

Cabinet Addendum Sheet

19 November 2015



Classification: Public

ITEM 8 - COUNCIL MONTHLY BUDGET MONITORING REPORT- MONTH 6

New recommendation 9

That Cabinet agree that during the 2015/2016 winter season, with the full agreement of the Leader of the Council (or Deputy Leader if unavailable), the Chief Executive or the Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate Director of Resident Services are both authorised to take all necessary urgent decisions (including those ordinarily reserved to the executive) to release funds, procure and incur expenditure in order to safeguard residents and deliver services where there is adverse weather or related incidents affecting the Borough. Such decisions taken, that would have ordinarily required Cabinet or Cabinet Member approval, are to be reported to a subsequent Cabinet meeting for formal ratification to ensure transparency. Furthermore, that Cabinet request the Chairman of the Executive Scrutiny Committee waive the scrutiny call-in period so this takes immediate effect.

Reason for recommendation

It is approaching the time of year to renew the usual delegated authority in respect of the Council's emergency decision-making capabilities during the winter season. Such procedures enable swift decision-making in order to protect residents and services during adverse weather or related incidents. Decisions made under this authority will be undertaken by officers but also agreed informally by the Leader of the Council. Any such decisions reported to a subsequent Cabinet meeting for both ratification and public record.

In past years such interim decision-making has been particularly beneficial during unusual cold weather spells, e.g. for the urgent release of capital monies to repair large school boilers and central heating systems in multiple Council properties.

Alternative options considered and rejected

To rely on existing urgency procedures, which over the Christmas and New Year holiday season may not be as effective as usual.

PTO

New recommendation 10

That Cabinet delegate authority to the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate Director of Residents Services, to finalise the programme and award any contracts in relation to the delivery of Universal Free School Meals.

Supporting information

Members will note the good progress implementing the Government's Initiative offering infant school children with a hot free school meal. The Council was awarded £477k grant funding towards refurbishing and upgrading kitchen facilities at Frithwood, Harefield and Harlyn Primary Schools. Planned works at all 3 schools have now completed in time for the start of the new term.

Following a further grant award of £715k to be expended by March 2016, officers are finalising another programme of works to utilise the funding allocated.

Given the challenging timetable for implementation, it is proposed that delegated authority be granted to enable flexible decision-making by Cabinet Members, in the event any contract decisions would ordinarily require a Cabinet level decision.

Alternative options considered and rejected

To use existing thresholds for decision-making on contracts, which could potentially impact upon the timescale for the delivery of the programme.