



Meeting of the Cabinet

Minutes - 10 September 2014

Attendance

Members of the Cabinet

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

Employees

Dereck Francis	Democratic Support Officer
Keith Ireland	Strategic Director, Delivery
Tim Johnson	Strategic Director, Education and Enterprise
Sarah Norman	Strategic Director, Community
Kevin O'Keefe	Chief Legal Officer
Mark Taylor	Assistant Director, Finance

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 Apologies for absence**
Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Elias Mattu and Phil Page.
- 2 Declarations of interests**
Cllr Peter Bilson declared a non-pecuniary interest in the report at agenda item 13 (Bushbury Hill Estate Management Board Right to Transfer Proposal) in so far as he is a ward councillor for the area.
- 3 Minutes of the previous meeting (23 July 2014)**
Resolved:
That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2014 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 ITEMS (RED - for decision by the Council)

- 5 **Adoption of the Stafford Road Corridor and Bilston Corridor Area Action Plans**
Cllr Peter Bilson presented the report on progress made with the production of the Stafford Road Corridor Area Action Plan and the Bilston Area Action Plan (AAPs). The plans had been through a lengthy period of public consultation and examination and were now being recommended for referral to Full Council for formal adoption. The plans would be used for determining planning applications in the Stafford Road and Bilston Corridor areas.

Resolved:

That Full Council be requested to adopt the Stafford Road Corridor Area Action Plan and the Bilston Area Action Plan at its meeting on 17 September 2014.

- 6 **Tettenhall and Heathfield Park Neighbourhood Plans**
Cllr Peter Bilson presented the report on progress made with the preparation of the Tettenhall and Heathfield Park Neighbourhood plans. He reported that the Council was the first in the country to have undertaken a successful referendum on neighbourhood plans with such a high level of support. The plans supported the delivery of 975 new homes, investment in parks, open spaces and transport facilities and provided a stronger emphasis on local character in planning decisions and a basis for improvement of residential areas including the regeneration of the Heath Town Estate

Following the successful community referendum on the plans he recommended that they be referred to Full Council for formal adoption.

Resolved:

1. That Full Council be recommended to make (adopt) the Tettenhall and Heathfield Park Neighbourhood plans at its meeting on 17 September 2014.
2. That the progress made with the Tettenhall and Heathfield Park Neighbourhood plans be noted.

DECISION ITEMS (AMBER - delegated to the Cabinet)

- 7 **Reduction of Play Service Provision**
Cllr Val Gibson presented the report on proposals to undertake a consultation exercise on proposals for a reduction in the current play service provision and on proposals to utilise funding from Public Health and Aiming High for Disabled Children grants in order to continue provision at Old Fallings adventure playground. She reported on the need to involve community groups in discussions on the possibility of them taking over the running of the Gatis Street and Scotlands Adventure playground through a Community Asset Transfer.

Councillor Steve Evens added that as a ward councillor he was very keen to work with community groups to look at the possibilities for them taking over the running of the playground facilities.

Resolved:

1. That a six week period of consultation be undertaken with users and stakeholders outlining proposals for a reduction in the Play Service budget.
2. That subject to the consultation not identifying a significantly different proposal to the one outlined within this report, the Cabinet Member for Children and Families in consultation with the Strategic Director Community be authorised to approve the closure of the Gatis Street and Scotlands Adventure Playgrounds, and to declare the sites surplus to the operational requirements of the Play Service and then promote them for a Community Asset Transfer if appropriate.
3. That maintain Old Fallings Adventure Playground be maintained through funding from Short Breaks and Public Health.
4. That a further report be submitted to Cabinet in the event that a significant proposal to the one outlined within the report is identified during the consultation.
5. That the feedback from Children and Young People scrutiny panel be noted.

8 **Better Care Fund Programme Update**

Cllr Sandra Samuels presented a report seeking delegated authority to approve the Better Care Fund Programme plan for submission to Government by 19 September 2014 and the budgets and services proposed for inclusion in the plan. The report also updated Cabinet on progress made in relation to the development of the Better Care Fund Programme plan in Wolverhampton.

