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CABINET
30/03/2015 at 6.00 pm



Present: Councillor McMahon (Chair)
Councillors Akhtar, Brownridge, A Chadderton, Harrison,
Hibbert, Jabbar and Stretton

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received.

2 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Akhtar declared a pecuniary interest in Item 15 – Selective Licensing – Phased Implementation Programme 2015/16 by virtue of his position as a private landlord within a programme area as detailed within the report.

Councillor Stretton declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Item 16 – Funding to Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Organisations by virtue of her position as Chair of the Credit Union.

4 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions received.

5 **MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 23RD FEBRUARY 2015**

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on the 23rd February 2015 be approved.

6 **THE DEVOLUTION OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE RESPONSIBILITIES TO GREATER MANCHESTER**

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Executive Director, Health and Well Being which sought agreement of the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Devolution Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enable the beginning of the necessary preparations throughout the build-up year of 2015/16, in readiness for the full devolution of health and social care budgets and responsibilities to Manchester in April 2016. It was reported that the MoU was developed between the Greater Manchester Local Authorities, Greater Manchester Clinical Commissioning Groups and NHS England and the document created a framework for the delegation and ultimate devolution of health and social care responsibilities to Greater Manchester.

It was further reported that the report would be submitted to Full Council to allow consideration by all 60 Members of the Council. Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 – Agree and endorse the MoU and recognise the significance of the development of a new collaborative partnership for health and social care in Manchester

To also endorse the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Health and Social Care Cluster and the Member working group in relation to the MoU and the governance structures at Greater Manchester level as they develop.

Option 2 – Not to endorse the MoU

This option would exclude Oldham from the Greater Manchester Devolution agreement and the future integration of Health and Social Care across the Greater Manchester.

RESOLVED – That:

1. The report considered and agreed at the joint Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Association Greater Manchester Authority Executive Board meeting on 27th February 2015 as detailed at Appendix 2 to the report be approved.
2. The Memorandum of Understanding signed by representatives of Association of Greater Manchester Authorities, Greater Manchester Clinical Commissioning Groups and NHS England as detailed at Appendix 1 & Option 1 of the report be agreed and the significant step in the development of a new collaborative partnership for health and social care in Greater Manchester be acknowledged.
3. The comments on the implications, current position and next steps for Oldham as set out in sections 1 & 2 of this report be endorsed.

7

OLDHAM'S HOUSING STRATEGY 2015 - 2018

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Director Co-operatives and Neighbourhoods which sought approval of a new Housing Strategy 2015-2018.

It was reported that the success of the Council's strategy over the last 3 years included:

- The building of 1,100 new homes
- The number of long term empty homes fell by 500 between 2012-2014
- Between 2015-2015 the Council prevented homelessness for over 5,000 households
- The introduction of extra care housing.

It was further reported that the four key priorities of the plan were:

- Residential Growth
- Healthy homes
- Improving Neighbourhoods
- Building Strong Communities

An annual delivery plan included in the appendices provided details of key actions and milestones to enable the priorities to be delivered.

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 - Do not update the Housing Strategy 2012-2015 which expires on the 31st March 2015

Option 2 - Approve the new Housing Strategy 2015-2018. The new strategy clearly defined what Oldham's priorities were in relation to housing for the next three years.

RESOLVED – That:

1. The contents of the new strategy be noted.
2. The Housing Strategy 2015-2018 be approved for distribution.

8

SADDLEWORTH SCHOOL: SITE SELECTION

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Director, Health and Wellbeing and the Executive Director Economy and Skills which sought approval of the preferred site for the replacement of Saddleworth School.

It was reported that the school had been in a poor state of repair for a number of years and required rebuilding.

In March 2013 the Council was advised by the Education Funding Authority that subject to securing a site, funding would be made available to develop a replacement school.

It was further reported that the Council undertook a site identification and appraisal site and concluded that there were two viable sites, the existing school site and the former WH Pallett Works in Diggle and as the Council had to assemble purchase the site for the school, options to acquire the former pallets works site were entered into.

The report provided details of a feasibility study undertaken by the Education Funding agency in July 2014 to consider four options two relating to the existing school site and two relating to the pallet works site to identify the option that was value for money to the public purse.

The study concluded that following the appraisal options the land at the back of Shaw WH Pallett works site in Diggle has been identified as the preferred site for the construction of the school.

Consultation

Since the announcement that Saddleworth School was to be included in the Priority Building Programme, there had been extensive engagement with stakeholders including the general public on various site options.

A summary of issues raised by the public both before and after the publication of the Education Funding Agency feasibility study was attached at appendix 2 of the report and copies of the comments received were attached at appendix 3a to the report.

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 - Do Nothing

The Council could choose to do nothing. But, as the EFA Feasibility Study stated, “the current condition of the buildings is such that it would not be possible to achieve the programme requirement for contractor warrantied serviceable life through a ‘do nothing’ option”. Due to the extensive repairs needed to the current school buildings, this option was therefore discounted from the option appraisal undertaken.

In proceeding with this option and choosing not to work with the EFA, it was likely that the Council would lose any funding available to support the development of a new School. The Council would need to make a significant capital investment in repairs to bring the school to a reasonable standard for learning which would not represent good value for money. This would not facilitate the school vision about the future learning environment.

Option 2 - Refurbishment of the Existing School

As already referred to above in option 1 the existing school was in very poor condition and refurbishment was dismissed as a viable option as part of the original BSF option appraisal. Even with extensive refurbishment, the school would not deliver the school's vision of a learning environment that is fit for the future. The following four options were considered in detail as part of the EFA Feasibility Study

Option 3 – Diggle Greenfield Site

This site, fronting Huddersfield Road was more expensive than the backland option in Diggle and would be closer to housing and far more visible and intrusive from Huddersfield Road. It was also judged to have more potential impact on the local ecology of the area which was of major concern to some local residents.

Option 4 - Diggle Pallet Works Site

This option would provide a new school building on a new site on land east of Diggle Brook. In July 2014, Cabinet agreed to proceed to obtain an option via a replacement conditional Contract for this site.

Option 5 – Uppermill Existing Location

This option would provide a new building on the existing site in Uppermill, utilising an area near to the entrance currently occupied by existing school buildings.

Option 6 – Uppermill Playing Field

This option would provide a building on the existing site in Uppermill, utilising the existing playing fields, which were at the north east of the site and remote from the entrance to the site. Options for a replacement school to be developed on the existing School site were more expensive and were likely to result in a prolonged period of educational disruption during the construction period with a high risk of a negative impact upon school and pupil performance. Because of the constraints of the site the school would be unable to deliver its educational vision effectively. There would also be a lack of on-site sporting facilities for pupils during construction. There would be no car parking for contractors, staff or parents for the duration of the works which would be very difficult to manage, especially in view of the pressure on car parking already experienced within Uppermill.

The Uppermill option had the advantage of requiring little change in travel to school patterns and minimal change for Uppermill and Diggle residents and local businesses. The use of the existing site would not require any loss of land in the Green Belt.

RESOLVED – That:

1. The Education Funding Agency's 'Saddleworth School Priority School Building Programme Feasibility Study' dated January 2015 be noted;
2. The comments received from parents and members of the public in relation to the options for a site for the new school be noted.
3. The Diggle Pallet Works Site be agreed as the location for the replacement Saddleworth School as set out in Section 5 of this report.

DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF POLICY 2015/16

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Interim Director of Finance which sought approval of amendments to the Council's Discretionary Rate Relief Policy to enable a clear, streamlined application and assessment process to be in place. It was reported that a review of the Council's Discretionary Rate Relief Policy was required to incorporate changes required including the ability for applicants to submit their application and supporting documents electronically to enable child care providers to apply for discretionary rate relief and to take advantage of the extended business reliefs announced by the Government in the Autumn 2014 statement (as detailed within the report).

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 – Do Nothing.

If the Council chose not to adopt the revised policy, the Council would continue using the current policy in place. However this would mean that childcare providers asking for Discretionary Rate Relief would be assessed in line with any other business applicant and could be refused relief based on the current criteria. It would also mean that the suggested improvements to the application process would not be introduced.

Option 2 – Approve the amendments the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy.

This would ensure that the Council had a clear, streamlined application and assessment process is in place and enable the Council to support childcare providers by offering rate relief in line with the recommendation from central government as outlined at section 3 of the report.

RESOLVED – That the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy March 2015 as detailed at appendix 1 to report be approved.

LOCAL WELFARE PROVISION SCHEME 2015/16

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Director, Corporate and Commercial Services which provided the Cabinet with an update on the current scheme and options available for delivery of the Local Welfare Provision Scheme 2015/16.

It was reported that funding was transferred from the Department of Work and Pensions to Local Authorities from the 1st April 2013 to provide a locally administered scheme to provide assistance to vulnerable residents in the Borough.

There was no statutory duty requiring Local Authorities to deliver a scheme but Oldham Council considered it to be in the best interests of the residents of the Borough to operate the scheme.

The full amount of the grant funding provided by DWP was not spent in 2013/14 and it was projected that this would be the case in 2014/15 totals. The projected underspend across the two years was expected to be £704,263.

It was further reported that Government had made a decision that specific funding would not be available for Local Welfare Provision schemes from 2015/16 onwards. Resources would be made available within general non ring-fenced grant (RSG)

which would give Local Authorities the option to identify funding from within the overall Local Government Finance Settlement should they wish to continue their scheme and the Council needed to consider whether it would operate a Local Welfare Provision scheme from 2015/16 onwards.

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 - The Council to continue with its current policy and support all vulnerable groups for 2015/16 using the underspend from 2013/14 and projected underspend from 2014/15.

The scheme had been operating since 1st April 2013 in Oldham and had received positive feedback. The scheme had proven to be successful in responding to the immediate need for household goods and emergency provision. The scheme would support the Oldham Essentials project.

Option 2 - The Council to review its policy and narrow the scope allowing any underspend to fund future schemes for a longer period.

