

CABINET – 10 December 2024

Notice of Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Board Meeting held on 18 November 2024, for provision to Cabinet meeting of 10 December 2024.

Action required – for consideration by Cabinet and publication of a response within 2 months of 10 December 2024.

Cabinet Agenda Item 5 – ‘Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees’

The Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed the following recommendations to Cabinet:

1. That the principle of an inflationary increase across all parking charges be endorsed for the 2025/26 budget.

(Majority Decision)

2. That it requests Officers to take into account the suggestion that an assessment be made on using a proportion of surplus income to accelerate the parking charging machine replacement programme prioritising the best value machines in order to reduce future costs (subject to the necessary procurement processes).

(Majority Decision)

3. That it requests that Officers evaluate the retention and recruitment of Civil Enforcement Officers to ensure a robust and resilient workforce to provide an appropriate level of resource and promote safe and appropriate parking.

(Majority Decision)

4. That Officers be requested to explore options to reduce costs for the Council and make the process easier for the public to pay for car parking, in particular an option to be able to pay in advance/on Council website.

(Majority Decision)

5. That Officers be requested to ensure adequate resourcing of parking enforcement to reduce inappropriate parking around schools.

(Majority Decision)

6. That any Resident Card offering is made fully accessible to all those who are not digitally enabled.

(Unanimous Decision)

7. That there should be an application process for the Resident Card with a small financial contribution for the cost of processing and that the card should be a valuable offer that residents are willing to pay a small cost for, so that it can be sustainable in terms of administrative costs.

(Unanimous Decision)

8. That any charge levied for the Resident Card should be the same regardless of the format and that consideration should be given to concessions for disadvantaged groups.

(Unanimous Decision)

9. That Cabinet be recommended to put in place as a matter of urgency a corporate approach to financial decision making that would enable it to meet its net zero targets by 2030, to include a gap analysis of the estimated total amount of spend required to reach net zero targets against the work already underway within departments to reach these targets.

(Unanimous Decision)

10. That following receipt of the Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) report and the work suggested at recommendation 9 above, Cabinet be recommended to consider a mechanism for including the full costs associated with reaching net zero by 2030 alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan, by consulting best practice used in other authorities to date for the same purpose.

(Unanimous Decision)

11. That Cabinet notes that the O&S working group members are assured that, within the difficult financial position that the council is in, officers have explored options to maximise budget and to change the direction of travel in relation to temporary accommodation.

(Unanimous Decision)

12. That the O&S working group members record their concern at the level of Homelessness Prevention Grant and the government subsidy for temporary accommodation placements and request that the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Regulatory Services explore all possible mechanisms to lobby government for increases in this respect.

(Unanimous Decision)

13. That, to support work around the Temporary Accommodation Efficiency Review Themes, Officers be asked to explore the benefits of using co-production tools to answer difficult policy questions, such as the approach to

be taken to releasing empty homes. The working group suggested that one such tool may be a Citizens Assembly or Citizens Survey.

(Unanimous Decision)

14. That Cabinet be informed that the O&S working group notes that the Children's Social Care Service is working within the MTFP and is assured that the budget for 25/26 is being built on well informed growth forecasts and that BCP's position was now stabilising in terms of numbers of children entering the care system.

(Unanimous Decision)

15. That Cabinet notes that, within a time of financial constraint, the O&S working group finds that protection of non-statutory services (such as Early Help) continues to be vitally important to avoid additional financial impact on statutory services. The working group supports and recommends a continued approach to protecting non-statutory services for this reason.

(Unanimous Decision)

16. That Cabinet be informed that the O&S working group was assured by the previous end of year outturn being within approximately £300k of the Quarter 3 projections for the year which was a minimal variance, demonstrating that the Service has a good handle on the anticipated costs for Children's Services.

(Unanimous Decision)

17. That Cabinet supports and promotes inclusion as a key priority for Children's Services enabling more SEND pupils to be educated in mainstream, local schools, therefore reducing the need for school transport provision and associated costs.

(Unanimous Decision)

18. That in light of the financial and other benefits of block booking beds, funds be made available in the 2025/26 budget to allow the Adult Social Care service to increase the number of block booked beds used by the council for long-term care provision with the aim of reaching 300 block booked beds, followed by a review and a further aim of 500 block booked beds.

(Unanimous Decision)

19. That funds be made available in the 2025/26 budget to support the Adult Social Care service to work in partnership with health partners to develop a more enhanced offer of intermediate care and reablement care to be able to meet the objective of reducing or delaying long-term residential care need for residents.

(Unanimous Decision)