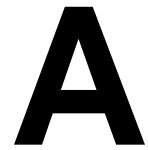


# Crawley Borough Council



## Minutes of Cabinet

Wednesday 11 February 2015 at 7.30pm

### Present:

Councillor	P K Lamb	(Chair of Cabinet and Leader of the Council)
	S J Joyce	(Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing)
	C C Lloyd	(Cabinet Member for Environmental Services)
	C Oxlade	(Cabinet Member for Community Engagement)
	P Smith	(Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development)

### Also in Attendance:

Councillors R Burrett, D Crow and W Ward

### Officers Present:

Ann-Maria Brown	Head of Legal & Democratic Services
Peter Browning	Deputy Chief Executive
Sally English	Democratic Services Officer
Lee Harris	Chief Executive
Karen Hayes	Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits
Diana Maughan	Head of Strategic Housing and Planning Services

### 70. Death of Bert Crane

The Leader, in response to news of the recent death of Bert Crane, a former Crawley Borough Councillor of 58 years' continuous service, as well as an Honorary Freeman and Alderman, asked those present to observe a minute's silence in remembrance.

### 71. Apologies for Absence:

Councillors C J Mullins and D Shreeves

### 72. Members' Disclosure of Interests

There were no disclosures of interest.

**73. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on [14 January 2015](#) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**74. Public Question Time**

There were no questions from the public.

**75. Matters Referred to the Cabinet**

The Head of Legal & Democratic Services confirmed that no matters had been referred to the Cabinet for further consideration.

**76. Three Bridges Station Forecourt Project (Planning and Economic Development Portfolio)**

The Cabinet considered report [SHAP/43](#) of the Head of Strategic Housing and Planning Services which sought approval of a scheme for the improvement of the forecourt area at Three Bridges Station, and to recommend support for the use of S106 monies which had been received for transport or interchange improvements at the station to fund the project.

The matter had been considered at the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission on 9 February 2015. The Commission's main comments were:

- Acknowledgement that the option 1 proposal provided a good strategic scheme for Crawley, offering the best possible configuration and would deliver the maximum benefits.
- Acknowledgement that few of the participants responding to the consultation travelled to the station by car, thus the proposed improvements to safety and access were well justified.
- Recognition that continued consultation would take place with the Hackney Carriage Association as the scheme progressed.
- Support that further traffic management solutions (chicane removal and traffic light phasing) could possibly be amalgamated with the new eastern drop off/pick up area to minimise disruption.
- Support for additional bike storage at the new eastern drop off/pick up area.
- Concerns raised over the alternative exit routes being proposed, whilst hoping that those proposed would be the safest and offer the best possible solution.
- Concerns raised over the possible safety issues from re-opening the narrow platform on the eastern side.

The Commission agreed to support the recommendations and the Cabinet thanked the Commission for its comments.

Councillor Burrett expressed support for the report, but relayed the concerns of residents who had contacted him regarding the reduction to two lanes westbound under the railway bridge, and the loss of the right-hand turn: some felt the changes would cause congestion, while others felt they would improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. He welcomed clarification of a statistic given in paragraph 5.13 (regarding 2% of total traffic movements in the area being right-turning traffic) but felt this had not been clear in the public consultation document. Nevertheless, regarding the loss of the right-hand turn, he requested a recommendation be added to ensure mitigating measures would be taken in case of any problems arising from loss of the turn, in order to reassure residents. He was also concerned how the project would be affected, should the bid for £850k funding be unsuccessful and was assured that the risk of such an outcome was very low.

The Cabinet discussed the inclusion of a recommendation to address concerns regarding loss of the right-hand turn, and the Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Development advised that consultation would continue with all interested parties (Hackney Carriage Association, ward members, Southern Rail, WSCC etc) and that he would ask project officers to conduct flow checks and study outcomes. It was therefore proposed and formally agreed that an amendment be added as follows:

c) That residents' concerns be acknowledged regarding loss of lane and the right hand turn, and to commit to working with WSCC and Southern Rail to mitigate any possible effects.

## **RESOLVED**

That

- a) That the allocation of the Section 106 monies of £430,000 received from the development of the maintenance depot and operations centre permitted under planning application CR/2011/0075/FUL and CR/2011/0093/FUL to the implementation of the full scheme as set out in Option 1 of the consultation document, be approved.
- b) That the transfer of the ownership of the subsoil of a small area of land within the forecourt currently owned by the Council to Network Rail at a nominal value in order to facilitate the improvement scheme and its economic and social benefits, be approved.
- c) That residents' concerns be acknowledged regarding loss of lane and the right hand turn, and to commit to working with WSCC and Southern Rail to mitigate any possible effects.

## **Reason for Decision**

A financial contribution has been received from the development of the maintenance depot and operations centre at Three Bridges Station. The Section 106 agreement requires this funding to be spent on improving access to Three Bridges Station. The proposed full scheme (Option 1) will improve safety and access to the forecourt of Three Bridges Station and address many of the needs of people travelling to and from the station by different forms of transport. The requirements of the S106 agreement mean that the monies can only be used at the station and cannot be allocated to a

scheme elsewhere therefore presenting a one off opportunity to achieve these improvements.

## **77. 2015/2016 Budget and Council Tax (Leader's Portfolio)**

The Cabinet considered report [FIN/356](#) of the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits which set out the Budget and level of Council Tax for the year 2015-2016.

The Leader welcomed the budget report, and commended the Finance Team, especially given the 5% reduction in CBC's spending power, one of the biggest reductions in the country.

The matter had been considered at the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission on 9 February 2015, and the Commission's main comments were:

- Support for a proposed freeze in Council Tax for 2015/16.
- Recognition of the continued work towards a balanced budget, putting back into reserves when the budget is in surplus, whilst needing to maintain as many services as possible. It was acknowledged that the challenges will become more demanding from 2016/17.
- Acknowledgement of the provision for new capital schemes, including improvement to the adventure playgrounds.
- Support for the additional increase in the Crawley Allowance for all employees from 1 April 2015.
- It was recognised that the Council has seen a 5.8% reduction in spending power. However, there was agreement that 'spending power' required further definition. Perhaps comparisons of 'spending power' in previous and future years could be documented.
- Recognition that there was a focus on income generation, including investment acquisitions. However, it was recognised that further investigations could take place in relation to increasing income/savings, for instance recycling credits.
- Acknowledgement of the volatility of business rates income and the uncertainty over the income in future of the New Homes Bonus.
- Members commended officers from the Finance Team for their excellent work in producing the budget and report.

The Commission agreed to support the recommendations to the Cabinet. The Cabinet thanked the Commission for its comments and then agreed the recommendations.

### **RESOLVED**

#### **That the Full Council be RECOMMENDED:**

- (a) to approve the proposed 2015/16 General Fund Budget as set out in section 6 and Appendix 2 of report FIN/356.
- (b) to approve the proposed 2015/16 Housing Revenue Account Budget as set out in section 10 and Appendix 3 of the report,
- (c) to authorise the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, Portfolio Holder for Planning & Economic Development, and Head of Finance,

Revenues & Benefits, to acquire land up to £5m suitable for the provision of housing including affordable housing, with the possibility to include a commercial element to provide investment income, as outlined in paragraph 11.4,

- (d) to approve the 2014/15 to 2017/18 Capital Programme and funding as set out in paragraph 11.6 of the report,
- (e) to agree that the Council's share of Council Tax for 2015/16 be frozen at £187.83 for a band D property,
- (f) to approve the Pay Policy statement for 2015/2016 as outlined in paragraph 16.3 and appendix 6 of the report,
- (g) to approve an additional increase in the Crawley Allowance of 3% as outlined in paragraph 5.5.9 payable from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.

### **Reason for Decision**

To provide adequate funding for the proposed level of services and to fulfil the statutory requirement to set a Budget and Council Tax and report on the robustness of estimates.

## **78. Treasury Management Strategy 2015/2016 (Leader's Portfolio)**

The Cabinet considered report [FIN/355](#) of the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits which covered two main areas: Capital Issues and Treasury Management Issues.

The Leader commended the work of officers on the report. The matter had been considered at the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission on 9 February 2015, and the Commission's main comments were:

- Acknowledgement that the Council's policy is to remain debt free, investing accordingly whilst providing adequate liquidity, security and yield.
- Recognition that different rates of interest and returns are achieved for shorter and longer term investments and loans, yet it was important to strike a balance between risk and investment return.
- The advantages and disadvantages surrounding ethical investment.

The Commission noted the report to the Cabinet, who thanked the Commission for its comments. The Cabinet then agreed the recommendations.

### **RESOLVED**

#### **That the Full Council be RECOMMENDED:**

- a) To approve the Treasury Prudential Indicators and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement contained within Section 5 of report FIN/355.
- b) To approve the Treasury Management Strategy contained within Section 6;

- c) To approve the Investment Strategy contained within Section 7, and the detailed criteria included in Appendix 3.

**Reason for Decision**

The Council's financial regulations, in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management, requires a Treasury Management Strategy to be approved for the forthcoming financial year. This report complies with these requirements.

**79. 2014/2015 Budget Monitoring - Quarter 3 (Leader's Portfolio)**

The Cabinet considered report [FIN/353](#) of the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits which set out a summary of the Council's actual revenue and capital spending up to the third Quarter ending December 2014. It identified the main variations from the approved spending levels and any potential impact on future budgets.

The Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Development commended the Property Team for their work and noted that the acquisition of properties was already generating revenue.

The Cabinet then agreed the recommendations in the report.

**RESOLVED**

- 1) That the projected outturn for the year 2014/2015 as summarised in report FIN/353, be noted.

**Reason for Decision**

To report to Members on the projected outturn for the year compared to the approved Budget for 2014/2015.

**80. Closure of Meeting**

With the business of the Cabinet concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.12pm.

P K LAMB  
Chair