

## **CABINET MEETING**

Meeting: 1 February 2022

At: 6.00 pm

### **PRESENT**

Councillor Elise Wilson (Leader of the Council and Devolution) (Chair) in the chair; Councillor Tom McGee (Deputy Leader and Resources, Commissioning & Governance) (Vice-Chair); Councillors Sheila Bailey (Sustainable Stockport), Colin Foster (Children, Family Services & Education), David Meller (Economy & Regeneration), Amanda Peers (Inclusive Neighbourhoods), David Sedgwick (Citizen Focus & Engagement) and Jude Wells (Adult Care & Health).

### **1. MINUTES**

The Minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 7 December 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors and officers were invited to declare any interests they had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations of interest were made.

### **3. URGENT DECISIONS**

No urgent decisions were reported.

### **4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Members of the public were invited to submit questions to the Cabinet on any matters within its powers and duties, subject to the exclusions set out in the Code of Practice.

Three public questions were submitted as follows:-

- Relating to the Greater Manchester Clean Air Zone and whether more could have been done to publicise it; why it had not been subject to a referendum and why hadn't the funding allocated to this scheme been spent on other initiatives such as electric vehicle charging points.

The Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning & Governance (Councillor Tom McGee) responded that the questioner had misunderstood the background to the clean air zone and undertook to provide a written response to the questioner.

- Relating to the proposed refurbishment of the Merseyway Car Park and why this was being dealt with in private, and why the cost of these measures hadn't been included in the Future High Street Fund bid.

The Cabinet Member for Economy & Regeneration (Councillor David Meller) responded that the report was largely in the public domain, and that only an appendix to the report had been made 'not for publication'. It was stated that the proposal was to provide for essential repair work to a council owned asset and that the car park extended much further than the floorspace of Stockroom. It was stated that the proposed financing arrangement detailed in the report was usual for capital projects of this nature.

- Relating to whether the cabinet would now discuss with the government a change to the plans for Stockroom to remove the library service from them.

The Cabinet Member for Citizen Focus (Councillor David Sedgwick) responded that the business case did not suggest that there had been a consultation on the library move in 2019 but instead referred to wider engagement of Stockport Central which was the Adlington Walk element of the scheme, This included comments from members of the public on the type of facilities they would like to see included in the scheme, and it was not felt that it was necessary to refer to the matter back to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

## **5. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST TEST**

The Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Devolution (Councillor Elise Wilson) invited the Cabinet to consider whether to exclude the public and press from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 21 as it contained information that was 'not for publication' within its appendices.

RESOLVED – That in order to prevent the disclosure of information which was not for publication relating to the financial or business affairs of the any particular person (including the authority), the disclosure of which would not be in the public interest, would not be fair and would be in breach of Data Protection principles, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item in the eventuality it was necessary to discuss the information contained within the 'not for publication' appendices:-

<u>Item</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Reason</u>
21	Merseyway Car Park Maintenance & Refurbishment	Category 3 'Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority)' as set out in the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)

## **6. CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISION CAB339 'FUTURE HIGH STREET FUND - STOCKROOM' (E&R76/ RCG43)**

A report of the Council Meeting was submitted (copies of which had been circulated) inviting the Cabinet to reconsider its previous decision (CAB339) in relation to the Future High Street Fund - Stockroom. Council Meeting considered the call-in of this decision at its meeting on 13 January 2022, the summary of which was included in the report.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:-

## Cabinet Meeting - 1 February 2022

- There had been a significant and useful debate held at the Council Meeting on this issue.
- The matter remained a decision for the Cabinet to determine.
- The Cabinet had previously agreed that it would like to see the Stockroom project continue and that there remained a discussion in relation to the future long-term use of the Central Library building.
- The broad agreement between members on the continuation of Stockroom project was welcomed.
- The proposals had always kept the security and future of the Central Library building at its heart.
- There was an opportunity to invest in the Central Library building, take care of it for the future and make it accessible.
- The revised proposals commit to establishing a cross-party working group to discuss the future of the Central Library building. It was suggested that this should include representation from those members that represented the Brinnington & Central ward.
- The Cabinet remained open to the possibility of having an adult education centre in the Central Library building with a relevant library provision as part of that.
- Stockport was one of the few authorities to have been awarded the full amount it had bid for as part of its Future High Street Fund application.
- Central Library had seen a significant reduction in footfall whereas other newly developed library facilities in Tower Hamlets and Chester had increased their visitor numbers.
- It was noted that there were approximately 11,000 adults in Stockport who had trouble reading and a new adult education centre would help address this issue.
- The development of a library facility in Stockroom would be the biggest investment in libraries in Stockport in living memory.

It was then

RESOLVED – That the objection of the Council Meeting be noted and that approval be given to the amendment of the original decision of 7 December 2021 and the Cabinet has therefore:-

(1) Noted the update on progress with Stockport's Future High Street Fund project, Stockroom and approve the proposals.

(2) Noted the recent consultation undertaken in relation to the relocation the town centre library offer from Central Library Building into Stockroom.

(3) Noted the views, comments and recommendations of the Communities & Housing; Corporate, Resource Management & Governance; and Children & Families Scrutiny Committees and the opinion and recommendation of the Council Meeting.

(4) Resolved to approve the proposals as set out in the Cabinet report of 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021 in relation to Stockport's Future High Street Fund project, Stockroom, including a modern library offer. This is to be delivered in line with the Outline Business Case set out in Section 11 of the report.

(5) Confirmed that the Central Library Service would remain in the Central Library Building until a date linked to the opening of Stockroom, recognising the need for some transition during which the Library Service may not be fully available in either location. This is currently anticipated to be Autumn 2023.

(6) Agreed to establish a cross-party working group with representation from all groups on the Council, no later than 28 February 2022, to develop proposals for relocating the Continuing Education Service into the Central Library Building whilst retaining a library offer with the following terms of reference:

- (i) any solution for retaining a library offer linked to the Continuing Education Service in the Central Library Building must come with a business case which covers how any revenue and capital costs associated with the solution will be funded;
- (ii) no additional capital or revenue costs can be imposed on the Stockroom project as a result of any recommendation of the working group.
- (iii) a solution must demonstrate the benefits which it will provide in addition to those provided by Stockroom; and
- (iv) the working group must report back to Cabinet with its recommendations by 20th September 2022 to allow any decision to be implemented in time so that it might come into effect aligned to the proposed opening date for Stockroom.

(7) Agreed to instruct the Director of Development & Regeneration to write to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to update on progress with the Stockroom scheme.

(8) Agreed to delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate and Support Services) and the Director of Development & Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Citizen Focus & Engagement; Resources, Commissioning & Governance; and Economy & Regeneration to:

- (i) appoint a contractor to deliver the refurbishment works and execute any necessary letter of intent or other agreement, pending resolution of the final contract, to maintain progress in connection with the redevelopment of Stockroom;
- (ii) take all necessary steps to implement the strategy set out in the report and the resolutions contained within this decision; and
- (iii) approve the final Operational Business Plan for Stockroom.

(9) Agreed to delegate authority to the Strategic Head of Service (Legal & Democratic Governance) to do all things necessary or incidental to the implementation of these resolutions.

#### Performance and Budget Monitoring

### **7. 2021/22 QUARTER 2+ BUDGET MONITORING UPDATE (NON-KEY)**

The Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning & Governance (Councillor Tom McGee) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing a summary of the Quarter 2+ revenue forecast outturn incorporating

the business as usual forecast, which also reflected the impact of Covid-19 as response to the recovery process continues. The report also provides an update on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), Housing Revenue Account (HRA), Collection Fund and updates to the Capital Programme in addition to updates on budget virements to be incorporated into the 2022/23 budget setting process.

RESOLVED – That:-

- approval be given to the virements to the Revenue Budget;
- the Cash Limit and Non-Cash Limit forecast positions for 2021/22 as at Quarter 2+ be noted;
- the update on the Council's positive investments be noted;
- the update on the Council's Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) investment plan be noted;
- the update on Reserves be noted;
- the Dedicated Schools Grant, Housing Revenue Account and Collection Fund forecast positions for 2021/22 as at Quarter 2+ be noted;
- the forecast position for the 2021/22 Capital Programme be noted; and
- the changes to the Capital Programme and re-phasing of schemes during Quarter 2+ be noted.

#### Key Decisions

### **8. SCHOOLS FUNDING SETTLEMENT AND LOCAL FUNDING FORMULA 2022/23 (NON-KEY)**

The Cabinet Member for Children Family Services & Education (Councillor Colin Foster) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) updating the Cabinet on key announcements made by the Department for Education on the education funding settlement for 2022/23 and inviting the Cabinet to consider the local funding formula models to be used to determine the individual 2022/23 budgets for early years providers and schools in Stockport.

RESOLVED - (1) That the details of the Education Funding Settlement for 2022/23 be noted.

(2) That approval be given to the construction of the early year's budget as per section 3.1 to 3.2 and the updated 2022/23 local funding formula for schools as outlined in sections 3.3. to 3.5 and detailed in the table(s) in section 6.2 which will form the basis of the calculation of school budgets and be notified to the DfE in accordance with statutory requirements.

### **9. STOCKPORT COUNCIL PLAN 2022/23 (RCG39/ LDR95)**

The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Devolution (Councillor Elise Wilson) submitted the Council Plan (copies of which had been circulated) that accompanied the budget and set a high-level framework for decision making throughout the financial year.

The Leader of the Council reported that the plan built on the themes in the One Stockport Borough Plan and aligned with the long term vision of the Greater Manchester Strategy.

Some of the key themes of the plan were highlighted including tackling pre-existing inequalities and the impact of climate change as well as underlining the ambitions of the borough with regard to homes, jobs and opportunities.

RESOLVED - That the Council Meeting be recommended to give approval to the draft Council Plan for 2022/23.

**10. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET AND RENT LEVELS FOR 2022/23 (SS27)**

The Cabinet Member for Sustainable Stockport (Councillor Sheila Bailey) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) inviting the Cabinet to consider the rent levels and service charges for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and a recommended budget for 2022/23.

RESOLVED – That the Council Meeting be recommended to approve the following in relation to the Housing Revenue Account:-

- a) An increase of 4.1% for social rent;
- b) An increase of 5.4% for rent of shared ownership properties;
- c) Service charge increases as outlined in section 3;
- d) The Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1.

**11. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN UPDATE (RCG36/ LDR96)**

(i) Part A - Responding to Our Medium Term Financial Plan: Saving Proposals

The Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning & Governance (Councillor Tom McGee) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the suite of savings proposals for 2022/23.

The Cabinet Member reported that following the consideration of the proposals by scrutiny committees, the Cabinet was minded to not proceed with the proposal in relation to the highways discretionary budget.

RESOLVED - (1) That the approach undertaken and considerations of the implications of proposals, including: engagement feedback; environmental impact assessments; and, equality impact assessments be noted.

(2) That approval be given to the proposals outlined in the appendices for inclusion within the Cabinet Revenue Budget subject to the exclusion of the proposal relating to the 'highways discretionary budget'.

(ii) Part B - Medium Term Financial Plan Financial Landscape and Forecast 2021/22 to 2024/25

The Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning & Governance (Councillor Tom McGee) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on the Council's 2022/23 to 2024/25 Medium Term

Financial Plan (MTFP) forecasts and assumptions as part of setting a robust and resilient budget and financial plan to meet the unprecedented uncertainty, volatility and risk within the financial landscape following the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement announced.

RESOLVED – That having considered an update on the forecasts for the Council's finances for the period 2022/23 to 2024/25 following the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, the Cabinet has agreed to:

- Note the details of the 2022/23 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement and the expected announcement of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement;
- Note, and comment upon as appropriate, the financial forecasts and assumptions for 2022/23 to 2024/25;
- Note and approve the indicative budget adjustments since the MTFP Update presented to the Cabinet meeting on 21 September 2021 resulting in savings requirement of £7.435m in 2022/23;
- Approve the allocation of £7.065m of the corporate contingency budgets to Cash Limit budgets as part of the budget setting process as set out in paragraphs 3.4 to 3.6;
- Note the Section 151 Officer recommendation to hold the Council's General Fund Balance at its current level £15.183m in 2022/23 aligned to his risk assessment of the budget and the adequacy of reserves and balances to support the Council's 2022/23 Budget; and
- Take the necessary steps to propose a final balanced 2022/23 Budget including any proposed Council Tax increase to be recommended for approval at the Council meeting on 24 February 2022.

(iii) Part C - 2022/23 Cabinet Revenue Budget

The Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning & Governance (Councillor Tom McGee) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) presenting the 2022/23 Cabinet Revenue Budget for approval. It also outlined the Council's financial outlook and significant challenges across the medium term period 2022/23 to 2024/25 as the response and recovery from the pandemic continued. The report highlighted the overarching priorities and desired outcomes upon which the Cabinet has based its budget proposals, and which formed the basis of the updated Council Plan.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:-

- The proposed investment in district centres was to be welcomed.
- It was noted that it was proposed to provide additional resources to support veterans.
- It was stated that the government needed to fundamentally reconsider how adult social care was funded and that it was inappropriate to use Council Tax as a vehicle for this.
- There was an increasing reliance on the outcome of bidding processes to secure funding that was not sustainable in the long-term.
- The transition to multi-year settlements would be a welcome development that would allow local authorities to properly plan their finances into the medium-term.

RESOLVED – That in relation to the 2022/23 Revenue Budget, the Council Meeting be recommended to:-

- Approve the Budget for 2022/23 described in the report and set out in Appendix 2 and 3;
- Note the risk assessment of the 2022/23 Budget at Appendix 5 and the report of the Section 151 Officer on the adequacy of proposed financial reserves and robustness of the estimates also included at Appendix 5;
- Approve the required Council General Fund Balance to reflect the Section 151 Officer assessment of risks;
- Note, comment upon and approve the financial forecasts and assumptions for 2022/23 to 2024/25 at Appendix 6, and the key issues to be addressed in formulating a response to the future financial challenges facing the Council; and
- Pass the appropriate Council Tax resolutions which produce a Council Tax increase of 3.5% in 2022/23 (1% General increase, 1% Adult Social Care Precept increase and 1.5 deferred 2021/22 Adult Social Care Precept increase) as illustrated in Appendix 7.

## **12. 2022/23 CAPITAL STRATEGY AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME (LDR99/ RCG45)**

The Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning & Governance (Councillor Tom McGee) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) inviting the Cabinet to consider its proposed 2022/23 Capital Strategy and Capital Programme that aimed to provide a framework for the Council's capital investment plans, ensuring effective planning, option appraisal, risk management, and governance processes and which had been developed in accordance with the CIPFA Prudential Code.

RESOLVED – That in relation to the Capital Strategy and Capital Programme 2022/23, the Council Meeting be recommended to approve:-

- The Capital Strategy at Appendix one;
- The 2022/23 to 2024/25 Capital Programme and the funding arrangements as described in the report and set out at Appendix two; and,
- The prudential indicators set out in Appendix three.

## **13. 2022/23 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY, ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY (RCG38)**

The Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning & Governance (Councillor Tom McGee) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing a proposed 2022/23 Treasury Management Strategy, Annual Investment Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and prudent and sustainable Treasury and Prudential Indicators, constructed in compliance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.

RESOLVED – That in relation to the 2022/23 Treasury Management Strategy, Annual Investment and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy the Council Meeting be recommended to approve:-

- The Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2022/23.
- The Capital Expenditure Forecasts and Capital Financing Requirement projections.
- The Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23.



- The Treasury and Prudential Indicators and Limits 2022/23-2024/25.
- The Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) 2022/23.

#### **14. STOCKPORT LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY, LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND NEIGHBOURHOOD TRANSPORT PLANS (SS30)**

The Cabinet Member for Sustainable Stockport (Councillor Sheila Bailey) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an overview of several recent requests from Councillors, motions to Council and a Scrutiny Review requesting a more joined up approach to managing the highway networks and transportation improvements within Stockport.

RESOLVED - (1) That the proposed approach to developing neighbourhood transport plans and note the responses to the motion to council regarding slower speed 20mph and the Scrutiny Review on Active Streets and School Streets be noted.

(2) That approval be given to the proposal to sign the Walking Charter.

#### **General Items**

#### **15. RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW INTO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION**

The Cabinet Member for Children, Family Services & Education (Councillor Colin Foster) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) inviting the Cabinet to agree its response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review with regard to Children and Young People's Participation.

RESOLVED – (1) That the response to the recommendations contained in the 'Children and Young People's Participation Scrutiny Review' carried out by the Children & Families Scrutiny Committee be approved.

(2) That the Cabinet's gratitude and appreciation be recorded for the excellent work undertaken the Scrutiny Review Panel and its contributors.

#### **16. RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW INTO SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AND COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS**

The Cabinet Member for Children, Family Services & Education (Councillor Colin Foster) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) inviting the Cabinet to agree its response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review with regard to Supporting Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing and Counselling in Schools.

RESOLVED – (1) That the response to the recommendations contained in the 'Supporting Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing and Counselling in Schools Scrutiny Review' carried out by the Children & Families Scrutiny Committee be approved.

(2) That the Cabinet's gratitude and appreciation be recorded for the excellent work undertaken the Scrutiny Review Panel and its contributors.

## **17. FAIR AND INCLUSIVE STOCKPORT - UPDATE**

The Cabinet Member for Inclusive Neighbourhoods (Councillor Amanda Peers) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an overview of the actions being taken by Stockport Council and partners to tackle inequality; and the outputs from work that was being taken forward to develop the Fair and Inclusive Framework and delivery plans.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:-

- The report highlighted the significant amount of work that needed to be done to address inequalities across the borough.
- The recent equalities summit was a welcome start to addressing some of these issues and brought together people from different walks of life.
- The council had recently appointed a Head of Fair and Inclusive Stockport who would be working to reduce some of the inequalities identified.
- A cross-party working group had been formed on this issue which had met on a number of occasions.
- The council had invested a significant amount of resources over many years to try and reverse some of the inequalities identified in the report, and it was concerning that in some cases, notwithstanding this investment, those inequalities had widened further.
- Previous government interventions had been time-limited and once they had withdrawn, any progress made had often been reversed.

RESOLVED – That the proposed approach of the council and partners to tackling inequalities in Stockport including the council's response to the recommendations of the GM Build Back Fairer Report and the GM Independent Inequalities Commission be noted.

## **18. GOVERNANCE - DELEGATIONS TO CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR PLACE**

The Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning & Governance (Councillor Tom McGee) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing a proposed approach for the reallocation of delegations previously made to the post of Corporate Director for Place Management & Regeneration.

RESOLVED - (1) That the Directors of Place Management and Development & Regeneration be authorised to exercise any of the specific delegations previously approved by the Cabinet to the Corporate Director for Place Management & Regeneration/ Corporate Director (Place) or Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

(2) That the contents of this report relating to the interim arrangements for the discharge of functions delegated to officers in Section 8 of the Scheme of Delegation, as set out in Section 4 of this report be noted and endorsed.

## **19. GMCA DECISIONS**

The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Devolution submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) setting out decisions taken by the GMCA at its meeting on 26 November and 17 December 2021.

RESOLVED – That the decisions be noted.

## **20. TO CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

The Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning & Governance (Councillor Tom McGee) reported that at its meeting on 13 December 2021, the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered an item that had been placed on the agenda at the request of the Chair in relation to the 'Cabinet responses to Scrutiny Reviews'.

The Chair of the scrutiny committee stated that it was his understanding that none of the scrutiny reviews undertaken in the previous municipal year had yet received a formal response. It was further commented that there was no mechanism within the constitution for failures to comply with this procedure rule, and that consideration should be given to remedying this.

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee agreed to recommend that the Cabinet comply with their duty under Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.3(b) and provide formal responses to those scrutiny reviews undertaken during the 2020/21 municipal year.

RESOLVED - (1) That it be noted that since the recommendation of the scrutiny committee, three cabinet responses had been provided to those scrutiny reviews undertaken in 2021/22 with one response remaining outstanding.

(2) That it be noted that the matter was the subject of a separate referral to the Constitution Working Party asking that consideration be given to instituting a mechanism for dealing with failures by the Cabinet to comply with the provisions of Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.3(b).

Item including information 'Not for Publication'

## **21. MERSEYWAY CAR PARK MAINTENANCE & REFURBISHMENT (E&R77)**

The Cabinet Member for Economy & Regeneration (Councillor David Meller) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) seeking authority to undertake structural repairs to the Merseyway Multi-storey Car Park to prevent further structural deterioration, ensure the safety of users, protect the car parking revenue stream and halt water ingress to retail units below the car park structure.

(NOTE: The report contained a confidential appendix that had been circulated to members of the Cabinet only).

RESOLVED – That approval be given to the Phase 1 works identified in the report to be funded at a cost of £4.4m through borrowing based on savings or existing borrowing costs from within the car parking revenue budget.

The meeting closed at 8.24 pm