implementation Plan would be delivered over a period of three years from 2020 to 2023. The Plan would work on the principle of a strength-based approach; this meant the Strategy should encourage people to recognise their strengths to support choice and control.

Furthermore, the strategy would build on work being carried out in Rotherham and South Yorkshire by individuals, groups and communities, as well as the Council and partners to improve the lives of people with autism.

The report had been subject to pre-decision scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 10 June 2020, where Members had recommended that:

- That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.
- That a report on the implementation of the Rotherham All Age Autism Strategy and Implementation Plan 2020 -2023 be submitted to the Health Select Commission in due course.

Resolved:

1. That the content of the report be noted.
2. That approval be given to the proposed Rotherham All Age Autism Strategy and Implementation Plan.

3. That the intention to review the Plan in 2022 be noted.
4. That the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board be accepted, with a report on the implementation of the Rotherham All Age Autism Strategy and Implementation Plan 2020 -2023 be submitted to the Health Select Commission at an appropriate point to be agreed by the Cabinet Member, Strategic Director and Commission.

13. PUBLIC HEALTH PROPOSALS FOR RECOMMISSIONING SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES (ADULTS AND UNDER 18S)

Consideration was given to a report requesting that the tender for sexual health services, which was due for publication in July 2020, be delayed in order to give service providers (some of which are in the NHS) time to recover from the COVID 19 crisis and furthermore to enable RMBC resources to be diverted to urgent requirements to deal with COVID 19 consequences.

The report also requested that a variation to the current contract, delivered by The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust (TRFT) be extended for a 12month period until 31 March 2022.

Resolved:

1. That the impact of the pandemic on NHS providers and also the local authority in its role as commissioner of the Sexual Health services for Rotherham residents, as set out in the report, be noted.
2. That approval be given to the publication of the Sexual Health tender in April 2021.
3. That the current contract with TRFT be varied for a further 12-month term until 31 March 2022 to facilitate the tendering exercise.
4. That the new service be recommissioned for a period of 5 years with annual extension options after that for up to a further 5 years, making the total potential contract length 10 years.
5. That approval be given to the amendment to the service for the recommissioned contract to include the budget held by the Council for the payments to other providers across England when Rotherham residents' access Genito Urinary Medicine (GUM) services. This is to be managed by the successful provider going forwards.

14. OPERATIONAL DELIVERY OF LAC SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY – UPDATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

Consideration was given to a report which provided a progress update on the in-house children's residential development, which had previously been agreed by the Cabinet at its meeting on 17 February 2020, and detailed the financial implications for progressing to the next stage of development.

It was reported that the overall development responded directly the Council's strategic intention to reduce external residential placements and ensure more looked after children and young people were placed within borough, closer to their family and community networks. The new provision, along with foster care, third party in-borough block contracts, semi-independent provision and other family-based placements, would provide a mixed economy of arrangements which will effectively meet the Council's statutory duties, outlined in the Sufficiency Strategy 2019 - 2022. The development would enable the Council to invest in residential provision which would:

- ensure more children and young people are placed in Rotherham close to their communities, families, friends and schools.
- deliver improved outcomes for looked after children.
- develop a service model that encourages step-down to family-based placements
- provide a local response to the increasing demand for a range of residential placements.
- provide greater flexibility and control of provision.
- reduce placement costs and support the delivery of directorate savings.

The report detailed the progress made from 17 February 2020, which had been achieved within context of the COVID pandemic that had significantly impacted the internal and external working environment from the beginning of March 2020. Summary of progress is highlighted as:

- A Registered Manager and Deputy Manager had been appointed and additional internal Registered Manager capacity had been re-configured to support implementation. Recruitment campaign had been successful and was on track to recruit the required staffing for phase one.
- Two buildings were operationally ready for registration with Ofsted, including the required planning approval.
- Registration of one provision had been submitted in mid-May and the second was ready and would be submitted when newly appointed Registered Manager was in place in July 2020.

It was noted that the report and proposals had been subject to pre-decision scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 10 June 2020, where Members had recommended:

1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.
2. That, subject to Cabinet approving the recommendations set out in the report, the benchmarking exercise by Members of Improving Lives Select Commission be continued, with interviews with Members from other authorities being prioritised to better inform the approach for the procurement process.
3. That, in view of the individual personal circumstances of victims and survivors, the specification for the contract ensure that the re-referral process be expedited swiftly to ensure that service users receive timely support.
4. That Improving Lives Select Commission monitor the effectiveness of the service and contract arrangements on an annual basis.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet note the progress made.
2. That approval be given to progress to phase two of the implementation plan, which incorporates the acquisition of three properties within the capped budget of £750, 000 and the recruitment of the associated staff to register and operationalise the homes.
3. That a further report be presented to Cabinet on the submission of the Ofsted registration for the homes in phase two, and any requests for permission to move to phase three of the plan which will include an update on the financial implications.
4. That the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board be accepted.

