

MINUTES OF: THE CABINET

Date of Meeting: Wednesday 20th November 2024

**Present: Councillor A Barnes (Chair)
Councillors Harris, Lythgoe, McInnes and Walmsley**

**Rob Huntington, Chief Executive
Chris Warren, Director of Resources, s151 Officer
David Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development
Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal, Monitoring Officer
Clare Law, Head of People and Policy
Kimberly Haworth, Head of Financial Services
Andy Taylor, Head of Environmental Services
Anne Stora, Principal Planner – Forward Planning**

**Also present Councillor Neal
1 member of the public**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th October 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

3. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Leader responded to a questions from a member of the public relating to renewable energy (item D3. Authority Monitoring Report). She confirmed that we had declared a climate emergency and this was part of the bigger agenda in relation to sustainable forms of power. For such projects there were very formal processes to go through, including planning.

6. UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

An update from the 11th November 2024 Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting was provided.

7. AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The Lead Member for Planning outlined the report which asked Cabinet to approve the Supplementary Planning Document and delegate minor amendments to the Lead Member and Head of Service.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:

- The team were thanked for all their work.
- There were ways to draw land to people's attention, in relation to underachievement of self-build. We had housing allocations but they had not come forward and some sites were not in the right location to match demand.
- There was a self-build website, so a campaign on social media would be welcomed.
- More work would be done around the housing strategy and housing need.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approved the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for use for Development Control purposes.
2. Cabinet delegated minor amendments to the Affordable Housing SPD, including formatting changes, and updates to the household income and price caps, in line with data produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), to the Head of Planning and Lead Member prior to consultation.

Reason for Decision:

Adopting the Affordable Housing SPD would enable the Council to ensure that new major residential developments that require planning permission would deliver an appropriate level and type of Affordable Housing that is appropriate to Rossendale.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

8. OPEN SPACE AND SPORTS PROVISION SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The Lead Member for Planning outlined the report which asked Cabinet to approve the Supplementary Planning Document and delegate minor amendments to the Lead Member and Head of Service.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:

- Sport England thought it was more a Built Facilities SPD but we had worked closely with them and they were now happy. The general misunderstanding of the SPD had now been accepted.
- It was good to have a document that set out expectations, but the viability of development did have its challenges.

In response to a question regarding Whitworth Town Council expressing an interest in some local facilities and asking the Council to consider working with them to explore options for better use and funding opportunities. The Leader informed that it could be looked at if a formal approach was made.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approved the Adoption of the Open Space and Sports Provision SPD (SPD) for Development Control purposes.
2. Cabinet delegated minor amendments, including formatting changes to the SPD and updates, to ensure contributions remained in line with inflation, to the Head of Planning and Lead Member.

Reason for Decision:

To enable the Council in the justification of planning contributions from developers to enhance existing provision or create new provision to meet the needs of the local community.

Approval of the Open Space and Sports Provision SPD would enable the Council to request specific planning requirements for open spaces based on the context of the local area for major residential schemes in the Borough. Also, the SPD would allow the Council to seek planning obligations for indoor sport facilities in addition to contributions for playing pitches and other outdoor sports facilities.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

9. AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT FOR 2023 TO 2024

The Lead member for Planning outlined the report which asked Cabinet to note the contents of the Authority Monitoring Report, agree the Local Development Scheme and delegate minor amendments to the Lead Member and Head of Service.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:

- In relation to Gypsy and Traveller sites and a stopping site, the Council was working on the Local Plan review and this would feed into the process around housing need.
- There was a need to understand the impact of the ward boundary changes. In future external organisations that feed in to the process would be based on the new ward boundaries, but this would take time to work through.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet noted the contents of the Rossendale Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) for 2023-24, which reported on planning data from the adoption of the Local Plan in 2021, and specifically for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. Progress on supplementary planning documents was recorded, and context given on the Government's plan-making reforms.
2. In particular noted over the past year: the high number of housing completions (201), and on brownfield land (64%), with 59 affordable homes delivered. However, approvals for new houses were particularly low (66 dwellings) and the Council could no longer demonstrate it was meeting the Self Build duty. Childhood Obesity levels had improved for the former wards of Helmshore and Goodshaw, with the restrictive policy remaining in place for the other wards. Several appeals had been upheld by Inspectors on design grounds so work would progress on updating the Design Guidance and the Local List.
3. Agreed the Local Development Scheme, which provided a timetable for additional guidance including Supplementary Planning Documents under the current system of plan-making
4. Delegated minor changes to the Authority Monitoring Report, including the incorporated Local Development Scheme, to the Lead Member and the Head of Planning

