

Meeting of the Cabinet

Minutes - 26 April 2017

Attendance

Members of the Cabinet

Cllr Roger Lawrence (Chair)
Cllr Peter Bilson (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Claire Darke
Cllr Steve Evans
Cllr Val Gibson
Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal
Cllr Andrew Johnson
Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr Sandra Samuels
Cllr Paul Sweet

Employees

Tim Johnson Deputy Managing Director
Linda Sanders Strategic Director for People
Kevin O'Keefe Director of Governance
Claire Nye Director of Finance
Jaswinder Kaur Democratic Services Manager
Philippa Salmon Democratic Services Officer

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

- | <i>Item No.</i> | <i>Title</i> |
|-----------------|---|
| 1 | Apologies for absence
No apologies for absence were received. |
| 2 | Declaration of interests
There were no declarations of interest submitted. |
| 3 | Minutes of the previous meeting
That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 March 2017 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. |
| 5 | Outcome of Children's Services Ofsted Inspection and Ofsted Action Plan
Councillor Val Gibson presented the report and action plan and informed the meeting that the outcome was very positive for the Council. The Ofsted rating received placed Wolverhampton as second in the West Midlands and first in the West Midlands |

Combined Authority area based on the new criteria. Key findings from the inspection included effective and strong corporate leadership, a clear sense of vision and purpose and that good and sustained improvements had been made across the service. The action plan centred around the eleven recommendations made by Ofsted and outlined the proposed action against each recommendation. Good progress was already being made. Delivery Boards would be established to monitor progress going forward and the Children's Trust Board would have overall responsibility.

Resolved:

1. That the 'Good' overall judgement from the recent Ofsted Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection be celebrated and the Council's excellent position in the West Midlands and the country be noted.
2. That the Ofsted Action Plan which had been produced in response to recommendations from the inspection be approved.

- 6 **Outcome of the Local Government Association Corporate Peer Review**
Councillor Roger Lawrence presented the outcome of the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Review and the action plan that had been created to address the recommendations following the visit. The Peer Team concluded that the City of Wolverhampton Council had been on 'an impressive journey of improvement' and was 'in a strong position to respond with confidence to both current and future challenges facing the City'. The Action Plan detailed how each recommendation would be addressed going forward with timescales attached to aid in monitoring progress.

Resolved:

1. That the draft action plan arising from the recommendations within the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Review final report be approved.
 2. That it be approved that the LGA conduct a follow up visit in February 2018 to assess the progress that the City of Wolverhampton Council had made with regards to the recommendations set out in the final report.
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1. That the outcome and issues raised in the LGA Corporate Peer Review final report be noted.
 2. That it be noted that this report would also be considered by Scrutiny Board on 25 April 2017.

- 7 **Better Care Fund Section 75 Agreement (Pooled Budget 2017-18) & Additional Adult Social Care monies announced during the Spring 2017 Budget statement**
Councillor Sandra Samuels sought approval to renew the Section 75 Agreement (Pooled Fund) with NHS Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group for 2017-18 and delegate authority to approve the final terms of the proposed Section 75 Agreement. The report outlined the proposed use of the additional non-recurring monies that had been announced in the Spring 2017 budget statement. The monies would be focussed on areas including Behaviour Change/Demand Management programme implementation and the Reconfiguration of Older People's service activity. An amendment to recommendation 3 of the report was requested to include the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board as an additional recipient of the delegated authority.

Resolved:

1. That the report proposing the use of the additional non-recurring monies announced during the Spring 2017 budget statement be noted and received.
2. That it be agreed to renew the Section 75 Agreement (Pooled Fund) with NHS Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group (“WCCG”) for 2017-18.
3. That authority be delegated to the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Cabinet members for Adults, Public Health and Well Being and Resources, (Cllrs. Roger Lawrence, Paul Sweet, Sandra Samuels OBE and Andrew Johnson), in consultation with Strategic Director for People and Director of Finance, to approve the final terms of the proposed Section 75 Agreement.

8 **Connected Places Strategy Summary Document**

Councillor John Reynolds presented the Connected Places Strategy Summary document for approval for distribution. The document brought together the Car Parking and Connected Places Strategies and emphasised the importance of connectivity between key destinations. Whilst the strategy aimed to improve existing channels of transport, non-car based models of transport were also promoted. The images in the document were contextual and the effect of the strategy on buses and taxis were also being examined in the process.

Resolved:

1. That the Connected Places Strategy summary document be approved for distribution.
1. That the progress of a number of Connected Places projects and work streams that have emerged as a consequence of the strategy’s development be noted.