15. SUPPORT SERVICES FOR ADULT SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION: COMMISSIONING AND PROCUREMENT APPROACH

Consideration was given to a report which provided background information on current commissioning arrangements for support services for adult survivors of child sexual exploitation and presented the key findings from the needs analysis. Further to that needs analysis, the report also provided details of the proposed procurement arrangements, including the key features of the service specification.

It was reported that the current contracts to support adults who are survivors of child sexual exploitation would come to an end in December 2020. The report proposed that services were recommissioned for at least three more years (until April 2023) to provide ongoing support to Rotherham residents who were vulnerable due to their historic experiences. Members noted that in order to support the re-commissioning process a detailed needs analysis, including public consultation, had been prepared.

Resolved:

1. That the key findings from the needs analysis for support services for adult survivors of child sexual exploitation be noted.
2. That approval be given for services to be re-commissioned until 31 March 2023, with an option to extend until 31 March 2025, and that a formal tender is advertised.
3. That approval be given to the key features of the service specification, as set out in paragraphs 2.14 and 2.15 of this report and Option 3, to realign the funding split to increase the proportion of evidence-based interventions that are delivered as part of the overall service offer

16. FINANCE UPDATE AND BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update on a number of financial matters, including those related to Covid-19. The report was provided as an interim update for Cabinet, following on from the approval of the Budget and Council Tax 2020/21 report in February 2020 and in advance of the Financial Outturn 2019/20 and Financial Monitoring 2020/21 reports to be submitted to Cabinet in July 2020.

It was reported that, in common with local authorities across the country, the Council faced significant operational impacts on service delivery along with the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on residents and local businesses resulting from the associated restrictions and the substantial support being provided to residents, care organisations and other organisations and businesses. The Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) was collecting monthly financial management information from councils in order to understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on local authority finances, to inform MHCLG planning purposes and to help identify where the greatest pressures are likely to be and to support an ongoing assessment of likely future costs. The total estimated cost of Covid impact to the Council, as submitted to MHCLG was £40.1m, from a combination of:

- Additional costs
- Loss of sales, fees and charges and income
- Non-delivery of budget savings

- Increased rent arrears and other costs for the Housing Revenue Account
- Loss of business rates and council tax income

The majority of the cost impact was on Adult Social Care and included dealing with additional demand, supporting the market and providing personal protective equipment (PPE). The anticipated cost of PPE, as envisaged at the time and included within the MHCLG return of 15 May, was £2.8m. Most of the impact on loss of sales, fees and charges and income was within the Regeneration & Environment Directorate, with the main areas of impact being Cultural and Related Services and Planning and Development.

It was noted that the report had been subject to pre-decision scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 10 June 2020, where Members had recommended that:

1. That Cabinet be advised that the recommendations be supported.
2. That the Leader of the Council write to all three Members of Parliament for the borough seeking their support to lobby the Government to ensure the Council is fairly funded to respond to the impact of the Covid19 pandemic.
3. That, at an appropriate time later in the year, the Leader of the Council hold an all Member Seminar on the proposals for the authority's recovery from the Covid19 pandemic and the likely financial impact of proposed changes.

In receiving the recommendations, Cabinet noted that the Leader of the Council had already encouraged the three MPs representing the borough to lobby the Government for fair funding to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Resolved:

1. That the substantial costs associated with responding to the Covid-19 pandemic be noted.
2. That the funding received from Government to be used to mitigate the costs of responding to the Covid-19 pandemic be noted.
3. That approval be given to the expenditure incurred and anticipated on the Covid19 response, in accordance with the expectations and guidance from Government and the Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules contained within the Council's Constitution.
4. That approval be given to the utilisation of the Covid-19 emergency grant funding in accordance with expectations and guidance from Government and the Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules contained within the Council's Constitution.

5. That the approach taken to the distribution of 75% of the Infection Control Fund as per national guidance is noted.
6. That approval be given to the recommended approach for the allocation of the 25% discretionary element of the Infection Control Fund.
7. That the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board be accepted.

17. NEW APPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS RATES DISCRETIONARY RELIEF FOR ROTHERHAM ABUSE COUNSELLING SERVICE AND ROTHERHAM CROSSROADS - CARING FOR CARERS

Consideration was given to a report which detailed the application for the award of a business rate discretionary relief for Rotherham Abuse Counselling Service and Rotherham Crossroads - Caring for Carers. The report was submitted in accordance with the Council's Discretionary Business Rates Relief Policy (approved by Cabinet on 12 December 2016).

Resolved:

1. That 20% top up discretionary relief be awarded to Rotherham Abuse Counselling Service for the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2021.
2. That 20% top up discretionary relief be awarded to Rotherham Crossroads – Caring for Carers for the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2021 on the premises at The Point, Bradmarsh Way, but declined on the premises at Bridgegate.

18. COVID-19 DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS GRANTS SCHEME

Consideration was given to a report which sets out proposals for how the Discretionary Grant Fund will be utilised by the Council, the businesses the Council aims to support, eligibility and exclusions and the application process.

On 1 May 2020 the UK government announced a new discretionary grant fund scheme that would aim to provide grant support to those businesses affected by Covid-19 who did not receive any support under the first tranche of business grants. The proposed scheme gave local authorities a degree of discretion to design their own scheme, however, it did indicate the business types that government intend the funding to be used to support.

As the report had not been included on the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for 28 days prior to the decision being taken by Cabinet, consent to the decision had been given by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. As part of the pre-decision scrutiny process, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board had considered the report and indicated its support for the proposals.

Resolved:

1. That approval be given to the operation of the Discretionary Grant Fund as set out within the report.
2. That the application process and timeframe for applications to be made be noted.
3. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services in respect of the application of any surplus grant to top up the grant values paid to eligible small businesses.

19. UPDATE ON THE SITE CLUSTERS PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update on progress and outcomes in respect of the Site Clusters Programme, and further explained the impact of Covid-19 on the programme, and set out the final cost position.

It was reported that the Site Clusters Programme, which would deliver 217 new homes of a range of types and tenures across seven sites in Canklow, Maltby, Dinnington and East Herringthorpe, was almost complete.

Resolved:

1. That progress with the Site Clusters Programme be noted.
2. That the anticipated final cost position of the Site Clusters Programme as set out in Appendix 4, be noted.

20. LOCAL PLAN: ADOPTION OF SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Consideration was given to a report which sought approval to Cabinet approval to adopt the following Supplementary Planning Documents:

- Householder Design Guide
- Development in the Green Belt
- Equal and Healthy Communities
- Town Centre Uses and Developments
- Air Quality and Emissions
- Shop Front Design Guide

It was reported that Rotherham's Local Plan provided the framework for determining planning applications. Supplementary Planning Documents provided additional detail and guidance to support policies in the Local Plan. Once adopted, they were a material consideration which could be taken into account when determining planning applications. Supplementary Planning Documents help improve planning applications, which in turn could speed up the planning process and produce better outcomes for the community.

Resolved:

1. That approval be given to adopt the Supplementary Planning Documents in respect of:
 - Householder Design Guide
 - Development in the Green Belt
 - Equal and Healthy Communities
 - Town Centre Uses and Developments
 - Air Quality and Emissions
 - Shop Front Design Guide

21. DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS PROPERTY ASSET - FORMER CARETAKER'S PROPERTY (THORPE HESLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL), 790 UPPER WORTLEY ROAD, THORPE HESLEY, ROTHERHAM

Consideration was given to a report which sought approval to dispose of the Council's freehold interest in the Former Caretaker's Property (Thorpe Hesley Primary School), 790 Upper Wortley Road, Thorpe Hesley, Rotherham.

The property was declared surplus to the operational requirements of the Council in November 2019. Consultations had since taken place with all relevant service areas through the Asset Management Board and no other alternative operational use had been identified. It was reported that the property was currently vacant and posed a risk to the Council in terms of ongoing security and holding costs.

It was noted that the Council regularly reviewed its property portfolio to ensure it had a "fit for purpose" estate, reduced unnecessary holding costs and where appropriate generate capital receipts.

Resolved:

1. That approval be given to the disposal of the Council's freehold interest in the Former Caretaker's Property (Thorpe Hesley Primary School), 790 Upper Wortley Road, Thorpe Hesley, Rotherham.

2. That approval be given to the Assistant Director (Planning, Regeneration and Transport) to the disposal of the assets by implementing the most appropriate method of disposal to help expedite the process, whilst ensuring that best consideration is achieved under Section 123 – Local Government Act 1972.
3. That the Head of Legal Services be instructed to negotiate and complete the necessary legal documentation once terms for the disposal have been agreed.

22. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Consideration was given to the circulated report, the contents of which were included as part of the relevant items and the details included accordingly

23. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:-

That the next meeting of the Cabinet be held on Monday 13 July 2020 commencing at 10.00 a.m.

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