

CABINET

4 June 2018

Present: Mayor Taylor (Chair)

Councillors K Collett, S Bolton, S Johnson, I Sharpe, M Watkin
and T Williams

Also present: Councillor K Hastrick

Officers: Managing Director
Deputy Managing Director and Director of Place Shaping and
Corporate Performance
Shared Director of Finance
Head of Service Transformation
Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications
Head of Community and Environmental Service
Legal and Democratic Section Head
Watford 2020 Programme Manager
Communications and Engagement Manager
Mayor's Political Assistant
Democratic Services Manager

1 Apologies for absence

The Mayor welcomed the two new Cabinet members, Councillor Tim Williams and Councillor Stephen Bolton.

No apologies were received.

2 Disclosure of interests (if any)

There were no disclosures of interest.

3 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2018 were submitted and signed.

4 **Conduct of meeting**

No changes were made to the agenda.

5 **Watford: A great town for everyone**

A report was received from the Managing Director. The Mayor introduced the report and explained there would be a new emphasis on transport which was one of his key themes as Mayor.

The Managing Director explained that the key priorities from the Mayor's manifesto would be linked into the Council's Corporate Plan. A number of the initiatives were already reflected in capital and revenue commitments in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and also in the corporate plan, for example, the clean-up and improved access to the River Colne. The council were also working to support West Hertfordshire Hospital Trust through the development of the Riverwell scheme and multi-storey car park. The new initiatives would be the transport infrastructure enhancements; such as the hop on and hop off bus and the bike hire scheme. Officers would develop the proposals through Leadership Team and then take financial implications, risk and governance decisions through Cabinet and Budget Panel. Any additional budget may require Full Council approval. If there was a need to enhance or change the Corporate Plan before work commenced on the next draft in September, then this would also go through Council.

Councillor Sharpe commented that emphasis had been on strengthening the local economy, which the council had a good record on. Refocusing on transport was now important particularly in light of the Metropolitan Line Extension not going ahead. Under the government's new methodology there was a large amount of housing to be provided but the support for infrastructure and transport were minimal. This was a void that the council needed to step into. The council was already working with other local authorities on a strategic plan about creating new homes, however, the government had also indicated that councils needed to work together in order to access support for transport initiatives.

The Mayor emphasised the need for a coherent transport strategy to avoid a piecemeal approach of different transport schemes.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Notes that the new Mayoral priorities and initiatives will be developed further to assess delivery options, costs and how best to integrate them into the Corporate Plan to 2020 and beyond.
2. Notes that the development of the detailed projects will be reported through Cabinet with any financial and resource implications identified and subsequently a revised corporate plan will be presented to Council.

6

Watford 2020 Programme

A report of the Head of Service Transformation was received. Councillor Watkin introduced the report and praised the Watford 2020 Team for the work that had been done leading up to the report. Following the collection of a huge amount of data, work would now focus on the detail of how to deliver and schedule the programme. Councillor Watkin explained that there would be an investment of £1.92m which would result in an ongoing baseline budget reduction of £1.21m. The aim was to achieve transformation of the council and how its services were perceived by the community, it was the beginning of an exciting period for the authority.

The Mayor commended the report for its focus on improving provision for residents and not on cost reduction.

The Head of Service Transformation explained that the business case and operating model showed how the vision of Watford 2020 could be delivered. The programme was about delivering a sustainable organisation which addressed the expectations of customers, enabled the use of technology to deliver services and delivered the expected financial savings as included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The delivery of the transformation was ambitious and required investment. However, the savings could be delivered without cutting services and whilst maintaining and enhancing service delivery. There would be a reduction in the staffing establishment, however, Leadership Team understood the implications and were looking to minimise redundancies. A core part of the transformation was enabling customers to self-serve but it was not about closing communication channels and customers would continue to have the choice to transact by telephone or face-to-face. From the point of view of officers, it was about agile and flexible working and making the most of the systems available.

Cabinet discussed the £300,000 revenue income referred to in the report and it was explained that a consultant commercial adviser would be appointed to help take ideas from officers and work them into business propositions. The contract for the consultant would be completed within two to three months. The Managing Director commented that a consultant was needed as there were

substantial amounts of work required on the business case and risk management for the ideas and additional capacity was needed. The arrangement would follow a similar model of support provided by Lambert Smith Hampton to the Property Investment Board which was working well.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the Watford 2020 business case, future operating model and implementation plan.
2. Agrees that the above approval allows the Watford 2020 programme to progress to tranche 2, the detailed design and implementation as outlined in the implementation plan.
3. Agrees that the financial resource necessary to deliver the programme as set out in section 8 of the report is presented to Full Council for approval on 10 July 2018.

7

Opportunities at Woodside Playing Fields

Cabinet received a report of the Head of Community and Environmental Services. Councillor Collett introduced the report and commented that the area had a leisure centre, Watford Harriers athletics club, boxing club, cricket club and bowls clubs. There needed to be a new strategy for the area which also included older children and families. Councillor Collett stressed the importance of full consultation with the cricket and boxing clubs as they had been running successfully and would also have ideas to input. She commented that it would be great for the community hub to have a café which would also be a good place for community events.

Councillor Williams thought that there were very exciting plans to maximise the site and again stressed that all the existing users need to be consulted, and encouraged to take part in the project. In addition, there would need to be consultation with residents as there would be concerns about parking. Councillor Williams commented that there was a need for an improved parking survey to be carried out on a busy summer night.

The Head of Community and Environmental Services explained that a report would come back to Cabinet in September with a further plan and financial implications for the budget setting process. There would also be a meeting to agree the communication and engagement plan.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Supports the emerging vision to provide an enhanced leisure offer at Woodside Playing Fields which would appeal to more of Watford's residents.
2. Approves the further development of these outline proposals, undertaking consultation as appropriate, with a report back to a future Cabinet for confirmation of the proposals and costs.

8 Watford Rural Parish Fees - Cemetery Agreement

Cabinet received a report of the Head of Community and Environmental Services. Councillor Williams introduced the report and explained that Watford Rural Parish Council had requested to terminate the agreement. A representative from the Parish Council had sent their apologies to Cabinet that they were unable to attend the meeting. The original agreement was established about 66 years ago and required mutual consent to be terminated. The Watford Rural Parish Council thought it was in their best interest to terminate and the report before Cabinet set out why it was also in the best interests for Watford Borough Council to agree to the termination.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Accepts Watford Rural Parish Council's request to terminate the agreement from January 2019.
2. Agrees that all future requests for burials from Watford Rural Parish are treated as non-residents and charged accordingly in line with agreed annual fees and charges.

Mayor

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm
and finished at 7.25 pm