

THE CABINET
Monday 19 June 2023

Present:- Councillor Read (in the Chair); Councillors Allen, Beck, Cusworth, Lelliott, Roche and Sheppard.

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alam and Brookes.

160. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made:

Member	Agenda Item	Interest Type	Nature of Interest
Councillor Beck	Agenda Item 7 (SEN Resource Bases)	Personal Interest.	School Governor

161. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A question was received from Mr Azam who asked why it was so difficult to share the Terms of Reference or give enough advance notice of when the consultant was meant to come as part of the independent review.

The Monitoring Officer advised that the Consultant had withdrawn at the last moment.

In his supplementary question he advised there was a Muslim bereavement liaison group that didn't know the terms of reference and he believed the Council were creating a toxic environment.

The Monitoring Officer responded saying he disagreed and that the Council were committed to consultation and involve various groups and consult with groups of various religious communities. The Leader suggested that Mr Azam provided his details to the Monitoring Officer and this could be followed up.

Mr Hussain asked a question relating to the Muslim public graveyard and stated that Councillor Alam previously advised he had only been aware of the flooding issues since the Easter weekend which was conflicting information.

In Councillor Alam's absence, the Leader recalled that Councillor Alam was recounting when he had personally been advised of the issues.

Mr Hussain advised that the flooding issues had been there for years, before Dignity had taken over the contract and questioned when exactly the Council became aware of the issues.

The Leader said he would attempt to find out the information and for Mr Hussain to leave his details so this could be clarified.

Mrs Khan stated that the Muslim Burial Council had been notified at the last minute that the review had been cancelled and wanted an explanation as to why this had happened.

The Monitoring Officer advised that the Consultant withdrew from the process and that the Council were considering its next steps.

In her supplementary question she stated that she had been advised that the Consultant felt like they were being controlled by the Council. The Monitoring Officer advised this didn't tie in with his understanding and that he would check and respond in writing.

162. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved:-

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 April 2023 should include an amendment at minute 152 recommendation 3 needs to say 'bases' as opposed 'basis' but then be approved as a true and correct of the proceedings.

163. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair advised that appendices to Minute No. 171 contained exempt information, however, the meeting remained open to the public and press throughout.

164. SCRUTINY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS - ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE

Consideration was given to the report submitted that summarised the findings and recommendations of the Health Select Commission spotlight review into access to primary care. The review was prompted by insight provided by Healthwatch Rotherham, regarding continued enquiries from residents who were having difficulty accessing GP appointments.

The report sought approval for the recommendations to be submitted to NHS South Yorkshire / Rotherham Place Board for consideration and response.

Although it wasn't a large study, Scrutiny took feedback from partners and residents seriously, access to services were a priority of the Health Select Commission and the review took a closer look at the availability of GP

appointments.

The review found after speaking to GP representatives and primary care commissioners, that in the recovery from the pandemic, Rotherham's numbers of appointment rebounded the fastest in South Yorkshire and at the time of the review, there were approximately 5000 GP appointments available across Rotherham every day. There was more work that can be done to address the delays and improve understanding around accessing GP appointments and the report sought the approval for the recommendations to be submitted to South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board, in particular Rotherham Place Board.

The recommendations were then proposed

Resolved: That Cabinet

1. Approved the submission of the following recommendations to NHS South Yorkshire / Rotherham Place Board for their consideration and requested a written response to the Director of Public Health for reporting to a future Cabinet meeting:
 - a. That the principle should be agreed that responsibility for patient access to primary care would be shared between the primary care practices and their patients.
 - b. That consideration was given to how all Place Partners demonstrated responsibility to communicate honest wait times, where this information was available, for all health and care services system-wide.
 - c. That any trend connecting a practice or GP with excessive delays or Urgent and Emergency Care Centre attendances should be analysed, and appropriate action taken.
 - d. That consideration was given to how to increase general understanding of how to recognise symptoms as needing medical attention, where to seek help, and within what timeframe.
 - e. That Place partners, including the Primary Care Networks (PCNs), considered how to expand general understanding of the wider options when seeking medical advice, with a view to expediting consultation with the most appropriate professional or service to be able to address their need.
 - f. That NHS South Yorkshire/Rotherham Place Board gave due consideration to enhanced safety-netting to mitigate risks associated with an increasingly patient-led model of care initiation and follow up.

- g. That NHS South Yorkshire/Rotherham Place Board considered how messaging and communications would figure in managing patient expectations around waits in the evolving model of care.
- h. That consideration was given to how Councillors may play an expanded role in signposting and managing expectations among Rotherham residents, as the sector worked toward a new model of care which takes account of ongoing resource pressures on health services.
- i. Whereas recruitment remained a limiting factor for expansion of social prescribing, that recruitment to social prescribing roles be prioritised, and consideration given to how to make participation in social prescribing in Rotherham more attractive to professionals.

165. SEN RESOURCE BASES

Consideration was given to the report submitted which provided an update in respect of SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 delivery of the SEND Resource base education provisions in mainstream schools following the SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 approved by Cabinet paper in October 2022.

The report detailed the key activities undertaken in completing an expression of interest process for schools to host a SEND resource base, with updates on the selection process, due diligence undertaken to date and next steps in relation to delivering the roll out of Rotherham SEND Sufficiency Strategy Phase 4.

In Rotherham there were just under 20% of pupils identified as having special education needs or disability and this included those with an Education, Health and Care Plan but also those receiving support without such a plan.

Cabinet heard that, to continue to meet the educational needs of children in Rotherham there was a responsibility to create a sufficiency of education provision to meet the needs of all pupils.

SEN resource bases were provisions attached to mainstream schools providing specialist therapeutic input and support for pupils with a specific SEND need. Pupils would be able to access mainstream classes with peers but also individual support.

The first of the planned 140 places should be available from September with the remainder available over the next two academic years. The bases would allow the Council to support parental wishes to access education in Rotherham as opposed to out of area placements where could benefit from remaining in the community they live. They also provide value for money, avoiding the need to leave to go to a specialist provision

which is more expensive for the Council.

The Leader remarked that it was good news for Rotherham and that 3.3 millions pounds was being invested on the 140 places.

The Leader listed the following schools as being part of the investment: Thrybergh Academy, Winterhill Academy, Dinnington Academy, St Pius Catholic High School, Wales High, Brinsworth Academy, Dalton Foljambe, Bramley Sunnyside, Meadow View Highfield Farm, Thurcroft Junior Academy, Maltby Manor Academy, Brinsworth Whitehill.

He acknowledged that for many parents it was too difficult to access appropriate school places, right across the country and parents were given difficult decisions to make. He stated that a significant amount of money would make a difference to young people to access more appropriate education closer to their homes.

The recommendations were then proposed.

Resolved: That Cabinet:

1. Noted the activity undertaken and progress to date on SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 including changes to the original profile of provision following the expression of interest process.
2. Formally approved 140 places at the 13 schools successful in their expression of interest to host a SEN resource base as outlined in paragraph 2.6 and limited to the High Needs Safety Valve capital allocation as outlined in paragraph 6.1 subject to Department of Education approval.

166. SCHOOLS ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY

Consideration was given to the report submitted which detailed that all schools had a statutory duty to provide 'reasonable adjustments' for their pupils to make sure disabled students were not discriminated against. There were three main categories of adjustment that schools were expected to make for children: Improving access to the curriculum, improving physical access to buildings including providing specialist equipment and improving access to information.

The updated Rotherham School's Accessibility Strategy identified all schools' statutory responsibilities to support their pupils and the support available to schools from the Council in relation to their own Accessibility planning.

Rotherham were committed to delivering improved special educational provision with a capital allocation of £375k per year (two separate pots of money) for both mainstream and special schools for the next four years.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board acknowledged the work that had taken place on this when it was presented to Scrutiny and a comprehensive session had taken place and that it was an extremely good news story for Rotherham.

The recommendations were then proposed.

Resolved: That Cabinet:

1. Approved the School Accessibility Strategy.
2. Approved the Capital Accessibility Funding Framework and schools' accessibility application process.
3. Agreed that there would be a future report provided to Cabinet to approve the outcome of the application for the capital funding.

167. FINANCE UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report that provided an update to Cabinet on a number of financial matters. The report was provided as an interim update for Cabinet, following on from the approval of the Budget and Council Tax 2023/24 report at Council on 1 March 2023 and in advance of the Financial Outturn 2022/23 report and May Financial Monitoring 2023/24 report that should be submitted to Cabinet in July 2023.

This report also provided an update on the Council's administration of the Local Council Tax Support Top Up payment and Household Support Fund for 2023/24 along with a number of Capital Programme variations and an update on Feasibility Funding received from the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority.

The expected outturn position had improved and was now down to £8.4 million. The biggest single pressure being the impact of inflation and energy prices, but the £8.4 million position should improve before the year end. This was an improvement from £7.3 million at the end of 2022-2023 and the Council was able to use less reserves than anticipated.