Resolved:

1. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Members for Adult Services, Health and Well Being and Resources, in consultation with the Strategic Director for Community and the Assistant Director Finance, to approve the Better Care Fund Programme Plan on behalf of the Council, for submission to Government by 19 September 2014.
2. That the council services and associated budgets for 2015/16 agreed as part of the Better Care Fund Programme Plan under the delegation detailed above be pooled in the Better Care Fund, subject to the conclusion of a pooling agreement with Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) under Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006.
3. That it be noted that the Better Care Fund Programme Plan would also require the approval of the Health and Well-Being Board, which had delegated authority for this approval to the Chair of the Health and Well-Being Board and the Chief Officer of Wolverhampton CCG.
4. That it be noted that a further report would be presented to Cabinet following the submission to Government by 19 September 2014, which would provide an update on the final Better Care Fund Programme Plan, and seek approval for the finalised Section 75 agreement.

9 **First Impressions of the City Scrutiny Review**

The Cabinet received a report on the findings and recommendations of the scrutiny review 'First Impressions of the City'.

Cllr Phil Bateman, Chair of the scrutiny review group was in attendance for this item. He paid tribute to the employees who had supported the work of the review and to the members of the review group for their enthusiasm in approaching the work. He informed Cabinet that the review covered a wide area and there was scope for further reviews into some of the areas the review touched upon. He asked that Cabinet consider instigating a more refined look into these areas. He also reported that he wanted the review report and recommendations to be used to improve the three offers of the city (i.e. the visit, business and shopping offers) and to sculpture a city and services all could be proud of.

Cllr Peter Bilson thanked Cllr Bateman and the review group for their enthusiastic consideration of what was a wide topic. He referred to the executive response to the review group recommendations attached as an appendix to the report. He also reported that a lot of work had been done to improve the city's offer since the review report had been produced. The Council was in negotiations with business/property owners to refurbish/improve their properties; the Council was investing in Block 10, the office and retail block next to the bus and railway stations at the Interchange; and recent external validation had stated that there are now fewer empty shops in the city since 2010. The Council was in a position to improve and was creating the conditions to make it happen. He assured Cllr Bateman that the review report would be used and the Executive would look to improve the offer and have an effective communications strategy to accompany it.

Resolved:

- a. That the report of the First Impressions of the City Scrutiny Review be received and the following recommendations from the review be noted:

Developing a joint marketing strategy and communication strategy for Wolverhampton

1. The Review Group support the proposed principles for the City Marketing Strategy and would welcome an early response from Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Prosperity about how these will now be developed into a marketing strategy and plan that will be delivered by the council together with its partners.
2. The Review Group was concerned about achieving a joined up approach to marketing and communication. The Strategic Director for Education and Enterprise should provide a report and presentation within three months on how this will be achieved.
3. The Strategic Director of Education and Enterprise supported by the Head of Corporate Communications to produce a city marketing strategy and plan, including the identification and use of the main resources available across the Council to support its delivery. The plan should also include identifying any the key gaps in resource which will form the basis of discussions with partners, stakeholders and external funders.

4. A report detailing progress in the delivery of the plan to be presented to Cabinet every six months thereafter.
5. The Strategic Director of Education and Enterprise should incorporate activities being undertaken by key partners involved in either improving the "visit offer", "business offer" and the "shopping offer" and or Marketing Wolverhampton, in a further iteration of the plan. This should include a review on whether current resources are sufficient to support any planned future marketing initiatives, events and campaigns developed from the strategy.

Improving the Wolverhampton 'offer'

1. The Strategic Director of Education and Enterprise to be invited to include within the progress report at the start of each municipal year an analysis of any business and resident perception surveys, together with any other relevant information, together with any recommendations for improving the Wolverhampton offer and how they will be taken forward.
2. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Prosperity, in collaboration with other Cabinet Members as appropriate, to be invited to update Cabinet six monthly, on progress to address agreed actions to improve the Wolverhampton Offer, based on the business and resident perception surveys and other evidence provided by the Strategic Director for Education and Enterprise.
3. Consideration should be given to tasking the City Centre Regeneration Advisory Group to scrutinise current work being done to improve the city centre 'offer' and follow up issues highlighted during the review evidence sessions and report their findings to the appropriate scrutiny panel.
4. The City Centre Member Advisory Group should review and report on progress in delivering specific regeneration projects against an agreed timetable; particularly those projects where delays are likely to impact negatively on the reputation of the City as a destination of choice.
5. The importance of the City's cultural 'offer' to the City and the wider Black Country has been highlighted in the Black Country Strategic Economic Plan and also the draft Greater Birmingham Visitor Economy.
6. The Strategic Director of Education and Enterprise to keep Cabinet updated on a quarterly basis on progress in securing external investments and the findings from the review.

Managing and improving the reputation of Wolverhampton

1. The Head of Policy and Head of Communication to be invited to present a report to Cabinet on the feasibility of Wolverhampton Council adopting the Building Trust: Action developed by the Local Government Association. The results should be published either six monthly or annually. The information

should be used to inform the development of the any future communication and marketing plans for the City.

2. The Head of Policy and Head of Communication to be invited to consider revising Wolverhampton Residents' Opinion Survey to include specific questions about what people overall think about the City and views about the current 'offer'.
3. The Head of Policy to review the findings of the relevant public survey responses should be reviewed and used to inform future plans aimed at improving the current 'offer'. For example, the Express and Star – Your say survey and The National Student Survey findings from Wolverhampton University.
4. The Head of Policy to present a summary of the findings annually to Scrutiny Board. The results should be separated into "visit offer", "business offer" and "shopping offer" and include details of specific action taken to improve the 'offer'.
5. Head of Customer Services to be consulted on marketing and communication plans for the City to ensure that they are built around improving the current customer experience. Head of Customer Services to lead on development of work flow and rules for business and civic events in the public domain
6. To develop an information report to include intelligence relating to customer contact for these services. The report to be presented to the City Centre Project Board on a three monthly basis to inform their work.

Harnessing the value of social media for Councillors

1. Head of Communication to be tasked to either arrange appropriate social media training for Councillors or share published guidance on the subject. Priority should be given to supporting those Councillors who regularly use Facebook and Twitter as part of efforts to engage with the public or have a keen interest in building their social media presence. The group should be invited to set out proposals for encouraging all Councillors to register on Wolverhampton Twitter and Facebook for email information alerts.
2. The Head of Communication to prepare a revised current social networking guide. The guide to be shared with all Councillors and appropriate support offered.
3. The Head of Communication to be invited to advise how the success of initiative in meeting its objectives can be assessed. The findings to be shared with the Councillor Development and Information Technology Advisory Group.

4. The Head of Communication to set up a community discussion forum similar to that developed by Dudley Council. The aim of the forum would be to provide a space to discuss local issues or future plans relating to the regeneration of the City or improving the current 'offer':

b. That the Executive response to the review recommendations be approved.

c. That the response be referred to to Scrutiny Board for them to monitor the implementation of the agreed recommendations.

10 **Outcome of Called-in Item**

Resolved:

That the decision of the Scrutiny Board on the called-in item 'Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2015/16 Onwards' be noted.

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 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>
12	Proposal Regarding Children's Residential and Fostering Provision	3
13	Bushbury Hill Estate Management Board Right to Transfer Proposal	3

Part 2 - exempt items, closed to press and public

12 **Proposals Regarding Children's Residential and Fostering Provision**

Cllr Val Gibson presented the report on proposals to remodel existing services for looked after children in order to improve outcomes for children and young people in care. She informed Cabinet that the proposals had cross party support.

Resolved:

That proposal to remodel existing looked after children services through developing a specialist foster care service and closing residential provision in order to increase the number of local family-based placements available to improve outcomes for looked after children be approved.

13 **Bushbury Hill Estate Management Board Right to Transfer Proposal**

Cllr Roger Lawrence moved the recommendations contained in the report on arrangements for dealing the Bushbury Hill Estate Management Board (BHEMB) stock transfer proposal.

Resolved:

1. That the draft formal consultation document for tenants living within council properties managed by Bushbury Hill Estate Management Board be approved and authority be delegated to the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Resources, in consultation with the Strategic Director for Education and Enterprise and the Assistant Director Finance to approve the final document.
2. That a further report be submitted to Cabinet on 12 November 2014 to review the responses to the formal consultation document and determine whether to issue the Stage 2 notice and proceed to the ballot.
3. That the provisional Heads of Terms with Wrekin Housing Trust as the receiving landlord, if tenants vote for stock transfer; including the asset transfer value of the estate; the valuations for other assets to transfer including the Management Centre at 14 Kempthorne Avenue; the formula for agreeing the payment in lieu of both current and former rent arrears; and the use of a VAT shelter be approved.
4. That if required, a further report be submitted to Cabinet in early 2015 to agree the final terms of the transfer.
5. That the appointment of the Electoral Reform Society to conduct the confidential ballot of all tenants in the Bushbury Hill estate if the matter proceeds to a ballot be approved.
6. That the process for consultation as prescribed by Section 106A and Schedule 3A of the Housing Act 1985 and the requirement of the Council to consult with tenants affected by stock transfer and to conduct a ballot be noted.
7. That it be noted that a member of staff from Wolverhampton Homes would be subject to a transfer of employment to Wrekin Housing Trust under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 if tenants vote in favour of transfer.