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## CABINET

13 NOVEMBER 2017

(7.15 pm - 8.13 pm)

PRESENT: Councillors Stephen Alambritis (in the Chair), Mark Allison, Tobin Byers, Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Nick Draper, Ross Garrod, Edith Macauley MBE, Katy Neep and Martin Whelton

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Daniel Holden, Abigail Jones and Abdul Latif

Hannah Doody (Director of Community and Housing), Caroline Holland (Director of Corporate Services), Chris Lee (Director of Environment and Regeneration), Yvette Stanley (Director, Children, Schools & Families Department), Paul Evans (Assistant Director of Corporate Governance), David Keppler (Head of Revenues and Benefits) and Bronwen Pickering (Senior Communications Officer - Media Relations)

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from the Chief Executive.

### 2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2017 were agreed as an accurate record.

### 4 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2018/19 (Agenda Item 4)

The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report, which set out proposed changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2018/19, and noting the wish to continue to provide some financial assistance to working families and others on low incomes.

There was some concern expressed that the proposal to restrict personal allowances to families with more than 2 children would result in those families having to pay more Council Tax. It was felt that those families should not be penalised and protected if possible. Therefore it was proposed to amend the recommendation to not implement that restriction.

RESOLVED:

1. That the uprating changes for the 2018/19 council tax support scheme detailed in the Cabinet report be agreed, in order to maintain low council tax charges for those on lower incomes and other vulnerable residents including not to implement restricting personal allowances for households with more than two children; and
2. That Cabinet recommends to Council the adoption of the new 2018/19 scheme.

## 5 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2017-18 - SEPTEMBER 2017 (Agenda Item 5)

The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report, noting the low overspend and the efforts to reduce the overspend further; and noting that the report was also due to be considered by the Financial Monitoring Task Group.

### RESOLVED:

1. That financial reporting data relating to revenue budgetary control, showing a forecast net overspend at year end of £1.6million, 0.3% of the gross budget be noted.
2. That Cabinet and Council approve the following adjustments to the Capital Programme:

Scheme	2017/18 Budget	2018/19 Budget	Funding/Re-profiling
£		£	
<b>Corporate Services</b>			
Invest to Save schemes	(1,710,000)	1,710,000	Re-profiling in accordance with projected spend
<b>Children, Schools &amp; Families</b>			
Sherwood Schools Capital maintenance	82,510	0	Essential H&S Works
Cricket Green School Expansion	272,070	5,028,000	Vired from Unlocated SEN
Unlocated SEN	(272,070)	(5,028,000)	Vired to Cricket Green
Harris Academy Wimbledon	(544,530)	544,530	Re-profiling in accordance with projected spend
Harris Academy Merton	(70,120)	0	Capital Budget will be utilised under the Better Care Fund
<b>Environment &amp; Regeneration</b>			
Industrial Estates	(452,750)	0	Budget relinquished as no plans to spend
Morden Leisure Centre	(1,255,830)	1,255,830	Slippage to 18/19 in line with current build programme.
<b>Total</b>	<b>(3,950,720)</b>	<b>3,510,360</b>	

3. That in respect of capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008, Cabinet recommends to the Council that the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy be revised to read:

“For capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008 or by Supported Capital Expenditure, the MRP policy will be the equal annual reduction of 2% of the outstanding debt at 1 April 2017 for the subsequent 50 years”

The remainder of the MRP Policy Statement will remain as approved by Council on 1 March 2017.

## 6 CROSSOVERS TASK GROUP REPORT (Agenda Item 6)

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing introduced the report which set out recommendations for reviewing the current Crossovers Policy, thanking the Task Group for their work on this subject which was an area of concern to a number of residents.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration welcomed the work of the Task Group as there were complex issues involved with significant implications for the environment. Officers would seek to influence the development of the Mayor's London Plan to reduce the loss of green space and look at reviewing the Council's guidance to mitigate any adverse effects on air quality.

### RESOLVED:

1. That the report and recommendations (attached in Appendix A) arising from the scrutiny review of Crossover Policy in Merton be noted.
2. That the implementation of the recommendations through an action plan being drawn up by officers working with relevant local partner organisations and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing be agreed.
3. That the action plan be formally approved by Cabinet prior to it being submitted to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

## 7 REFERENCE ON THE CONTRACT WITH VEOLIA FOR WASTE, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANING (Agenda Item 7)

The Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Parking introduced the report which set out a series of recommendations made by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Veolia's performance in respect of waste, recycling and street cleaning.

At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Abigail Jones, Chair of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel presented the report, thanking her Vice-Chair and the members of the public and officers who had contributed to the meeting.

The Chair thanked the Scrutiny Panel and welcomed the recommendations, stressing the importance of impressing on Veolia the need to improve their performance.

### RESOLVED:

- 1 That the comments made by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel set out in paragraph 2.4 of the Cabinet report be noted and endorsed.

## 8 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda Item 8)

The Leader asked members to note that a redacted version of item 9 had been published; and proposed that although the item had exempt appendices, Cabinet would not discuss either the redacted information or the exempt information contained in those appendices and could therefore stay in public session.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet would remain in public session to consider item 9; and
2. That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of item 10 on the grounds that it is exempt from disclosure for the reasons stated in the report.

## 9 BATTLE CLOSE (Agenda Item 9)

The Cabinet Member presented the report, which set out a proposal to authorise the surrender of the leasehold interest in Virgin Active Health Club, Battle Close, SW19 1AQ on the main terms identified within the Cabinet report. It was noted that the Council remained committed to providing leisure space for families, and that taking back control of the site would provide the Council with an opportunity to consider its future including possible development.

At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Abdul Latif addressed the Cabinet on behalf of residents in his ward, who were concerned over the loss of a leisure facility and over a possible redevelopment of the site for high density housing; and therefore requested that the current leaseholder be forced to honour the lease.

The Director of Environment and Regeneration advised the Cabinet that the request to surrender the lease had been made by the current leaseholder, who did not consider the Battle Close site to be one which they could any longer operate. Therefore the Council had a duty as the landowner to consider that request. The Council did not have the authority to force the current operator to remain open.

Cabinet Members highlighted the need to distinguish between the decision to relinquish the lease; and the future use of the site which did not form part of the report. This would be considered as part of the new Local Plan consultation, which would provide residents an opportunity to provide comments on the use of the site at that point.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Council take a surrender of the leasehold interest on the terms contained within the body of the Cabinet report.

## 10 AGENCY WORKERS CONTRACT 2017 (Agenda Item 10)

The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report, which proposed an award of a new contract for the supply of temporary agency workers, on the terms set out in the exempt report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the recommendations contained in the exempt report be approved.