

DEPUTY LEADER

A record of decisions made by the Executive Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Deputy Leader's Portfolio:-

MONDAY 28th JUNE, 2021

Following consideration of the matters detailed below in the presence of:-

Councillor Cox	- Executive Cabinet Member – Deputy Leader's Portfolio
Councillor Zaman	- Minor Opposition Spokesperson
Councillor Sanders	- Minor Opposition Spokesperson
Councillor Brady	- Minor Opposition Spokesperson
Councillor Ismail	- Minor Opposition Spokesperson
Councillor Allen	- Minor Opposition Spokesperson

Officers

Mr. G. Brough	- Director of Place
Mr. P. Whittingham	- Assistant Director Economic Development and Regeneration
Ms. H. Gorman	- Borough Solicitor
Ms. J. Ivison	- Head of Service
Ms. C. Hansell	- Principal Project Officer
Mr. D. Shepherd	- Principal Group Accountant
Mrs. V. Ridge	- Democratic Services Manager

3. TOWN CENTRE FREE CAR PARKING

The Director of Place submitted a report which sought the Executive Cabinet Member's approval for the extension of the current Town Centre Free Parking initiative until at least 18th July, 2021.

CC2

The Executive Cabinet Member was reminded that free parking in Bolton Town Centre was first introduced in 2012 to encourage people into the town centre and support local businesses and, as part of the response to Covid-19 pandemic, a new free parking initiative was established to provide an additional 2 hours free parking on weekdays at all NCP multistorey car parks. This offer was also extended to include all on street parking in the town centre and Ashburner Street (market). It was stated that this offer was initially set to end in mid-November, 2020 but it was subsequently agreed to extend the offer until 20th June, 2021 in line with Stage 4 of the Covid roadmap being introduced.

The report also advised that at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council allocated £1 million for Covid recovery and response from the Town Centre Strategy Budget and £839,000 of this was allocated to free parking. This was based on 2019 car parking usage and used as a maximum benchmark for what might be needed to fund free parking and by the time the free parking agreement was set to end there would be approximately £147,500 of this allocation remaining.

The Executive Cabinet Member was informed that the present free parking agreement was set to end on 20th June, 2021 and the Council must provide 14 days notice for any changes to parking arrangements. Therefore, the current period would have to be extended and in addition to this, restrictions would remain in place from 21st June, 2021.

In view of the above, the following options were put forward, viz:-

- Option 1 - extend the free parking for a period of 4 weeks and cease the free parking scheme on 18th July, 2021; or
- Option 2 – extend the free parking for a period of 6 weeks and cease the free parking scheme on 1st August, 2021.

The report provided details in relation to each of the above options and it was recommended that Option 1 be approved.

In terms of the financial implications, the Executive Cabinet Member was advised that the continuation of the free parking initiative was not sustainable in the long term due to the amount of budget available and there was also a risk of losing the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding if initiatives were unable to be front funded using the remaining £152,367. It was stated that this money would allow for borough wide improvements such as the mobile app to be facilitated and the Council would be reimbursed following successful sign off of claims by the MHCLG.

The Executive Cabinet Member NOTED the report and APPROVED the extension of the Town Centre Free Parking scheme until 18th July, 2021 as detailed in the report.

(In accordance with Article 5 of the Council's Constitution this decision was subsequently called in by six members for consideration by the Place Scrutiny Committee).

4. STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN (SAMP) DISPOSALS PHASE 4

The Director of Place submitted a report which sought the Executive Cabinet Member's approval for the sale and disposal of two sites in various locations across Bolton.

The Executive Cabinet Member was reminded that the Council had developed a Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) 2020-2025 and operating framework within which section E7 (Estates Optimisation) was approved at Cabinet on 5th October, 2020. This provided for the disposal of surplus land following a review of the Council's land holdings and the SAMP was a key enabler to delivering Bolton 2030 vision and goals.

In view of the above, a review of Councils assets had been undertaken to identify land that had no strategic, development or investment use, and 2 sites had been identified for disposal at market value for capital receipt and in line with the Strategic Asset Management Plan's disposal policy were recommended for disposal, viz:-

CC4

- QUEST Building, Brownlow Fold Way; and
- Land at De-Havilland Way.

