

Cabinet minutes

Wednesday 4 February 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 |

2129 Apologies

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

2130 Minutes

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on copies having been sent to each member of the Cabinet be approved and signed as correct records.

2132 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2133 Forward plan

The forward plan as at 6 January 2009 was submitted:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the forward plan be noted.

2134 Strategic partnering – Collaboration Agreement with Walsall Housing Group

Councillor Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the draft Collaboration Agreement be approved as the formal agreement between the Council and Walsall housing group (whg) governing the procedural basis for joint working and delivery principles of the Strategic Partnering Arrangement to deliver the Strategic Regeneration Framework programme in Brownhills, Moxley and Goscote Lane Corridor;
- (2) That further reports be received on the detailed implications for best consideration, development clawback and the preferred social housing provider prior to the completion of the Agreement;
- (3) That a future report be received on a recommended development model and process for selecting a developer partner comprise the Strategic Partnering Arrangement to deliver the Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) programme in Brownhills, Moxley and Goscote Lane Corridor.

2135 Updated Corporate Risk Management Strategy

Councillor Griffiths presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted;
- (2) That the resolution of the Audit Committee be endorsed and the application of the revised risk management strategy and allied processes be supported.

2136 Draft budget – recommendations of Scrutiny and Performance Panel

Councillor Griffiths presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the recommendations of the five Scrutiny and Performance Panels be noted.

2137 Annual Treasury Management and investment strategy

Councillor Griffiths presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That decisions to effect movements between conventional borrowing and other long term liabilities, such as leases, be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer.
- (2) That decisions to use capital receipts or unsupported borrowing within the framework of approved prudential indicators be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer.

Resolved to recommend to Council

That the 2009/10 treasury management and investment strategy document set out in Appendix A and the adoption of the prudential indicators set out in Appendix B be approved.

2138 Draft corporate revenue budget and capital programme 2008/9 to 2012/13

Councillor Griffiths presented the report, together with the following annexes circulated at the meeting:

Annex 9 – Chief Finance Officer report
Annex 11 – Risk assessment
Annex 13 – Capital bids 2009/10 Reserve list
Annex 16 – Summary of draft corporate revenue forecast 2009/10

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the corporate budget plan (revenue and capital) set out in the report and its appendices be noted.
- (2) That it be noted that consultation is ongoing with trade unions and employees in respect of savings options which have a staffing implication.
- (3) That at the time of despatch of this report, the precepting authorities (fire and police) had not formally notified the authority of their final council tax increases, so these will be provided for the Council meeting of 23 February 2009. Current estimates have been used within this report based on informal communication from each precepting authority.

- (4) That it be noted that the Walsall Council draft net budget requirement for 2009/10 is £237.194m, resulting in a band D Council tax of £1,332.66; a weekly increase of between £0.64p and £0.95p for the 92.37% of Walsall residents in bands A – D properties as detailed in Annex 16
- (5) That on the basis set out in (3) above, the provisional (i.e.: subject to formal confirmation) overall Council tax increase would be 3.8%, including estimated precepts, resulting in a total band D council tax of £1,477.54.
- (6) That the recommendations of the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) in respect of the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the budget calculations and the adequacy of reserves as set out in Annex 9 of the corporate budget plan be noted.
- (7) That delegated authority be given to the Chief Finance Officer to make any necessary amendments to this resolution, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Finance and Personnel, to take account of the final levies and precepts which have not yet been notified and to make any necessary amendments to the statutory determinations to take account of those changes and the resulting final analysis of the budget for 2009/10 and for that amended resolution to be submitted to Council at its meeting of 23 February 2009.

