

SIGNIFICANT OFFICER DECISIONS

16 FEBRUARY TO 15 MARCH 2014

DECISIONS

08/14 – 10/14

DATE OF PUBLICATION:

Tuesday 18th March 2014

DEADLINE FOR MEMBER CALL-IN:

5.00pm on 25th March 2014

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SIGNIFICANT OFFICER DECISIONS

BACKGROUND

About this document

Slough Borough Council has a decision making process involving an Executive (Cabinet) and a Scrutiny Function. Part 3 of the Council's Constitution sets out the Responsibility for Functions and Scheme of Officer Delegation. This document lists the decisions taken by officers under this scheme during the period stated.

Distribution

The schedule is circulated monthly to all Members and published on the website. This document, and any reports relating to individual decisions, are published on the Council's website in accordance The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

Decisions included in the Schedule

The definition of the categories for 'Significant' Officer Decisions to be included in the Schedule are set out below:

1. Tenders/Contracts over £50,000 or 'sensitive' excluding individual social services care packages and school placements.
2. Exemptions to Competitive Tendering.
3. Redundancies/Early Retirements above 5 in Service area*
4. Decision to commence formal organisational restructuring/consultation.
5. Consultation responses other than technical responses where officers asked for Member views.
6. Write-off of individual debts between £5,000 and £15,000.
7. Decisions arising from external report on significant Health and Safety at Work Act risk.
8. Compulsory Purchase Orders.
9. Action with regard to Petitions in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme
10. Any exceptions made to the Council's agreed tender procedure as set out in Financial Procedure Rules
11. Consultancies over £5,000 (excluding cover for established posts) or any consultancy/employment offered to former Senior Officers of the Council of 3rd tier and above.
12. Other decisions such as those with political, media or industrial relations implications that Directors consider Members should be aware of.
13. Appointments to casual vacancies on committees, sub committees, Panels, Working Parties and outside bodies
14. Specific decisions that have been delegated to a particular officer by resolution at a Cabinet meeting to be taken following consultation with the relevant Commissioner

*Decisions taken on the Redundancy/Early Retirement of a senior level officer to be reported to Group Leaders, Cabinet and Employment and Appeals Committee.

Call-in

Any Member of the Council may call-in an officer decision specified in this Schedule by following the procedure set out in paragraph 21 of Part 4.5 of the Council's Constitution. Member call-ins must be submitted in writing to the Head of Democratic Services and state the reasons why the request to have the matter considered by Scrutiny has been made. The call-in must be received within five working days of delivery of the publication of the decision (by 5.00pm). Members call-ins of officer decisions will be submitted to the next Overview & Scrutiny Committee for consideration and dealt with in the same way as other post decision call-ins.

Exempt information

Any supporting reports considered by the decision-maker will be published on the website in a separate appendix, unless they contain exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

Further information

The schedule will be published monthly. A copy can be obtained from Democratic Services at St Martin's Place, 51 Bath Road on weekdays between 9.00 a.m. and 4.45 p.m. or Tel: (01753) 875120, email: nicholas.pontone@slough.gov.uk.

A copy will be published on Slough Borough Council's Website: www.slough.gov.uk

Ref	08/14
Title of decision	Short Breaks (for Carers of Children with special educational needs)
Date decision taken	24th February 2014
Decision maker	Strategic Director of Wellbeing
Portfolio	Health & Wellbeing
Details of decision taken	Extension of contracts for one year. Total expenditure of £300k per annum.
Reasons for taking decision	<p>Short Break Services for respite for parent carers of children with special needs are commissioned under contract from a small number of local not for profit organisations. Re decision to extend these contracts for a one year period has been taken to ensure that the new reforms for this care group are fully known and the implications understood before a re-tender of service(s) commences.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the reforms will introduce a requirement upon Local Authorities to make access to short break services available through direct payments. As a consequence both the range of service options favoured by families may change, requiring a corresponding shift in the market, and the mechanisms by which services are commissioned and contracted will move in part of whole to micro commissioning basis.</p>
Options considered	None.
Details of any conflict of interest, disclosable pecuniary interest or non-statutory disclosable interest declared	None.
Reports considered	None.

Ref	09/14
Title of decision	Appointment to the Standards Advisory Committee, Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Council Representative
Date decision taken	6 th March 2014
Decision maker	Kevin Gordon
Portfolio	Cabinet
Details of decision taken	Parish Councillor Scott Bryant appointed to the Standards Advisory Committee, under Council procedure Rule 1.2 (vi)
Reasons for taking decision	N/A
Options considered	None
Details of any conflict of interest, disclosable pecuniary interest or non-statutory disclosable interest declared	None
Reports considered	None

Ref	10/14
Title of decision	Tender of Liability & Motor Insurance, (including claims handling).
Date decision taken	18 th March 2014
Decision maker	Section 151 Officer – Joseph Holmes.
Portfolio	Finance & Strategy
Details of decision taken	The decision has been taken to award the contract for the supply of Liability and Motor insurance, (including claims handlers) to Risk Management Partners. At a cost of £239,187 for the first year. The contract will run for a period of 1 year.
Reasons for taking decision	The Liability and Motor Insurance, (including claims handling), were tendered via the Government Procurement Service. The responses were evaluated by Jardine Lloyd Thompson, the council's insurance brokers and the Risk & Insurance Officer.
Options considered	Three responses to the tender process were anticipated. However one expected bidder declined to submit a bid. Therefore the decision was between bids.
Details of any conflict of interest, disclosable pecuniary interest or non-statutory disclosable interest declared	None
Reports considered	Tender evaluation report from Jardine Lloyd Thompson, the council's insurance brokers

Petitions

In accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme and the schedule of Significant Officer Decisions please find below a list of petitions submitted to the Council and a summary the response provided. Further details of the petitions can be found on Slough's website: <http://www.slough.gov.uk/moderngov/mgePetitionListDisplay.aspx?bcr=1>

Ref: 14-02 Emergency Vehicle Access – Goodman Park

Petition Received – 10th February 2014

We, the residents of Goodman Park, Slough, petition the council to provide us with access for emergency vehicles on a road opposite the park, in front of the houses facing the park because of health and safety reasons.

We only have vehicular access to the properties near garages which are built away from the houses facing the park. There is insufficient parking for residents so there are many cars parked near the garages, sometimes blocking access to garages and cars. Therefore emergency vehicles find it very difficult to park anywhere near the houses.

Recently there was a house fire at one of the houses and due to lack of access for the fire engine the house virtually burnt to the ground. The fire engine was not able to park near the property and did not have a hose long enough to reach the property from where it was parked.

We are also worried that an ambulance would also struggle to reach any of the properties and therefore lives will be at risk potentially. There are many elderly and disabled residents living in these properties and we feel denying them easy access to emergency vehicles cannot continue.

Response Provided – 7th March 2014

Thank you for submitting a petition on behalf of the residents of Goodman Park regarding access problems around the service roads for the garages of Goodman Park.

We have implemented the parking scheme on Goodman Park on an experimental basis, which enables us to monitor the successes and failures of the scheme. We then have the opportunity to make any changes before the scheme is implemented permanently. Your comments regarding the displacement of vehicles onto the service roads are much appreciated, and we have also noticed this from other correspondence we have received. There are a few options available to us, which include using double yellow lines, marking out parking bays or even extending a prohibition of parking on the pavement down the service roads to try and ensure both the pavements and carriageway is kept clear to the minimum requirements for its users. However, we will only know the best solution once a number of site visits are made and designs drawn up.

All changes will be considered once the experimental scheme is coming to expiration, and the comments received about the scheme will be considered and any changes proposed to the residents. The amendment period runs from June 2014 to June 2015, however we anticipate that the responses will be collated and considered over the summer and we will be able to make any necessary amendments soon after.

In the meantime, I would suggest speaking to the police who are able to issue fixed penalty notices to vehicles parked in obstruction of the highway. If the parked vehicles are obstructing the emergency services, this would be classed as obstruction to the highway.

I hope this response helps and we hope to be in touch with the residents soon outlining any amendments to the scheme as per the responses that we have received since the schemes implementation.

Ref 14-03 Proposal for CCTV on Merton Road

Petition Received – 17th February 2014

We, the residents of Merton Road, petition to Slough Borough Council to install a CCTV camera on Merton Road.

Response Provided – 3rd March 2014

In response to the above petition in which the Council had been asked to look at CCTV for Merton Road.

CCTV cameras are installed within areas of the borough where crime and disorder and community safety priorities exist. This is done by a bidding system that the Police (working in partnership with the Council and other partners) use if they have an area they believe is a hot spot for crime and disorder.

In order to determine if an area is suitable for a camera, the Police and Council will look at how many reports of crime, anti-social behaviour and disorder have been received. If the numbers do reflect the problems, then a camera is considered, but as a last resort – this is because the local neighbourhood policing team will look at all other options they can put in place to deal with the nuisance before a camera is considered.

Thames Valley Police, the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team and the Anti Social Behaviour Officer visited the lead petitioner on 20th February, 2014, and agreed that they would carry out a street survey in Merton Road to speak to residents and ascertain the extent of the problem in order to look at all the options available to tackle the issues that have been raised.

On 24th February, 2014, a street survey was carried out with Thames Valley Police and the Anti Social Behaviour Officer, in which they spoke to numerous residents in Merton Road. The Police also dropped off information regarding burglaries and protecting your property.

Having collated the data from the recently completed street survey, and Police and Council data on how many reports of crime, anti-social behaviour and disorder have been received for the past 12 months in Merton Road, there is unfortunately insufficient evidence of crime and/or anti-social behaviour to justify a Council or Police CCTV camera in Merton Road at this stage.

Residents can however put up private CCTV on their properties - provided it only covers the bounds of their property. More information on using your own private CCTV can be found on the Information Commissioners website: ico.org.uk - faqs - cctv
Residents have been encouraged to report any criminal activity to the Police by calling the new non-emergency number 101. If a crime is in progress or a person is in immediate danger the emergency services should be alerted by calling 999. Anti-social behaviour can be reported to the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour hotline on 01753 875298.

The Council will be monitoring the calls from Merton Road for the next 6 months and should problems escalate, we will once again consider all options to deal with any incidents, including the use of a CCTV camera for the area.

In the meantime, the local neighbourhood policing team and Community Warden are aware of these concerns and have added Merton Road to their patrol plans – they will be patrolling the area on a regular basis in order to deter any future incidents of crime and/or anti-social behaviour.