

Cabinet minutes

Wednesday 17 March 2010 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 Towe	Finance and personnel
Councillor Harris	Leisure and culture
Councillor McCracken	Social care, health and housing
Councillor Ansell	Transport

2395 Minutes

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2010 copies having been sent to each member of the Cabinet be approved and signed as a correct record.

2396 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2397 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.

2398 Forward plan

The forward plan as at 4 January 2010 was submitted:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the forward plan be noted.

2399 Portfolio plans

Councillor Bird presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the nine portfolio plans, reflecting the Council's priorities for 2010/11 set out in the Corporate Plan and the shared vision for the borough be approved.

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2400 Protocol for Walsall Council to act as the Accountable Body

Councillor Bird presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That Cabinet approves the proposed protocol, (which consists of the principles set out in paragraph 3.4 and the decision-making matrices attached at appendix 1 – 3), to be used on every occasion that it is being considered that the Council becomes the accountable body.

2401 Provision of primary school places

Councillor Walker presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the schedule of primary school places as set out in Appendix A of this report be noted.

- (2) That the implementation date of the significant enlargement of Birchills CE Primary School be modified to bring it forward from September 2011 to September 2010.
- (3) That Cabinet notes that it is proposed to go over the published admission number at Hillary Primary School and to admit up to 90 pupils in September 2010.
- (4) That the consultation on the proposal to significantly enlarge Hillary Primary School and increase the intake from 60 to 90 places from September 2011, be approved.
- (5) That Cabinet notes that it is proposed to go over the published admission number at King Charles Primary School and to admit up to 45 pupils in September 2010.
- (6) That the consultation on the proposal to significantly enlarge King Charles Primary School and increase the intake from 30 to 45 places from September 2011, be approved.

2402 Determination of admission arrangements

Councillor Walker presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Perry expressed concern at the recent decision by the Schools Adjudicator to change the admissions criteria at short notice for 2010 admissions and suggested that a letter be sent to the Education Secretary in respect of the potential disadvantages this may create.

Resolved

- (1) That the admission arrangements for primary and secondary community and voluntary controlled schools for the academic year 2011/12, as set out in Appendix A of the report, be agreed.
- (2) That the publication of the associated statutory notice be approved.
- (3) That Walsall Children's Services - Serco be asked to inform all consultees of the determination of the admission arrangements for 2011/12.

2403 Pool Hayes Arts and Community School – outcome of consultation

Councillor Walker presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That approval be given to the publication of a statutory proposal to significantly enlarge Pool Hayes Arts and Community School by increasing the admission number from 213 to 240 from 1 September 2016.

2404 Frank F. Harrison Engineering College – outcome of consultation

Councillor Walker presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That Cabinet approval be given to the publication of a statutory proposal to significantly enlarge Frank F Harrison Engineering College by increasing the admission number from 180 to 240 from 1 September 2014.

2405 Walsall “Myplace”

Councillor Walker presented the report:

(see annexed)

The Leader commended Councillor Walker and officers for their work to produce this scheme which would ensure that the funding from the Big Lottery was secured.

Resolved

- (1) That approval be given for the provision of a young people’s facility on the Joseph Leckie school campus, and authority given for the preparation of a business plan for submission to the BIG lottery to help deliver the project.
- (2) That authority for the submission and implementation of the business plan be delegated to the Executive Director of Children’s Services, in consultation with the portfolio holder for Children’s services.

2406 Early years strategy

Councillor Walker presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved to recommend to Council

That the Early Years Strategy as set out in Appendix A of the report, be approved.

2407 Tony Stainer

Councillor Walker informed Cabinet that Tony Stainer would be leaving Serco and this would be his last Cabinet meeting. Cabinet members thanked Mr. Stainer for his work at Walsall. The Leader said that this Cabinet and Council were indebted to Mr. Stainer for his work to raise the standard of education in Walsall and hoped he would conduct his duties elsewhere as well as he had at Walsall.

2408 Walsall “Single Conversation” and Local Investment Plan

Councillor Andrew presented the report and supplementary report:

(see annexed)

In presenting the reports, Councillor Andrew informed Cabinet of the recommendations of the Regeneration Scrutiny and Performance Panel in respect of this matter, which was to support the plan and to recognise the reduced need for flats/apartments.

Resolved

- (1) That the Single Conversation process as described in the report, and the links to the Strategic Regeneration Framework 1 Outline Business Case, be noted.
- (2) That the Walsall’s Local Investment Plan set out in Appendix A be approved and that authority be delegated to the Executive Director, Regeneration in consultation with the portfolio holder for Regeneration to make any further amendments following negotiations with the Homes & Communities Agency.

2409 Strategic Regeneration Framework 1

Councillor Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the Outline Business Case for the Strategic Regeneration Framework 1 Programme in Brownhills, Moxley and Goscote Lane Corridor – Phase 1 submitted to the Homes and Communities Agency, be endorsed.

2410 Connecting to opportunities fund

Councillor Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

(1) That the proposal for the Connecting to Opportunities Fund be supported.

(2) **To recommend to Council**

That approval be given to the Council acting as the accountable body for the Connecting to Opportunities Fund.

(3) That, subject to (2) above it be noted that Clive Wright, Walsall Partnership, will be the accountable body officer.

(4) That the use of the robust monitoring process implemented for Working Neighbourhoods Fund, to monitor this project, be agreed.

(5) That Cabinet receive a monitoring report every six months

2411 Beacon index 2009/10

Councillor Arif presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

(1) That the performance position for the Council's priorities and pledges as of 31 December 2009 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, be noted..

(2) That the proposed change of target for Beacon Index measure HRD 2.2 (vacancy %) be agreed.

2412 **Corporate financial performance 2009/10**

Councillor Towe presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That Cabinet:

- (a) Note a net revenue overspend of c £1.989m (0.26% of the current gross budget) which includes the effects of identified corrective action plans and the effects of non essential expenditure restraint.
- (b) Note and approve the earmarking of £0.100m general reserves to fund costs arising from additional pot hole repairs due to the recent adverse weather conditions.
- (c) Note that opening reserves for 2010/11 will be in line with those set out in the medium term financial strategy (MTFS).
- (d) Note slippage/underspends on the capital programme of £5.469m, the majority of which is expected to be required to be carried forward into 2010/11, subject to Cabinet approval at year-end.
- (e) Note amendments to the capital programme since the programme was approved by Council on 23 February 2009, as set out in table 3.

2413 **Corporate risk management**

Councillor Towe presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the application of the revised corporate risk management strategy (Appendix 1) be agreed.
- (2) That the work undertaken by the Audit Committee in ensuring that risk is being actively managed within the organisation be acknowledged.

2414 **Fairer charging for personalisation**

Councillor McCracken presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That Cabinet approve progress on work to date and agree Appendix A for distribution.
- (2) That Cabinet receive a further report following consultation to determine Walsall MBC final decision in response to this policy guidance.

2415 West Midlands Local Transport Plan settlement and Transport Capital Programme

Councillor Ansell presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the proposed 2010/11 transport capital programme as summarised in Table 1 (full details included in Appendices A and B of the report), be approved.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director Regeneration in consultation with portfolio holder to manage the programme to ensure delivery within budget limits.
- (3) That the ongoing concern regarding revenue support for transport capital projects (3.2) be noted.
- (4) That Cabinet endorse an efficiency review in conjunction with audit of the development and implementation processes and procedures for capital projects to ensure that the use of limited capital resources is maximised. (3.3)
- (5) That Cabinet approve the slippage from the Integrated Transport Block for the 2009/10 financial year, to be allocated the Darlaston Strategic Development Area project to fund property acquisition, Bentley Canal Bridge and Detailed Design to ensure the advancement of the construction of the major scheme. In addition to this to also fund the remaining Red Route and Bus Showcase Schemes.(3.5).
- (6) That Cabinet note the overspend (in line with the Financial and Contract Regulations) on the Bentley Road South Canal Bridge works and allow slippage to be allocated to pay the retention payment for the works.
- (7) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director Regeneration to identify what schemes may be placed on hold should any additional reserves be required to fund the completion of the TCTP scheme from within the overall programme (IT Block and Maintenance). This will mean that some schemes identified within the Appendix A demonstrating a lower priority may not be started in the 2010/11 financial year.

- (8) That authority be delegated to the Executive Director Regeneration to identify what schemes should be placed on hold, should funding be reduced following a general election.
- (9) That Cabinet approve an additional future allocation from the Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme of up to £1.85m spread out over a period of 5 years starting from 2010/11 through to 2014/15 to fund the local contribution to the DSDA scheme. This is to satisfy the financial requirements for the S151 signature required at Programme Entry stage.

2416 Personalisation

The report of the Social Care and Inclusion Scrutiny and Performance Panel was submitted:

(see annexed)

Councillor McCracken spoke to the report and said that the Personalisation agenda had been implemented as a result of legislation and would have a significant impact on service users in Walsall, requiring them to take ownership of their own budgets. She commended the scrutiny panel on their work to safeguard the interests of service users and accepted their recommendations.

Resolved

That the report of the Social Care and Inclusion Scrutiny and Performance Panel be noted.

2417 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 items considered in private session

2418 Land at High Street, Brownhills – proposed compulsory purchase order

Councillor Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

The Cabinet gave in-principle approval for the making of a compulsory purchase order and disposal of the Council's land to enable the comprehensive assembly of land and redevelopment of Ravenscourt Precinct and land at High Street/Silver Street/Pier Street, Brownhills, which represents a key part of the regeneration of Brownhills centre, a priority within the SRF1 programme.

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

2419 **Land off Chester Road, Aldridge – Bliss Quarry**

Councillor Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That Cabinet note the report and the potential courses of action that may be necessary to secure the development as described in paragraphs 3.21 to 3.27 of the report.
- (2) That officers pursue adoption of the new site access road as described at paragraph 3.8 of the report.

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