

CABINET

4 October 2021

Present: Mayor (Chair)

Councillors A Dychton, S Johnson, J Pattinson, I Stotesbury,
M Watkin and T Williams

Also present: Councillors N Bell

Officers: Managing Director
Group Head of Democracy and Governance
Group Head of Community and Environmental Services
Head of Programme Management Office
Head of Leisure and Environmental Services
Contract Manager - Parks and Streetcare
Interim Head of Parks and Open Spaces
Democratic Services Officer (OE)
Democratic Services Manager

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the Cabinet meeting in the Town Hall and to those viewing online.

27 **Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

28 **Disclosure of interests (if any)**

There were no disclosures of interest.

29 **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2021 were submitted and signed.

30 **Conduct of meeting**

The Mayor reported that he intended to go through the agenda as published.

Strategic Framework Progress Update (Q1 2021/2022)

Cabinet received a report of the Executive Head of Strategy and Communications and Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office, which included the latest update on the progress of the plans under the Strategic Framework. This included the council's Delivery Plan 2020-22 and the Organisational Development Strategy 2020-24.

The Mayor introduced the report and thanked officers for all their work in achieving the progress set out in the document. He invited the Managing Director to provide further information.

The Managing Director advised that the Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office had the responsibility for oversight of the programme. She acknowledged the programme was ambitious. It was intended that an update would be included in the next edition of About Watford in order to inform Watford residents on progress against the Delivery Plan.

The Managing Director reported on some of the highlights. These included:

- Watford Borough Council being assigned as district lead on the cross-organisational Hertfordshire-wide 'Staying Connected' project. The core aim of the project was to help those socially isolated to stay connected.
- 'Market Lates' event which included food, music and entertainment.
- £3.7 million awarded to the council to assist in the decarbonisation works in the Town Hall and Colosseum.
- Supporting managers with training to help them identify early signs of mental health issues within their teams.
- Five new people had joined the council as part of the Kickstart scheme, who would be with the council for six months. This was separate to apprentices.

RESOLVED –

1. That Cabinet notes the progress updates within this report relating to:

- the Council Plan 2020-24 and Delivery Plan 2020 -22 (Appendix A to the report)
- the Organisational Development Strategy 2020-24 (Appendix B to the report)

2. That Cabinet notes, as outlined in the original report to Cabinet in July 2020, that the progress to date will be communicated publicly to our residents.
3. That Cabinet notes the significant corporate effort over the last three months that has resulted in a substantial level of progress made against the plans.
4. That Cabinet notes the impact of external factors on some of the areas of delivery. Where this is the case, the areas have been reviewed to reflect the current environment during Quarter 1. The focus on delivery within the life of the plans remains a corporate commitment.

32

Road to Renewal Refresh

Cabinet received a report of the Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office which included a refreshed Road to Renewal Plan.

The Mayor commented that this was an important piece of work. He noted that Watford was one of the first councils to think about renewal following the impacts of the pandemic. He invited the Managing Director to further expand on the report.

The Managing Director stated it was important to note that the council had called it a renewal plan, rather than focusing purely on 'recovery'. The plan provided the platform for the council to deliver a comprehensive and joined up renewal of the town and council. Details of the council's progress were set out in the report. Throughout the second wave and additional lockdowns the council had remained agile, which enabled it to continue to deliver excellent services for the community and to support the vaccination roll-out across the borough. Three work streams had been established:

- Community
- Business and Economy
- Organisational Renewal

In response to a question from Councillor Bell about the renewal budget indicated in the financial section of the report, the Mayor advised that the budget had been created to cover the renewal work. The Managing Director reiterated this.

RESOLVED –

- That the Road to Renewal Plan work stream objectives outlined in this report be approved.
- That the Road to Renewal delivery actions (Appendix 1 to the report) be approved.
- That progress on delivering the Road to Renewal delivery actions will continue to be reported on a quarterly basis to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- That, with agreement from the Elected Mayor and oversight from the Renewal Coordination Board, the Managing Director is able to make amendments to the plan objectives, governance structure and delivery actions.
- That delegated authority is provided to the Managing Director, as chair of the Renewal Coordination Board, to draw down up to £5,000 of funding from the Renewal budget for minor items without the need for additional review by Portfolio Holders.
- That Cabinet also notes that the actions outlined in this report will continue to contribute to the delivery of the Council Plan 2020-2024.

33 **Litter Strategy for Watford 2021- 2026**

Cabinet received a report of the Contract Manager – Parks and Streetcare which included the draft Litter Strategy.

The Mayor invited Councillor Williams, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, to introduce the report.

Councillor Williams informed members that the strategy covered best practice. It included education, enforcement and infrastructure to enable the ability to continue delivering a reduction in litter and improving behaviour. £25,000 funding had been received to support the ‘right bin in the right place’ project. He noted that very few councils had a litter strategy in place and Watford was the first in Hertfordshire.

Councillor Williams thanked those groups and organisations that arranged litter picks in the town’s parks and open spaces. He informed Cabinet that he did this along the A405. He had approached the county council for signage ‘Love Watford, Hate litter’ to be installed. However, as yet the county council had not agreed, but he would continue to press for the signs.

Councillor Williams thanked the council’s officers for their hard work and particularly the Contract Manager for Parks and Streetcare. He urged Cabinet to adopt the strategy.

The Mayor noted the fixed penalty charges for litter and dog fouling offences. He felt they were very low. He questioned whether the council had any flexibility.

The Group Head of Community and Environmental Services advised that officers would check, but there was often a maximum limit that could be set. The information would be circulated to Cabinet.

Councillor Williams added that many local councils, in partnership, had pressed the Government to increase the levels of the Fixed Penalty Notices.

Councillor Bell stated that he was pleased with the initiative. He noted in the report it referred to monitoring taking place. He asked, if other areas became 'hotspots' with regularly overflowing bins, could work be concentrated in those areas.

Councillor Williams advised that Veolia would be able to monitor areas during their rounds. If a problem area was identified this information could be fed back to the central office and if necessary increased collections could be built into the work programmes.

In response to a question from Councillor Watkin about signage, Councillor Williams replied that the county council allowed temporary signs to be put up, but he was looking to have larger and bolder signs installed.

RESOLVED –

That the Litter Strategy for Watford 2021-2026, at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

34

Rediscovering the River Colne Programme 2021-2031

Cabinet received a report of the Contract Manager – Parks and Streetcare which sought approval for a 10-year programme.

The Mayor invited Councillor Stotesbury, Portfolio Holder responsible for Sustainability to introduce the report.

Councillor Stotesbury explained that this was a key environmental programme which delivered on a number of the council's strategies. The programme would improve the health of the river, engagement with the local community and the health and wellbeing of all. The programme was at the stage where it was moving from developing the programme to beginning its implementation. There

were eight sites within the programme and these were shown in the report and the appendices.

Councillor Stotesbury thanked the officers and its partners for their work. He encouraged everyone to support the programme. Further information could be found on the website at - <https://www.rivercolnewatford.co.uk/> . The key message was to protect and preserve the river.

The Temporary Parks Project Manager added that an all-Member Briefing had been set up for 10 November when all councillors would be able to find out more about the project.

Councillor Johnson suggested that all councillors should also be encouraged to get involved in the project and be 'hands on'. The Temporary Parks Project Manager confirmed there would be lots of opportunities for members to get involved.

The Mayor thanked Sandy Belloni and all those who had been working to improve the river in recent years.

Councillor Bell wished to give thanks for the work carried out to the lairage land in his ward. He added that he was still waiting for further information about the dead fish that had been seen in Oxhey Park.

The Temporary Parks Project Manager advised that it had been raised with the Environment Agency but as yet there had been no response. The Contract Manager was chasing the Agency for an answer.

RESOLVED –

1. That Cabinet approves in principle the proposals for 'Rediscovering the River Colne 2021 – 2031 as detailed in section 4.4 and appendices 2, 3, 3a, 3b, 3c, and 3d to the report.
2. That Cabinet approves the proposals for the programme for 2021 – 2024 as set out in this report.
3. That Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Community and Environmental Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability to agree priorities within the proposed work streams and funding of the programme.
4. That Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Community and Environmental Services to finalise the terms of the contracts with

Groundwork East and South for the delivery phase of the programme 2021/22.

5. That Cabinet notes the procurement exemption to appoint Groundwork East (Appendix 5 of the report) for the delivery phase of the programme 2021-2022.
6. That Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Community and Environmental Services to undertake a procurement exercise to secure a delivery partner to carry out works under the programme in the financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24; to award the contract to the successful bidder and to finalise the terms of the contract.

35

Community Protection Compliance Policy 2021-2026

Cabinet received a report of the Business Compliance Officer which included the final draft of the Community Protection Compliance Policy 2021-2026 following consultation. It was noted that Licensing Committee had approved its responsibilities within the policy at its meeting on 30 September 2021.

The Mayor invited Councillor Dychton, Portfolio Holder for Community to introduce the report.

Councillor Dychton stated that Watford was a family friendly and safe town. The draft policy had been out for consultation. As a result of the consultation the policy had been reviewed and updated. Following Licensing Committee's approval, Cabinet was being asked to approve those elements of the policy within its remit.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Community Protection Compliance Policy 2021-2026, set out in appendix 1 be approved by Cabinet in relation to functions under its remit.
2. That the Head of Community Protection, in consultation with the Head of Legal, be authorised to make minor amendments to the Policy without member approval. These changes are to be restricted to updates of legislation, codes of practice and guidance notes, and are not to include any changes to approach or considerations.

Mayor

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm
and finished at 7.30 pm