The report stated that, if required, following the completion of a report on title for each site the intention to dispose would be advertised in the local press for two consecutive weeks and, if any objections to the proposed disposal of open space were received, a report would be brought back to the Executive Cabinet Member for consideration. It was then recommended that the 2 sites be offered for sale by auction or private treaty or separate negotiation on an off-market basis by the Estates Section and or a reputable firm of Auctioneers or independent agents.

The report also outlined the proposed main terms of the disposal and stated that the disposal of the sites would generate a capital receipt which would be included in the overall Capital Receipts programme.

In conclusion, the Executive Cabinet Member was advised that consultation had taken place with Ward Members and representations had been made accordingly. It was noted that no objections had been made in relation to the disposal of the two assets.

The Executive Cabinet Member APPROVED –

- (i) The sale of 2 sites as detailed in the report unconditionally by auction or private treaty in accordance with Standing Orders relating to Contracts and the Strategic Asset Management Plan and subject to no objections being received as part of the public open space process (where relevant) and subject to title investigations being received and considered for each site; and AGREED –**
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Director of Place (Assets) to agree a reserve price (auctions) or accept the best consideration offer (sale by private treaty) and complete the sale of the land; and AUTHORISED**

-

- (iii) The Borough Solicitor to complete the legal formalities in each case.**

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

The background papers and report in relation to the following item were considered confidential as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that it be deemed that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in their exemption outweighs the public interest in their disclosure.

5. FUTURE HIGH STREET FUNDING – FARNWORTH TOWN CENTRE

The Director of Place submitted a report which sought the Executive Cabinet Member's approval to accept £13,276,817 in Future High Street Funding from the Ministry of Homes, Communities and Local Government to invest in Farnworth Town Centre in accordance with the reprofiled business case.

The Executive Cabinet Member was reminded that, on 26th December, 2020, the Ministry for Homes, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) announced that Farnworth had successfully be awarded £13,276,817 from the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) which was 60% of the original ask. However, the Council was required to reprofile the Business Case to reflect the reduced amount of funding whilst maintaining a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 2.

It was explained that the reprofiling exercise had now been completed which produced a BCR of 2.38 (above the minimum threshold of 1.5) and the proposed way forward was endorsed by members of the Farnworth Town Centre Steering Group on 9th February, 2021 and submitted to the MHCLG for consideration on 26th February, 2021. MHCLG confirmed their acceptance of the reprofiled business case on 6th April, 2021.

The report advised that to accept the FHSF from MHCLG the Council needed to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which sets out the terms, principles and practices that

CC6

would apply to the working relationship between MHCLG and the Council regarding the administration and delivery of the FHSF proposal in Farnworth Town Centre. A copy of this MoU for the financial year 2021/2022 was appended to the report.

The Executive Cabinet Member was informed that the Business Case which had been approved by the MHCLG set out the details of the projects, including budget; spending profile; scope; key assumptions; outputs; timeline; key milestones and risks.

In terms of the three main projects, these were detailed as follows:-

- Farnworth Market Precinct;
- Expansion of the Leisure Centre; and
- 'Streets for All'.

It was also explained that the details set out in the Business Case would form the agreed perimeters for taking forward the above schemes.

The report outlined in detail how the schemes would be progressed, together with, the funding implications. It also provided further details in relation to co-funding.

In conclusion, it was stated that extension consultation was undertaken as part of the development of the Masterplan and Farnworth Town Centre Strategy. Further consultation would also be undertaken as part of the planning process for the redevelopment of Farnworth Market Precinct site and the extension of the Leisure Centre and in the development of the phased approach to the implementation of the 'Streets for All' treatment of Market Street in partnership with TfGM.

The Executive Cabinet Member APPROVED –

- (i) The contents of the report and the acceptance of funding from MHCLG and increase the capital programme by £13,276,817; AGREED -**

- (ii) To delegate authority to the Director of Place to conclude negotiations with tenants of Farnworth Market Precinct to achieve Vacant Possession; and AUTHORISED –**
- (iii) The Director of Place, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive and the Borough Solicitor, to finalise and enter into the Grant Funding Terms and the Memorandum of Understanding;**
- (iv) The Director of Place, in consultation with the Borough Solicitor, to negotiate and enter into:**
 - a) a Client Access Agreement for the use of the Pagabo framework agreement; and**
 - b) all contractual documentation relating to the delivery of the works as detailed in the report, whether those works are called off under the Pagabo framework agreement or under any other pre-procured framework agreement; and**
- (v) The Borough Solicitor to complete the necessary legal formalities.**