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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Cabinet

Date: Tuesday, 9th June, 2020
Place: Virtual Meeting - MS Teams

Present: Councillor I Gilbert (Chair)
Councillors R Woodley (Vice-Chair), T Harp, A Jones, C Mulroney,
K Robinson and M Terry

In Attendance: A Griffin, A Lewis, T Forster, L Read, M Marks, J Williams,
J Chesterton, J Ruffle, S Meah-Sims, T MacGregor, A Keating and
C Gamble.

Start/End Time: 2.00 pm/3.05 pm

22 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence at this meeting.

23 Declarations of Interest

The following Councillors declared interests as indicated:

(a) Cllr Gilbert – Minute 24 (Council’s response to COVID-19) – Council representative on the Board of Southend Association of Voluntary Services (SAVS) – non-pecuniary interest;

(b) Cllr Harp – Minute 24 – (Council’s response to COVID-19 – Volunteer for SAVS and wife employed by that organisation – non-pecuniary interest and Minutes 26 and 28 (Urgent item of business - SO46 report) – Season ticket holder of Southend United Football Club – interest;

(c) Cllr A Jones – Minute 26 (Urgent Item of business – SO46 report) – Council’s representative on governing body of Southend Adult Community College – non-pecuniary interest;

(d) Cllr Mulroney – Minute 25 – (Initial Local Financial Assessment of COVID-19) – Chair of Trustees of Leigh Heritage Centre (grant application made by treasurer) – non-pecuniary interest;

(e) Cllr Terry – Minute 24 – (Council’s response to COVID-19) – Lives in the Seafront area – non-pecuniary interest and Minutes 26 and 28 (Urgent item of business – SO46 report) – Season ticket holder of Southend United Football Club – interest; and

(f) Cllr Woodley – Minutes 26 and 28 (Urgent item of business – SO46 report)- Wife is a season ticket holder of Southend United Football Club – interest.

24 The Council's Response to COVID-19

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive setting out the action taken by the Council in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and its approach to restore and/or adapt services and further assist residents, local businesses, staff

and the Borough in general. The report highlighted how the Council would use and review the Southend 2050 programme to drive recovery and build on some aspects of the pandemic response that had been positive, including community mobilisation, adaptation of services and more effective remote working.

The report also put forward recommendations to address the emerging arrangements for local outbreak planning and the crucial role of the Council in supporting the NHS test, trace and isolate programme.

Councillors received an updated version of the report which had been circulated before the meeting.

On behalf of members of the Cabinet, the Leader thanked Council staff for their hard work in responding to the issues arising from the pandemic and for their contribution towards delivering services in difficult circumstances. He also extended his thanks to the NHS staff and other key workers for their sterling work.

Resolved:

1. That the action taken to date in response to the Covid-19 crisis, be noted.
2. That, in the light of the impact of Covid-19, the proposed approach to recovery, including the use of the Southend 2050 programme to drive the Borough and Council's recovery phase and in that context undertake a review of the Southend 2050 outcomes and roadmap content, be approved
3. That the residents, staff, businesses and partners be thanked for all their efforts to date in responding to the pandemic.
4. That the governance arrangements for overseeing preparations for a local outbreak of Covid-19 and the production and implementation of a Local Outbreak Control Plan be put in place, as outlined in paragraph 4.15.5 of the submitted report. This will see the establishment of an Outbreak Control Oversight Board and a Local Health Protection Board as sub-groups of the Health and Wellbeing Board.
5. That it be noted that the executive decisions, that would otherwise go to Cabinet, relating to the arrangements for local outbreak planning, the Council's role in supporting the NHS test, trace and isolate programme and associated matters, will be dealt with under the Council's SO 46 procedure, with additional consultation with the 4 Group Leaders in the case of strategic matters.

Other Options

The Council could choose not to outline its response to Covid-19 or agree not to set out its path to recovery or review its current ambition and desired outcomes. This would mean failing to set out and recognise the huge impact the crisis has had on the Borough, its people and the Council and the Council's approach to recovery. A review of the current 2050 ambition and outcomes would most likely be required in any case, given they were agreed in 2018.

Reasons for Recommendations

To ensure the Council has an opportunity to review action taken to date to tackle the Covid-19 crisis and to consider the appropriate approach to be taken to enable the Borough and Council to recover.

Note: This is an Executive function

Referred direct to all three Scrutiny Committees

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert

25 Initial Local Financial Assessment of COVID-19

The Cabinet considered a report from the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) providing a high-level initial assessment of the local financial impact of Covid- 19 together with the Council's initial response to managing the scale of the financial challenge over the short and medium term.

Resolved:

1. That the Council's initial assessment of the local financial impact of the unprecedented challenges that has been caused by the pandemic, be noted.
2. That the proposed tactical and strategic response to managing the financial challenges, be noted.
3. That regular reports be presented to future Cabinet meetings, which will provide updated assessments on the Council's financial position and outline any changes to the Council's strategy and range of assumptions.

Other options:

None

Reasons for recommendations

To provide an assessment of the financial implications associated with the Council's response to Covid-19

Note: This is an Executive Function

Referred direct to all three Scrutiny Committees

Cabinet Member: Cllr Gilbert

26 Urgent Item of Business - SO46 Report

The Chair agreed to take the SO46 report, as an urgent item of business, on the basis of its relevance to the report on the Council's response to COVID-19.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

Note: This is an Executive Function
Referred direct to all three Scrutiny Committees
Cabinet Member: as appropriate to the item

27 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:-

That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the item of business set out below, on the grounds that it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

28 SO46 Report Confidential Sheet

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

Note: This is an Executive Function
Referred direct to all three Scrutiny Committees
Cabinet Member: As appropriate to the item

Chair: _____