

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Cabinet

Wednesday, 6 September 2023 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

M G Jones (Chair)	Leader of the Council
I T Irvine	Cabinet Member for Housing
Y Khan	Cabinet Member for Public Protection
C J Mullins	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Wellbeing
S Mullins	Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Culture
A Nawaz	Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development
B Noyce	Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change
T Rana	Cabinet Member for Resources

Also in Attendance:

Councillors	M L Ayling, B J Burgess and D Crow
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Officers Present:

Vicki Basley	Chief Accountant
Natalie Brahma-Pearl	Chief Executive
Georgina Bouette	Head of Community Services
Dan Carberry	Public Protection and Enforcement Manager
Siraj Choudhury	Head of Governance, People & Performance
Ian Duke	Deputy Chief Executive
Carolin Martlew	Head of Corporate Finance
Diana Maughan	Head of Strategic Housing
Chris Pedlow	Democracy & Data Manager
Nigel Sheehan	Head of Projects and Commercial Services

1. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interests were made.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 28 June 2023 and 12 July 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

3. Public Question Time

There were no questions from the public.

4. Further Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private and Notifications of any Representations

It was reported that no representations had been received in respect of agenda item 8: *Review of the Community Warden Service and Creation of Community Protection Team*.

5. Matters referred to the Cabinet and Report from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

It was confirmed that no matters had been referred to the Cabinet for further consideration.

6. Vote of Thanks To Natalie Brahma-Pearl - Chief Executive

The Leader of the Council asked that his and the Cabinet's thanks be recorded in respect of Natalie Brahma-Pearl (Chief Executive) for all her hard work and dedication to Crawley Brough Council and Crawley's residents during her time of employment in Crawley. Along with their best wishes as Natalie leaves to be the Portsmouth City Council later this month.

7. Exempt Information – Exclusion of the Public (Subject to Agenda Item 5)

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

8. Review of the Community Warden Service and Creation of Community Protection Team

Exempt Paragraphs 1 & 4 –
Information Relating to an Individual; and

Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising

between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the authority.

The Cabinet Member for Public Protection presented report HCS/064 of the Head of Community Services. The report sought to review a proposed restructure of the Community Warden Service, including the Straying Dogs provision.

Councillor Ayling presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report OSC/313 to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 4 September 2023.

Councillors Crow and Burgess were invited to speak on the item, and both commenting their general support of the proposals.

Cabinet Members, Councillors C Mullins, S Mullins and Jones all as part of the discussion on the report, emphasising their full support on the proposed changes.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet:

- a) approves Option 2 for the Community Warden Service, as set out in Section 6 of the report and to note the Community Protection Team – Proposed Service Model and Structure (Appendix A of report HCS/064)
- b) delegates authority to the Head of Community Services to conduct the necessary consultation arrangements, fulfil the changes and decisions on all human resources matters, subject to the appropriate guidelines and procedures, as set out in the Constitution.
(Generic Delegation 11 will be used to enact this recommendation)
- c) delegates authority to the Head of Community Services to conduct a tender process and procurement exercise in accordance with the Council's Procurement Code, for the straying dogs service to be delivered by a specialist provider.
(Generic Delegation 3 will be used to enact this recommendation)
- d) delegates authority to the Head of Community Services, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member and Head of Governance, People and Performance to approve the contract award of the straying dogs service following an appropriate procurement process.
(Generic Delegation 3 will be used to enact this recommendation)
- e) delegates the negotiation, approval, and completion of all relevant legal documentation, following the awarding of the contract, to the relevant head of service, Head of Governance, People and Performance, and Head of Corporate Finance, in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member.
(Generic Delegations 2 & 3 will be used to enact this recommendation)

Reasons for the Recommendations

The conclusion of the review is that the current service model is, in parts, no longer fit for purpose and is not designed to meet the increased level of demand for more complex enforcement activity.

Revising the role profiles and salary scale as recommended is critical to ensuring the Council can attract and retain staff with the required specialist skills, qualifications and experience to deliver a high performing and quality service.

The proposed revised Community Protection model (attached as Appendix A) will modernise the service in order to meet the identified demands namely, providing local residents with an enhanced enforcement response to anti-social behaviour, low level public-space crime and environmental crime.

The straying dogs service continues to face challenges related to the size, breeds and behaviour of dogs, and Crawley is facing a similar national trend of an increase in abandoned dogs, rather than lost pets. To successfully address this service requirement, the recommendation is to procure and enter into a contract with a specialist provider for the straying dog service to fulfil this function.

The recommendation is to refresh the Community Wardens Service including all associated functions, processes and procedures and relaunch it as the Community Protection Team which will deliver enhanced enviro-crime and ASB investigation and enforcement activity.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Cabinet concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.33 pm

M G JONES
Chair