The Council could continue to provide the support but reduce the offer on goods supplied. By removing the award for example removing specific items such as washing machines and carpets could deliver a potential saving in the region of £100k. However, it was recognised that in some instances, based on the applicant's circumstances, the award of these items would be appropriate.

Option 3 - The Council could make a decision not to operate a scheme.

The Council could make the decision that as DWP funding has ceased they no longer wish to operate an LWP scheme.

Option 4 – The Council could make the decision to create an on-going budget for Local Welfare Provision.

Although the Final Settlement did not specify how much of the additional RSG was related to Local Welfare Provision, funding a sum up to the value of £478k per annum could be an option. This would utilise the increased funding available from the RSG to create an on-going budget for a permanent local welfare provision. To date, around £450k per annum had been spent in LWP and therefore this sum would seem to align to spending trends.

This allocated funding on a permanent basis thus addressing a community need, a national priority and also a local priority area.

RESOLVED - That the Local Welfare Provision scheme for 2015/16 as outlined in Option 1 be approved, the Council would continue with its current policy and support all vulnerable groups for 2015/16 using the underspend from 2013/14 and projected underspend from 2014/15.

GENERATION OLDHAM' - UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Executive Director, Corporate and Commercial Services which sought approval of the principles of establishing a new community energy company in the form of a Community Benefit Society for the purpose of bidding for external funding to pay for feasibility studies on community owned buildings.

It was reported that the Generation Oldham programme, the Council's community energy support programme was launched on the 3rd December 2014 and a significant number of opportunities for renewable energy on community buildings were identified. This report provided an update on progress

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 - Do nothing. Community groups that owned their own buildings could bid for funding independently and individually to carry out feasibility work on these buildings. However, supporting and coordinating these disparate bids could be very resource intensive and time consuming for the Council's Environmental Policy team, and individual bids may not be as strong as a collective bid by a new company representing all of the community groups involved. Additionally, a new legal entity would need to be established in any case for the delivery phase of the project, once feasibility work was complete.

Option 2 – The Council to establish a new community energy company in the form of a Community Benefit Society. This would require a resource input from the Council in terms of officer time (which will take the form of the new Transforming Energy Cooperative Board) and a budget to pay for setting up the new company (in the region of £350-£500), the latter of which could be met from the existing Environmental Policy budget. The new company would not have any operating costs until all feasibility work was completed and a decision had been made to proceed to delivery. At that stage, the operating costs of the company would be included in the overall business model for the new community energy company, and a new report would be brought to Cabinet at that stage seeking approval to proceed.

RESOLVED – That:

1. The progress to date in delivering the Generation Oldham Programme be noted.
2. The principle of the establishment of a new community energy company in the form of a Community Benefit Society, for the purpose of bidding for external funding to apply for feasibility studies on community owned buildings.
3. A further report be submitted to a future Cabinet meeting outlining the business model for the company including governance, Council liabilities and risks, mitigating actions and detailed financial and other resource implications for the Council, prior to the company beginning operations.

ETHICAL FRAMEWORK REFRESH

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive which sought approval of the refresh of Oldham Council's Ethical Framework.

It was reported that the refresh of the framework was driven by the launch of the co-operative behaviours and the opportunity to provide clarity as to what the Council's co-operative values mean in practice.

The refreshed framework was detailed at appendix 1 to the report.

Options/ Alternatives considered

Option 1 – To approve the refreshed Ethical Framework

Option 2- Not to approve the refreshed Ethical Framework

RESOLVED – That Oldham Council's refreshed Ethical Framework be approved.

13

FOSTER CARER ALLOWANCE- INCREASE TO PAYMENTS

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Executive Director, Health and Wellbeing which sought approval to the proposal to offer Oldham Council foster carers a pay rise. It was reported that foster carers had received minimal increases to their allowances over recent years. The Council was making significant investment in developing an enhanced offer for children with the recruitment of therapeutic fostering carers to ensure the Council could place complex children in foster placements rather than relying on residential options only which could result in poorer outcomes.

It was further reported that the Council also needed to attract foster carers willing to foster teenagers and that a review of payments was timely and would reward those carers with an uplift whilst attracting new carers for Oldham.

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1- To increase basic allowances and skills payments by 1%, 1% uplift to allowances approximately £18,000, 1% uplift to skills payment approximately £18,000

Total £36,000

Option 2 - 2% increase on skills payment only approximately £36,000.

This would place an emphasis on rewarding Foster Carers who were available to provide short and long term placements when needed. This option would also avoid an automatic uplift on the allowance paid for the day to day costs of care which was currently linked to payments which support adoptive, special guardianship and child arrangement orders.

If the Council did not continue to invest financially in foster carers alongside all the other support offered, there was a real danger the Council would lose foster carers to private or the voluntary sector. This would then force the Council to place looked after children in private higher cost independent fostering agencies, further away from home and Oldham.

Payments needed to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the Council was kept abreast of the minimum fostering rates produced by the Department of Education to ensure the Council compared favourably with National Fostering rates.

Option 3 - Remain at the current allowance rate and risk foster carers leaving Oldham, and working for other agencies, and finding it harder to recruit carers.

The current average unit cost for an independent fostering placement was £2,300 per annum more expensive than in house provision.

Assuming that demand for placements remained constant this would be the cost incurred for every carer that left Oldham for alternative employment.

RESOLVED – That that Foster Carers would receive a 2% increase in their overall payment based on the skills based allowance. This would place an emphasis on rewarding Foster Carers who are available to provide short and long term placements when needed. This option would also avoid an automatic uplift on the allowance paid for the day to day costs of care, which was currently linked to payments which support adoptive, special guardianship and child arrangement orders.

14

CONTRACT WITH AGE UK OLDHAM 2015-2017

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Executive Director, Health and Wellbeing which set out three options for the future procurement arrangements for the services currently provided by Age UK Oldham including a range of care and support services for older people in Oldham.

It was reported that the Council commissioned Age UK Oldham to provide a wide range of services to support older people in Oldham and the contract was due to expire on the 31st March 2015.

In addition to those services there were a number of services which were funded by Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group but which formed part of the Council's overall contractual arrangements with Age UK.

It was further reported that in order to align each service under the contract to the relevant of the Adult Transformation programme as set out in the report, a twelve month extension to the Age UK Oldham contract was required.

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 - Break up the contract and procure each service in the contract in line with the Council's procurement rules.

Each of the services would go through a procurement exercise in the six month extension to the Age UK contract.

Option 2 - Align each service in the contract with the Adult Services Transformational Programme. Each service would be tendered based on the timetable for the implementation of the Transformational Programme it was aligned too. Each individual service would need to have a contract extension of sufficient length to match the timetable for the transformational project it was aligned to.

Option 3 - Extend the whole of the Age UK contract for a period of one year. During this extension each service under the contract would be aligned to the relevant element of the Adult Services Transformation Programme, as set out in the table provided within the report. The services would then be tendered based on the timetable for the implementation of that element of the Transformational Programme.

RESOLVED – That:

1. The alignment of the various preventative services delivered by Age UK, to the transformation of adult services programme, and adopt timescales for the re

provision of these services in line with the transformation programme be approved.

2. The extension of the Age UK Oldham contract for a period of one year as set out in option three to the report, to enable the strategic direction outlined in this report to be delivered.

15

SELECTIVE LICENSING - PHASED IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME 2015/16

Councillor Akhtar declared a pecuniary interest in Item 15 – Selective Licensing – Phased Implementation Programme 2015/16 by virtue of his position as a private landlord within a programme area as detailed within the report. He left the room and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Consideration was given to a report of the Assistant Executive Director, Environmental Services which sought approval of the implementation programme for the selective licensing of private landlords across the eight neighbourhoods as described and approved in the Cabinet report of the 15th December 2014. It was reported that on the 15th December 2014 the Cabinet approved the implementation of the selective licensing scheme for private landlords within the neighbourhoods as detailed within the report.

Officers had developed a phased implementation programme for the project and its delivery across the eight neighbourhoods approved by Cabinet.

The project would be rolled out across the neighbourhoods at the same time and with approximately 2,250 privately rented properties requiring visiting and licensing, an implementation programme had been devised to inform both residents and landlords as to when detailed work would commence in each neighbourhood.

The programme was detailed within the report. The phased approach to the first years' work in the neighbourhoods would ensure licences were issued and privately rented properties inspected.

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 - Do not have a phased implementation of the scheme throughout the first year. This option would not focus efforts of the new team of officers and therefore lessen the early impact in the neighbourhoods in question. Licences would still be issued but this would be on a very 'ad hoc' across all eight neighbourhoods and would be difficult to control and report on in the future.

Option 2 -Approve the phased implementation throughout the first year as detailed in this report and remake the designation of 7 of the 8 neighbourhoods as agreed by Cabinet on the 15th December.2014. This would ensure residents living in the neighbourhoods and landlords who rent out properties were fully informed as to progress neighbourhood by neighbourhood and allow the team to utilise the Neighbourhood forums more effectively to report progress and engage with residents.

RESOLVED – That

1. The phased implementation programme for 2015/16 for the selective licensing of private landlords as detailed in

this report with the existing designation for St Mary's which was approved on 15th December 2014 continuing to come into force on 1st May 2015 be approved.

2. The areas shown on the digitalised Neighbourhood Maps contained in Appendix 3 of the report and described in the corresponding street lists contained in Appendix 4 of the report be designated as areas subject to selective licensing under section 80 of the Housing Act 2004 with effect from the following dates:

- Hathershaw 6th July 2015
- Waterhead 6th July 2015
- Hollinwood 1st September 2015
- Primrose Bank 1st September 2015
- Coldhurst 1st January 2016
- Oldham Edge 1st January 2016
- Alexandra 1st January 2016

16

FUNDING TO VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH SECTOR ORGANISATIONS

Councillor Stretton declared a prejudicial interest in Item 16 – Funding to Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Organisations by virtue of her position as Chair of the Credit Union. Councillor Stretton left the room and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Consideration was given to a report which sought approval to fund voluntary, community and faith (VCF) sector organisations for four strands of work: voluntary sector infrastructure support; community centres and organisations; community support; and community cohesion and provided details of the existing arrangements for funding of these areas of work, and considered options for the future.

It was reported that proposals for piloting a new approach to the management of community centres, and for reviewing areas of community support activity during 2015/16 could be considered. It was proposed to continue with existing arrangements in relation to voluntary sector infrastructure support and community cohesion, with new 3 year funding agreements.

Options/alternatives considered

Voluntary sector infrastructure

Option 1A – Decommissioning - Discontinue funding of this activity.

This was not regarded as a viable option because there would be a loss of infrastructure support to the VCF sector in Oldham. This would impact upon the capacity of the sector to develop and grow the recruitment and placement of volunteers, and opportunities for securing external funding. This would work against the Council's aspiration for a co-operative Borough.

Option 1B – Competitive commissioning - Provide a 6 month extension to Voluntary Action Oldham and undertake a competitive commissioning process for the work.

This was not regarded as a viable option because the provision of effective VCF infrastructure support was dependent upon strong local relationships with both partners and communities,

as well as detailed local knowledge. VAO had proven to be open to innovation and change and was working closely with the Council and Oldham Partnership in developing a range of initiatives. The potential benefits from a competitive process were outweighed by the potential costs including the risk of losing the relationships, skills and knowledge of VAO as the current provider.

Option 1C – Recommission for two years – Provide funding of Voluntary Action Oldham for a two year period, subject to the continuing availability of resources following the budget process for 2016/17.

This option would retain the relationships, knowledge and experience of the current provider, but missed out on the possibility that an alternative provider could deliver a better offer. Recognising the sum involved, and forthcoming changes to the financial and organisational operating environment, a two year funding agreement provided an appropriate balance between having an opportunity to review delivery and the level of investment, while enabling sufficient time to enable the organisation to develop the range and quality of their offer.

Community centres and organisations

Option 2A – Decommissioning - Discontinue funding of this activity.

This was not regarded as a viable option because it would involve losing a range of valuable local facilities at a time when the Council was seeking to encourage communities to do more to help themselves.

Option 2B – Competitive commissioning - Provide a 6 month extension to existing and undertake a competitive commissioning process for funding a number of community centres and organisations.

A competitive commissioning process could result in a different set of community centres and organisations being funded to work locally, with the potential for new ideas and a significant local contribution. But this would not address the fundamental problem that there were insufficient resources to maintain current numbers of community facilities, and a new approach was needed if more than a very small number of centres were to be sustained.

Option 2C – Pilot change - Offer a 12 month contract to existing organisations, during which a new approach to community centres could be piloted

Under this option, new 12 month agreements would be agreed with existing organisations. During this period, the Community Horizons approach would be piloted in partnership with Voluntary Action Oldham at a cost of £45k. A process would be developed as part of this for a phased expansion of the project to involve a range of community facilities. Organisations which did not want to be part of this would have a year to explore alternative arrangements. There was a risk that the pilot would not be successful in securing the desired potential for change.

Community support

Option 3A – Decommissioning - Discontinue funding of these areas of activity.

This was not regarded as a viable option because it would threaten the viability of the Credit Union, with the associated

reduction in access to affordable finance for residents, though their savings would be protected. Failure to fund Community Transport would result in the loss of Shop mobility, Dial-a-ride and group travel activity in Oldham.

Option 3B – Recommission for three years, subject to the availability of continuing following the budget process for 2016/17 and beyond.

This option would secure continuing delivery of these areas of community support for three years. However the Credit Union had the potential to increase income generation, and there were possibilities for considering whether the activities delivered by Community Transport could be linked into a wider offer of transport support for people with impaired mobility. Potential possibilities for securing better social value (such as through an enhanced offer) or greater value for money (by reducing costs) could be missed.

Option 3C – Extend and review – Issue 12 month funding agreements to existing provider allowing future requirements to be reviewed during 2015/16.

This option would allow the continuation of the existing community support offer, whilst enabling a review of potential options for supporting these areas of activity in 2016/17 and beyond.

Community cohesion

Option 4A – Decommissioning - Discontinue support for this area of activity.

This was not regarded as a viable option because it would result in the loss of the activity delivered by Oldham Inter-Faith Forum and Oldham Race Equality Partnership in support of building good community relations. It would also result in the missed opportunity to secure £36k of Charitable Trust funding to the Inter-Faith Forum which was conditional upon Council match funding.

Option 4B – Competitive commission. Provide a 6 month extension to the existing organisations and undertake a competitive commissioning process for the work.

Effective delivery of this area of work was critically dependent upon local knowledge, experience and relationships with partners and communities. It was not believed that there were alternative providers with these attributes, and that the potential risks of undertaking a competitive process which could result in new providers outweighed the potential benefits that new providers could bring.

Option 4C – Recommission for three years – Provide funding of £36k per annum to Oldham Inter-Faith Forum and £15k per annum to Oldham Race Equality Partnership for a three year period, subject to the continuing availability of resources following the budget processes for 2016/17 and beyond.

This option would secure continuity of activity, with the added value of additional external funding. Given the comparatively limited funding committed to these funding agreements, and the local knowledge, experience and relationships of existing providers, it is believed that seeking alternative providers would not offer greater value for public money.

RESOLVED – That:

1. Voluntary sector infrastructure

Option 1C – Recommission for two years – That a new two year funding agreement to provide voluntary sector infrastructure support with Voluntary Action Oldham at a cost of £280,000 per annum be agreed. This would be subject to the continuing availability of resources following the budget processes for 2016/17 and beyond.

2. Community centres and organisations

Option 2C – Pilot change - Voluntary Action Oldham would receive £45,000 to pilot. To cover the pilot period, community centres and organisations would be given a 12 month funding agreement for the same sums as in 2014/15 as follows:

Fatima Women’s Association	£16,200
Greenacres Community Centre	£27,450
Oldham Play Action Group	£9,738
Men Behaving Dadly	£9,612
Werneth & Freehold Community Development project	£29,250
Coppice Neighbourhood Group	£29,250

3. Community support

Option 3C – Extend and review – New 12 month funding agreements would be agreed with Oldham Credit Union and Community Transport for £40,000 and £50,000 respectively, securing continuation of the activities they deliver. During 2015/16 these areas of activity will be reviewed, in order to identify the preferred approach for 2016/17 and beyond, taking advantage of any opportunities to secure greater social value and/or value for money.

4. Community cohesion

Option 4C – Recommission for three years – New three year funding agreements would be agreed with Oldham Inter-Faith Forum and Oldham Race Equality Partnership for £36,000 and £15,000 respectively, subject to the continuing availability of resources following the budget processes for 2016/17 and beyond.

17

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Policy and Governance which provided Members with a review of the Council’s performance for December 2014 to acknowledged the highlights and scrutinise any of underperformance as appropriate.

It was reported that there were 47 rated measures within the period and of these 53% met the target. In addition there were 27 Corporate Plan Actions this quarter and 89% were on track or completed.

It was further reported that public satisfaction was higher far higher than it had been and the momentum needed to be sustained.

RESOLVED – That the Corporate Performance report for December 2014 be noted.

18

LANCASTER CLUB, BROADWAY, FAILSWORTH:

SELECTION OF PREFERRED DEVELOPER PARTNER THE FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Economic Development which provided the Cabinet with details of the outcome of the selection process for a developer partner for the Lancaster Club site and to recommend the selection of Bellway Homes as the preferred developer.

This report provided information on the results of the EU compliant selection process for a development partner to develop the Lancaster Club site.

It was reported that the redevelopment comprised of the construction of 142 high quality aspirational new homes for private sale and the conversion of the retained listed Lancaster Cub building to residential use.

The plans included a range of 2 to 4 bedrooms homes with a predominance of 3 and 4 bedroom properties. Construction was scheduled to start early 2016.

The land would be sold on a long leasehold basis, so that the Council was able to impose a requirement for ground rents from the new homes. It was proposed that ground rents were paid as directed by the Council with the intention that a proportion of ground rent receipts were paid to the land at Failsworth Lower Memorial Park (1924) Trust (registered no. 1136597).

Options and Alternatives considered

Option 1 – Appoint Bellway to develop the site under a 999 year lease.

Option 2 - Do not appoint. The site could be remarketed.

Option 3 – Do nothing.

RESOLVED – That the Cabinet would consider the commercially sensitive information contained at Item 25 before making a decision.

19

DISPOSAL OF LAND AT NORTH WERNETH [WERNETH]

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Economic Development which sought approval of a proposal that would seek to facilitate the potential comprehensive redevelopment the Hartford Mill area in Werneth Oldham.

It was reported that all parties maintained the view that reuse of the existing building, in its existing condition, was commercially unviable, the Council had been asked by the private mill owner to utilise its adjoining landholding to facilitate the potential comprehensive redevelopment of the area.

Whilst both Hartford Mill and the Council's adjoining land had been used for industrial purposes and would require remediation prior to redevelopment, it would be accepted by the Council that comprehensive redevelopment of the combined site (only) should be sufficient to achieve viable redevelopment on a low density residential development of larger property types.

As such, in order to give the mill owner sufficient confidence to submit a planning application in respect to the whole site (i.e. the land shown edged red and blue on the attached plan), the Council had offered terms for an option in respect to its land.

Under the terms of the option, in the event that the owner of the Hartford Mill site was successful in obtaining planning consent,

the owner could call upon the option and the Council would transfer a long-leasehold interest in its adjoining land (as shown edged red on the attached plan) to support comprehensive redevelopment of the area on a residential basis.

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 - Do Nothing

The Council could choose to do nothing and not sell the adjoining land to the owner of Hartford Mill. However, this approach was likely to result in the Mill owner continuing to do nothing with the property.

In proceeding with this option, Hartford Mill is likely to continue blighting the landscape for years to come. Being located immediately adjacent to Freehold Metrolink station and the Metrolink line, it was important that this prominent gateway property was addressed.

Option 2 – Dispose of the land

In order to try and support the Mill owner and seek comprehensive redevelopment of the area at the earliest opportunity, the Council could choose to dispose of the land now. This approach would generate a capital receipt although, in choosing to sell the land at an early stage, there would be little to incentivise the Mill owner to progress the proposed redevelopment in a timely manner.

Option 3 - Provide an option

Alternatively, the Council could look to grant an option in its land. This approach would give the Mill owner certainty that, should planning permission for comprehensive redevelopment be forthcoming, the Council would be bound to transfer the land.

RESOLVED – That the Cabinet would consider the confidential information contained at Item 26 of the agenda before making a decision.

20

CONTRACT AWARD: NEW 3FE PRIMARY SCHOOL (GRANGE)

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Executive Director, Corporate and Commercial Services which sought approval to accept direct award contract for design and construction of new 3Form Entry Primary School on the former Grange School site.

It was reported that through the review of primary school places across the Borough a future provision of between 140 and 165 primary school places were identified to meet the educational needs of children, focussed around Failsworth, Saddleworth and the central area of Oldham. As a result of this identified need, the Council agreed in a Cabinet Report on 31st March 2014 to an investment programme of £13.5m to help address the basic needs demand.

The basic need provision allocation for the new 3 form entry build primary school (central) was approved at £7.5m, together with its location as being on the former Grange School site adjoining the Oldham College on Rochdale Road.

The report detailed the direct award process under the government procured framework for education buildings for the design and construction of new 3 form entry Primary School.

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 – Do nothing

This was not an option as the provision of primary places will remain and completion of scheme would leave Council without adequate pupil places.

Option 2 – Competitively tender scheme under Modular Framework

This option was available for consideration to deliver the pupil places, but would not be able to achieve the completion date requested of September 2016.

Option 3 – Accept Contract Proposal and Commence discussions to develop fixed price tender.

RESOLVED – That the Cabinet would consider the commercially sensitive information as detailed at Item 27 of the agenda before making a decision.

21

UNITY PARTNERSHIP CHANGE IN SUBCONTRACTOR ARRANGEMENTS FOR ICT AND CONTACT CENTRE

Consideration was given to a report of the Assistant Executive Director Commercial Services which sought to maximise savings through reduction in Gross Annual Savings Charge (GASC) from Unity Partnership and secure improvements in services for ICT and Contact Centre.

It was reported that Unity Partnership had been working to support the Council with its significant budget challenges by identifying and delivering projects that either reduce costs or generate additional revenue.

Since 2008, Unity Partnership had employed a subcontractor to manage the ICT service and more recently, the Contact Centre service. Since mid-2014, Oldham Council, Unity Partnership and their subcontractor had been reviewing the ICT service and developing a new operational strategy to meet the needs of the Council going forward. A number of solutions had been considered by all parties which would result in changes to the service provision arrangements.

A significant deal had been agreed that brought both ICT and Contact Centre services directly back under Unity Partnership management, whilst leaving the online customer account portal as a subcontract to the existing subcontractor. This online customer account portal would continue to be developed throughout the remainder of the subcontract.

The guaranteed savings were to be delivered through a reduction in management fee and a change in overall service management and the Unity Partnership continued to be committed to identify further efficiencies and resultant savings going forward.

The lead Council officers were drafting a Deed of Variation to ensure appropriate controls around the change, reduction in GASC, and enacting of refreshed Output Specifications.

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 - Do Nothing

The option to do nothing has been dismissed due to the Council requiring an ICT Service that was aligned with the Council's financial and non-financial needs, particularly during this period of unprecedented change.

Option 2 - Pursue dispute resolution with Unity Partnership. The likelihood of success and cost to the Council of pursuing this option had been compared to the cost of accepting and progressing the proposal from Unity Partnership. For this reason the option was not recommended.

Option 3 - Require Unity Partnership to fund the compensation, transition, and transformation costs in order to progress with proposed deal with subcontractor.

Given that the changes were in relation to Unity Partnership's subcontractor, it would be reasonable to expect Unity to bear the costs of resolution. If Unity were required to pay the costs of resolving / settling with its subcontractor, they would also need to hold back the resultant savings in order to finance the deal. The cost of financing the compensation and investment required was less if the Council provided the financing vs. Unity Partnership or Mouchel financing.

Council officers had considered this option in depth and have calculated that it was in the Council's interest to finance in order to keep the costs to a minimum and maximise the net savings.

Option 4 - Accept Unity Partnership Proposal and delegate further decision making to Assistant Executive Director Corporate and Commercial Services. It was Council officers' opinion that the best option available to the Council at this stage was to accept and finance the proposal from Unity Partnership in respect of the change to its subcontractor relationship as per the benefits set out in the detailed internal report.

RESOLVED – That the Cabinet would consider the commercially sensitive information as contained at Item 28 of the agenda before making a decision.

22

LOW VALUE CONSTRUCTION AND HIGHWAYS SERVICES FRAMEWORK

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Director, Economy and Skills which sought approval to establish a Low Value Construction Framework (LVCF), aimed at bringing together under one contract, a number of existing Oldham Council measured term building and highway maintenance contracts, (that were managed by Unity Partnership as the Council's Strategic Partner), which were due to expire (as detailed in Appendix A), to facilitate the future delivery of maintenance works.

A review of the delivery of repair and maintenance contracts currently managed by Unity Partnership and the Council, identified initially through the elapsed Procurement & Commissioning Board and finalised through the Diamond Partnership Board (DPB), a potential to deliver a significant efficiency saving through retendering the current measured term contracts, to be replaced with a new overarching framework contract.

The proposal was to establish a Low Value Construction Framework, which included a variety of lots (as detailed in Section 2.6) to cover the majority of the Council's maintenance work requirements. The Council needed to ensure that all procurement activity was fully compliant with Oldham Council Contract Procedure Rules and EU Regulations. The Framework

Contract was to be established initially for a two year period, with the option to extend by an additional two years (in one year increments), if considered appropriate to do so at that time.

Options/Alternatives considered

Option 1 – To approve the LVCF and award the contract to the panels of Lot suppliers aforementioned. This would ensure that the delivery model commences on 1st May 2015, firstly to comply with Oldham Council Contract Procedure Rules and EU Regulations, and secondly, to deliver best value for the council and for local residents, alongside efficiencies savings, in terms of service delivery.

Option 2 – Not to award the contract, which was not considered viable, as the consequence of this would leave the Council in breach of Oldham Council Contract Procedure Rules, unless each scheme was individually quoted or tendered for, which is considered an inefficient procurement method and would not provide best value.

RESOLVED – That the Cabinet would consider the commercially sensitive information at Item 29 of the agenda before making a decision.

23

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they contain exempt information under paragraphs 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and it would not, on balance, be in the public interest to disclose the reports.

24

GREATER MANCHESTER HOUSING INVESTMENT FUND

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive which sought approval of from the Cabinet to the Council entering into an indemnity agreement to support the delivery of the Greater Manchester Housing Investment Fund (GMHIF). This would allow the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to take responsibility for the allocation of the Fund to help deliver increased housing in the city-region.

RESOLVED – That:

1. The proposal to enter into a Deed of Indemnity on the terms set out in the report be approved
2. The Director of Legal Services be authorised to complete the necessary documentation.

25

LANCASTER CLUB, BROADWAY, FAILSWORTH: SELECTION OF PREFERRED DEVELOPER PARTNER THE FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Cabinet considered the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 18 of the agenda.

RESOLVED – That:

1. Bellway Homes Ltd as the preferred bidder for the development of the Lancaster Club Site be approved.

2. That the finalisation of the legal documentation be delegated to the Leader of the Council in consultation with the Director of Economic Development and the Borough Solicitor.
3. The site be sold on a 999 year lease basis.
4. That ground rents were paid as directed by the Council and the decision on how the monies would be used be delegated to the Leader of the Council in consultation with the Director of Economic Development and the Borough Solicitor.

26 **DISPOSAL OF LAND AT NORTH WERNETH [WERNETH]**

The Cabinet considered the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 19 of the agenda.

RESOLVED – That the recommendations as detailed within the commercially sensitive report be approved.

27 **CONTRACT AWARD: NEW 3FE PRIMARY SCHOOL (GRANGE)**

The Cabinet gave consideration to the commercially sensitive information as detailed at Item 20 of the agenda

RESOLVED – That:

1. The acceptance of the negotiated price and to approve commencement of discussions with the contractor to develop their proposal be approved.
2. Delegated authority be given to Executive Director, Corporate and Commercial Services, the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Interim Director of Finance, to enter into a contract to deliver the new school ready for September 2016 term commencement.

28 **UNITY PARTNERSHIP CHANGE IN SUBCONTRACTOR ARRANGEMENTS FOR ICT AND CONTACT CENTRE**

The Cabinet gave consideration to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 21.

RESOLVED –That:

1. That the settlement and savings proposal from Unity Partnership as set out in Appendix A of the report be agreed and the Interim Director for Commercial and Transformational Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and HR, the Director of Legal Services and the interim Director of Finance be authorised to progress towards a Deed of Variation and any associated documentation on behalf of the Council to enact the necessary changes.
2. The final commissioning of the transition and transformation projects be delegated to the Interim Director of Commercial and Transformational Services, including approval of the necessary investment as set out in the report.

3. The governance for the delivery of the transformation part of the proposal be delegated to the Change Programme Board (Diamond), and the Interim Director of Commercial and Transformational Services.
4. This key decision be exempt from call in due to the need to initiate transition on the 1st April 2015.
5. The Director of Legal Services or his nominee be authorised to execute the agreed Deed of Variation and any associated documents.

29

LOW VALUE CONSTRUCTION AND HIGHWAYS SERVICES FRAMEWORK

The Cabinet gave consideration to the commercially sensitive information in relation to Item 22 of the agenda.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to establish this Low Value Construction Framework (LVCF) Oldham Council Contract.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and finished at 6.58pm

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