

# **Cabinet minutes**

**Wednesday 14 September 2011 at 6.00 p.m.**

**in Conference Room 2 at the Council House Walsall**

## **Present**

Councillor Bird	Leader of the Council
Councillor A. Andrew	Deputy Leader and regeneration
Councillor Arif	Business support services
Councillor R. Andrew	Children's services
Councillor Ali	Communities and partnerships
Councillor Towe	Finance and personnel
Councillor Harris	Leisure and culture
Councillor Ansell	Transport and environment

## **2688 Apology**

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

## **2689 Minutes**

### **Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2011 copies having been sent to each member of the Cabinet be approved and signed as a correct record.

## **2690 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **2691 Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985**

There were no items to be considered in private session.

## **2692 Forward plan**

The forward plan as at 11 August 2011 was submitted:

(see annexed)

The Leader advised that the Cabinet meeting in December had been brought forward a week to 14 December.

**Resolved**

That the forward plan be noted.

**2693 Black Country Business Friendly Planning Charter**

Councillor A. Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

**Resolved**

- (1) That Cabinet endorse the Black Country Planning and Development Charter and its use to promote a business friendly planning service in Walsall.
- (2) That Cabinet support the work activities as set out in the Black Country Planning and Development Charter and Implementation Plan and agree to receive further reports, if appropriate, to provide further details of the improvements being implemented at a Walsall and Black Country level.

**2694 New Homes Bonus**

Councillor A. Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

**Resolved**

- (1) That the remainder of the New Homes Bonus (NHB) allocation for 2011/12 of £866,506 only be used to assist specific new housing developments in the Borough, as far as possible equitably across the Borough's six partnership areas, with the developments selected by using the outline scoring matrix set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
- (2) That approval be given to the outline scoring criteria set out in Appendix 1 to enable the assessment of any applications made to the Council from third parties for funds to stimulate the provision of new homes in the Borough in 2011/12.

- (3) That authority to develop a process, compliant with the Council's Contract Rules 2010, to allocate the balance of the 2011/12 NHB funds to support the development of new homes in the Borough, be delegated to the Executive Director Regeneration, in consultation with the Regeneration Portfolio Holder
- (4) That authority to take decisions to allocate the balance of the 2011/12 funds to third parties or otherwise to support the development of new homes in the Borough, by way of a loan, grant or an alternative form of intervention, be delegated to the Executive Director Regeneration, in consultation with the Regeneration portfolio holder, taking into account the agreed scoring criteria.
- (5) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director Regeneration to sign or approve the sealing of any deeds, contracts and other related documents with third parties for the NHB funds that are to be allocated to stimulate the provision of new homes within the Borough using the balance of the 2011/12 allocation.
- (6) That a further report be submitted to Cabinet in December 2011:
  - outlining specific criteria for investment of the balance of NHB in line with the agreed NHB investment principles over future years,
  - proposing detailed arrangements for the management of the programme, including financial and staffing implications.

#### **2695 Walsall Housing Strategy 2011-2016**

Councillor A. Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

#### **Resolved to recommend to Council**

That the Housing Strategy 2011-2016 be adopted.

#### **2696 Black Country Business Property Investment Programme**

Councillor A. Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That Cabinet endorse the approach to the preparation of a full application for European Regional Development Fund funding.

- (2) That Cabinet agrees in principle the governance structure as set out in Appendix B to the report.
- (3) That Cabinet agrees to receive a future report prior to submission of the full application to Communities and Local Government setting out the final governance structure, detailed financial and staffing resource implications and contractual arrangements for Cabinet's approval.

**2697 Home to school transport policy**

Councillor R. Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

**Resolved**

That the refreshed Home to School Transport policy be approved.

**2698 Caldmore Primary School – statutory proposals**

Councillor R. Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

**Resolved**

That approval be given to the publication of a statutory proposal to significantly enlarge Caldmore Primary School from 1 FE (Forms of Entry) to 2 FE by increasing the intake from 30 to 60 places from 1 September 2012.

**2699 Education capital programme**

Councillor R. Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

**Resolved**

- (1) That schemes and budgets set out in of this report be approved, including permission to seek tenders and appoint contractors to undertake the work identified.

- (2) That Cabinet delegates to the Executive Director for Children's Services in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder authority to award contracts (including authorising execution/signature of the contract and ancillary documents) to the most suitable contractors having regard to Best Value for the works/services as set out.
- (3) That approval be given to the option to use an appropriate form of procurement and contracting arrangements determined by the head of Property Services to provide the most efficient and value for money means of delivering the projects. This to include consideration of traditional procurement and EU compliant frameworks available to local authorities.

#### **2700 Annual adoption report**

Councillor R. Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

##### **Resolved**

That the good progress made particularly in relation to the 'good' Ofsted rating in August 2010 for the Adoption Service be noted.

#### **2701 Annual fostering report**

Councillor R. Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Andrew thanked staff, foster carers and members of the fostering and adoption panels for their service which had led to significant improvements and the number of looked after children in Walsall decreasing.

##### **Resolved**

That the good progress made particularly in relation to the 'good' Ofsted rating in September 2010 for the Fostering Service be noted.

#### **2702 Financial plan 2012/13: Draft revenue and capital budget proposals**

Councillor Towe presented the report:

(see annexed)

## **Resolved**

- (1) That Cabinet approve as the basis for consultation:
  - (a) Provisional revenue cash limits by portfolio as set out in section 3.8, which include draft savings options referred to in the relevant portfolio plans.
  - (b) Provisional capital cash limits by portfolio as set out in section 3.9
- (2) That Cabinet note and approve the consultation arrangements and reporting framework back to Cabinet set out in section 3.
- (3) That Cabinet refer this report to all scrutiny and performance panels for consultation, to enable their comments to be considered by Cabinet on 9 November 2011.
- (4) That Cabinet note that the 2012/13 provisional revenue cash limit is based on the draft formula grant settlement announced in December 2010 and initial savings proposals. Should the final allocation be less than current estimates, further proposals for ensuring a balanced budget will be brought back for Cabinet consideration as the budget develops and information is published.
- (5) That Cabinet note that the 2012/13 provisional capital cash limit includes provision for ongoing commitments to the approved capital programme from 2011/12, and are subject to confirmation of available capital resources for future years.

## **2703 Evaluation of Area Partnerships**

Councillor Ali presented the report:

(see annexed)

A discussion took place particularly in respect of the recommendation that elected members should not attend Area Partnership meetings. Councillor Ali suggested that, should the Cabinet be minded to support this recommendation, elected members should be informed of progress on issues raised at those meetings. He also advised that the decision in this respect may not need to be submitted to Council and advice on this was being sought.

Accordingly, it was **moved** by Councillor Ali, duly seconded and:

## **Resolved**

- (1) That the findings and recommendations of the 'Evaluation of Area Partnerships' be noted.

- (2) That the recommendation that Elected Members should not attend Area Partnership meetings be supported and that the Chief Executive be requested to report back to Cabinet on appropriate ways to ensure Councillors are kept informed of progress on tasking issues raised at those meetings.
- (3) That the Chief Executive be requested to advise on the approval process for the review..

#### **2704 Commissioning Mental Health Services**

Paul Davies, Executive Director presented the report:

(see annexed)

##### **Resolved**

- (1) That a programme of reviews of all individuals receiving support from Broadway North be completed by the end of March 2012;
- (2) That a subsequent programme of re-commissioning of the services be carried out through the 2012/13 financial year to release resources from the historical pattern of provision to support individually tailored support plans;
- (3) That the Council continues to work in partnership with Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Trust to ensure that re-commissioning of services at the Broadway North Centre is fully incorporated within the overall service redesign of mental health services; and
- (4) That officers continue to consult with service users and carers on proposals for the development of the services.

#### **2705 Winter service operational plan**

The reports of the Environment Scrutiny and Performance Panel and portfolio holder were submitted:

(see annexed)

##### **Resolved**

- (1) That the report of the Environment Scrutiny and Performance Panel be noted.
- (2) That the Winter Service Operational Plan 2011/12 be approved.

- (3) That the Head of Engineering and Transportation be authorised to make amendments to the plan, as necessary, in the light of case law or legal advice, which might assist in managing the risk of litigation in relation to the exercise of the statutory duty under Section 41 (1A) of the Highways Act 1980 to 'ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that safe passage of the highway is not endangered by snow and ice'.

#### **2706 Civil parking enforcement annual report**

Councillor Ansell presented the report:

(see annexed)

##### **Resolved**

- (1) That Cabinet note the content of the annual report and approve it for submission to the joint committee of England and Wales for the Civil Enforcement of Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London (PATROL).
- (2) That Cabinet approve the submission of statistical information contained within the annual report to the Department for Transport and the Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT).
- (3) That Cabinet authorise the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Environment, to approve any final changes to Appendix A that may be required as a result of minor drafting errors, or to improve overall presentation in line with Department for Transport expectations.

#### **2707 Town Centre parking working group**

Councillor Ansell presented the report:

(see annexed)

##### **Resolved**

- (1) That Cabinet note the full response to the recommendations made by the Environment Scrutiny and Performance Panel as set out in sections 3.3 and 3.4 of this report.
- (2) That Cabinet approve the following:



- (a) That the cost of parking at Ward Street and Dudley Street car parks be reduced to £3 per day, for an initial trial period of three months with delegated authority given to the Executive Director for Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the portfolio holder to continue the trial for a further three months if found to be successful at this stage.
- (b) That the four hour parking charge on all town centre car parks be reduced by £1 to £2.80 for four hours for an initial trial period of three months with delegated authority given to the Executive Director for Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the portfolio holder to continue the trial for a further three months if found to be successful at this stage.
- (c) That officers, in conjunction with representatives of the Crown Wharf and Premier Business Park, determine the demand for dedicated permit holder only car parks in Frederick Street, Charles Street and Brook Street. Subject to a suitable level of demand, to introduce permit holder business parking at a cost of £30 per month.
- (d) That pay and display parking be introduced at the above car parks subject to the demand for permit holder business parking. The level of charge to be set at £3 per day but to be reviewed after six months.

The meeting terminated at 7.15 p.m.

Leader:

Date: