



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

# MINUTES

## Cabinet

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** held on **Monday 8th April, 2019**, Room 18.01 & 18.02 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP.

**Members Present:** Councillors Nickie Aiken (Chairman), Ian Adams, Iain Bott, Heather Acton, David Harvey, Tim Mitchell, Andrew Smith and Paul Swaddle

**Also Present:** Councillor Angela Harvey

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Richard Beddoe and Councillor Rachael Robathan

#### 1 WELCOME

1. The Leader welcomed everyone present.

#### 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

#### 3 MINUTES

- 3.1 The Chairman, with the consent of the Members present, signed the minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2019 as a true and correct copy of the proceedings.

#### 4 OXFORD STREET DISTRICT - BUSINESS CASE AND INVESTMENT APPROVAL

- 4.1 Barbara Brownlee, Executive Director For Growth, Planning & Housing introduced the report and summarised the business case including justification for the Council's investment in improving and enhancing the Oxford Street District. She explained that the business case had been based around four options. All options showed very high value for money compared to a do nothing scenario although Option 4 was recommended as the preferred option as it fully delivers the Place Shaping Strategy and secures the maximum benefit for the district.

- 4.2 Barbara Brownlee advised Cabinet of a non-material typing error in Table 3.1 of the Business Case (Appendix 1 to the report) and in Appendix 2b to the report which set out the Project Summary by Option. The errors related to references to Phase 1 and 1.5 which should have been labelled either Phase 2 or 3. She circulated an updated table.
- 4.3 Councillor David Harvey was of the view that Option 4 presented the right balance between the Council retaining stewardship of the district whilst delivering all of the projects in the Place Shaping Strategy via a part investment by the private sector.
- 4.4 Councillor Mitchell stated that Option 4 was ambitious but was the right option for the Council to pursue given its aspirations. He agreed that Option 2 (Oxford Street only) should not be progressed due to the displacement impacts of undertaking the changes to Oxford Street without prior improvement to district streets which would have a detrimental effect on nearby businesses and residents.
- 4.5 The Leader thanked the Oxford Street project team and finance colleagues for the significant amount of work they had undertaken on the business case. She hoped to see investment partners including the Mayor of London come forward to deliver Option 4.

## **RESOLVED**

1. That Cabinet approved the Business Case which demonstrates high value for money and provides a robust justification for the £150m investment by the Council for the Oxford Street District programme.
2. That Cabinet approved spend against the project of c.£21m focussed on the design, surveys and other feasibility related work for the programme, this includes a contingency element.
3. That Cabinet approved Option 4 as the Preferred Option which delivers the Place Shaping Strategy as approved by Council on 25 February 2019 and has an estimated cost of £232m. To deliver this option additional funding will be required from the private sector.
4. That Cabinet approved the development of a Funding Strategy which sets out how the council will work to secure the funding required to deliver Option 4 of c.£82m.
5. That Cabinet delegated future decisions on delivering the Oxford Street District Project to the Cabinet Member for Place Shaping and Planning and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration in consultation with the Oxford Street Steering Group including:
  - Approval for projects to enter the delivery phase (individual projects will be grouped into work packages and approved over the course of the programme) and hence approval to spend against budget.

- Acceptance of external funding and to respond to stakeholders.

## **REASON FOR DECISION**

1. The Council's commitment to the Oxford Street District is to create a long term and ambitious vision for the whole of the district that will strengthen its world-renowned status as a great place to live, work and visit. This strategy will support that ambition and respond to the big challenges that the district faces, including: a rapidly evolving retail environment; a place that can cater to a greater number of people; providing more attractions; and for Oxford Street to be a better neighbour to the wider district, including the residential neighbourhoods. In the wake of strong competition from national and international retail destinations, increased online shopping; increased business rates; and interest rates, retailers and businesses in the district are finding the trading environment very challenging.
2. The business case provides a compelling rationale for the Council to invest in the area to ensure that it retains its status as the nation's high street, a world-renowned destination for domestic and international visitors, characterised by vibrant and historic neighbourhoods. On 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019, full Council approved the Capital Strategy including allocation of c.£150 million towards the delivery of the final adopted Place Strategy and Delivery Plan. The programme now needs approval to spend against the budget in order to progress. The Council will take responsibility for delivering an ambitious set of projects that will help to bring about a significant change to counter some of the external factors that the district currently faces. Additional funding to support the delivery of the projects listed in the Place Strategy will be required from other external sources.

## **5 CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

- 5.1 Councillor Ian Adams, Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Licensing, introduced the report. He explained that the full review of the Corporate Enforcement Policy was required to ensure the Council is fully transparent in the way its services carry out enforcement, to bring it in line with recent updates to legislation, and to widen the scope of Council services that the policy applies to following the housing department functions from CityWest Homes being brought in-house.
- 5.2 Councillor Adams clarified that the update to the policy did not propose any changes to the Council's approach to enforcement which remained to educate and help businesses and individuals understand and meet regulatory requirements through support and advice whilst taking proportionate enforcement action where there is a serious risk or where regulatory breaches are persistent.
- 5.3 Sara Sutton, Executive Director for City Management & Communities, explained that this was an overarching corporate enforcement policy. It was much more comprehensive than the current policy that had been in place for a number of years and it aligned with the legal requirements set out in the Regulators Code 2014 and the duties under GDPR.

## **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Cabinet approved the updated Corporate Enforcement Policy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.
2. That the Corporate Enforcement Policy be uploaded to the website and included in publication lists for the authority.
3. That the Corporate Enforcement Policy continues to be reviewed on a regular basis or as the need arises from factors such as changes to legislation.
4. That delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive to approve minor modifications and updates to the policy.

## **Reasons for Decision**

1. The council's current corporate enforcement policy was endorsed and adopted by Cabinet on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2008 and last updated in 2016. It can be accessed via the council's webpages at:  
<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/enforcement-policy>
2. An update to the policy is required to:
  - Fully align the policy with the legal requirements set out in the Regulators Code 2014.
  - Include recent legislative updates (e.g. general data protection regulations (GDPR)).
  - Ensure our approach to enforcement is transparent and consistently applied.

## **6 CONNECTED LIBRARIES - REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT ADVISORY BOARD ON LIBRARIES TO WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL**

- 6.1 Councillor David Harvey, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Education and Skills introduced the item. He explained that in recognition that libraries were changing the Council established the independent Libraries Advisory Board to consider the longer term future of Westminster's library and archive services. Councillor Harvey stated that the board had developed some strategic recommendations for an effective and sustainable service vision.
- 6.2 Councillor Harvey emphasised the role of libraries as places of trust for Westminster's communities as well as places of opportunity. He clarified that the report focused on services rather than the buildings themselves. He highlighted that the Board wishes the Council to be bold, thoughtful and innovative in developing a sustainable service vision. He thanked Chris Cotton, who acted as chairman, and the Board for their work.

- 6.3 Sara Sutton explained that the next phase would be to develop long-term service strategies that respond to the board's recommendations and set a clear future direction for the service. This would begin with an engagement exercise with staff followed by a comprehensive consultation with stakeholders throughout the summer of 2019.
- 6.4 Councillor Heather Acton, Cabinet Member for Family Services & Public Health, welcomed the report and hoped to foster links between the Libraries Service and health and wellbeing.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Cabinet noted the report of the independent advisory board on libraries.
2. That Cabinet Members consider implications and opportunities arising from the report and its recommendations for their portfolios.

The Meeting ended at 7.13 pm

**CHAIRMAN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_