

Decisions of Cabinet

21 October 2009

Cabinet Members:

* Cllr Mike Freer (Chairman)

Councillors:

* Fiona Bulmer	* Andrew Harper	* Matthew Offord
Melvin Cohen, LL B	* Helena Hart	* Robert Rams
* Richard Cornelius	* Lynne Hillan	* Daniel Thomas

* denotes Member present

1. MINUTES:

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2009 were approved.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS:

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Melvin Cohen.

3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS:

No interests were declared.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS:

Questions were received from 5 members of the public and answered by the Leader of the Council. Details of the questions and answers are set out in the appendix to these decisions. Questions from two other members of the public were not dealt with as the questioners were not in attendance.

5. SAFEGUARDING IN BARNET (Report of the Cabinet Members for Children's Services and Community Services – Agenda Item 5):

Cabinet's report of this date to the Council meeting on 3 November contains their recommendations that Council should note the Safeguarding activities and governance arrangements set out in the Cabinet Members' report.

In discussing the report, Cabinet agreed that Acute Care facilities had an important role to play in Safeguarding. Accordingly, and for the reasons given in the Cabinet Member's report, Cabinet also

RESOLVED –

1. That a report summarising Safeguarding activity relating to both children and vulnerable adults be submitted annually in future.

2. That Safeguarding training be included in the induction process for newly-elected Members and senior officers/directors.
 3. That the Safeguarding Boards be requested to seek confirmation that hospital Acute Care facilities have provisions in place to support the Safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children.
- 6. RESPONDING TO THE RECESSION IN BARNET (Cab Rept 23/2/09) (Report of the Leader of the Council – Agenda Item 6):**
- For the reasons given in the Leader’s report, Cabinet
- RESOLVED – That the actions described in paragraph 9.9 of the Leader’s report to support the resilience of businesses, residents and the community in the current recession, be noted.
- 7. CRICKLEWOOD/BRENT CROSS REGENERATION (CRC Dec 25/3/08 – 7) (Report of the Leader of the Council – Agenda Item 7):**
- For the reasons given in the Leader’s report, Cabinet
- RESOLVED – That the Development Framework Agreement (DFA) and Principal Development Agreement (PDA) terms and conditions set out in the report of the Leader and the accompanying consultants reports be approved subject to:
1. Approval by the Interim Director of Finance and the Leader of the Council of the Brookfield Europe and Hammerson guarantor companies;
 2. All plans to be attached to the various documents being in forms to the Council’s satisfaction;
 3. The Council’s consultants confirming that the historic costs schedule is a proper record of admissible costs for the current scheme;
 4. Eversheds Solicitors being satisfied that the final documents reflect the approved terms; and
 5. The appropriate land transaction and financial arrangements being approved by the Secretary of State.
- 8. FUTURE SHAPE OF THE COUNCIL (Cab Dec 6/07/2009 – 5) (Report of the Leader of the Council – Agenda Item 8):**
- For the reasons set out in the Leader’s report, Cabinet
- RESOLVED – That the plans for implementing the Future Shape Programme are approved.
- 9. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CORE STRATEGY – DIRECTION OF TRAVEL (Cab dec 22/4/2009 – 5) (Report of the Cabinet Member for Planning & Environmental Protection – Agenda Item 9):**
- In endorsing the Cabinet Member’s recommendations, Cabinet agreed that housing development opportunities along the A110 in Section 8 “Distribution of Housing Growth” should refer to “A110 – East Barnet Road”. It was also agreed that the consultation period could be extended to allow a report back to Cabinet in January 2010.

Accordingly and for the reasons set out in the Cabinet Member's report, Cabinet
RESOLVED –

1. That the Core Strategy – Direction of Travel be approved for a period of at least six weeks of public engagement, subject to the amendment indicated above.
2. That the Director of Planning, Housing and Regeneration be authorised in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Environmental Protection to agree any consequent changes to the Core Strategy - Direction of Travel
3. That the findings of the consultation together with the next stage of the Core Strategy are reported back to Cabinet in January prior to submission to the Secretary of State.

10. GRANVILLE ROAD ESTATE REGENERATION (Report of the Cabinet Housing and Regeneration Committee – Agenda item 10)

For the reasons set out in the Committee's report, Cabinet
RESOLVED –

1. That, having noted the financial procurement and partnership options to take forward Phase 2 of the wider regeneration of the Granville Road Estate, Cabinet instruct officers to invite expressions of interest on the options, in order to unlock early delivery and achieve best consideration for the Council.
2. That Cabinet authorises the commencement of formal procurement and market testing of the options arising from 1 above and in parallel with the procurement process for Phase 1 refurbishment of the tower blocks.
3. That Cabinet instructs the Director of Planning, Housing and Regeneration to fund and procure the production of a Masterplan to guide the development and regeneration of the wider Granville Road Estate. The Masterplan will be reported to Cabinet or Cabinet Resources Committee for Member approval.
4. That Cabinet instructs the Director of Planning, Housing and Regeneration to report back to a future Cabinet or Cabinet Resources Committee to seek authority to commence Phase 2 of the wider regeneration in accordance with the chosen financial and procurement model.

11. ANNUAL REPORT ON PARTNERSHIPS (Cab Dec 3/4/08 – 7) (Report of the Cabinet Member for Policy and Performance – Agenda item 11)

For the reasons set out in the Cabinet Member's report, Cabinet
RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

12. REFERENCES FROM COUNCIL (Council 8/09/2009) (Report of the Democratic Service Manager – Agenda item 12)

RESOLVED – That each relevant Cabinet Member will consider the motions concerned and report back on any further actions they may consider appropriate.

13. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC: -

RESOLVED – That under 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 involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended):

Agenda Item	Subject
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X1.	Exempt information relating to item 7 in public session – Cricklewood/Brent Cross Regeneration
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14. EXEMPT INFORMATION RELATING TO AGENDA ITEM 7 IN PUBLIC SESSION – CRICKLEWOOD/BRENT CROSS REGENERATION (Agenda item X1)

RESOLVED – That the exempt information be noted.

15. ITEM INCLUDED IN CABINET’S REPORT TO COUNCIL (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

The following item was the subject of recommendations by Cabinet to full Council and is included in Cabinet’s report of this date to the Council meeting on 3 November 2009:

Agenda Item 5 – Safeguarding in Barnet

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The meeting ended at 8.40pm

Appendix to Cabinet Decisions 21 October 2009 – Agenda Item 4

Public Questions answered by the Leader

Questions	Response
<p>Mr Ron Cohen</p> <p>I note that in the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter, Barnet London Borough Council, Audit 2007/08, March 2009 the Audit commission said:</p> <p>Action needed by the Council “ensure that there is effective engagement of all stakeholders in the Council's ambitious plans for transforming the organisation under the Future Shape programme.”</p> <p>In light of the above can the cabinet explain why it appears to be favouring the Ryan air/Easy jet approach to delivering of public services to Barnet residents? Can the Cabinet give assurances to Barnet residents as key stake holders there will be full consultation on any proposed change in delivery of public services in Barnet including and making performance indicators (KPIs), tender specification and service level agreement (SLAs) publicly available.</p>	<p>Budget airlines shook up a fat, lazy, inefficient business sector which is not something to be criticised. Their relentless drive for efficiency and transparency in the services they provide is also a model that should be welcomed not derided.</p> <p>With regard to engagement we have throughout our research into future shape engaged with the public in relation to their experience of Council and other public sector services. We have conducted in-depth research with disadvantaged families. We have interviewed people with complex needs about their experience of the assessment process and how it could be improved. We have talked to people trying to get access to Council services. The Council's public sector partners have been involved in all of our research to date and the LSP has been fully informed.</p> <p>In the future we are proposing, as part of our approach to commissioning, to consult significant numbers of citizens about how we achieve better outcomes. Partners will be involved in the reconstituted Future Shape Programme Board, there will be a staff panel, we will make use of the Citizens Panel to test specific proposals.</p> <p>It is difficult to envisage what a ‘full consultation’ of Barnet residents on any proposed change in service delivery would look like, or indeed how it would be sustainable. Who would be consulted, about what and with what information. The electorate</p>

	<p>entrust, through the ballot box, the Members of this Council to lead and take the decisions about what services will be provided and by whom. We will continue with the approach outlined in the report.</p> <p>In relation to KPI's, these are always in the public domain, as are tender specifications. The Future Shape Programme Board will recommend decisions to the Council with opportunities for Scrutiny to call these in through the normal democratic channels.</p> <p>As I have stated in previous replies, we have a representative democracy and that is how the Council operates. It is not the policy of the Council to conduct its business through plebiscites and referenda.</p>
<p>Mr Roger Enskat,</p>	
<p>Referring to the Council's recent statement that "Core Services" will be retained in spite of the proposed cuts to services provided by the Council, what is the Council's definition of a "Core Service"?</p>	<p>Core services are those that fulfil functions that could not be performed by other organisations or providers. Services that; help to determine the needs of the community, that shape the strategies we should use to meet those needs, that commission and monitor the cost and quality of services we provide. This model of core and non-core services is already in operation in Barnet and has been for some time, much Adult Social Care is provided through private, charitable and third sector organisations; IT services are routinely provided by the private sector as is telephony.</p> <p>In these instances these services are determined, commissioned and monitored by 'core' Council staff.</p>
<p>Mr Austin Harney</p>	
<p>Barnet Council are currently proposing many changes to the way services are being commissioned and provided. The Leader of the</p>	<p>If and when services are commissioned they will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.</p>

<p>Council is the cabinet member responsible for equality. May I ask if an Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out, in relation to all the employees and customers, in terms of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability and social background</p>	<p>However it is our view that the current Future Shape proposals will improve the Council's capacity to understand the changing nature of Barnet's population and to develop responses that ensure that all sections of the community, where appropriate, are served and involved by the public sector in Barnet.</p> <p>The move to more personalised approaches to service delivery, outlined in this report, will ensure that services more effectively respond to and meet people's diverse needs.</p> <p>Under the Future Shape programme in the future the Council will specifically look at equalities and diversity issues through the business case development and prototyping to ensure that there will be no differential service outcomes for different communities. Delivery of any proposed new services or functions will also aim to increase satisfaction ratings amongst different groups of residents.</p> <p>More personalised services should ensure services are far more responsive to the needs of residents whatever their different cultural, ethnic, religious, gender, disability, sexual orientation or social backgrounds.</p>
<p>Dr S Pandit</p>	
<p>In the light of the present recession how are cabinet and the Council ensuring that Barnet can support victims of the recession such as (but not exclusively) residents who have lost jobs, who have suffered family breakdown because of economic hardship, or who have lost their homes</p>	<p>Item 6 on this Cabinet agenda sets out what the Council is doing to support the resilience of people in Barnet to the consequences of the recession. This is based on a constant analysis of what effects the recession is having and regular sharing of intelligence with partners such as JobCentre Plus.</p> <p>The report includes an exhaustive list of actions, but to draw</p>

attention to some key ones:

- Keeping council tax down to below the rate of inflation year after year;
- Projects with a range of partners (Job Centre Plus, Barnet College, voluntary sector etc) to tackle worklessness, and enhance local people's skill levels and hence employability (e.g. the outreach programme in Colindale or working with our development partners and encouraging local labour);
- Introducing an intern scheme and participating in a Local Employment Partnership with JCP to ensure all our vacancies are advertised in local job centres;
- Debt advice for people at risk of losing their home (including the mortgage rescue scheme) and training staff to advise homeowners in difficulties
- Working with private sector landlords to ensure adequate supply of homes to minimise homelessness
- Working with developers and Homes and Communities Agency to ensure plans for new homes continue to progress
- Funding local voluntary organisations such as the CAB
- Promoting awareness of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit

We have also taken a range of action to support businesses . As most businesses in Barnet are small and many are family-run these initiatives have therefore also helped business people and their families. Of particular note here is that we have signed up to the Prompt Payment Code (PPC) and are practising what we preach; as an authority we are already paying 97% of our suppliers within the agreed 30 day contract terms, and changes in our payments process now ensures that 9 out of 10 invoices from local suppliers are paid within 10 days.

We also surveyed residents on our Citizens Panel on how the

	<p>recession is affecting them. The biggest impacts have been a drop in income and a resultant 'belt tightening' on leisure and other non-essential spending and people's biggest worries for the future are continuing falls in income and increasing bills.</p> <p>Through a section on Barnet Online entitled 'Bright Ideas' we provide, on one page, direct links to useful specialist information (whether council or external services) on the most common recession-related issues. These include benefits and advice; job seeking; learning facilities to make people more employable; debt and money advice; housing advice; environmental money saving ideas; and free activities. This is currently being revamped and an improved microsite will be relaunched in the next month or so, particularly to focus on the sources of advice that residents told us would be most useful</p>
<p>Ms V Morris</p>	
<p>Publicity about the Future Shape programme has included a lot of rhetoric about the council forging 'new relationships with citizens'. Can you elucidate on what you mean by this, or provide tangible evidence that Barnet residents are looking for a new relationship with the council? What are your plans for this?</p>	<p>Local Government in the UK has seen declining levels of satisfaction which leads me to believe that a fresh look at our relationship with citizens is necessary. Declining grant settlements from Central Government contribute to this also as they undermine the ability of the Council to provide as much as it has done in the past.</p> <p>The Future Shape programme aims to deal with these two realities, on the one hand we will put in place measures that aim to open up the structures of the Council so that citizens can influence provision more: Opportunities for people to participate in defining the strategies adopted across the public sector. Greater opportunity for people to personalise and customise services. A rationalised assessment system. Simplified arrangements for people to get access to services and sources of information and help.</p>

	<p>At the same time however we will need to be clearer about what we are willing to do. We will act to try influence people behaviours. Personalisation will mean that some people will get enhanced services through additional payments. We will ensure that we don't provide services that lead to dependency and the Council will not be the only source of help in the future, self help will be encouraged and expected in some instances</p>
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