

Attendance

Members of the Cabinet

Cllr Ian Brookfield (Chair)
Cllr Stephen Simkins (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Obaida Ahmed
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Chris Burden
Cllr Steve Evans
Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal
Cllr Jasbir Jaspal
Cllr Linda Leach
Cllr Beverley Momenabadi

Employees

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| Tim Johnson | Chief Executive |
| John Denley | Director of Public Health |
| Charlotte Johns | Director of Strategy |
| Richard Lawrence | Director of Regeneration |
| David Pattison | Chief Operating Officer |
| Becky Wilkinson | Director of Adult Social Services |
| Brenda Wile | Deputy Director of Education |
| Paul Dosanjh | Section Leader |
| Jaswinder Kaur | Democratic Services Manager |
| Dereck Francis | Democratic Services Officer |

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

- | <i>Item No.</i> | <i>Title</i> |
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| 1 | Apologies for absence No apologies for absence were received for the meeting. |
| 2 | Declaration of interests No declarations of interests were made |
| 3 | Minutes of the previous meeting Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 November 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair. |

4 **South Staffordshire, Stafford and Birmingham Local Plan Consultation Responses**

Councillor Stephen Simkins presented the report on consultations on three local plans affecting the city: the South Staffordshire Local Plan (SSLP) - Regulation 19; the Stafford Local Plan (SLP) - Preferred Options; and the Birmingham Local Plan (BLP) - Issues and Options. Approval was requested to principles for the Council's response to the SSLP and Statements of Common Ground on the SSLP, and of detailed responses to the SLP and BLP.

It was reported that since the report was published, the Government had made statements on potential new changes to the planning system. These changes would affect the way local plans are prepared. The consultation on changes to the national planning policy framework should be published before Christmas. When the detail of the consultation is announced, the Council would carefully consider the implications for Wolverhampton. In the meantime the Council had to respond to the three local plans under current guidance and legislation to meet deadlines.

Resolved:

1. That the principles set out in paragraph 3.24 of the report be approved as the basis of the Council's response to the South Staffordshire Local Plan (SSLP) Regulation 19 consultation.
2. That the recommended issues set out in Appendix 1 be approved as the basis of the text of Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) on the SSLP to be agreed with South Staffordshire District Council (SSDC) and other relevant parties, and authority to approve and sign the SoCG be delegated to the Deputy Leader: Inclusive City Economy in consultation with the Director of Regeneration.
3. That the interim officer response set out in Appendix 2 to the report be approved as the Council's response to the Stafford Local Plan Preferred Options consultation.
4. That the interim officer response set out in Appendix 3 to the report be approved as the Council's response to the Birmingham Local Plan Issues and Options consultation.
5. That the Wolverhampton approach to the duty to cooperate following the cessation of work on the Black Country Plan as summarised in section 2 of the report be noted.

5 **City of Wolverhampton Council Enforcement Policy in Relation to the Relevant Letting Agency Legislation**

Councillor Steve Evans presented for approval the City of Wolverhampton Council Enforcement Policy in Relation to the Relevant Letting Agency Legislation applicable to landlords and property agents concerning displaying fees, prohibited fees, being members of a redress scheme and belonging to a client money protection scheme. There was a statutory duty on the Council to enforce the relevant lettings agency legislation. To enforce the legislation the Council was required to adopt an enforcement policy.

Responding to questions, Paul Dosanjh, Service Manager Trading Standards and Licensing reported on how the policy would help tenants and on action the Council was taking to help tenants. A project was being developed around letting agents and letting agency work about interacting with letting agents and landlords to give them guidance so there is a fair playing field. The Council also carried out continuing level of inspections based on complaints; inspections from intelligence gathering or concerns reported; liaised with tenants groups and social housing providers to try and get a picture of the private rented sector in the city; and when the Council obtained a good result through enforcement action either in Trading Standards or the Private Sector Housing Service, it was publicised to say to people there is something that can be done, and to try to empower them to bring information to the Council's attention either as a complaint or intelligence. The policy allowed the Council to act more quickly and have a sanction shortly after the action so the consequences of the non-compliance are brought to bear more quickly. It would also hopefully send a message to change the marketplace where there are rogue traders operating in the city.

Resolved:

That the City of Wolverhampton Council Enforcement Policy in Relation to the Relevant Letting Agency Legislation be approved.

6

Expansion of Broadmeadow Special School

Councillor Chris Burden presented the report seeking approval to proceed with a proposal for the expansion of Broadmeadow Special School in order to meet pupil need and demand. Phase 1 of the expansion would provide two temporary modular buildings to immediately address a shortage of accommodation and to re-purpose parking spaces at the school. This would be in addition to extending the lease agreement so the school could continue to occupy the ground level of the Whitmore Reans Strengthening Families Hub. Whilst phase 1 was a temporary measure, a permanent solution would be sought in phase two of the expansion project. That would see a further increase in capacity for the School to meet additional demand. This increased capacity would not be able to be achieved on the existing site and would therefore be delivered through relocation of Broadmeadow Special School to another site in the city in purpose-built provision.

Resolved:

1. That the proposal to fund additional accommodation to meet pupil need and demand at Broadmeadow Special School (Phase 1) be approved.
2. That Legal Services be authorised to enter into or execute or seal any legal documentation in relation to this scheme to protect the Council's interests.
3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work, in consultation with Executive Director of Families, to approve the virement from the currently approved capital budget High Needs Capital Programme – Future Schemes to a budget for this specific project, once the actual level of budget required is finalised.
4. That it be noted that the Central Learning Partnership Trust (CLPT) have an existing agreement with the Local Authority to lease the ground floor of the Whitmore Reans Strengthening Families Hub, which is adjacent to Broadmeadow Special School. This lease would need to be extended in

addition to the provision of additional accommodation under Phase 1 of the scheme.

5. That it be noted that Phase 1 is intended to be a temporary solution. The proposed Phase 2 of the scheme would see Broadmeadow Special School further increase in capacity to meet additional demand and would be relocated to another site in purpose-built provision. Investigations regarding Phase 2 are currently ongoing.
6. That it be noted that any proposal to relocate Broadmeadow Special School and increase in capacity would be presented at a future Cabinet meeting.

7 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 of business as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to any individual and the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Part 2 - exempt items, closed to press and public

The Chair reported that as stated previously the meeting was in confidential session as the information included in the report could, if released into the public domain, prejudice the financial position of the Council or its partners. As such all present are under a legal duty of confidentiality and must not disclose any confidential information - to do so would not only be a breach of the Council's codes (for councillors and employees) but also a breach of the legal duty of confidentiality.

8 Update on Streamlining Black Country Ways of Working – Black Country Consortium Ltd

Councillor Ian Brookfield presented the report seeking endorsement to a recommendation from the Association of Black Country Authority Leaders at their meeting on 19 October 2022, to close the Black Country Consortium Ltd. The Consortium, a company limited by guarantee was established by the Black Country local authorities in April 2005. At that time various Black Country wide activities had been established and the creation of a legal entity was felt appropriate for the policy and partnership context in operation across the region. The 2022 Levelling Up White Paper signalled the current shift in policy direction and a significant change in economic development architecture, namely emphasising and empowering local leadership and improving pride of place. This shift provided the latest context for a root and branch review of how streamlining ways of working at a Black Country geography needed to be reflected.

Resolved:

1. That the closure of the Black Country Consortium Limited be approved.
2. That the following Association of Black Country Authorities Leaders' approvals made at their meeting held on 19 October 2022 be noted:
 - a. Acknowledge the track record and positive contribution enabled by Black Country Consortium Ltd.

- b. A calling of a directors meeting of Black Country Consortium Ltd in January 2023 with a recommendation to voluntary wind up the company at a date to be advised and agreed during 2023.
- c. A commitment to working towards a goal of a clear regional arrangement for data and intelligence clarifying roles and responsibilities and in the interim hosting of Black Country Consortium Economic Intelligence team via Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council who will still continue to provide via a service level agreement data and intelligence to Black Country Councils as required.
- d. A fit for purpose and timely arrangement for a TUPE transfer arrangement for Active Black Country, currently hosted via Black Country Consortium Ltd (BCC Ltd) to an independent entity arrangement, noting local authority hosting offers in principle from the City of Wolverhampton Council and Sandwell MBC.
- e. A potential hosting/ integration of current cultural/ visitor economy expertise by one of the Black Country local authorities.
- f. Historical BCC Ltd company deferred pensioners and pensioners liabilities split as a liability equally across the four Black Country Councils.
- g. A report to individual local authority Cabinets (November/December 2022) to endorse the closure of BCC Ltd.