The main improvement was down to a number of adult care placements that were able to be picked up through NHS funding and further improvements in terms of Children and Young People's placements.

The recommendations were then proposed.

Resolved:

1. That the update on the revenue budget financial outturn 2022/23 was noted.
2. That the Council's progress on the delivery of the Local Council

Tax Support Top Up payment 2023/24 was noted.

3. That the Council's delivery of the Household Support Fund 2022/23 was noted.
4. That Cabinet delegated the decision to allocate and spend the £3m Feasibility Fund to the Strategic Director for Regeneration & Environment in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Assistant Director Financial Services.
5. That Cabinet approved the capital budget variations as detailed in section 2.7 of the report.

168. SCRUTINY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS - MODERN SLAVERY

Consideration was given to the report to outline the outcomes and findings of the spotlight review into modern slavery. The review was prompted following the Council's adoption of the Charter against Modern Slavery, to examine the effectiveness of partnership interventions that aimed to tackle modern slavery in Rotherham.

Councillor Clark advised that there was an innovative approach to this spotlight review which was an overview rather than in depth analysis. The key challenges faced were discussed with partners in dealing with this issue and explored what was working well and exchanged ideas on areas for improvement. The Cabinet Member, Officers and partners were thanked for their openness in responding to the enquiries. The Board was assured by the evident commitment across South Yorkshire Modern Slavery partnership to tackle exploitation. The examples provided showed the complexity and sensitivity of this work along with the part each agency played. The Safer Rotherham Partnership 2022-25 sighted tackling modern slavery and human trafficking as one of its priorities. It was hoped that the observations and recommendations made a timely contribution to the agenda. The recommendations were submitted to Cabinet and the Safer Rotherham Partnership for response.

The Assistant Director, Community Safety & Street Scene echoed his thanks for everyone's engagement with this review. The detailed work following the report would be carried out and brought back to Cabinet in due course.

The recommendations were then proposed.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet received the report and considered the following recommendations:
 - i. That the Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP) gives consideration to rolling out a targeted learning and

development offer/campaign to raise awareness of modern slavery, how to spot the signs, risks and how to raise concerns and make referrals:

- a) to front-line staff across key agencies;
 - b) to elected members;
 - c) to the general public and targeted business such as letting agencies (commercial and residential).
- ii. That the SRP gives consideration to mapping the local modern slavery landscape to identify high risk industries and hot spots (using the example of Bristol City Council).
 - iii. That consideration is given to establishing an RMBC Modern Slavery Internal Governance Group including representation from services who may encounter modern slavery (for example, Procurement, Licensing, Environmental Health, Training Standards, Neighbourhood teams, Social Care and Housing).
 - iv. That consideration is given to how young adults at risk or experiencing modern slavery are safeguarded during the transition from children to adult services and are age assessed appropriately.
 - v. That consideration is given to developing referral pathways to ensure that modern slavery victims (both adult and child) have access to appropriate support (housing, advocacy, mental health support) on a timely basis.
 - vi. That consideration is given to re-launching the Strategic Partnership information sharing group at the earliest opportunity to improve the way that agencies can share data and intelligence, including examining how IT systems can work better together.
 - vii. That consideration is given to widening the levels of investigation and auditing of contracts procured by the Council to focus on the 'layers' of sub-contractors, including binding specifications to audit or 'dip sample' contracts along the supply chain.
 - viii. That consideration is given to how the Procurement Team can engage with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) Supply Chain Advisor to improve processes, joint working and awareness.
 - ix. That consideration be given to allowing victim advocates to make representations to Housing Assessment Panels on behalf of victims of modern slavery.

2. That Cabinet formally considered its response to the above recommendations within two months of its receipt, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.
3. That the recommendations as approved, will be submitted to the Safer Rotherham Partnership for dissemination to the South Yorkshire Modern Slavery Partnership for consideration and response.

169. HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY

Consideration was given to the report which detailed that in March 2020, the Council introduced a revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy. This Policy built on the previous Policy (introduced in 2015) which was widely seen to be setting the standard for other local authorities to benchmark against in relation to Taxi and Private Hire Licensing.

The 2020 Policy was now due for review and provided an opportunity to ensure that the Council's approach to Taxi and Private Hire Licensing continued to reflect best practice, addressed local challenges and set standards that would ensure that the standard of licensed driver, vehicle and operator in Rotherham remained high.

The report outlined the key changes being considered and sought approval from Cabinet to commence a period of consultation in relation to these proposals.

The recommendations were then proposed.

