

Meeting of the Cabinet

Minutes - 22 March 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

Keith Ireland	Managing Director
Mark Taylor	Director of Finance
Linda Sanders	Strategic Director for People
Kevin O'Keefe	Director of Governance
Ross Cook	Service Director - City Environment
Tim Clark	Communications Manager
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 February 2017 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chair. |
| 4 | Matters arising
There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting. |

5 **Approval to widen scope of the Black Country Joint Committee to include the Combined Authority and act as accountable body for the Land Remediation Fund**

Councillor Roger Lawrence presented the report for approval and recommendation to Full Council. The proposals were to widen the scope of the Black Country Joint Committee, to incorporate the West Midlands Combined Authority into the Collaboration Agreement dated 7 May 2014, relating to the City and Growth Deals within the Black Country Executive Committee's remit. Approval was also sought for the City of Wolverhampton Council to act as Accountable Body for the first tranche of £53 million Combined Authority Strategic Development Programme's Land Remediation Fund to be allocated principally to the Black Country.

Resolved:

That Council be recommended to:

1. Delegate to the Black Country Executive Joint Committee the power to make decisions relating to funding applications into and funding received through or from the West Midlands Combined Authority.
2. Approve the widening of the scope of the Black Country Executive Joint Committee Constitution by amending the current Annex A - Terms of Reference; Functions of Black Country Executive Joint Committee, as revised and included as Attachment 1 to the report.
3. Approve entering into the Black Country Executive Joint Committee Collaboration Agreement's Deed of Variation, included as Attachment 2 to the report.
4. Approve the Council acting as Accountable Body for the first tranche of £53 million Combined Authority Strategic Development Programme's Land Remediation Fund to be allocated principally to the Black Country (subject to approval by WMCA in March 2017) and delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Resources in consultation with the Director of Finance to agree any extension to the role beyond the first tranche of funding.
5. Delegate to the Directors of Governance and Finance the drawing up of budgets, grant agreements and authorisation of payments to grant recipients subject to appropriate due diligence of claims submitted.

6 **Budget Adjustment to reflect Adult Social Care Funding**

Councillor Andrew Johnson sought approval to adjust the gross expenditure and income budgets to reflect additional Adult Social Care funding. The Chancellor had announced the new grants in the Spring Budget, the allocation for 2017/18 for the City of Wolverhampton Council was £6.402 million. The additional funding was welcome and a report would be presented to Cabinet at a later date to outline the planned use of the grant to ensure that the short term funding is used in a managed way, to create a longer term sustainable Adult Social Care budget.

Resolved:

1. That adjustments to the gross expenditure and income budgets to reflect the additional Adult Social Care funding in 2017/18 of £6.402 million be approved.

7 **Review of Discretionary Housing Payment Policy**

Councillor Andrew Johnson sought approval for a revised local policy for the award of Discretionary Housing Payments. Recent welfare reform changes had created reductions in benefit payments, including the restriction of Local Housing Allowance rates, the removal of the 'spare room subsidy' and the benefit cap. These changes

had seen an increased demand for financial assistance, subsequently the Government had increased the funding available under the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme. This draft policy sought to ensure that the Council's spending on the payments would not exceed the funding available, whilst preserving the core aims of an award which was to safeguard vulnerable people and prevent homelessness whenever practicable.

Resolved:

1. That the Discretionary Housing Payment policy be approved.

8 **Improving Outcomes within the Early Years**

Councillor Val Gibson presented the Early Years Strategy for approval, following an extensive period of consultation that had shaped and influenced the strategy. The Early Years Strategy aimed to improve outcomes for children from conception to age five and their families. A number of amendments to the printed Strategy were proposed to make changes relating to a school readiness checklist, ensuring all early years providers deliver high quality experiences, accurate assessments of children's starting points and appropriate support for children born in the summer months.

Resolved:

1. That the Early Years Strategy be approved, subject to the following amendments:
 - a. A footnote to be inserted on page 9 of the document to read 'To support parents and practitioners, a school readiness checklist will be developed with parents and professionals and published alongside the strategy'
 - b. Additional text to be inserted on page 19 of the document to read 'The city continues through the work of the early intervention service and the school improvement and standards team to ensure that schools, settings, childminders and all early year's providers are delivering high quality early years experiences. An example of the excellence and success we strive for within all settings is modelled within the city's seven nursery schools and this resource should be utilised to influence and support future developments across the range of early education provision. The Ofsted ratings for the city continue to rise annually; the figures for all providers within the city demonstrate this'.
 - c. Additional text to be inserted on page 33 to read 'Accurate assessment of children's starting points was based on constant reflection about what was deemed typical for each child given their chronological age in months. Where we observed this to be most effective, staff entered into frequent discussion, within and between providers, to check and agree their judgments. This included the frequent sharing of information between parents, other pre-school setting and health visitors'.
 - d. A footnote to be inserted on page 33 to read as 'Particular regard needs to be given to those children born in the summer months and the impact this has on their development compared to their peers and appropriate support put in place to overcome any potential disadvantage'.

9 **Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy 2017-20**

Councillor Paul Sweet presented the refreshed Safer Wolverhampton Partnership (SWP) Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy 2017-20 for endorsement and to support its implementation. There was a statutory requirement for the SWP to have a plan in place to reduce crime and improve community safety for the city; the

current strategy expired on 21 March 2017. The strategic priorities had been refreshed and focused on reducing re-offending, violence prevention and reducing victimisation. The strategy was broad to ensure that there was flexibility to respond to emerging areas of concern. It was clarified that the data captured in the strategy was specific to people who were LGB (lesbian, gay and bi-sexual) as it had been taken from the Office for National Statistics, but locally the data that was captured related to people who were LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender). An amendment to the strategy was requested, to ensure this inclusivity was clear.

Resolved:

1. That the Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy 2017-20 be endorsed, subject to additional equalities detail regarding LGBT and disabilities and that its implementation be supported.

10 **The Vision for Education 2030 - Shaping a city of learning**

Councillor Claire Darke presented the City of Wolverhampton Council – Vision for Education 2030 for approval. The Vision brought together the ambitions of all strands of education and across all directorates of the Council. It encompassed the Council's commitment to ensuring that Wolverhampton's citizens had outstanding opportunities at every stage of their education. An addition to the document was requested to emphasise the culture of partnership working with academies and free schools.

The Leader extended Cabinet's appreciation and thanks to Julien Kramer, who would be standing down in April from his role as Interim Director of Education.

Resolved:

1. That the City of Wolverhampton Council – Vision for Education 2030 be approved, subject to an amendment to emphasise partnership working with academies and free schools.

11 **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 is 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).

12 **Senior Management Structure 2017**

Resolved:

That the recommendations be agreed as detailed in the exempt minutes.