

Cabinet minutes

Wednesday 18 November 2009 at 6.00 p.m.

in Conference Room 2 at the Council House Walsall

Present

Councillor Bird	Leader of the Council
Councillor Andrew	Deputy Leader and regeneration
Councillor Arif	Business support services
Councillor Walker	Children's services
Councillor Perry	Communities and partnerships
Councillor Flower	Environment
Councillor Sanders	Leisure and culture
Councillor McCracken	Social care, health and housing
Councillor Ansell	Transport

2303 Apology

An apology for non-attendance was submitted on behalf of Councillor Towe.

2304 Minutes

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2009 copies having been sent to each member of the Cabinet be approved and signed as a correct record.

2305 Declarations of interest

Councillors Andrew, Bird and Sanders declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 14 – Barr Beacon Heritage Lottery Fund application.

2306 Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985

Resolved

That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the items set out in the private part of the agenda for the reasons set out therein and Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

2307 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act

Councillor Bird presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved to recommend to Council

That the new model of Leader and Cabinet executive arrangements under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 Act, be adopted.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposal be considered at a specially convened Council meeting before the 31 December 2009.
- (2) That the Assistant Director for Legal and Constitutional Services be requested to ensure that:
 - (a) copies of the proposal be made available for inspection at the Civic Centre for the public;
 - (b) an advert be placed in a local newspaper setting out the main features of the proposal.

2308 A4148 Red route scheme – Pleck Road/Bescot Road

Councillor Ansell presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the outcome of the public consultation exercise undertaken in June 2009, demonstrating full public support for the scheme, be noted.
- (2) That the proposals as shown in the plans attached at Appendix A to be report be taken forward to detailed design and implementation.
- (3) That responsibility for resolving any minor scheme amendments be delegated to the Executive Director Regeneration in consultation with the portfolio holder. Specifically this will include: -
 - Finalising the location of any loading bays and parking arrangements along the route.
 - Finalising any agreements with adjoining land owners for any environmental mitigation and improvement measures required along the route.
 - Finalising the location of crossing points.

- (4) That approval be given to the undertaking of either the Maintenance or Transportation framework contractor in accordance with the Council's Financial and Contract Rules, to construct the Red Route proposals.

2309 Black Country Joint Core Strategy

Councillor Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That Cabinet approve the Joint Core Strategy as a basis for consultation in the publication stage of the production of the document;
- (2) That the Executive Director of Regeneration be delegated, in consultation with the portfolio holder, to approve any further amendments to the document as necessary prior to publication.

Resolved to recommend to Council

That the Black Country Joint Core Strategy be approved and submitted to the Secretary of State.

2310 Bereavement and Registration services – fees and charges

Councillor Flower presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That approval be given to an increase in burial, cremation and discretionary registration fees with effect from 1 January 2010 as detailed in the report and Appendices.

2311 Household waste recycling centres and transfer station

Councillor Flower presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That officers be authorised to enter into a three year extension to the existing contract with May Gurney for the management of the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres and Transfer Station.

2312 Draft corporate revenue budget 2010/11 for consultation

James Walsh presented the report in the absence of Councillor Towe:

(see annexed)

The Leader commented on the proposals and explained the next stages in the budget process.

At this point, with the approval of Cabinet, the Leader allowed Councillor I. Shires to speak.

Councillor Shires drew attention to budget item 115 relating to the proposed closure of Willenhall Leisure Centre and gave reasons to support the retention of the facility. He asked for the proposal to be removed and alternative options to be considered.

A lengthy discussion took place in respect of the proposal and related issues during which time the Leader pointed out that the budget proposals were in draft form and would be subject to the scrutiny process. In response to a specific point raised by Councillor Shires, the Leader asked that any report to the scrutiny panel on the proposals to close the leisure centre, should provide information on the relocation of the current user groups.

Resolved

(1) That the following be approved as the basis of consultation:

- (a) The budget framework and process detailed in Section 3 of the report;
- (b) The current draft net budget requirement of £242.678m;
- (c) The provisional formula grant entitlement of £137.243m;
- (d) A provisional Council tax increase of 4.5% and provisional Council tax at Band D, of £1,392.63 excluding precepts;
- (e) Total investment of £8.331m, relating to budget pressures and investment in service development as set out in sections 4.5 and 4.6 and Appendix 1 of the report;

- (f) Total savings, efficiencies and income generation proposals of £11.207m as set out in section 4.7 and Appendix 2 of the report.
- (2) That the consultation arrangements and reporting framework back to Cabinet set out in section 5 of the report, be noted and approved.
- (3) That this report be referred to all Scrutiny and Performance Panels for consultation, to enable their comments to be considered by Cabinet on 16 December, prior to Cabinet meeting on 3 February 2010 to make it's final budget recommendations to Council.

2313 Corporate financial performance

James Walsh presented the report in the absence of Councillor Towe:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That Cabinet:

- (1) Note a net revenue overspend of c £3.247m (0.4% of the current gross budget) which includes the effects of identified corrective action plans and the effects of non essential expenditure restraint;
- (2) Note and approve amendments to the net revenue budget due to new or increased grant allocations since the budget was approved by Council on 23 February 2009, as set out in paragraph 4.5 of the report;.
- (3) Note slippage on the capital programme of £1.942m, which is expected to be required to be carried forward into 2010/11, subject to Cabinet approval at year-end.
- (4) Note and approve amendments to the capital programme from additional grant approvals received since the programme was approved by Council on 23 February 2009, as set out in table 4 of the report.

2314 Corporate governance arrangements

James Walsh presented in the absence of Councillor Towe:

(see annexed)

It was noted that this was the first such report the scope of which took into account the CIPFA/SOLACE arrangements and which gave an overall “significant assurance”. The Chief Finance Officer also pointed out that the findings in relation to standards of conduct did not relate to the conduct of members, but related to the extent of awareness of the policy amongst staff. Notification of the policy would be reiterated.

Resolved

That the contents of the audit report be noted.

2315 Barr Beacon Heritage Lottery Fund application

At this point, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, Councillors Bird, Andrew and Sanders withdrew from the room for the duration consideration of this item.

Councillor Ansell in the Chair for item 14.

Councillor Ansell presented the report:

(see annexed)

Jamie Morris, Executive Director Neighbourhoods, commented that the report had been written in the expectation that official notification of the Stage 1 pass and award would be received before the meeting. Unfortunately the Heritage Lottery Fund had not yet completed their evaluation of all the information required and therefore the Cabinet was recommended to agree recommendations 2.2 to 2.6 in the report, subject to confirmation of the pass and award

Resolved

That subject to confirmation from the Heritage Lottery Fund of the Stage 1 pass and award of a Development Grant:

- (1) A Stage 2 application for the Barr Beacon Heritage Project to the HLF Heritage Grants programme by 30 September 2011 be supported.
- (2) The Head of Leisure and Culture act as the lead contact on the HLF application form.
- (3) Bids for match funding be submitted to other external grant bodies.
- (4) Opportunities be fully explored to develop links between the Barr Beacon Heritage Project and other heritage sites.
- (5) To note and endorse that no scheme will be allowed to commence unless an approval from the funding provider has been received to ensure that there will be no unbudgeted call on Council mainstream resources.

2316 Private Session

Exclusion of public

Resolved

That during consideration of the remaining items on the agenda, the Cabinet considers that the items for consideration are 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 those items in private.

Summary of item considered in private session

2317 New Walsall Police Station

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to pursue a compulsory purchase order to help deliver the Police Station relocation and for the sale of land to the Police Authority. The Cabinet approved the recommendations contained in the report.

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

The meeting terminated at 6.50 p.m.

Leader:

Date: