

## **Decisions of the Cabinet**

20 June 2012

Members Present:-

Councillor Richard Cornelius (Chairman)  
Councillor Daniel Thomas (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Dean Cohen	Councillor Sachin Rajput
Councillor Andrew Harper	Councillor Robert Rams
Councillor Helena Hart	Councillor Joanna Tambourides
Councillor David Longstaff	

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Tom Davey

### **1. MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 April 2012 be approved as a correct record.

### **2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tom Davey. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Sachin Rajput.

### **3. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS**

There were no such declarations.

### **4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Details are appended of the questions asked of and the answers given by the Leader of the Council. Verbal responses were given to the supplementary questions asked at the meeting.

### **5. ADDITIONAL HIGHWAYS PLANNED MAINTENANCE WORKS PROGRAMME FOR 2012/13**

The Cabinet Member tabled an amended appendix B to this report, which replaced the version distributed with the original papers.

For the reasons set out in the Cabinet Members' report, Cabinet

RESOLVED –

1. That £3.5 million of the £5 million set aside in the service development reserve in this year's budget, as agreed by Cabinet in February 2012, be made available for carrying out additional carriageway resurfacing and footway relay works in the Borough during the financial years 2012/13 and 2013/14.
2. That, subject to the overall costs being contained within available budgets, the Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Regeneration be instructed to:
  - i) give notice under Section 58 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 of the Council's intention to implement the highway works shown in Appendices B (as amended) and C by advertising and consulting as necessary with the public utility companies and Transport for London (TfL) for schemes proposed to be implemented during 2012/2013;
  - ii) implement the schemes proposed in Appendices B (as amended) and C by placing orders with the Council's term contractors or specialist contractors appointed in accordance with the public procurement rules, or the Council's Contract Procedure Rules as appropriate;
  - iv) agree any variations to the scheduling of the programme in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, the Cabinet Member for Environment and the Chairman of the relevant Area Environment Sub-Committee.

**6. THE BARNET SKILLS, EMPLOYMENT AND ENTERPRISE ACTION PLAN AND A PACKAGE OF TARGETED SUPPORT TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE INTO EMPLOYMENT, INCLUDING SUPPORT TO LOCAL BUSINESSES**

The Chairman of the Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee addressed the Cabinet, and presented the recommendations to Cabinet that Committee's recommendations made during their pre-decision Scrutiny of this agenda item on 11 June 2012. Cabinet formally endorsed the following Scrutiny recommendations:

- (1) the Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Families should actively seek to involve local business groups on the Skills and Enterprise Project Board.
- (2) there should be greater clarity and less bureaucracy for local businesses and public agencies regarding how to establish apprenticeship schemes.
- (3) the Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Families should consider mechanisms for monitoring the success of the Action Plan
- (4) the Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Families should consider how to reach young people not in education or employment and encourage their involvement in apprenticeships.

Cabinet chose not to endorse a further recommendation relating to jobs moving out of the borough (recommendation 6 of the Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 11 June 2012).

Cabinet then

RESOLVED –

1. The Barnet Skills, Employment and Enterprise Action Plan 2012 – 2015, as attached in Appendix A to the report.
2. The recommended package of targeted, time-limited support, costing £1m in 2012-13, to support 16 – 24 year olds into employment, including those classified at 'NEET'. The beneficiaries of the package, which has been approved by major public sector partners and discussed with central Government, will be unemployed young people and local businesses.
3. That the Leader of the Council be authorised to agree any minor changes to the Skills, Employment and Enterprise Action Plan and proposed support package in order to ensure effective delivery.

## **7. ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMISSIONING NEW SCHOOLS**

For the reasons set out in the Cabinet Member's report, Cabinet

RESOLVED –

1. To note the change in legislation regarding the commissioning of new schools and its implications for the borough.
2. To agree the approach to commissioning new schools as set out in paragraphs 9.5 to 9.10 of the report.

## **8. FINCHLEY CHURCH END - DRAFT FINAL TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY FOR ADOPTION**

For the reasons set out in the Cabinet Member's report, Cabinet

RESOLVED

1. To note the outcome of the public consultation on the draft Town Centre Strategy for Finchley Church End as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
2. To formally adopt the draft final Town Centre Strategy for Finchley Church End attached as Appendix 2 of the report.

## **9. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

There were no such items.

The meeting finished at 7:43pm

## **CABINET MEETING, 20 June 2012**

### **Public Questions**

#### **From Roger Tichborne:**

*1. Barnet Council Cabinet is reviewing a paper entitled "Cabinet approval of The Barnet Skills, Employment and Enterprise Action Plan; and a package of targeted support to help young people into employment, including support to local businesses."*

*The total cost of the initiatives outlined in this paper are £1,000,000. One of the strands of the scheme is to work with Small to Medium sized Enterprises (SME's) to develop pathways for getting young people not in education or training (NEET) into employment.*

*I am highly concerned by the fact that Barnet Council has embarked on such an initiative, yet has seemingly not bothered to engage with any SME's, especially those who have some experience of working with NEET youngsters. As a member of the Federation of Small Business, I would have expected Barnet Council to have consulted the Federation with regards to initiatives involving SME's. Furthermore, I would also have expected Barnet Council to have engaged with organisations and companies engaged with working with NEET youngsters in Barnet.*

*My business, Mill Hill Music Complex, together with SoundSkool, have in association with Youth Music and YMCA developed a program for such youngsters and delivered a series of courses for such young people, which also offered practical experience for the young people with paid work experience outcomes.*

*Myself and Simon Gordon of Sound Skool have attended many meetings with various parts of the Barnet Council organisation to discuss the subject of improving opportunities for NEET youngsters. Simon also applied to attract funding via the former Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Lisa Rutter for initiatives related to the Sound Skool project. Simon has been successful in securing funding from Ltd.ltd (one of the UK's leading advertising agencies) for a further term of Sound Skool courses.*

*Given the fact that there are companies involved in this area, with a proven track record of success, why have they not been consulted? With a budget of one million pounds, which is a not insignificant sum, surely any scheme which is designed to involve SME's should do the following:*

- a) Work with organisations such as the FSB which represent SME's to develop a program, working with SME's to deliver appropriate programs.*
- b) Identify local businesses (many of which already work with Barnet Council) which have experience of NEET youngsters, to develop and build upon existing programs.*
- c) Consult with established local business, to develop schemes, rather than to develop the schemes, spend the money and then wonder why they haven't delivered.*

*It is instructive to see that not a single SME or organisation representing them is featured in the action plan included in the report.*

*The culture within an organisation such as Barnet Council is completely different to that within an SME. Any scheme which is targeted at SME's should include board members with solid SME experience in Barnet and good contacts within the SME business community. Will Barnet Council commit to reviewing this program and adopting the suggestions above before progressing the scheme?*

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*The current Sound Skool term is ending shortly. In her role as Deputy Mayor and Mayor, Councillor Lisa Rutter was a steadfast supporter of Simon Gordon and SoundSkool. We formally*

*invite the Leader, Deputy Leader and CEO of Barnet Council, as well as the Current Mayor, Councillor Brian Schama to attend the final week of the Sound Skool term next Tuesday at Mill Hill Music Complex, to review the work and meet the youngsters involved.*

*The current term has been 100% funded by the private sector. We believe that Barnet Council must seriously consider ways to promote such schemes and encourage private/public sector cooperation. We believe that this would be a far more cost effective method of actually delivering opportunities for NEET youngsters than the plans outlined in the report. As a first measure, the FSB and other local businesses should be encouraged to contribute and participate. I consider it rather strange that this initiative was not discussed at all at the recent "business breakfast" I attended with the Leader and CEO of Barnet Council. Surely this was the ideal opportunity to raise the matter? Surely the main purpose of such meetings should be to brief local business on initiatives which affect them?*

*Given that the report involves a substantial amount of money and directly references the SME business sector in Barnet, surely not even bothering to consult the sector or seek feedback on plans, is potentially discriminatory, if not actually negligent? As this involves taxpayers money, I cannot see any justification for excluding the sector.*

### **Answer**

The council developed the Plan through the Barnet Employability Group, whose membership includes the key employment and training delivery partners in the borough such as Job Centre Plus (who have expert knowledge on skills, unemployment and the local business community), Barnet & Southgate College, Children's Services (who have expert knowledge in the needs of our young people), Middlesex University and CommUNITY Barnet (who represent the voluntary sector). We consulted the Barnet Partnership Board which includes business representation. We have also separately consulted some of our key business partners to understand the needs of business in the borough and to ensure the measures are attractive opportunities for businesses and young people alike.

A business breakfast meeting on 26 April 2012 centred on how the council and its partners could support businesses in accessing appropriately skilled employees. Approximately 20 businesses attended. The informal networking following the meeting identified further issues that businesses felt were important in relation to young people and employment, and these were built into the NEET programme. Businesses were particularly keen on models that reduced administrative burden, and were very supportive of the Barnet Apprenticeship Training Agency.

Many of the measures outlined complement the Federation of Small Businesses' (FSB) Manifesto for London 'Six to Fix: A Programme to Nurture London's Real Life Entrepreneurs' released in January.<sup>1</sup> For instance, the ATA represents an approach to apprenticeships that is 'administratively light'. As the manifesto recommends, we are launching an internship programme, both within the council and externally (as well as developing placements in the voluntary sector). We are also supporting the growth of new enterprise and start-ups among young people which will ensure the borough remains a prosperous and dynamic place in which to conduct business. However, the council has recognised that it is difficult for smaller employers to be able offer this, hence the creation of a series of paid internships and voluntary sector placements for local SMEs in the borough as well as the establishment of an Apprenticeship Agency which takes the HR burden away from businesses.

### **From Keith Martin:**

*2. Will the Council, as the largest employer in Barnet with the NHS, ensure that its Employment and Enterprise Action Plan to encourage unemployed 16 to 24-year-olds back into employment, is not jeopardised by the One-Barnet programme of outsourcing 70% of Council employees to employers in the private sector, many of whom are outside the borough?*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fsb.org.uk/policy/rpu/london/images/six%20to%20fix%20one%20pager.pdf>

**Answer**

We do not foresee that the Skills, Employment and Enterprise Action Plan will be jeopardised by the One Barnet programme of outsourcing. The measures within the Action plan have a very specific target group to ensure maximum impact. Moreover, council departments have been asked to identify opportunities for paid internships, which is one way the council is directly support young people into work at this time.

**From Ron Cohen:**

*3. In the strategy plan for Finchely Church End there is no reference to cyclists path, and very little considerations for cyclists in general, contrary to the progress made by other boroughs e.g. Hackney & Islington, Camden and Harrow. Will the council re-consider its plan, and allocate space for cycling routes in this area?*

**Answer**

The Finchley Church End Town Centre Strategy is a planning document that is intended to guide development at a number of locations throughout the town centre. In Chapter 3 it clearly refers to proposing a balanced provision across all modes of transport, and cyclists are specifically mentioned. The strategy will be a material consideration when the Council reviews any forthcoming planning applications, and accordingly the Council will ensure that transport improvements are provided for all modes of transport, including cyclists, as part of this work.

*4. Who will be responsible for deciding on and implementing such issues as cycling and green polices if and when One Barnet Program goes ahead?*

**Answer**

The Cabinet Member for Environment is the portfolio holder with decision making power in these policy areas, and the overall responsibility for implementation would continue to be with the Council in managing its service providers.

**From David Bell:**

*5. Regarding paragraph 3.3 - How is the statement "Barnet is supportive of schools that wish to convert to academy status" (which is a statement about existing schools) relevant to a report on commissioning new schools? Is Barnet also supportive of schools that wish to stay with the Local Education Authority and benefit from the support and services provided by Barnet's employees? Why indicate support for the former but not for the latter?*

**Answer**

Under the new government legislation, there is a presumption that new schools will be free schools or academies. Barnet's partnership of schools is increasingly diverse, and we remain committed to sustaining this excellent partnership, including community, voluntary aided, academy and free schools.

*6. Regarding paragraph 3.3 and also the local process 9.5 to 9.10 - Given the widespread concern about a move to academies and free schools meaning that school governance will involve fewer mechanisms of democratic accountability than existing local authority schools (for example, in the requirements for governors to be elected), will Barnet give a commitment to include criteria of open and democratic local community involvement in the running of a school (including seeking a commitment to have elected parent and staff governors - at least to the same extent as local authority schools - as well as a democratic voice for the school's students) when making a decision about a preferred proposer?*

**Answer**

Under the new government legislation, there is a presumption that new schools will be free schools or academies. Their government arrangements are set out in Department for Education guidance, which outlines that they should have a minimum of two parent governors while a local authority governor and staff governors are optional. As such, governance arrangements cannot be an influencing factor. The factors to be considered by the local authority in determining a preferred proposer do however include commitment to community provision.

*7. Noting that paragraph 6.6 states "New school proposers would be responsible for staffing the school.", will Barnet nevertheless consider that it would be wise not to rule out general staffing issues as a criterion for deciding on a preferred proposer? In particular, given the importance of strong morale in a dedicated staff team, will you be willing to include a positive approach to relations with staff trade unions in the criteria for deciding a preferred proposer?*

**Answer**

One of the factors to be considered by the local authority in determining a preferred proposer will be educational and financial capability and capacity. This will include their ability to access sufficient educational expertise to deliver their vision.

**10.**