The key changes to the policy included out of town vehicles, vehicle age and emissions, disabled access for wheelchair users.

The current policy was recognised as national best practice but a revised policy was required to drive forward and so that the public were kept informed about the services they were receiving.

The Leader confirmed that there would be a substantial piece of public consultation on this policy.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet approved the draft policy that should be consulted upon and authorised officers to commence consultation as outlined in the report.

170. MULTIPLY PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the reported that detailed the next steps for the Multiply programme. Multiply was a national programme to improve numeracy skills, focusing on supporting people aged 19+, who did not have a Level 2 Maths qualification.

Multiply funding was allocated through the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA), which intended to devolve funding to the four local authorities in South Yorkshire to arrange delivery in their local area. The Council received £194,000 for 2022/23, which was granted to voluntary and community organisations for local delivery of predominantly engagement and confidence building work.

SYMCA was providing a further £408,000 per annum to the Council for each of the years 2023/24 and 2024/25. This would provide funding for a Multiply Manager to design and secure implementation of a Multiply Programme in Rotherham and grant funding to commission third party organisations to contractually deliver the programme outcomes and activity agreed with the South Yorkshire Combined Mayoral Authority.

The recommendations were then proposed and it was highlighted that when presented at Scrutiny that it was a concern that members had not heard about the programme and more effective communication was required to ensure there was a greater reach.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. Approved the acceptance and planned spend of an annual Multiply grant of £408,000 from SYMCA, for each of the years 2023/24 and 2024/25.
2. Delegated authority to the Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, to agree grant awards, within the terms and conditions of the funding, to colleges, community organisations and other training providers to deliver the agreed learning activity and outputs for the Programme.
3. That consideration was given to how the Council's recruitment and selection processes recognised and promoted successful completion of the Multiply programme as evidence of an applicant's numeracy skills.
4. That further updates of the programme's progress should be submitted to OSMB.

171. 3-7 CORPORATION STREET COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report which provided an update to Cabinet on progress of the Compulsory Purchase Order for 3-7 Corporation Street (comprising of two derelict, fire damaged buildings, formerly a nightclub/bar and a restaurant) and confirmed the Council's commitment to the redevelopment of the site following acquisition.

The recommendations were then proposed.

It was confirmed that the Council was a step closer to achieving its aims and that ultimately looking for a private developer but should that fail, the Council would have plans in place for the development to still go ahead. It was a key gateway site in the Town Centre and aligned with the Master Plan.

Resolved: That Cabinet:

1. Noted the progress made, next steps, and anticipated timescale to confirmation of the Compulsory Purchase Order for 3-7 Corporation Street.
2. Noted the cost of the proposed redevelopment of the site and the sources of funding currently available (as set out in Appendix 1)
3. Approved the proposed use of the Town Centre Investment Fund to ensure sufficient funding is in place for the redevelopment of the site in the event that a private sector development partner is not found and/or further external funding is not secured.

172. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING PROJECT - DRUMMOND STREET CAR PARK

Consideration was given to the report that sought approval for the Electric Vehicle Charging Project at Drummond Street Car Park, contributing to the Council's Net Zero 2040 Carbon Targets. The project included Electric Vehicle (EV) charging systems using power from solar photovoltaic (PV) canopies and would be funded through a combination of Government Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) pilot funding and private investment.

The recommendations were then proposed.

The funding would be used for 28 charging bays which would be appropriate for a number of different charging vehicles. There were over 2000 properties without off-street parking within a 10 minute walk of Drummond Street Car Park and would provide the opportunity for many homes to be able to charge their vehicles.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet approved the £1.29m funding into the Capital Programme for the delivery of the Electric Vehicle Charging Project at Drummond Street Car Park, subject to planning approval.
2. That Cabinet approved the procurement of a concession contract to design, install and operate the Electric Vehicle Charging systems.

173. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Consideration was given to this report. Outside bodies were external organisations which had requested that the Council appoint a representative to them. Outside bodies had separate governance structures to the Council. Appointments to outside bodies could be an important mechanism for community leadership, partnership and joint working and knowledge and information sharing.

The Council's Constitution stated that Cabinet was responsible for the appointments to Outside Bodies. This report presented the nominations received and recommended the appointment of the nominees to the various organisations and partnerships.

Resolved: That Cabinet:

1. Agreed that councillors be appointed to serve on outside bodies, as detailed on the schedule in Appendix 1.

174. 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.

175. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:-

That the next meeting of the Cabinet be held on Monday 10 July 2023, commencing at 10.00am in Rotherham Town Hall.