

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Cabinet

Wednesday, 8 September 2021 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

P K Lamb (Chair)	Leader of the Council
I T Irvine	Cabinet Member for Housing
M G Jones	Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Community Engagement
C J Mullins	Cabinet Member for Wellbeing
P C Smith	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development

Also in Attendance:

Councillor R D Burrett, D Crow and K Khan

Officers Present:

Natalie Brahma-Pearl	Chief Executive
Siraj Choudhury	Head of Legal, Governance and HR
Ian Duke	Deputy Chief Executive
Karen Hayes	Head of Corporate Finance
Matt Lethbridge	Community Services Manager
Chris Pedlow	Democratic Services Manager
Karen Rham	Neighbourhood Services Manager
Nigel Sheehan	Head of Projects and Commercial Services
Kate Wilson	Head of Community Services

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor R S Fiveash and G S Jhans

1. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interests were made.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 30 June 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader, subject to a minor amendment to item 1 Declarations of Interest.

The declaration should read:

Councillor P Smith	Replacement Article 4 Directions for Main Employment Areas (Class MA) (Minute 12)	Personal Interest – As Councillor P Smith is Local Authority Director of the Manor Royal Business
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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 13 *Property Acquisition to Increase the Council's Portfolio of Temporary Accommodation*.

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. Petition – 'Keep your dog on a lead in Tilgate Park'.

The Cabinet Member for Wellbeing presented joint report [HCS/30](#) of the Head of Community Services and the Petitions Officer.

The report responded to the petition submitted from residents titled 'Keep your dog on a lead in Tilgate Park.' The petition documented the concerns and wished the council to increase signage and warden patrol around Tilgate lake to ensure dogs were kept on leads while walking around the lake and to implement the enforcement of rules when this was not adhered to:

"We the undersigned petition the council to Increase signage and warden patrol around Tilgate lake to ensure dogs are kept on leads while walking around the lake. To implement enforcement of rules are not adhered too. My dog was attacked while walking around the lake by a dog that was not kept on its lead. The rules are clear on the website, however there isn't sufficient signage and enforcement of rules for dog owners not adhering to the rules. Therefore increased presence of signage, policing and enforcement is required"

The principal petitioner was invited to address the Cabinet on their petition but declined the opportunity.

The report also outlined the research that had been undertaken following receipt of the petition along with the key areas for consideration.

Councillor Mullins, as Cabinet Member for Wellbeing, expressed his empathy for those that had signed the petition, as he was aware of the problem that the petition was highlighting, and he acknowledged that the Commission had held a good debate on the petition. He commented that the Commission had considered the options within the report and as shown in the Commission's comment sheet before the Cabinet, they supported option 2, but Councillor Mullins stated he was more than happy to put forward the stronger approach of option 3.

Councillor Khan read out report [OSC/296](#) the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 6 September 2021, which included:

- Acknowledged that the issue of dogs off leads attacking other dogs, people and other types of wildlife was not solely a Tilgate lake issues and such attacks had occurred across the Borough.
- That the Commission preferred option 2 as it was a stronger approach that the current method.
- They also felt that option 3, may be heavily resource intensive without resulting in behavioural change and minimum reward in comparison.

Councillor Crow was invited to speak on the item and commented he had first hand experience through a family member being attacked by an unleashed dog whilst they ran around Tilgate lake. He commented it was a difficult choice and wished Cabinet well in tackling this tricky matter.

The Cabinet held a long debate comparing the stronger approach of option 3 compared to opting for option 2, including the difference in cost against the likely outcomes, impact of the options on the Community Wardens and other Council services, how a PSPO could be used and where it should cover, the expectations of residents including the impact on dog walkers along with other factors. Arising from this discussion the Cabinet felt that they could not make an informed decision, without receiving more detailed analysis on the implication of option 3 and therefore agreed that a further report was required.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet requests that Officers bring a further report back for its consideration, which provides more detail with regards to the potential implementation of option 3 referred to within the report [HCS/30](#).

In order for Cabinet to make an informed decision, the requested report should provide information on option 3, the possible changes to service delivery and personnel, expected financial implications and any legal aspects. This will include details on the use of bye-laws and the installation of a PSPO together with the associated statutory consultation requirements.

Reasons for the Recommendations

To ensure the procedure for petitions as detailed in the Council's Constitution is adhered to.

To ensure that Cabinet are making an full informed decision on the subject on the petition - 'Keep your dog on a lead in Tilgate Park.'

7. 2021/2022 Budget Monitoring - Quarter 1

The Leader presented report [FIN/531](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance. The report set out a summary of the Council's actual revenue and capital spending for the Quarter 1 of the 2021-2022 financial year. The figures showed an expected overspend of in the revenue budget of £1.529mill, but with use of the 'use of approved coronavirus budgets' reserve of £1.008mil and Grants' relating to sales, fees and charges of £250k, the predicted revised deficit would be £271k. It was explained the majority of the deficit was directly or indirect Covid related. The HRA was showing an underspend of £5k currently but that figure did not account for the potential repairs and maintenance overspend which was being investigated.

The capital budget expenditure to end of Quarter 1 was £9.033mil and with an estimate total capital spend for the year of £54.356mil. The report also detailed proposed redistribute funds within the ICT budget and proposals with regard to the Unsupervised Play Investment Programme.

Councillor Khan presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 6 September 2021, which included that they noted that the majority of the reasons overspent for this quarter were still Covid related and that they would want to be monitoring this in the next few Quarters' report, especially regarding K2 Crawley.

Councillor Crow spoken on the report acknowledging the uncertain times that the Council was functioning in, also added his support with regards to Recommendation 5 relating to the refurbishment of playgrounds.

Councillors Irvine and C Mullins also spoke regarding to issues relating respectively their Portfolios as part of the discussion on the report.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet:

- a) notes the projected outturn for the year 2021/2022 as summarised in this report [FIN/531](#)
- b) notes the potential overspend on HRA responsive repairs as shown in paragraph 8.4 of report [FIN/531](#) .
- c) notes that the ICT budget has been increased by £100,000 for Hardware Renewals and that this will be funded from the ICT Renewals Reserve.
- d) approves the increase the capital budget by £35,000 in 2021/22 to purchase a Legal Case Management System this will be funded from New Burdens grant received from the government.
- e) approves the draw down from the existing refurbishment of playgrounds future schemes for the two play schemes as identified in paragraph 9.9 of report [FIN/531](#) which will be funded from available S106 (subject to delegated approval).

Reasons for the Recommendations

To report to Councillors on the projected outturn for the year compared to the approved budget.

8. Cabinet Appointments to Outside Bodies and Organisations

The Leader presented report [LDS/172](#) and it was noted there were additional nominations to be sought for Cabinet Outside Bodies.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet appointed the following Councillors to the Outside Bodies for 2021/2022:

Name of Organisation	2021/2022 Appointment
The Cycling Forum	Councillor Irvine
High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Advisory Committee	Councillor Irvine
Gatwick Airport Noise Management Board	Vacancy
Gatwick Airport Noise Management Board Community Forum	Vacancy
Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group	Councillor Lamb

Reason for the Recommendations

To appoint to additional outside bodies in relation to Cabinet functions for 2021/2022.

9. 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.

10. Property Acquisition to Increase the Council's Portfolio of Temporary Accommodation

***Exempt Part B - By Virtue of Paragraph 3
Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person
(including the authority holding that information)***

The Cabinet Member for Housing presented report SHAP/83. The report sought approval to purchase a property on the open market to be used for Temporary Accommodation. The purchase will be funded through the approved budget for Temporary Accommodation.

Councillor Khan presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 6 September 2021, which included their general support as it would be a flexible approach to meet the demands of the service and acknowledged that consultation would take place as part of the planning process.

During discussion on the report Members of the Cabinet expressed their support for the report's proposal to help address some of the temporary accommodation needs within the Borough.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet delegates the negotiation, approval and completion of all relevant legal documentation to complete the purchase/acquisition, to the Head of Strategic Housing Services, Head of Legal, Governance and HR and Head of Corporate Finance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Housing.

(Generic Delegations 2 & 3 will be used to enact this recommendation)

Reasons for the Recommendations

The Council currently has 279 households in temporary accommodation, 100 of these in nightly paid accommodation, including 30 out of borough placements. This represents the highest level of need and demand for temporary accommodation faced by the Council to date.

The average net cost of nightly paid accommodation to the council per household per week is £211.50 equating to £21,150.00 per week / £1.1m per year for current numbers. This figure does not include any additional financial burdens arising from non-payment of contributions or ineligibility for benefits.

A raft of measures is being progressed both locally and at a countywide level to reduce the pressure on nightly paid accommodation. This report is focused on one of these work strands, namely to expand the portfolio of Council owned temporary accommodation.

This detached two storey property will provide an additional 6 units of temporary accommodation.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Cabinet concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.50 pm

P K LAMB
Chair