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CABINET

19 FEBRUARY 2018

(7.15 pm - 7.44 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, Sally Kenny, Najeeb Latif, Gilli Lewis-Lavender, Oonagh Moulton, Peter Southgate and David Williams

Ged Curran (Chief Executive), 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), Fiona Thomsen (Head of shared legal services), David Keppler (Head of Revenues and Benefits) and Christine Parsloe (Leisure and Culture Development Manager)
Louise Fleming (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

No apologies were received.

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 15 January 2018 were agreed as an accurate record.

4 SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE HOMESHARE SCHEME. (Agenda Item 4)

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health introduced the report, thanking the Scrutiny Panel for their work on this topic. He advised that officers would be working with providers to ensure that they held the proper accreditations and had appropriate safeguarding measures in place.

At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Sally Kenny, Chair of the Task Group, presented the report echoing the Cabinet Member's comments and thanked all those officers and Members for their support in this important piece of work which built on the work of the Loneliness project in 2017.

The Chair thanked all those involved in the review of the scheme and Cabinet welcomed the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report and recommendations arising from the scrutiny review of Homeshare schemes 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 Cabinet Members be agreed.
3. That the action plan be formally approved by Cabinet before being submitted to the Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

5 AIR QUALITY TASK GROUP (Agenda Item 5)

The Cabinet Member for Street Cleanliness and Parking introduced the report, thanking the Task Group for their work on this topic.

At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Daniel Holden, Chair of the Task Group, presented the report and thanked all those officers and Members for their support in this piece of work which was an important issue for residents.

The Chair thanked all those involved in the review of the scheme and Cabinet welcomed the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report and recommendations arising from the scrutiny review of Air Quality 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 Cabinet Members be agreed.
3. That the action plan be formally approved by Cabinet before being submitted to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

6 REFERENCE FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION - SECOND ROUND OF BUDGET SCRUTINY (Agenda Item 6)

At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Peter Southgate, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, presented the report on the second round of budget scrutiny. He noted the lack of detailed comment on individual savings proposed, as it had been the intention of the Commission and its Panels to take a broader strategic view of the proposed budget. It was recognised that the Council was in a position to set a balanced budget for the next financial year, but that a substantial gap was faced in 2020/21 and that it was not immediately apparent how this would be filled. However, it was noted that the Merantun Property Company provided a good example of the Council taking more control over its financial future. Cllr Southgate thanked all those Members and officers involved in the budget scrutiny process.

The Chair thanked Councillor Southgate and Cabinet welcomed the report.

RESOLVED that, in taking decisions relating to the Business Plan 2018-22, the comments and recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and the outcomes of consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels be taken into account.

7 BUSINESS PLAN 2018-22 (Agenda Item 7)

The Cabinet Member for Finance gave a detailed presentation of the report, thanking all officers and Members involved in both the drafting of the Business Plan and the budget scrutiny process. He detailed the consultation which had taken place and the proposed Council Tax rise to fund the increase in the budget for services to older and vulnerable people, and proposed an addition to the wording of recommendation 2 in light of this. He highlighted the financial challenges which the Council faced, due to the cuts in central government funding for funding of public services and welcomed a debate on this issue.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health endorsed the comments made and highlighted the current national crisis in social care funding. In lieu of the government taking action to address the crisis, the Council had built growth into the proposed budget to address. The approach had been discussed with the Chair of the CCG who was comfortable with the proposed approach.

RESOLVED:

1. That the response to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission be agreed.
2. That, having considered all of the information in this report and noted the positive assurance statement given by the Director of Corporate Services based on the proposed Council Tax strategy, the maximum Council Tax in 2018/19, equating to a Band D Council Tax of £1,169.36, which is an increase of 3% for Adult Social Care flexibility, inclusive of the 1% Adult Social Care precept, be approved and recommended to Council for approval.
3. That all the latest information and the comments from the scrutiny process be noted and recommended to Council as appropriate.
4. That the Business Plan 2018-22 including the General Fund Budget and Council Tax Strategy for 2018/19, and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2018-2022 as submitted, along with the Equality Assessments (EAs), be approved and recommended to Council.
5. That, having considered all of the latest information and the comments from the scrutiny process, the Capital Investment Programme (as detailed in Annex 1 to the Capital Strategy); the Treasury Management Strategy (Section 5), including the detailed recommendations in that Section, incorporating the Prudential Indicators and the Capital Strategy (Section 4) as submitted and reported upon be approved and recommended to Council for approval.
6. That it be noted that the GLA precept will not be agreed by the London Assembly until 22 February 2018, but the provisional figure has been incorporated into the draft MTFS.
7. That officers be requested to review the savings proposals agreed and where possible bring them forward to the earliest possible implementation date.

8. That it be noted that there may be minor amendments to figures in this report as a result of new information received after the deadline for dispatch and that this will be amended for the report to Council later in February.
9. That the Risk Management Strategy be approved.

8 SAVINGS PROPOSALS CONSULTATION PACK (Agenda Item 8)

RESOLVED that the savings proposals consultation pack be noted.

9 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2017-18 - DECEMBER 2017 (Agenda Item 9)

The Cabinet Member for Finance presented the report which set out the financial monitoring information for December 2017. It was noted that the overall overspend had come down from the previous month and this had been reflected in the Business Plan report.

RESOLVED that the financial reporting data relating to revenue budgetary control, showing a forecast net overspend at year end of £0.6million, 0.4% of the gross budget, be noted.

10 LOCAL DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS RATE RELIEF SCHEME (Agenda Item 10)

The Cabinet Member for Finance presented the report and thanked the officers involved.

The Chair welcomed the support for small businesses in the Borough and thanked officers for their work.

RESOLVED that the new Local Discretionary Business Rate Relief Policy for 2018/19 be agreed.

11 LEISURE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT (Agenda Item 11)

The Cabinet Member for Community and Culture presented the report which set out proposals for improving family friendly leisure facilities in the Borough and thanked officers involved for their hard work.

The Chair thanked all involved and Cabinet welcomed the report.

RESOLVED:

- A. That the improved financial benefits that have been negotiated and will be available to the council once the new Morden Leisure Centre is open to the public be noted.
- B. That the preferred option and the priority order of alternative choice options detailed below, for an extension of the leisure management contract between the Council and Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) be agreed:

Preferred Option - 1st Choice

1. An additional 5 years of operation (by means of a variation to the terms and conditions of the existing contract), whilst retaining the option to further extend by up to 2 years as currently existing within the contract (Option D), subject to there being no substantial challenges to so doing from the published OJEU contract notice (i.e. contract expiry 30th November 2030 but the 2-year extension is retained as a possible further extension to 30th November 2032).

Alternative Choice Options in Priority Order should the Preferred – 1st Choice Option not be possible.

2. 2nd Choice Option

An additional 5 years of operation, by accepting now the ability to extend the contract by two years and to increase the term, (by means of a variation to the terms and conditions of the existing contract), by a further 3 years with no right to further extend (i.e. contract expiry 30th November 2030) (Option C), subject to there being no substantial challenges to so doing from the published OJEU contract notice (i.e. contract expiry 30th November 2030)

3. 3rd Choice Option

Take up the 2 years extension currently available within the existing contract (Option B), should there being no substantial challenges from the published OJEU contract notice (i.e. contract expiry 30th November 2027).

- C. That authority be delegated to the Director of Environment & Regeneration, in consultation with the Lead Member, to finalise the detail of contract extension changes
- D. That authority be delegated to the Director of Environment & Regeneration and the Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Community and Culture, to enact the addition of café and associated facilities with Madeira Hall at Canons Leisure Centre to the operational management of GLL.
- E. That the change of the contract structure from a management agreement to a lease agreement not be approved at this time.

12 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda Item 12)

Cabinet noted that the content of the exempt appendices would not be discussed and therefore the meeting could remain in public session. The decision is set out under item 11.

13 LEISURE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT - EXEMPT APPENDICES (Agenda Item 13)

Cabinet noted that the content of the exempt appendices would not be discussed and therefore the meeting could remain in public session. The decision is set out under item 11.