Resolved to recommend to Council

- (1) That delegated authority be given to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Leader to allow reserve list items in the draft capital programme 2009/10 to commence following confirmation that funds are available.
- (2) That the following changes to Annex 5 and 13 of the report be approved:
 - (a) Replace saving number 164 Annex 5 (agency savings housing – £45,657) with restructure of management within residential homelessness projects.
 - (b) Replace £150,000 of saving number 115 Annex 5 (agency savings regeneration) with WNF funding in 2009/10 and 2010/11.
 - (c) Replace £106,000 of saving number 46 Annex 5 (agency savings neighbourhood services) with a reduction of 9 permanent posts and an increase in 9 summer agency employees.
 - (d) The revised draft capital programme reserve list Annex 13
- (3) (a) That the net levies for outside bodies be noted. At the time of despatch of this report, we had not been formally notified by the authorities of their final levy and as such this will be reflected in a revised resolution to be provided to the Council meeting of 23 February 2009. An estimate has been used within this report based on informal notification from the authorities.

| LEVY | AMOUNT (£) |
|---|-------------------|
| West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority | 13,587,000 |
| Environment agency | 82,930 |

- (b) That approval be given to an opening working balance for 2009/10 set at a prudent level of £6.99m in line with the council's medium term financial strategy.
- (c) That the following opening cash limited budgets for 2009/10 be approved.

| BUDGET | 2009/10 BUDGET (£) |
|--|-----------------------|
| DIRECTORATE BUDGETS: | |
| Resources | 14,699,300 |
| Social care and inclusion | 74,468,399 |
| Children and young people | 55,582,492 |
| Neighbourhood services | 62,865,576 |
| Regeneration | 3,958,216 |
| CORPORATE PROVISIONS/CONTINGENCIES ETC: | |
| Capital financing | 17,036,928 |
| Non-service specific central items | 13,762,867 |
| Contribution to general reserves | 2,000,000 |
| Less: Capital Charges | -20,850,011 |
| LEVIES: | |
| Passenger Transport Levy | 13,587,000 |
| Environment Agency Levy | 82,930 |
| WALSALL MBC NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT | 237,193,697 |

- (d) That the following statutory determinations be noted (references are to the Local Government Finance Act, 1992):
- I. **£688,797,690** being the aggregate gross expenditure, which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) (a) to (e) of the Act.
 - II. **£451,603,993** being the aggregate income which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32 (3) (a) to (c) of the Act.
 - III. **£237,193,697** being the amount, by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 32 (4) as its budget requirement for the year.
 - IV. **£133,321,859** being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its General Fund in respect of redistributed Non-Domestic Rates (**£108,297,234**); Revenue Support Grant (**£24,996,399**); and the Collection Fund Surplus (**£28,226**).

- V. **£103,871,838** being the amount at (d iii) above, less the amount at (d iv) above, all divided by the Council Tax Base of **77,943.24**, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 33 (1) of the Act as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

VI. Valuation bands

Being amounts given by multiplying the amount at (d) above by the proportions set out in Section 5 (1) of the Act and calculated in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Act of the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands.

| A | B | C | D |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| £888.44 | £1,036.51 | £1,184.59 | £1,332.66 |
| E | F | G | H |
| £1,628.81 | £1,924.95 | £2,221.10 | £2,665.32 |

- (e) That the estimated precept from the Fire & Civil Defence Authority and the estimated precept for the Police Authority, issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown below be noted and that the final figures be substituted for these provisional ones once they are available at the Council meeting on 23 February 2009.

| PRECEPTING AUTHORITY | VALUATION BANDS | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Police | A | B | C | D |
| | £65.32 | £76.21 | £87.09 | £97.98 |
| | E | F | G | H |
| | £119.75 | £141.53 | £163.30 | £195.96 |
| Fire & Civil Defence | A | B | C | D |
| | £31.27 | £36.48 | £41.69 | £46.90 |
| | E | F | G | H |
| | £57.32 | £67.74 | £78.17 | £93.80 |

- (f) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (d) and (e) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts of council tax for 2009/10 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below.

| A | B | C | D |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| £985.03 | £1,149.20 | £1,313.37 | £1,477.54 |
| E | F | G | H |
| £1,805.88 | £2,134.22 | £2,462.57 | £2,955.08 |

- (g) That notice be given of the Council tax within twenty one days of it being set by publishing details of the same in the "Walsall Observer"; and the "Walsall Advertiser" being newspapers circulating in the authority's area.
- (h) That the chief financial officer be instructed to take all necessary action in relation to council tax, community charge and national non-domestic rates, including, where appropriate, the signing of all documents, the giving of notices and the taking of necessary steps to ensure collection thereof.
- (i) That the draft capital programme set out in the following tables be approved bearing in mind the principle that unless affordable from within current resources, specific projects funded by unsupported borrowing will not be commenced until a payback agreement is in place.

| DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/10 | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| MAINSTREAM SCHEMES | ESTIMATED VALUE £ |
| Education basic need | 1,443,204 |
| Modernisation - all schools | 1,947,980 |
| Schools access initiative | 586,620 |
| Local Transport Plan | 2,610,500 |
| Risk Management | 100,000 |
| Uninsured property damage | 100,000 |
| Contingency | 350,000 |
| Finance Direct/Oracle | 4,665,000 |
| Redhouse community centre | 300,000 |
| Walsall arboretum restoration programme | 374,233 |
| Walsall TCTP ring road land acquisition | 480,000 |
| Engineers– Town Centre Transport Package | 5,400,000 |
| Asbestos removal | 200,000 |
| Civic building air condition replacement | 300,000 |
| Legionella | 300,000 |
| Regenerating Walsall | 500,000 |
| Barcroft primary | 3,246,398 |
| Targeted capital fund | 500,000 |
| BSF | 900,000 |
| Clear major adaptations | 224,517 |
| Palfrey Park HLF | 75,000 |
| Pelsall library, childrens centre and health centre | 350,000 |
| Academies | 400,000 |
| TOTAL | 25,353,452 |

| MAINSTREAM CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009/10 | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| RESERVE BIDS | ESTIMATED VALUE £ |
| Clear major adaptations | 354,000 |
| Structural repairs to central library | 250,000 |
| Memorial safety | 100,000 |
| Eldon House Reprovision | 1,028,148 |
| Statutory testing of building services & resulting work | 300,000 |
| Essential repairs to Norfolk Place depot | 163,500 |
| Clear major adaptations | 421,483 |
| Planned property maintenance (non-educational bldgs) | 500,000 |
| Highways maintenance | 750,000 |
| Demolition of redundant buildings to save on rates | 200,000 |
| Provision of alternative accommodation to release leased premises | 1,000,000 |
| Shop maintenance | 120,000 |
| Additional contingency | 266,500 |
| Additional projects to support regeneration within Walsall which meet Council priorities | 1,000,000 |
| TOTAL | 6,453,631 |

| NON-MAINSTREAM CAPITAL PROGRAMME – SCHEMES FUNDED FROM GRANT 2009/10 | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| NON MAINSTREAM SCHEMES | ESTIMATED VALUE £ |
| 14-19 diplomas, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities | 2,000,000 |
| Barcroft primary | 1,332,089 |
| Devolved formula capital | 4,821,184 |
| Early years | 1,015,217 |
| Extended schools | 537,679 |
| Harnessing technology grant | 1,016,288 |
| Modernisation | 1,367,962 |
| Primary capital programme | 4,357,729 |
| Sure start, early years and child care grants | 546,966 |
| Targeted capital fund | 2,000,000 |
| Youth capital fund | 181,600 |
| Pathfinder short breaks | 117,300 |
| Bloxwich library project | 1,269,900 |
| Walsall's childrens play portfolio | 247,650 |
| Greenspaces improvement | 50,000 |
| Pelsall library, childrens centre and health centre | 550,000 |
| Palfrey park restoration programme | 296,500 |
| Walsall arboretum restoration programme | 720,574 |
| Waste infrastructure capital fund | 443,608 |
| Safer Stronger Community Fund | 106,655 |
| Bridge Street/Ablewell Street Townscape Heritage Initiative – Advantage West Midlands | 175,000 |

| | |
|--|---------|
| Bridge Street/Ablewell Street Townscape Heritage Initiative – Heritage Lottery Fund | 201,194 |
|--|---------|

| NON-MAINSTREAM CAPITAL PROGRAMME – SCHEMES FUNDED FROM GRANT 2009/10 CONTINUED | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| NON MAINSTREAM SCHEMES | ESTIMATED VALUE £ |
| Bus showcase | 1,000,000 |
| Local transport plan | 2,610,500 |
| Local transport plan – Darlaston project development | 150,000 |
| New deal for communities | 0 |
| Red routes | 2,000,000 |
| Willenhall Townscape Heritage Initiative - Heritage Lottery Fund | 150,000 |
| Willenhall Townscape Heritage Initiative – Visionary Investment Enhancing Walsall contribution | 150,000 |
| Disabled Facilities Grants | 1,500,000 |
| PARIS implementation - single capital pot | 129,000 |
| ICT infrastructure | 95,424 |
| Regional Housing Pot - Kickstart | 971,690 |
| Regional Housing Pot – Regeneration and Growth | 3,328,000 |
| Mental health | 137,000 |
| TOTAL | 35,576,709 |

| LEASING PROGRAMME 2009/10 | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| DIRECTORATE | TOTAL BUDGET £'000 |
| Neighbourhood Services | 3,400 |
| Social Care and Inclusion | 328 |
| Childrens Services | 36 |
| TOTAL | 3,764 |

2139 Walsall Arboretum Restoration programme

Councillor Harrison presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the Stage 2 application be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Funded Parks for People Programme by 31 March 2009;
- (2) That the procurement of the capital works programme is placed on the Procurement Team's Forward Plan and put out to OJEU tender as soon as possible after the HLF award;

- (3) That the Executive Director for Neighbourhood Services is granted delegated authority to award works contract(s) during the delivery of the scheme, subject to the limits set out in the Constitution;
- (4) That the revenue and capital resources required to deliver the Restoration Programme in future years are committed each year within the budget process.

2140 Corporate project management – strategic monitoring

Councillor Arif presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the report and the strategic project register as set out in Appendix 1 be noted.
- (2) That the progress on the implementation of the programme and project management software be noted.
- (3) That the Cabinet continue to work with relevant executive directors to implement any necessary corrective action to ensure successful delivery of strategic projects.
- (4) That Cabinet continue to endorse the use of the Council's programme and project management methodologies and practices ensuring that they are applied without exception.

2141 Private Session

Exclusion of public

Resolved

That during consideration of the remaining items on the agenda, the Cabinet considers that the item for consideration is exempt information by virtue of the appropriate paragraph(s) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972, and accordingly resolves to consider the item in private.

2142 Building Schools for the future

Tim Johnson presented the report in the absence of Councillor Zahid Ali:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That Cabinet notes the progress so far and the decision to submit a formal expression of interest for the next phase of the Building Schools for the Future programme (wave 7) with the intention for further waves to follow on in due course if government approval is achieved;
- (2) That Cabinet authorises the Director of Children's Services and/or the Executive Director for Regeneration and Performance to appoint Eversheds as the legal advisers to the Building Schools for the Future project and delegates authority to the Director of Children's Services and/or the Executive Director for Regeneration and Performance to proceed with the procurement of other specialist advisers as required;
- (3) That Cabinet approves the establishment of the project governance structure as set out in Appendix 1 of the report:
- (4) That Cabinet authorises officers to submit to Partnership for Schools the proposed five projects within Wave 6a as set out in Appendix 2 of the report and note that this is subject to approval from the Office of the Schools Commissioner and Partnership for Schools;
- (5) That Cabinet approves the Council's draft Strategy for Change part 1, set out in Appendix 3 of the report, authorises officers to submit the Strategy for Change to Partnership for Schools and to make any changes to this Strategy following discussions with Partnership for Schools;
- (6) That Cabinet note the proposals for the change of governance of Walsall Secondary Schools as set out in Appendix 5 of the report and that a further report be made to Cabinet on the pattern of provision of secondary education in the borough providing the opportunity for elected members to consider the consequences to the Council of changes to school governance.

[Exempt information under paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended)]

The meeting terminated at 6.45 p.m.

Leader:

Date: