

Cabinet minutes

Wednesday 14 January 2009 at 6.00 p.m.

in Conference Room 2 at the Council House Walsall

Present

Councillor O'Hare	Leader of the Council
Councillor Andrew	Deputy Leader and Regeneration
Councillor Perry	Communities and partnerships
Councillor Walker	Environment
Councillor Griffiths	Finance and personnel
Councillor Harrison	Leisure and culture
Councillor Arif	Procurement, transformation and performance management
Councillor McCracken	Social care, health and housing

2114 Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors Zahid Ali and Harris.

2115 Minutes

Resolved

That the minutes of the meetings held on 10 and 17 December 2008 copies having been sent to each member of the Cabinet be approved and signed as correct records.

2116 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2117 Forward plan

The forward plan as at 6 January 2009 was submitted:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the forward plan be noted.

2118 Local Area Agreement performance reward grant

Councillor O'Hare presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the Cabinet notes Performance Reward Grant, generated from the Walsall 2006/09 Local Area Agreement is estimated to be around £4,209,750. (This will be payable as the three-year result for each target is reported, at different dates during 2009/10).
- (2) That the sensitivity around the achievement of £4,209,750 be noted.
- (3) That the new arrangements in Walsall Partnership (better target setting and more emphasis on performance management) in the new Local Area Agreement be noted.
- (4) That the Cabinet supports Option 5, the recommended option for how Performance Reward Grant should be used. This option proposes a combination of the Council allocating some Performance Reward Grant directly to its own priorities (which may be activity currently funded by mainstream resources, for example Building Schools for the Future), where these are also priorities in the Local Area Agreement and also allocating some of the Performance Reward Grant to priorities that are currently under resourced (e.g. climate change/adaptation).
- (5) That the Cabinet formally approves the allocation of £500,000 for the running costs of Walsall Partnership, in line with the outcome of the discussion held on 27 June 2007, with Cabinet members and the Corporate Management Team
- (6) That the detailed approval of projects and activity be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, once the overall allocation of Performance Reward Grant has been notified to the Council.

2119 Area Based Grant

Councillor O'Hare presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the Cabinet note the progress regarding Target Action Planning, as set out in section 3 of the report.

- (2) That those programmes indicated as 'Green' at appendix 2, from the Working Neighbourhoods Fund be approved.
- (3) That the OJEU process for those programmes listed at 4.7 of the report, from the Working Neighbourhoods Fund 2008 – 2011 be approved.
- (4) That the delegated authority approval of an additional £12,000, for financial year 2008/09 from the Working Neighbourhoods Fund, for the Walsall Alcohol Arrest Referral Scheme programme, as set out in section 4.8 of the report, be endorsed.
- (5) That Cabinet approve the recommendation for Walsall Partnership Support Team to co-ordinate a joint response on behalf of Walsall Council and Walsall Partnership, as set out in section 4.10.3, of the report, in response to Government consultation on a change to the criteria used to allocate Working Neighbourhoods Fund.
- (6) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director, Regeneration, in consultation with the portfolio holder for Regeneration, to approve any programme variances, only where the proposed allocation is reduced. This delegated authority is for Working Neighbourhoods Fund programmes, as set out in section 4.11.2 of the report..
- (7) That the funding split of the Stronger Safer Communities Fund 2009/2010, as set out in section 5.2 of the report, be approved.
- (8) That the carry forward of £20,000, from the financial 2008/09 to the financial year 2009/10, from Safer Stronger Communities Fund, for Walsall Voluntary Action, be approved.
- (9) That the proposed programmes, from Local Area Agreement carry forward 2007/08 (revenue and capital) funding and Safer Stronger Communities Fund (capital), as set out in sections 6.5 and 6.7 of the report, be approved.
- (10) That the recommendations to change funding allocations to programmes between Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and Working Neighbourhoods Fund and vice versa, as set out at 7.2.3 and 7.2.4 in the report, be approved.

2120 Older people reprovision lease of site at Northgate

Councillor Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That approval be given to the granting of a 99-year lease, for a nominal premium, to Central Networks West PLC for the erection of a substation on the Northgate site and the granting of associated easements for cables.
- (2) That it be noted that the location of the substation will be in accordance with any planning requirements and the lease will only be completed once any necessary planning permission is obtained.

2121 Birchills CE Primary School – determination of statutory proposal

David Brown presented the report, together with Appendix 4 which was tabled at the meeting:

(see annexed)

He introduced Avril Walton from Walsall Children's Services, Serco, who explained the final statutory proposal in detail, including the outcome of the exercise undertaken to project school numbers which included births, preferences and home building. She informed Cabinet that one objection had been received, the details of which were in the report.

Members discussed the proposals and the details of the objection, particularly around the need for the additional places, whether the funding could be more appropriately spent elsewhere and the impact on the viability of the local Catholic School.

The Cabinet considered that the school number projection exercise which included births, preferences and homebuilding, demonstrated that the additional spaces were needed and that other schools in the area did not have the surplus capacity; the funding would therefore be appropriately spent given that Birchills had been assessed as the most suitable school for enlargement; and that increasing the size of Birchills school would not impact on the viability of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School or other local schools.

In view of the above, it was:

Resolved

- (1) That the Cabinet approve the statutory proposal to significantly enlarge Birchills CE Primary School from 1.5 FE (Forms of Entry) to 2 FE by increasing the intake from 45 to 60 places from 1 September 2011 in order to enable the need for additional primary school places in the area to be met.

- (2) That Cabinet approve a total budget of £4,815,000 funded and phased as set out in paragraph 4.1.2 of the report to meet the cost of a scheme to address condition issues, the proposed enlargement and other improvements.
- (3) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director for Children's Services to accept the tender for this scheme.

2122 Education capital programme – further schemes

David Brown presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the schemes and budgets set out in Appendix B of the report be approved.

2123 Community Action Tasking

Councillor Perry presented the report and informed Cabinet of an additional recommendation which was approved:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the Cabinet support the implementation of community action tasking in each of the 9 Local Neighbourhood Partnership areas in order to improve the responsiveness of public services in the locality.
- (2) That the Cabinet agree the proposed reporting arrangements between CATs and LNPs to formalise the relationship between the two groups and establish a mechanism for LNPs to hold service providers to account.
- (3) That officers report back to ward Councillors as soon as practicable after each CAT to brief them on matters relating to their ward.

2124 West Midlands Legal Panel

Councillor Griffiths presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That approval be given to the Council entering into the West Midlands Legal Services Panel.

- (2) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director for Legal and Constitutional Services, in consultation with the portfolio holder for Finance and Personnel, to accept on behalf of the Council the tenderers, recommended by Birmingham City Council, offering the best value for money services and their appointment to this Council's legal panel.

2125 Council tax base 2009/10

Councillor Griffiths presented the report, which was tabled at the meeting:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the Council tax base for 2009/10 be set at 77,943.24 Band D equivalents.

2126 Draft budget 2009/10 to 2011/12 – Recommendations of Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel

The report was submitted:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the recommendations of the Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel be noted in drafting the 2009/10 to 2011/12 budget.

2127 Draft corporate revenue budget and capital programme 2009/10 to 2011/12

Councillor Griffiths presented the report, which was tabled at the meeting

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the following be noted:
- (a) the current draft net revenue budget of £237.196m;
 - (b) the provisional formula grant entitlement for 2009/10 of £133.294m;
 - (c) the provisional area based grant entitlement for 2009/10 of £21.508m
 - (d) that, at the time of despatch of this report, the precepting authorities (fire and police) had not notified the authority of their Council tax increases;

- (e) the current draft capital programme of £59.912m; including mainstream schemes of £24.453m and specific grant funded projects of £35.459m;
- (2) That this report be referred to all scrutiny and performance panels requesting comments, to enable those comments to be considered by cabinet on 4 February 2009 as it makes its final budget recommendations to Council.

2128 **Corporate financial performance 2008/9**

Councillor Griffiths presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the following currently predicted year end forecasts be noted:

- a net revised revenue overspend of £2.4m (0.36%) of the current gross budget following inclusion of corrective action.
- unspent resources of c £0.8m and slippage of c £4.08m on the capital programme some of which is expected to be carried forward into 2009/10.

The meeting terminated at 6.25 p.m.

Leader:

Date: