



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE CABINET

**Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 8 November 2021
at 10.00 am**

PRESENT: Councillor M Butt (Chair), Councillor McLennan (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Farah, Knight, Nerva, M Patel, Krupa Sheth, Stephens, Southwood and Tatler.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Alan Lunt (Strategic Director Regeneration & Environment) who was represented by Chris Whyte (Operational Director Environmental Services) and Shazia Hussain (Assistant Chief Executive) who was represented by Katie Smith (Head of Executive & Members Services).

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous Cabinet meeting held on Monday 11 October 2021 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. Matters Arising (if any)

None.

5. Petitions (if any)

There were no petitions submitted for consideration at the meeting.

6. Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committees (if any)

There were no references from Scrutiny submitted for consideration at the meeting.

7. School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 Refresh

Councillor Stephens, Lead Member for Schools, Employment and Skills, introduced a report setting out a refresh of the School Place Planning Strategy 2019-2023 initially agreed by Cabinet in November 2018.

In considering the report, members noted that the annual refresh of the Strategy provided an updated assessment of school place demand across the borough based on the latest pupil projections from the Greater London Authority (GLA). Overall the 2021 forecasts for primary mainstream school places were lower than

the 2020 forecasts whilst the secondary forecasts were broadly similar to 2020. Based on the current forecasts, it was considered that:

- sufficient capacity was available in order to meet the forecast demand for mainstream primary places whilst maintaining the 5% of spare places required to respond to in-year movement and migration.
- sufficient capacity was available to meet the forecast demand for secondary places and provide 5% spare places up to 2029/30, which included the capacity that would be provided through the North Brent School. Given the latest forecast demand having confirmed that further additional secondary capacity was not required, Cabinet was also being asked to confirm that the proposed secondary school expansion programme did not proceed.

Alongside the above update, members also noted that demand for places to meet the needs of children and young people with Special Education Needs (SEND) was continuing to increase. Whilst this was due in part to overall population growth, it also reflected increasing diagnosis and the extension of services to children and young people aged 0-25 with SEND. In order to address this increase in demand and reduce dependence on out of borough places members noted and welcomed the strategies being developed to provide additional capacity through a new special school, special school expansions and new Additionally Resourced Provision as part of the overall School Place Planning Strategy. As part of this approach, members also welcomed the work being undertaken to establish a 16-25 Skills Centre for young people with complex learning difficulties.

Members were supportive of the overall approach adopted as part of the refresh of the strategy along with the work being undertaken alongside Brent Schools to ensure that place planning continued to be informed by local information on population trends, especially given the ongoing impact of Brexit and the pandemic.

Having welcomed the update provided, Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve the refresh of the School Place Planning Strategy 2019-2023 provided as Appendix 1 of the report.
- (2) To note that the current forecasts for primary places would remain fairly steady over the next five years.
- (3) To accept the recommendation that the Secondary School Expansion Programme, presented to Cabinet on 14 October 2020, does not proceed as the latest forecasts indicated that additional secondary places were not required.
- (4) To note the planned strategies for addressing the significant and increasing demand for places that meet the needs of children and young people with SEND aged 0-25.
- (5) To note the concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on Early Years provision and the strategies to support the sector.

8. **Purchase of a S.106 block of apartments at the Telford Homes Alperton Bus Garage Development**

Councillor McLennan, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Resources, introduced a report seeking approval to purchase a long leasehold interest in 155 affordable rented homes (flats) at the Alperton Bus Garage site, located at 330 Ealing Road, Alperton.

Cabinet noted that the scheme was currently in development with an estimated practical completion of Quarter 3 2024 for the affordable rented homes element. In order to finance purchase of the block it was proposed that the Council take a lease of 50 years from an Asset Special Purpose Vehicle (ASPV). This would be on the basis of current social rents and upon completion a reversionary 949 year lease would be granted at nil or peppercorn rent with the developer continuing to insure the premises during the construction and until completion of the contract.

In considering the report members were advised that the size and breakdown of the affordable homes would assist in addressing current housing needs at a location considered to be beneficial. As further assurance, confirmation was also provided that the Council would be employing their own professional services team to ensure that the quality and progression of the build met required standards.

In expressing their support for the proposal, Cabinet highlighted the opportunity the scheme provided to further increase the supply of affordable social housing within the borough based on a leasing model which was felt to represent good value for money. Officers were thanked for their efforts in securing the necessary terms as a means of providing additional high quality affordable homes offering secure tenancies.

As a result of the discussion and having noted the information provided within the exempt appendices of the report, Cabinet **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and the Operational Director of Property and Assets to negotiate and agree the terms and thereafter enter into a 50 year under lease (to be made between L.B. Brent and Asset SPV) in respect of the 155 affordable homes within the Alperton Bus Garage Development subject to:

- (a) clean and marketable title;
- (b) financial and legal due diligence;
- (c) all commercial terms having been agreed between the parties; and
- (d) vacant possession, with a target completion date as soon as possible after the grant of the long lease of 999 years (the headlease).

9. **Annual Procurement Strategy Report 2021**

Councillor McLennan, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Resources, introduced a report detailing the Procurement Strategy Annual Report 2020-21.

In considering the report, Cabinet noted the progress (as detailed within section 3 of the report) being made against each of the five pillars within the 2020-23 Procurement Strategy and way in which these had also been aligned to meet the key objectives within the Borough Plan 2019-23.

In focussing on the pillars within the strategy, members noted the specific progress being made in relation to the Active Procurement, social value considerations and community wealth building commitments and support being provided for local businesses through the strategy as well as the benefits in relation to employment and skills opportunities.

In recognising the progress being made and associated benefits being achieved, Cabinet **RESOLVED** to note and approve the Annual Procurement Strategy report 2020-2021 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

10. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press or public.

11. **Any other urgent business**

In accordance with Paragraphs 12 and 36 of the Council's Access to Information Rules Councillor Muhammed Butt, as Leader of the Council, advised Cabinet that he had also agreed to deal with the following as an urgent item on business at the meeting on the grounds that there was a statutory requirement for the Council to have in place a Statement of Principles under the Gambling Act 2005 and there was therefore a need to consider renewal of the policy in advance of it expiring on 30 January 2022.

11.1 Proposed renewal of the Council's current Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles (Policy Statement)

Councillor Knight, Lead Member for Community Safety & Engagement, was then invited to introduce the accompanying report which she advised was seeking approval to renew the Council's existing Gambling Policy in its current form for a maximum period of a further 24 months until 31ST January 2024 and recommend this on to Full Council for formal agreement.

In considering the report Cabinet noted that the Council was required under the Gambling Act 2005 to publish a statement of principles (policy statement) to be applied in exercising its functions under the Act, with the current version due to expire on 30th January 2022. In December 2020 the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) had launched a major and wide ranging review of the Act to consider the increase in online gambling along with advertising, marketing rules and the powers of the Gambling Commission and to ensure the necessary protections were available within the regulatory framework in order to protect children and vulnerable people, prevent gambling related crime and keep gambling fair in the digital age. The Council had made representations in response to the consultation seeking to secure more control over the number of Adult Gaming Centres (AGCs) able to be established within the borough given the detrimental impact they were felt to have on local communities, particularly in areas of deprivation. Given the need for the Council to review and prepare a new or revised

gambling policy and statement of principles that would align with any new legislation framework introduced as a result of the review, it had been recommended that the current policy be renewed for up to a further two year period in order to allow this process to be undertaken. Confirmation was provided that the current policy had been reviewed and was considered to remain fit for purpose with no amendments required.

In commenting on the report, members expressed their strong support for the robust and hostile stance being maintained by the Council against the establishment of AGCs in Brent given the detrimental impact they were felt to have on town centres, local communities and in targeting the most vulnerable and deprived neighborhoods. In confirming their support for the approach outlined in the report, Members were keen to ensure the Council continued to do all within its power to control and minimise the number of ASCs across all parts of the borough.

As a result of the discussions, Cabinet therefore **RESOLVED** to recommend to Council that, having agreed the reasons for urgency, the current gambling policy and statement of principles be renewed until 31st January 2024.

The meeting ended at 10.30 am

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair