



Cabinet Meeting

Minutes – 4 December 2013

Attendance

Members of the Cabinet

Cllr Roger Lawrence (chair)
Cllr Steve Evans
Cllr Val Gibson
Cllr Elias Mattu
Cllr Philip Page
Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr Sandra Samuels
Cllr Paul Sweet

Employees

Simon Warren	Chief Executive
Keith Ireland	Strategic Director - Delivery
Tim Johnson	Strategic Director - Education and Enterprise
Sarah Norman	Strategic Director - Community
Mark Taylor	Assistant Director – Finance
Wendy Trainor	Interim Chief Legal Officer
Martyn Sargeant	Head of Democratic Services
Matthew Vins	Graduate Management Trainee

Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Bilson and Councillor Johnson.

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

2. **Declarations of interests**

No declarations of interests were made.

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting (13 November 2013)**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 November 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

DECISION ITEM (Red – for referral to the Council)

5. **Black Country Executive Joint Committee**

Cllr Lawrence presented a report proposing the establishment of a Black Country Executive Joint Committee. He advised Cabinet that he expected to hear the outcome of the City Deal agreement before Christmas. He also indicated that the Growth Factory had been approved, which would bring in £3.1 million to the Black Country region.

He explained that the European programme for the Black Country had previously been managed through different councils acting as an accountable body. He noted that the formation of the Black Country Joint Executive Committee did not create a new Black Country authority. Instead, he highlighted the importance of the authorities working together, and hoped this would expand to a conurbation level to include Birmingham.

Resolved:

1. That Full Council be recommended to approve the establishment of the Black Country Executive Joint Committee.
2. That Full Council be recommended to approve the Constitution of the Joint Committee, including Terms of Reference, and to delegate the functions and powers therein referred to the Executive Joint Committee.
3. That Full Council be recommended to approve Councillor Lawrence, as Leader of the Council, be appointed as the Council's representative on the Executive Joint Committee, with Councillor Bilson to act as a substitute.
4. That Full Council be recommended to delegate authority to the Leader of the Council to sign the City Deal agreement.
5. That Full Council be recommended to support the focus and key elements of the Black Country City Deal and refer it to the Black Country Joint Executive Committee for sign off.
6. That the overview of the City Deal and Growth Deal Advisory Board and the proposed associated governance structure be noted.
7. To note that Walsall Metropolitan Council would act as Secretary to the Joint Committee and Advisory Board.
8. To note that recommendations for action or decision would not commit the Council to any budgetary provision over and above that already approved.

DECISION ITEMS (Amber – delegated to the Cabinet)

6. 2014 Primary School Expansion Programme

Cllr Page presented a report about the 2014 Primary School Expansion Programme.

Resolved:

1. That the outcomes of informal consultation and formal consultation on the proposed expansion of Dunstall High Primary School, Fallings Park Primary School and Trinity Church of England (CE) Primary School, in accordance with statutory guidance, be considered.
2. That the prescribed alteration to Dunstall Hill Primary School, in accordance with Section 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, be approved.
3. That the prescribed alteration to Fallings Park Primary School, in accordance with Section 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, be approved.
4. That the prescribed alteration to Trinity CE Primary School, in accordance with Section 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, be approved.
5. That the appropriation, in principle, of open space at Glentworth Gardens required for the proposed expansion of Dunstall Hill Primary School be approved, subject to the grant of planning permission.
6. That the outcome of public consultation about the proposed change of land use at Glentworth Gardens, to support the proposed expansion of Dunstall Primary School, be noted.
7. To note that Wolverhampton Schools' Improvement Board voted not to support the proposed use of schools' delegated Dedicated School Grant to meet the revenue costs of prudential borrowing, as part of the agreed funding strategy.

7. The Publication of Market Position Statements for Wolverhampton

Cllr Evans presented a report proposing the publication of the City Council's Market Position Statements (MPS). He explained that following a Department of Health white paper, the Council had a duty to produce an MPS. He advised this would be published online, and had to be completed by March 2014 and would then be updated on an annual basis. He highlighted the MPS would improve transparency and promote services.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet agrees to the publication of the Market Position Statements in respect of Care and Support of Older People and the care of Children with Disabilities and Young Adults.

8. **Bedroom Reclassification**

Cllr Lawrence presented a report in regard to bedroom reclassification as a response to Welfare Reform changes. He indicated that following the introduction of the 'Bedroom Tax', the Council had explored possible ways to help tenants meet increased financial pressures. He informed Cabinet that, except in a few circumstances, opting for a widespread bedroom reclassification in Wolverhampton would not be beneficial to the Council. He explained that the report offered a procedure which enabled a small number of properties to be assessed in regard to bedroom reclassification.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet agrees the Council will undertake bedroom reclassification by exception on individual or small groups of properties and not adopt a widespread policy.
2. That authority is given to the Chief Legal Officer to make a minor amendment to the Constitution to allow delegated authority to the Strategic Director for Education and Enterprise in regard to individual determinations on bedroom reclassification.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

9. **Exclusion of press and public**

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Act set out below:

<i>Item No.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Applicable paragraph</i>
10.	Giving Tenants Control	3

Part 2 – exempt items, closed to the press and public

10. **Giving Tenants Control**

Cllr Lawrence presented a report updating Cabinet on the Right to Transfer Regulations and outlining a recommended approach for handling any proposals for community-led stock transfers. He expressed concern for Wolverhampton Homes' residents, who might face increased financial pressure as a result of any transfer. He agreed to move the recommendation, and commented that recommendation one was included at Cllr Bilson's request.

Resolved:

1. To reassert the Council's commitment and support for tenant empowerment through the Right to Manage regulations, and to reaffirm its opposition to stock transfer, believing that the tenants' best interests are served with the Council continuing as their Landlord.
2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Housing Services to work with Bushbury Hill Estate Management Board (BHEMB) if it serves a Proposal Notice under proposed new regulations.
3. That authority be delegated to the Head of Housing Services in conjunction with colleagues from legal and finance to assess any Proposal Notice and respond within the proscribed timescale.
4. That authority be delegated to the Head of Housing Services to accept any Proposal Notice (provided that it is accurate and fully compliant with the Regulations) and provide such information as BHEMB reasonably requires in order to produce a feasibility study into the proposed stock transfer.
5. That Cabinet be updated on progress, advised as to the outcome of any feasibility study, and has the opportunity to authorize the Council's response.
6. That the forthcoming changes to the Right to Transfer Regulations and, in particular, the requirement for local authorities to co-operate with any tenants' group that serves a Proposal Notice, be noted.
7. To note that BHEMB has resolved to serve a Proposal Notice on the Council as soon as the Housing (Right to Transfer from a Local Authority Landlord) (England) Regulations 2013 ("the Regulations") come into law.