9 **Transportation Capital Programme - 2017/18 and future years**

Councillor Steve Evans presented the Transportation Capital Programme for 2017/18 and future years, which outlined the projects planned for development and implementation during that period. The Council had experienced success in bidding for additional grants for highways and transport projects. Existing road networks were already being improved and work on this would continue, projects were also planned for rail, cycle and footpath routes as well. It was noted that the Council was listening to residents and amending schemes following public consultations.

Resolved:

1. That the list of projects for development and implementation as part of the Transportation Capital Programme 2017/18 and future years, as set out in appendices B and C to the report, be agreed.
2. That the Head of Strategic Transportation and the Head of Highways Network be authorised to proceed with development work for each project on the list including surveying, site investigation, options appraisal, feasibility analysis, traffic modelling, detailed design, statutory advertising and public consultation, as appropriate.
3. That the projects marked ‘Approve’ in the ‘Approval’ column of appendix B to the report for implementation be approved, subject to the availability of funding.

4. That the Cabinet Member for City Environment be authorised, in consultation with the Service Director, City Environment to approve, through an Individual Executive Decision Notice, implementation of the projects on the list marked 'IEDN' in the 'Approval' column of appendix B to the report, subject to the satisfactory outcome of public consultation, availability of funding and any other relevant considerations.
5. That the Cabinet Member for City Environment be authorised, in consultation with the Service Director, City Environment to approve, through an Individual Executive Decision Notice, the bringing forward of projects from appendix C to the report to appendix B to the report and thereafter to approve them for implementation during 2017/18 subject to the satisfactory outcome of public consultation, availability of funding and any other relevant considerations.
6. That it be agreed to receive further reports at the appropriate times in order to obtain the necessary authority to construct the projects marked 'Cabinet' in the 'Approval' column of appendix B to the report.
7. That the Director of Governance be authorised to serve all necessary notices in respect of the projects listed in appendix B to the report and, subject to there being no unresolved objections, make traffic regulation orders as required.
8. That the Director of Finance be authorised to enter into funding agreements with the various funding bodies to receive grant funding in respect of the projects included in the report.
9. That the delegation of authority to the Cabinet Member for City Environment and the Cabinet Member for Resources, in consultation with the Strategic Director for Place and Director of Finance to approve capital budgets for transport schemes upon receipt of a grant offer letter be approved.
1. That the expenditure and progress made in delivering the projects in the Transportation Capital Programme during 2016/17, as set out in appendix A to the report, be noted.
2. That the Council's continuing success in bidding for additional funding and delivering new projects through the Highway Maintenance Challenge Fund, the Local Pinch Point Fund, the Access to Growth Fund, the Managing Short Trips programme and more recently the National Productivity Investment Fund be noted.

10

Heath Town Regeneration Project

Councillor Peter Bilson referred to the report in the Supplementary Pack and informed the meeting that the update was an amendment to remove a reference to WV Living. The report sought approval for the amended delivery proposals for the Heath Town regeneration project to progress work across the estate and the delivery of new build homes. The Council would keep residents informed of progress as work on the project continued.

Resolved:

1. That the amended delivery proposals be approved for the Heath Town regeneration project through a combination of:
 - a. direct development of the affordable units through the HRA (Housing Revenue Account),
 - b. disposal of sites by competitive tender or through direct disposal with District Valuer valuations to private developers for market housing development.
2. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Housing and City Assets together with the Director of Governance or Strategic Director: City Housing to

- agree the details of disposal of sites at Heath Town at a value to be determined by the District Valuer or by competitive tender.
3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Housing and City Assets together with the Strategic Director: City Housing to agree the details of appropriation of General Fund sites within the Heath Town Masterplan area to the HRA for delivery of Council housing, at a value to be determined by the District Valuer.
 4. That authority be delegated to the Director of Governance to execute legal agreements in respect of the Heath Town Regeneration as required.
 5. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Housing and City Assets in conjunction with the Strategic Director: City Housing for the approval of any minor variations to the project required for its delivery.
 6. That it be agreed to require that a minimum of 25% of the houses within the Heath Town development would be affordable and that the existing Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and the Grosvenor Street open space would be upgraded.
1. That progress on Phase 1 of the demolition works and enabling works for Phase 2 of the demolition works be noted.
 2. That improvements proposed for the green field at Grosvenor Street be noted.
 3. That progress on Wolverhampton Homes' £35 million Investment Programme for the Heath Town estate be noted.
 4. That the on-going discussions with Black Country Make Community Investment Company around providing access to a small site on a leasehold basis for the development of community build homes on the Heath Town estate be noted.

11

Long Term Empty properties back into use - proposed pilot

Councillor Peter Bilson presented the proposed pilot to further encourage the bringing back into use of long term empty residential properties. The pilot would build on effective work that had already been undertaken in this area. Recent media attention had reported that the Council was in possession of 2420 empty properties. It was clarified that this figure included privately owned properties, the Council currently owned 288 empty properties and was bringing properties back into use each year.

Resolved:

1. That the introduction of a 6-month pilot programme to further encourage the bringing back into use of long term empty residential properties be approved.
2. That the introduction of 2 pilot schemes of financial assistance be approved:
 - a. Scheme 1, being the conditional offer of up to £500 financial assistance for legal/agents' fees connected with the sale of long term empty properties to encourage owners to sell
 - b. Scheme 2, being the conditional offer of up to £500 to incentivise owners of long term empty properties to participate in the Private Sector Leasing Programme
3. That amendments to the Council's private sector housing assistance policy be approved to facilitate Scheme 1 and Scheme 2.
4. That the priority groups for this pilot programme be approved as being:
 - Priority Group 1 - Unfurnished Properties listed as empty for more than 2 years.
 - Priority Group 2 - Properties listed as empty for more than 2 years and furnished.

- Priority Group 3 - Properties Listed as being empty for between 6 months and 2 Years
 - Priority Group 4 - Properties listed as empty with an exemption as the owner is either in care or probate had not been achieved
5. That it be agreed that the financial expenditure and impact of the pilot is kept under review and to accept a future report to Cabinet on the impact and effectiveness of the Schemes.

12 **Adult Social Care Peer Challenge - Improvement Action Plan**

Councillor Sandra Samuels presented the Improvement Action Plan that had been created following the Peer Challenge. The Council participated in the West Midlands Association of Directors of Adult Social Services regional sector led improvement programme of Peer Challenges as part of a collective commitment to continual improvement of adult social care services in the region. The very positive reputation of the City of Wolverhampton within the region and beyond had been noted and progress had already been made against the recommendations that had been received.

Resolved:

1. That the finalised Peer Review Action Plan and the final implementation stages of the Peer Review be agreed.

13 **People Directorate Commissioning Strategy**

Councillor Sandra Samuels presented the draft People Directorate Commissioning Strategy 2017-2021. The strategy had been updated and incorporated a family approach to commissioning services across the Council. The importance of partnership working between Adults, Children and Young People and Public Health directorates was emphasised as services often overlapped.

Resolved:

1. That it be agreed to receive and comment on the attached draft People Directorate Commissioning Strategy 2017- 21, direct any required further actions; and approve the issuing for consultation and engagement with stakeholders prior to request for Cabinet approval of a final draft on 19 July 2017.

14 **Financial Support to Carers of Children Subject to Adoption, Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Orders**

Councillor Val Gibson sought approval for the updated policy for Financial Support to Carers of Children Subject to Adoption, Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement orders, the additional indicative cost and its implementation on 1 May 2017. The policy requires review to ensure that it is not only compliant to changes in regulations but also that it is compliant with recent case law and to ensure that the financial support for permanence orders is in sync with the allowances paid to foster carers. The proposed changes included areas such as the criteria for financial support and the requirement for carers to complete an annual financial statement. The policy aimed to target carers in need of the financial assistance and would mean an overall long term saving for the Council.

Resolved:

1. That the updated policy for Financial Support to Carers of Children Subject to Adoption, Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement orders be approved in line with the changes outlined within the report, and the implementation on 1 May 2017 also be approved.
2. That the additional indicative cost, which was estimated to be in the region of £440,000 per annum for the period the allowance was granted for, relating to Adoption, Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement orders be approved.

15

Re-organisation of Educational Provision

Councillor Claire Darke sought approval for the commencement of an informal consultation on the proposed merger of an infant and junior school and for delegated authority to decide on a formal consultation subject to the results. The merger would promote a closer working relationship and aim to promote a good standard of education for all children attending the schools.

Resolved:

1. That the commencement of informal consultation on the proposed merger of Springdale Infant School with Springdale Junior School be approved.
 2. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Education, in consultation with the Assistant Director for School Standards, to consider the outcome of informal consultation on the proposed merger of Springdale Infant School with Springdale Junior School and to determine whether or not to proceed to formal consultation.
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1. That the position at Christ Church CE Infant and Nursery School and Christ Church CE Junior School be noted.