Reason for Decision:

Annual requirement.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

10. ANNUAL AIR QUALITY REPORT 2024

The Lead member for Environment and Corporate Services outlined the report which asked Cabinet to note the contents of the report.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:

- There was a need to link in better with the Climate Strategy to test how measures such as electric vehicle (EV) charging points were having an impact.
- There was a need to address impact in Waterfoot.
- Broader wellbeing work would be welcomed.
- Thanks was given to the officers.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet noted the contents of the 2024 Air Quality Report.

Reason for Decision:

Success in improving the air that we breathe relies on action by a wide range of organisations and individuals and continued work across the authority and in partnership with other public and private organisations was central to achieving this.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

11. ROSSENDALE SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY

The Lead member for Communities, Housing and Health outlined the report which asked Cabinet to agree the adoption of the 2025-2030 Strategy and delegate amendments to the Lead member and Lead officer.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:

- Thanks was given to the officer.
- The document was presently a text version, but would be fully designed in readiness for launch in February.
- It was good to see participation numbers rising in the borough e.g. the Casked running club and Couch to 5k and the wider social aspects of such activities.
- Thanks was given to all those who had made Rossendale Connected what it was since its inception during covid.
- How did it focus on young children who did not exercise? These were potentially a vulnerable group and a hard to reach group. There was a need to have a separate conversation about this.
- Community groups were developing new ways of getting people together and potentially filling some of the gaps in participation.
- There was a need to encourage Play Streets to develop, as outlined in the Action Plan.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet agreed the adoption of the new Rossendale Physical Activity and Sport Strategy 2025 – 2030.
2. Cabinet delegated amendments to the Strategy to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Health.

Reason for Decision:

To establish a long-term vision for physical activity and sport in the Valley, and to outline this vision in a strategy that supports the provision of a comprehensive physical activity and sport offer that allows people to move more.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

12. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 2 2024/25

The Lead member for Resources outlined the report which asked Cabinet to note its content.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:

- Thanks was given to officers and team.
- In relation to the pooling arrangement, we had stated the intention to remain in the pool. Other local authorities had been asked to submit their intention by end of October, the outcome was not expected to be adverse, but the final outcome had not yet been announced.
- In relation to staffing in the Operations team, a review was taking place including the balance between core staff and agency.
- Houses had been purchased to tackle the ongoing budget pressures relating to temporary accommodation.
- The Council was considering supported housing provision which was presently lacking.
- Demand management and cost avoidance regarding temporary accommodations was high on the agenda. A multi-agency approach to tackling the issue needs to be pushed for to avoid the Council taking issues on that should be more appropriately be dealt with by other organisations.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet noted the Financial Monitoring Report for Quarter 2 2024/25.

Reason for Decision:

To note the report.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

13. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT QUARTER 2 2024/25

The Lead member for Environment and Corporate Services outlined the report which asked Cabinet to note and consider the Council's performance.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:

- Thanks was given to the officers. The report was much clearer.

In response to questions it was confirmed that:

- We were also working with Together Housing at potential opportunities for social housing, including looking at the list of land for potential development.
- The shortage of Occupational Therapists was now being addressed. It was a national problem but LCC were introducing ways to assure those on waiting lists that they had not been forgotten about. A new online process had been introduced to request assistance pending application.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet noted and considered the Council's performance during Quarter 2 (Q2) 2024/25.

Reason for Decision:

Monitoring the Council's performance enables Cabinet to identify and consider any service actions, projects, performance measures or corporate risks requiring further action.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

The meeting concluded at 7.37pm

_____ CHAIR _____ DATE