

## **REGENERATION SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL**

Thursday 21 January 2010 at 6.00 p.m.

### **Panel Members present**

Councillor D. Pitt (Chair)  
Councillor M. Ahmed  
Councillor D. Anson  
Councillor B. Douglas-Maul  
Councillor L. Harrison  
Councillor K. Phillips  
Councillor I. Shires  
Councillor B. Tweddle

### **Portfolio Holders Present**

Councillor M. Bird - Leader  
Councillor A. Andrew - Regeneration

### **Officers present**

Tim Johnson	Executive Director – Regeneration
Mike Tichford	Assistant Director – Regeneration
Chris Knowles	Lead Accountant
Craig Goodall	Acting Principal Scrutiny Officer

### **53/09 APOLOGIES**

There were apologies for absence from Councillors S. Coughlan and K. Sears.

### **54/09 SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Mushtaq Ahmed substituted for Councillor K. Sears.

### **55/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP**

There were no declarations of interest or party whip.

### **56/09 MINUTES**

Item 49/09 'Building Schools for the Future' the Chair noted that the names of the schools in the in the first bullet point were the incorrect way around. The bullet point should be amended to read:

'Sample Schemes – it was previously anticipated that *Pool Hayes School* would take part in the sample scheme, however, *Frank F Harrison School* was selected as the sample school as its site and the type of work expected to take place was a better representation of the programme as a whole.'

Councillor K. Phillips requested her apologies be added to the minutes of the previous meeting.

### **RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes, as amended, of the meeting held on 6 January 2010, copies having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.**

(annexed)

## 57/09 REVISED DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET AND DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2010/11 FOR REGENERATION PORTFOLIO

The Panel considered the revised draft revenue and capital budget proposals for 2010/11 for the Regeneration Portfolio.

### *Draft Revenue Budget 2010/11*

Councillor Andrew highlighted the revised revenue budget for the Regeneration Portfolio.

A Member of the Panel raised the proposed closure of Willenhall Leisure Centre (WLC) that was a part of the Leisure and Culture Portfolio and expressed concerns at the wider implications this proposed closure could have. The following resolution was proposed and seconded:

*'That in considering the draft corporate revenue budget for 2010/11 the Regeneration Scrutiny and Performance Panel expresses concern at the knock on effects of the proposed closure of Willenhall Leisure Centre will have on the future viability of the town centre from the following view points:*

- *Health*
- *Regeneration*
- *Leisure and Culture*

*Further to this the Regeneration Scrutiny and Performance Panel recommend to Cabinet that it considers the following amendments to draft revenue budget for 2010/11 to enable Willenhall Leisure Centre to remain open whilst the Community Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel establish a working group to investigate how it might be possible to reduce the unit costs at Willenhall Leisure Centre:*

<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Detail of Investment</b>	<b>Proposed Cost</b>	<b>Reduction to proposed investment to fund WLC</b>
<i>Business Support</i>	<i>Creation of 3 business analyst posts to support council wide efficiency activity. Funding is for one-off set up costs and it is expected that year 2 + the posts will generate sufficient efficiencies to cover the cost of the posts and achieve further savings for the council.</i>	<i>£120,000</i>	<i>£40,000</i>
<i>Business Support</i>	<i>Setting up a single operating model for customer service improvements and efficiencies in processes to support effective customer service across the</i>	<i>£145,000</i>	<i>£76,000</i>

	<i>organisation will be secured, supporting self-service as the most cost effective solution where possible.</i>		
<i>Finance and Personnel</i>	<i>Corporate feasibility studies resource. A corporate resource to enable targeted feasibility studies /and investigation work to be undertaken</i>	<i>£225,000</i>	<i>£100,000</i>
			<i>Total Savings = £216,000</i>

On being put to the vote the motion was declared lost.

Even though the motion was lost the Leader of the Council thanked the Member for his budget proposals and undertook to discuss them with his Cabinet colleagues.

#### *Draft Capital Programme 2010/11*

Councillor Andrew highlighted the draft capital programme for 2010/11 to the Panel.

#### *Demolition of redundant buildings to save on rates - £200,000 (mainstream funded)*

Following a questions Councillor Andrew explained that this money was to demolish three buildings on the Walsall Gigaport site. Rates for redundant buildings were high and the authority would save money by demolishing them.

#### *Aid and Adaptations - £1,500,000 (mainstream funded)*

The Panel were pleased with the level of funding proposed for this important area but expressed concerns regarding the value for money the Council received as a high proportion of this budget was used for tenders and other procedural steps.

#### *Darlaston Baths roof - £200,000 (mainstream funded)*

The Leader explained that the Council would seek to reclaim the cost of these works from the architect as it was possible that the problems with the roof were caused by a design fault.

#### *Walsall Town Hall toilet refurbishment - £40,000 (reserve list)*

The Panel expressed the wish that the Council received value for money from this, and all other, capital works.

The Panel discussed public toilets which was acknowledged as an important issue by the Leader.

**RESOLVED:**

**That:**

- 1. the draft revenue budget 2010/11 for the Regeneration Portfolio be supported;  
and;**
- 2. the draft capital programme 2010/11 for the Regeneration Portfolio be supported.**

**58/09 WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10 AND FORWARD PLAN**

The Panel considered their work programme and the latest edition of the Cabinet Forward Plan of key decisions.

**59/09 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members noted the date of the next meeting as 11 March 2010.

*The meeting terminated at 6.40 p.m.*

Chair:

Date: