

Meeting of the Cabinet

Minutes - 18 October 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 Paul Sweet

Employees

Keith Ireland	Managing Director
Tim Johnson	Strategic Director for Place
Mark Taylor	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
Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sandra Samuels OBE. |
| 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 13 September 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 **Digital Transformation Programme 2017-19**

Councillor Andrew Johnson sought Cabinet endorsement to recommend that Council approve Phase 2 of the delivery of the Council's Digital Transformation Programme and to reprofile and increase the ICT capital programme for 2017-18. The Programme would achieve savings for the Council and ensure that employees work in a more agile and efficient way. Scrutiny Board had carried out pre-decision scrutiny of the Programme and had recommended that it be carefully monitored and that they receive six-monthly updates on the delivery progress.

Councillor Johnson recorded his thanks to the Digital Transformation Director and his team for the work undertaken to develop the strategy.

Resolved:

That Council be recommended to approve:

1. The implementation of future phases of the Digital Transformation Programme over the period 2017-18 to 2019-20.
2. The allocation of projected capital resources totalling £3.0 million for the delivery of the next phase, Phase 2, of the City of Wolverhampton Council's Digital Transformation Programme over the period 2017-18.
3. The allocation of additional capital resources totalling £1.0 million for the further rollout of the ICT capital programme during 2017-18.
4. That it be noted that future phases of the Digital Transformation Programme over the period 2018-19 and 2019-20, was anticipated to have a total projected capital cost of £11.0 million and would be subject to Council approval.
5. That it be noted that future funding for the ICT capital programme over the period 2018-19 and 2019-20, was anticipated to have a total projected capital cost of £5.0 million and would be subject to Council approval.
6. That it be noted that the Digital Transformation Programme would build internal capability to support continuous improvement of digital services once the programme itself had been completed.
7. That it be noted that Scrutiny Board had been asked to review the contents of this report and provide feedback to Cabinet ahead of making these decisions to implement future phases of the Digital Transformation Programme.

6 **Governance of West Midlands Fire Service**

Councillor Roger Lawrence presented the Governance Review and Scheme for the proposed governance model of the West Midlands Fire Service for approval to go out to formal public consultation. A reformed Fire Authority and Mayoral Combined Authority had been identified as the preferred option for future governance of the Fire Service. The City of Wolverhampton Council was being consulted, as were all other constituent authorities, to request approval for the review and scheme for public consultation.

Resolved:

1. That the governance review and scheme be approved.
2. That it be agreed to move forward to public consultation for the scheme and proposed governance model.

3. That it be approved to delegate authority to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Managing Director, to make minor amendments to the Governance review and scheme on completion of the Local Authority approval process and prior to public consultation.
4. That it be approved to support/lead on the public consultation in the City of Wolverhampton region on behalf of the WMCA.
5. That the timeline of governance route to Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority be noted.

7 **Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018-19 - 2019-20**

Councillor Andrew Johnson presented the Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018-19 – 2019-20 for approval. The report provided an update on the progress towards identifying a strategy to address the projected £14.8 million budget deficit for 2018-19. The report outlined the key factors, the timetable for the budget process and the risks in relation to them. The report formed part of the budget consultation process and would be circulated for consultation shortly. The Council had successfully made savings of £200 million over the past six years but there were £15.5 million of further savings to be identified over the next two years.

Resolved:

1. That the reprofiling of previously approved Waste and Recycling Service budget reduction targets totalling a cumulative £2.1 million in 2018-2019 to 2019-2020, to reflect the anticipated implementation date of service changes, be approved.
2. That it be approved that Financial Transaction and Base Budget Revisions totalling a net reduction of £12.5 million in 2018-2019 be incorporated into the 2018-2019 draft budget.
3. That it be approved that authority be delegated to the responsible Cabinet Member and the Cabinet Member for Resources, in consultation with the responsible Director and the Director of Finance to implement financial transactions at the earliest opportunity where the proposal was not reliant on the outcome of formal budget consultation.
4. That a one-off base budget revision to the Treasury Management budget totalling £1.0 million for 2018-2019 be approved, due to an anticipated reduction in the forecast revenue implications arising from known capital programme requirements totalling £270,000 and the application of Treasury Management Equalisation reserves totalling £730,000 to support re-phasing in the capital programme.
5. That the one-off use of £700,000 from the Job Evaluation reserve in 2018-2019 be approved.
6. That the use of capital receipts totalling £2.7 million to fund the revenue cost of transformational projects that were anticipated to deliver efficiencies be approved.
7. That it be approved that work continues to identify additional recurring budget reduction opportunities that would work towards the remaining budget challenge to be delivered by 2019-2020. An update on progress on the budget strategy would be incorporated into the Final Budget report to be presented to Cabinet in February 2018.
8. That it be approved that authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Resources in consultation with the Director of Finance to approve the final budget consultation arrangements.
9. That it be approved that the Council opts-up from retail to professional status with regards to investment opportunities under the Financial Conduct Authority

regulations, with the institutions that the Council currently uses as part of its Treasury Management Strategy. This would enable the continued use of the current instruments post 3 January 2018.

