

MEETING OF THE CABINET

Thursday, 20th June, 2013 at 6.00 p.m.
in Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Dudley

PRESENT:-

Councillor Sparks (Leader of the Council) (Chair)
Councillor Lowe (Deputy Leader)
Councillors K Ahmed, Branwood, Foster, S Turner, Waltho and Wood

together with the following Opposition Group Members appointed to attend meetings of the Cabinet:-

Conservative Group - Councillors Burston, Harley, James, Miller, K Turner and Vickers

OFFICERS:-

The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Resources, Director of Children's Services, Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services, Director of Public Health, Treasurer, Assistant Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services, Assistant Director of the Urban Environment, Assistant Director of Corporate Resources (Human Resources and Organisational Development) and the Democratic Services Manager, together with other officers

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Crumpton, Partridge, Simms and Wright.

2 CHANGES IN REPRESENTATION OF MINORITY GROUP MEMBERS

It was reported that Councillors Burston and Miller were serving in place of Councillors Wright and Simms, respectively, for this meeting of the Cabinet only.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Member made a declaration of interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 20th March and 25th April, 2013, be approved as correct records and signed.

REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUT-TURN 2012/13

A report of the Treasurer was submitted on the provisional financial results for the year ended 31st March, 2013.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the information contained in the report be noted in relation to:
 - the draft outturn for 2012/13.
 - the effect of the General Fund Revenue outturn on General Balances at 31st March, 2013.
 - the position on earmarked reserves at 31st March, 2013.
 - the latest forecast General Fund Revenue position for 2013/14.
- (2) That the Chief Executive, the Director of Children's Services and the Treasurer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning, the Deputy Leader and the Opposition Spokesperson for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning, monitor the data and costs relating to Looked After Children and submit a further report to the Cabinet in September, 2013.
- (3) That the Council be recommended:-
 - (a) To amend the 2013/14 General Fund revenue budget to reflect:
 - the receipt of £0.511m of Council Tax Support Transitional Grant, as set out in paragraph 4 of the report now submitted;
 - the net saving of £0.170m resulting from economies of scale in the provision of support services to Public Health, as set out in paragraph 16 of the report now submitted.

- (b) To implement a 50% Empty Homes Premium from 1st April, 2014 to properties that have been unoccupied for more than two years.

(This was a Key Decision with the Cabinet and Council named as the Decision Takers).

6

REVIEW OF HOUSING FINANCE

A joint report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services and the Treasurer was submitted on proposed revisions to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budgets to reflect the latest financial forecasts; proposed revisions to the Public Sector Housing capital programme and seeking approval to the HRA 30 year business plan.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety undertook to provide written responses to questions raised by a Member concerning borrowing availability and Right to Buy applications.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Council be recommended to approve:-
 - (a) the revised Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2013/14 as referred to in paragraphs 5 to 11 and Appendix 1 to the report now submitted;
 - (b) the revised Public Sector Housing capital programme for 2013/14 to 2017/18 as referred to in paragraphs 12 to 19 and Appendix 2 to the report now submitted.
- (2) That the HRA 30 Year Business Plan, as referred to in paragraphs 20 to 22 and Appendix 3 to the report now submitted, be approved.

(This was a Key Decision with the Cabinet and Council named as the Decision Takers).

7

COUNCIL PLAN 2013 - 2016

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted seeking endorsement of the Council Plan in accordance with the Council Plan Policy Framework for 2013-16.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Council be recommended to approve the Council Plan 2013/16 and to note the alignment of Cabinet priorities to the Council Plan and Directorate Strategic Plans.
- (2) That in connection with the regeneration, skills and employment priorities, a report be submitted to the Cabinet in September, 2013 on sub-regional developments including the Local Enterprise Partnership, City Deal and the transfer of strategic transport functions from the Integrated Transport Authority.

(This was a Key Decision with the Cabinet and Council being named as Decision Takers).

8

CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING

A joint report of the Chief Executive and the Treasurer was submitted on progress with the implementation of the Capital Programme and proposing certain amendments to the Programme.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the results of the Post Completion Review of capital projects, as set out in Appendix B of the report now submitted, be noted.
- (2) That the Council be recommended:-
 - (a) That current progress with the 2013/14 Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix A to the report now submitted be noted.
 - (b) That the budget for Disabled Facilities Grants be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 4 of the report now submitted.
 - (c) That the capital schemes to be funded from the disposal of the Gornal Wood Cemetery Lodge be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 5 of the report now submitted.
 - (d) That the additional Integrated Transport Authority capital funding be used to increase the Integrated Transport programme, and that the Capital Programme be amended accordingly, as set out in paragraph 6 of the report now submitted.

- (e) That up to £370,000 (subject to final negotiations on land value) be allocated to support the Cradley Extra Care Housing development and that this expenditure be included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 7 of the report now submitted.
- (f) That the construction of permanent changing rooms at Homer Hill Park, Cradley, be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 8 of the report now submitted.
- (g) That the Corbyn Road site be retained for use as a base for a joint Children's Safeguarding Unit and frontline social work teams; that £945,000 of the forecast sale proceeds from the disposal of the Cradley High site be reallocated to contribute to the new Old Park school capital project; and that the cost of refurbishment of the Corbyn Road site of £1,300,000 (to be funded from 14-19/Special Educational Needs capital grant) be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 9 of the report now submitted.
- (h) That the loft conversion at a foster carer's property be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 10 of the report now submitted.

(This was a Key Decision with the Council and Cabinet being named as Decision Takers).

CORPORATE QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted on corporate performance for the period 1st January to 31st March, 2013. The Corporate Performance Management, Efficiency and Effectiveness Scrutiny Committee had considered the report on 11th June, 2013.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the corporate quarterly performance management report be approved.
 - (2) That the consideration of the report by the Corporate Performance Management, Efficiency and Effectiveness Scrutiny Committee be noted.
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DOMESTIC COLLECTIVE FUEL SWITCHING – TACKLING FUEL POVERTY

A joint report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services was submitted on the Council's domestic collective fuel switching initiative for residents, including a pilot initiative. Approval was sought to explore options and for the Council to formally enter into a collective fuel switching initiative.

Members welcomed the report and supported the need for further work to promote greater take-up of the initiative to reduce energy costs for local residents.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the report be noted.
 - (2) That the approach set out in the report to explore and appraise the various options (including the Black Country approach) for a collective energy switching scheme for Dudley households (including incorporating any findings from the pilot) be approved.
 - (3) That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety, be authorised to enter into a collective energy-switching scheme.
 - (4) That approval be given for the use of up to £10,000 to support this initiative and to undertake a range of promotional activities.
 - (5) That any referral fees (income paid to the Council through the collective fuel energy-switching scheme) be used as follows:
 - (a) 50% towards continued support for tackling fuel poverty initiatives in Dudley including future promotional activity for successive rounds of collective fuel switching.
 - (b) The remaining 50% be considered as additional income for the Council.
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SAFER ROUTES TO SCHOOL – 20 MPH UPDATE

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the position concerning the introduction of 20mph zones, following consultation with ward councillors and schools, based on agreed criteria, priority ranking and practical feasibility.

Approval was sought to produce a programme of works for 20mph zones or alternative safety measures where appropriate.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the consultation that has taken place be noted.
- (2) That the Cabinet Member for Transport, in consultation with the Opposition Spokesperson for Transport and the Director of the Urban Environment, develop a programme of 20 mph schemes or alternative safety measures based upon the highest ranking priority locations shown in Appendix A to the report now submitted and any schemes shown in Appendix A that are not completed this financial year be carried over to next financial year.
- (3) That the Cabinet endorse the principle that any ward member queries on the priority ranked programme or specific queries on schools in their ward be channelled via the Cabinet Member for Transport to ensure an investigation and an appropriate response.

LOCALISED COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2014/15

A report of the Director of Corporate Resources was submitted on the timetable for approving the localised Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the 2014/15 financial year. Approval was sought to undertake consultation on the options in advance of a final decision being made by the Council in due course.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the timetable required to develop a revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2014/15, as set out in paragraph 12 of the report now submitted, be noted.
- (2) That approval be given for consultation to commence based on the options set out in paragraph 16 of the report now submitted.

(This was a Key Decision with the Council and Cabinet being named as Decision Takers).

13 FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2013/14

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the approval of the Food Service Plan for 2013/14.

RESOLVED

That the Council be recommended to approve the Food Service Plan for 2013/14.

(This was a Key Decision with the Council and Cabinet being named as Decision Takers).

14 APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

A report of the Director of Corporate Resources was submitted on the appointment of Council representatives to various outside organisations for the 2013/14 municipal year.

RESOLVED

That the Director of Corporate Resources, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Opposition Group Leader, as appropriate, be authorised to determine the appointment of representatives to serve on the outside organisations indicated in the Appendix to the report now submitted.

15 FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

A report of the Director of Corporate Resources was submitted on the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the four-month period commencing 1st June, 2013.

RESOLVED

That the Forward Plan of Key Decisions be noted.

16 ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

No issues were reported under this item.

17

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972, as indicated below and in all the circumstances, the public interest in disclosing the information is outweighed by the public interest in maintaining the exemption from disclosure.

<u>Description of Item</u>	<u>Relevant paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A</u>
Directorate of the Urban Environment – Waste Care Restructuring Proposals	1

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DIRECTORATE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT – WASTE CARE
RESTRUCTURING PROPOSALS

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on a proposed restructuring in relation to Waste Care services.

RESOLVED

That the restructuring proposals, as set out in paragraphs 7 and 8 of the report now submitted, in relation to Waste Care services in the Environmental Management Division of the Directorate of the Urban Environment, be approved.

The meeting ended at 6.30pm

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL