

Agenda Item 3

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CABINET

15 JUNE 2020

(7.15 pm - 8.15 pm)

PRESENT: Councillors Stephen Alambritis (in the Chair), Mark Allison, Laxmi Attawar, Tobin Byers, Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Edith Macauley MBE, Eleanor Stringer and Martin Whelton

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Nick McLean and Peter Southgate

Ged Curran (Chief Executive), Hannah Doody (Director of Community and Housing), Caroline Holland (Director of Corporate Services), Chris Lee (Director of Environment and Regeneration), Rachael Wardell (Director, Children, Schools & Families Department), Louise Round (Managing Director, South London Legal Partnership and Monitoring Officer), Matt Burrows (Head of Communications and Customer Experience), Octavia Lamb (Policy and Research Officer (Labour Group)), Paul McGarry (FutureMerton Manager), Louise Fleming (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and Amy Dumitrescu (Democratic Services Officer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

No apologies were received.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2020 are agreed as an accurate record.

4 THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC (Agenda Item 4)

The Leader of the Council introduced the report which set out the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, thanking the Cabinet Members for their input into the response. He highlighted the mobilisation of staff to the frontline to support those residents vulnerable to the virus; the speedy allocation of financial support to local businesses and the creation of a volunteer hub to help out those most in need. The Council had also joined a pan-London procurement exercise with London Councils for the purchase of additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Council officers have worked closely with schools to ensure the safeguarding of vulnerable children and provided accommodation to rough sleepers in the borough. Trading Standards officers had been working with businesses in the borough to assist them with plans to

safely reopen and transport plans had been put in place to assist with social distancing. He paid tribute to a number of local community organisations, including the Food Bank operation at the New Horizons Centre in Pollards Hill; Merton Mutual Aid Group in Wimbledon; the Dons Local Action Group, Old Wimbledonians; and Mitcham and Tooting FC. He also thanked the Members of Parliament, London Mayor and London Assembly Member.

At the invitation of the Chair, the Chief Executive joined the Chair in thanking all those residents, staff and voluntary sector and community groups for their efforts in tackling the pandemic.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment expanded on the points made regarding shielding vulnerable residents and the procurement of PPE. He added his thanks to officers in public health and social care and welcomed the collaborative working relationship with partners in the health sector. He noted the Council's focus on its care providers since the outbreak of the pandemic, which would continue to be supported, and the Council's response to the Government's request to set out its plan was appended to the Cabinet report. The Council was in the process of distributing the additional Government funding to care homes to assist with infection control. He addressed the request of the Government for Local Authorities to set out Local Outbreak Control Plans, and the details of which were set out in the report and would be discussed at the Health and Wellbeing Board, with a further update to Cabinet in due course. Finally he advised that the NHS would be rolling out a campaign, supported by the Council and the CCG, to inform residents that the NHS is still open to them, in response to concerns that there had been a rise in fatalities due to people not presenting early enough.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance thanked the officers involved in providing financial support to residents in need and to local businesses. It was noted that the Council was in the top three boroughs in London for distributing financial support to businesses. He expressed disappointment in the Government's discretionary support scheme for local businesses which was too small and therefore the Council was only able to help 1-200 businesses or charities out of the thousands in the borough. In addition to this, the Council's discretion was limited by the Government's criteria around which businesses could receive the funding. He implored the Government to expand the scheme to include other organisations impacted by the pandemic. The Deputy Leader highlighted the financial impact of the pandemic on the Council's finances and the financial assistance provided by the Government which only covered a quarter of the Council's costs to date. He also took the opportunity to thank all those working in the voluntary sector for their efforts during the pandemic.

The Chair echoed the comments made on behalf of the Council and all local authorities and advised that the Local Government Association would continue to lobby the Government to properly fund the pandemic response and recovery.

The Cabinet Member for Voluntary Sector, Partnerships and Community Safety welcomed the support of the Merton Voluntary Service Council and other voluntary sector organisations and expressed her thanks for their efforts. She paid tribute to

the Police in their engagement with the community and the consequent good levels of compliance with Covid conditions and low numbers of fines issued.

The Chair echoed the comments and expressed his thanks to the Borough Commander and the BCU.

The Cabinet Member for Commerce, Leisure and Culture advised the Cabinet that the borough's parks continued to be popular during lockdown and the Council would be working with the Police to ensure social distancing measures were adhered to; and a temporary ban on barbeques in parks was in place. Plans had been developed to reopen libraries in July, whilst maintaining the safety of staff and users. Officers were working closely with the leisure provider, GLL, on their recovery plan towards reopening in July.

The Cabinet Member for Women and Equalities thanked the Director of Children, Schools and Families for her work on assessing the impact of Covid on BAME communities.

The Chair thanked all for their contributions.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet noted the steps taken by the Council in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

5 MERTON'S COVID-19 TRANSPORT PLAN (Agenda Item 5)

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport presented the report which set out the Council's emergency transport response to the Covid-19 pandemic and to aid social distancing, provide more space for walking and cycling and support the local economy. The measures included widening road and pavements and temporary cycle lanes. The temporary works would be followed by longer term works to improve walking and cycling routes throughout the borough to meet the Council's long term sustainability and active travel goals. It was important as lockdown eased that the borough did not return to pre-Covid levels of traffic congestion. The Cabinet Member outlined the consultation which had taken place and responses received and thanked the officers involved for their work in such a short space of time and the residents for their engagement.

The Chair thanked all those involved for their work. The Director of Environment and Regeneration advised that the strategy would be taken through the Council's scrutiny process over the coming months.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment welcomed the report and the measures which would promote more sustainable and active modes of transport, contributing to the improvement of air quality and improving residents' health.

The Cabinet Member for Voluntary Services, Partnerships and Community Safety welcomed the report and thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for looking into the issues raised by residents, particularly on congestions around schools.

The Chair thanked all for their contributions.

RESOLVED:

- A. That the Merton's Active & Healthy Travel Response to Covid-19 be endorsed.
- B. That the submission of funding bids to Department for Transport and Transport for London be noted and that the extent of projects delivered will be dependent on the funding made available to the Council.

6 SOUTH LONDON WASTE PLAN - SUBMISSION TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Agenda Item 6)

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport presented the report which set out the draft South London Waste Plan, a supplementary planning document for the identification of waste management sites, and highlighted the removal of Benedict Wharf from waste management and the change of use of the site from industrial to residential, which would be considered by the Planning Applications Committee. Following agreement by all four boroughs in the Waste Partnership, the Plan would be submitted to the Secretary of State for final approval.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for his report.

RESOLVED

- A. That Cabinet notes the recommendations from the Borough Plan Advisory Committee and recommends to Council that the draft South London Waste Plan be submitted to the Secretary of State, understanding that this will be preceded by a statutory six-week pre-submission publication period.
- B. That approval of any amendments arising during or subsequent to the Examination-in-Public be delegated to the Director of Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Environment and Housing.

7 ADOPTION OF MERTON'S SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (Agenda Item 7)

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport presented the report which set out the draft supplementary planning document for sustainable drainage and the public realm.

RESOLVED

- A. That, following the recommendation from Borough Planning Advisory Committee on 5th March 2020, the Sustainable Drainage (SUDS) Design and Evaluation Supplementary Planning Document, known as the SUDS SPD, be adopted.

8 ADOPTION OF MERTON'S STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (PLANNING) (Agenda Item 8)

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport presented the report which sets out how the Council will involve local people, businesses, stakeholders and other interested parties in development planning documents and planning applications. There had been a number of changes to planning legislation since the last Statement of Community Involvement was adopted, including the advent of social media which have changed the way public consultation is carried out and therefore the document has been updated to reflect this.

The Chair welcomed the report which was important for engaging the community in the Council's work.

RESOLVED

- A. That, following recommendation from the Borough Plan Advisory Panel (BPAC) on 5th March 2020, the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) be adopted.

9 ADDITIONS TO THE LOCAL LIST (Agenda Item 9)

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport presented the report which set out the recommendations of the Borough Plan Advisory Committee in respect of additions to Merton's locally listed buildings to recognise their contribution to the heritage of the borough. The proposed additions had been through an extensive consultation process and had been assessed by the Council's conservation officers against seven criteria and proposals amended as necessary in response to the consultation responses. The Cabinet Member thanked the Borough Plan Advisory Committee for their work and addressed their recommendations. He proposed a minor addition to the third recommendation for an annual review to be carried out, subject to the availability of necessary resources and capacity as it was a very extensive piece of work.

RESOLVED

That, having considered the advice from the Borough Plan Advisory Committee, the Cabinet resolves to:

- A Recommend the proposed additions to the Merton Local List to Council for adoption.
- B Agree that 4-7 Upper Green East and 7-11 Upper Green West will not be recommended to Full Council for addition to the Merton Local List.
- C. Undertake a review of and consultation on additions to the Local List each year, subject to the availability of necessary resources, and present the report to the Borough Plan Advisory Committee.

10 LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON INSURANCE TENDER (Agenda Item 10)

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance presented the report which set out the proposal to award the contract for the London Borough of Merton insurance contracts for Property, Liability, Motor and Travel. He thanked the Director of Corporate Services and the officers involved for their work during this period.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that a lot of the Council's insurance was recovered from schools and local businesses. Officers are monitoring the sustainability of those businesses and will report back if there are any changes throughout the course of the year.

The Chair thanked those involved.

RESOLVED

That the Merton Insurance Contract 2020-26 be awarded to Bidder E (Lot 1,2 and 3) and Bidder C (Lot 4) for an initial period of 3 years 7 months years with the option to extend for a further 2 years.

That authority be delegated to the Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Lead member for Finance to approve the extension of this contract, if required from April 2024 to March 2026.

11 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda Item 11)

The Cabinet noted the information contained in the exempt appendices at Item 12 and therefore the meeting remained in public session.

12 LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON INSURANCE TENDER - EXEMPT APPENDICES (Agenda Item 12)

The Cabinet noted the information contained in the exempt appendices and the meeting remained in public session. The decision is set out under Item 10 above.