10. That it be noted that, of the total £12.5 million financial transaction and base budget revisions identified in July 2017 for 2018-2019, £5.0 million were ongoing opportunities, as detailed in Appendix B, whilst £7.5 million were one-off opportunities, as detailed in Appendix C. Therefore, a significant element of the budget reduction proposals relate to one-off opportunities that can be achieved in 2018-2019. Taking this into account, the remaining cumulative budget challenge to be identified by 2019-2020 stands at £15.5 million.
11. That it be noted that the updated projected deficit assumes the achievement of budget reduction proposals amounting to £33.8 million over the three-year period to 2019-2020. Over the last seven financial years the Council had identified budget reductions in excess of £200.0 million. This continues to be the most significant financial challenge that the Council had ever faced.
12. That it be noted that, due to external factors, budget assumptions remain subject to change. This could therefore result in alterations to the financial position faced by the Council.
13. That it be noted that the 2018-2019 budget timetable would, as in previous years, include an update on all budget assumptions and the Provisional Local Government Settlement which be presented to Cabinet (Resources) Panel by January 2018, with the final budget report due to be approved by Full Council in March 2018.

8

Housing Enforcement and Charging Policy

Councillor Peter Bilson presented the Housing Enforcement and Charging Policy report for approval. The revisions to the Council's Housing Enforcement Policy included the use of Civil Penalties and discounts to be applied to housing licensing fees in respect of Rent with Confidence Three Star and above rated landlords. This was the introduction of an additional tool to the policy for private sector properties. It gave the Council the ability to take action quicker and to provide tenants with a better quality of service.

Resolved:

1. That the revisions to the Council's housing enforcement policy be approved.
2. That the adoption of the use of Civil Penalties in respect of certain breaches of statutory housing responsibilities be approved.
3. That the discount to be applied to the fee in respect of housing licence applications for landlords/agents achieving a Three Star and above rating under the Council's Rent with Confidence (RwC) programme be approved.
4. That it be approved to delegate the issuing of Civil Penalties to the relevant Head of Service/Director in consultation with the Director of Governance.
5. That it be approved to delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing in consultation with the relevant Director to approve the matrix for the amount of the Civil Penalties, and any subsequent amendments.
6. That it be approved to delegate authority to the Service Manager Private Sector Housing to make the reduction in enforcement charges where landlords/agents sign up to the Rent with Confidence scheme.
7. That it be noted that the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing scheme was proposed to be revised by the Department for Communities and Local Government to include a wider range of properties. The licence fees including any

discounts for all properties would be refreshed at the time that the revisions were enacted.

9 **Housing Allocation Policy - Immediately Available Homes**

Councillor Peter Bilson presented the report on Housing Allocation Policy – Immediately Available Homes, which requested approval for the scheme to be included as part of the Council’s Housing Allocation Policy. The report outlined detail of the results of the successful Immediately Available Homes pilot that had operated between January and July 2017.

Resolved:

That the inclusion of the Immediately Available Homes scheme as part of the City of Wolverhampton Councils Housing Allocation Policy be approved.

10 **Financial Support to Foster Carers for the Purchase of a Large Vehicle**

Councillor Val Gibson presented the policy for financial support to foster carers for the purchase of a large vehicle for approval. The policy would enable carers to be able to transport large sibling groups which would support the Council in keeping large sibling groups together and possibly support permanent placements for Looked After Children.

Resolved:

1. That the Policy for Financial Support to Foster Carers for the Purchase of a Large Vehicle be approved.
2. That it be approved to delegate authority to the Director of Children’s Services to approve amounts of up to £10,000 to support purchasing larger vehicles to enable carers to transport larger sibling groups

11 **Hot Food Takeaway Supplementary Planning Document**

Councillor John Reynolds and Councillor Paul Sweet presented the draft Hot Food Takeaway Supplementary Planning Document and requested approval for the document and associated reports to go out to public consultation. The report provided guidance on the application of planning policies relating to hot food takeaways in Wolverhampton. This would include the prevention of new hot food takeaways in areas where there was already a high percentage of such establishments and in areas less than 400 metres from a secondary school. The report explained that the Supplementary Planning Document had been drafted in the context of tackling health problems and obesity in the city.

Resolved:

1. That the draft Hot food takeaway Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and associated Sustainability Appraisal Report and Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report be approved for consultation.
2. That it be approved to delegate authority to the Cabinet Members for City Economy and Public Health and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Service Directors for City Economy and Public Health and Wellbeing, to approve the Council’s response to representations received on the draft SPD.
3. That it be approved to delegate authority to the Cabinet Members for City Economy and Public Health and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Service

Directors for City Economy and Public Health and Wellbeing, to make amendments to the SPD following consultation and subsequently adopt the SPD.

12 **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 items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to any individual, information which was likely to reveal the identity of an individual and/or information relating to the business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

13 **I9 Office Scheme – Development and Investment Proposal**

Councillor John Reynolds presented the I9 Office Scheme – Development and Investment Proposal report that was exempt as it contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Resolved:

That the recommendations be approved as detailed in the exempt report.

14 **Cricket Provision Capital Report**

Councillor Paul Sweet presented the Cricket Provision Capital Report that was exempt as it contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Resolved:

That the recommendations be approved as detailed in the exempt report.