

Cabinet

Monday, 11 November 2019

7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr John Burden (Chair)
Cllr Lee Croxton (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Shane Mochrie-Cox
Lenny Rolles
Brian Sangha
Narinder Singh Thandi
Jenny Wallace

Note: Councillors Leslie Hoskins, Denise Tiran and Frank Wardle were also in attendance.

David Hughes	Chief Executive
Stuart Bobby	Director (Corporate Services)
Nick Brown	Director (Housing and Operations)
Kevin Burbidge	Director (Planning and Development)
Melanie Norris	Director (Communities)
Daniel Killian	Assistant Director (Housing Assets)
Sarah Parfitt	Assistant Director (Corporate Services)
Carlie Simmonds	Committee Services Manager

38. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2019 were signed by the Chair.

39. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

40. Delegated Decisions - Cabinet Members

Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox advised that, following the Community and Leisure Cabinet Committee held on Thursday 26 September 2019, he had taken a delegated decision to adopt the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy 2019-23.

41. Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring Report – Quarter Two 2019/20

The Assistant Director (Corporate Services) advised that the Budget Monitoring Report had now been split into two separate reports in order to give equal prominence:-

- General Fund; and
- Housing Revenue Account.

The Cabinet received the second budget monitoring report for 2019/20 in relation to the Housing Revenue Account showing the position up to 30 September 2019.

The Cabinet noted the information provided on:-

- actual performance against the approved Revenue and Capital budgets for 2019/20, including known variances agreed or identified through budgetary control activity; and
- other key areas of financial performance that may impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, Medium Term Financial Plan, HRA Business Plan or Financial Statements.

Officers confirmed that the Council will continue to maintain robust budgetary control actions to ensure good financial governance and respond to the pressures on the Council's finances.

The Assistant Director (Corporate Services) advised that on 9 October 2019 HM Treasury announced that it would increase the interest rates on all new loans from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB). This appeared to be in response to a substantial increase in the use of PWLB by local authorities over recent months, given the cost of borrowing had fallen to record lows. This action was likely to make the PWLB the lender of last resort therefore the Council was currently exploring alternative sources.

The Cabinet expressed concern regarding the above and agreed that the Council should make representations to Central Government.

The Cabinet acknowledged the favourable variance in relation to repairs and maintenance and congratulated officers on the work that had been undertaken to date.

The Cabinet noted the information contained within the report.

42. General Fund Budget Monitoring Report 2019/20 – Quarter Two

The Cabinet received the second budget monitoring report for 2019/20 in relation to the General Fund showing the position up to 30 September 2019.

The Cabinet noted the information provided on:-

- actual performance against the approved Revenue and Capital budgets for 2019/20, including known variances agreed or identified through budgetary control activity; and
- other key areas of financial performance that may impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, Medium Term Financial Plan or Financial Statements.

Officers confirmed that the Council will continue to maintain robust budgetary control actions to ensure good financial governance and respond to the pressures on the Council's finances.

The Assistant Director (Corporate Services) advised that Central Government had confirmed that the Local Government Finance Settlement 2020/21 would now be considered following the General Election so there continued to be no clarity.

The Assistant Director (Corporate Services) also informed Members that it had been announced that the UK's Sovereign rating outlook by Moody's had changed from stable to negative due to the unpredictable times that lie ahead.

The Cabinet noted the information contained within the report

43. Annual Review of the Payroll Shared Service

The Cabinet was provided with a copy of the annual review that had been conducted in respect of the Payroll Shared Service with Medway Council in accordance with the Council's Working in Partnership Framework.

The Director (Communities) advised that the shared service had a second successful year and drew Member's attention to appendix two of the report which detailed the objectives that were currently being met.

The Cabinet noted the information contained within the report.

44. Gravesham Borough Council Parking Services Enforcement Policy

The Cabinet was presented with Gravesham Borough Council's (GBC) Parking Services Enforcement Policy.

The purpose of the policy was to:-

- deliver a high quality parking service to all users in a fair and consistent manner;
- ensure clarity, consistency and transparency within the Council's parking enforcement processes;
- provide staff with clear guidelines on service standards whilst ensuring they can apply fairness, discretion and flexibility in the issuing of penalty charge notices or in dealing with any subsequent challenges and representations;
- support effective parking management; and
- ensure that the needs of disabled people, motorcycles, buses, coaches, pedestrians, cyclists and local businesses are taken into account.

The policy applied to:-

- on and off-street parking enforcement (including penalty charge notice issuing criteria); and
- management of the administration processes following the issue of a penalty charge notice.

The Assistant Director (Housing Assets) advised that the policy would be published on the Council's website and promoted via social media.

The Cabinet praised the work of the Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) and agreed that it was important to change public perception of CEOs.

Resolved that the Parking Service Enforcement Policy be adopted and published on the Council's website.

45. Procurement of Major & Planned Works, Servicing, Repairs & Maintenance Contracts

The Cabinet was presented with a report which detailed the current position in relation to the contracts in place to maintain the Council's housing stock for major planned works, servicing, repairs and maintenance.

The report sought approval for use of the relevant frameworks to procure and award contracts in accordance with Gravesham's Procurement Strategy as a number of contracts were nearing expiry or will be expiring within the next 12 months.

The Assistant Director (Housing Assets) advised that prospective contractors will be asked as part of the tender process to:-

- outline what social value commitments they could bring to GBC if they were successful; and
- confirm details of their own commitments or declaration in relation to carbon neutrality and how they will contribute to Gravesham's target of being carbon neutral by 2030.

The Assistant Director (Housing Assets) advised that moving forward the Council will bring many of the services back in-house.

Resolved that:-

1. the Director (Housing & Operations) in consultation with the S151 Officer and Lead Member be given delegated authority to conduct the procurement process and award the contracts for Major and Planned Works, Servicing, Repairs and Maintenance contracts using procurement frameworks by way of mini tender as outlined in the report;
2. the Director (Housing & Operations) in consultation with the S151 Officer and Lead Member be given delegated authority to grant annual extensions for Major and Planned Works, Servicing, Repairs and Maintenance contracts subject to satisfactory contractor performance; and
3. the Director (Housing & Operations) in consultation with the S151 Officer and Lead Member be given delegated authority to grant temporary extensions on the current Term Contracts in place, in accordance with legislative procurement requirements, to provide added resiliance and consistency to the service and our tenants during the lead in to the award of the new contracts.

46. Minutes of the meeting of the Gravesham Joint Transportation Board held on Wednesday, 11 September 2019

The Cabinet noted the minutes of the Gravesham Joint Transportation Board held on Wednesday 11 September 2019.

47. Minutes of the meeting of the Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 10 October 2019

The Cabinet noted the minutes of the Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 10 October 2019.

48. Exclusion

Resolved pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public be excluded during the following item of business because it was likely in view of the nature of business to be transacted that, if members of the public were present during this item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

49. Write Offs

The Cabinet was presented with Business Rates debts over £15,000 that had now become irrecoverable.

The Director (Corporate Services) advised that officers would have undertaken all possible recovery action prior to recommending that debts be written-off. Debts will be reopened if debtors become traceable.

Resolved that authority be given to write-off the debts listed in Appendix Two of the report.

Close of Meeting

The meeting ended at 8.21pm