

# **Cabinet minutes**

**Wednesday 4 February 2015 at 6.00 p.m.**

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

## **Present**

Councillor S. Coughlan	Leader of the Council
Councillor Nazir	Deputy Leader and Regeneration
Councillor Cassidy	Children's services and education
Councillor Hussain	Community, leisure and culture
Councillor Jeavons	Environment and transport
Councillor Robertson	Health
Councillor Chambers	Personnel and business support
Councillor D. Coughlan	Social care

## **3260 Minutes**

### **Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2014 copies having been sent to each member of the Cabinet be approved and signed as a correct record.

## **3261 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **3262 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.

## **3263 Petitions**

The following petitions were submitted:

- (1) Save Blackwood Library (Mrs. K. Dowd)
- (2) "Axe Labour's garden tax" (further names to petition submitted to Council on 12.1.15) (Councillor Bird)

### 3264 **Questions**

There were no questions submitted.

### 3265 **Forward plan**

The forward plan as at 12 January 2015 was submitted:

(see annexed)

#### **Resolved**

That the forward plan be noted.

### 3266 **Children's centre redesign**

Councillor Cassidy presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Cassidy said that the decision relating to this matter would be made in the private session following consideration of a report containing confidential information.

### 3267 **Children's SEN school assisted transport and school bus passes**

Councillor Cassidy presented the report and reminded members that the full Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) had previously been circulated as part of the bundle of EqIAs on all budget proposals:

(see annexed)

Councillor Cassidy also advised Cabinet of an amendment to recommendation (3):

- “(3) That, subject to approval by Cabinet of the £1.65 million from general reserves to assist Children's Services manage demand pressures, £8,000 in 2015/16 and £23,000 in 2016/17 will be made available, should it be required, to maintain the budget at the current level, to minimise the possibility of any child or their family being adversely affected by the proposals.”

The Leader pointed out that the decision referred to above in relation to the use of resources would be made as part of the decision on the Corporate financial monitoring report later in the agenda.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the proposed changes to remove discretionary bus passes to faith schools, except where families are in receipt of Free School Meals/ Working Tax Credit, be approved.
- (2) That approval be given to restrict travel assistance payments to families where they choose to send their child to an out of Borough school not recommended by the local authority.
- (3) That, subject to approval by Cabinet of the £1.65 million from general reserves to assist Children's Services manage demand pressures, £8,000 in 2015/16 and £23,000 in 2016/17 will be made available, should it be required, to maintain the budget at the current level, to minimise the possibility of any child or their family being adversely affected by the proposals.
- (4) That Cabinet note that the updated Home to School Travel Assistance Policy will be presented for final approval in May 2015 when consultation has been finalised on other non-budget related changes to the Policy.

### **3268 Special educational needs disability review**

Councillor Cassidy presented the report:

(see annexed)

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the options proposed in Appendix A to the report to go forward for statutory consultation be approved.
- (2) That Cabinet agree to receive a further report in April 2015 detailing the outcome from the statutory consultation and recommending proposals for approval.

### **3269 Youth support service**

Councillor Cassidy presented the report:

(see annexed)

### **Resolved**

- (1) That Cabinet the results and feedback from the corporate consultation process for the Youth Support Service budget proposal.

- (2) That Cabinet approve the proposed arrangements for the review of the Targeted Youth Work service area of Youth Support Services, including a clear focus on best quality and best price.
- (3) That Cabinet note the £165k additional budget pressure for the Youth Support Service related to the Youth Justice Service resulting from the cumulative impact of reducing Youth Justice Board and partnership contributions, and the work being undertaken to manage this pressure.

### **3270 Corporate financial monitoring**

Councillor S. Coughlan presented the report:

(see annexed)

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That Cabinet note the pressures outlined in the report and that directorate corrective action plans have been produced to mitigate the potential overspend down to £3.30m.
- (2) That Cabinet note action being taken to manage the cost pressures arising.
- (3) That the risks to the forecast be noted.
- (4) That the forecast underspend on the Council funded capital programme of £350k be noted.
- (5) That the amendments to the capital programme as detailed in section 3.6 of the report be approved.
- (6) That the use of general reserves for the management of ongoing pressures as detailed in section 3.8 of the report of the report be noted.

### **3271 Corporate Plan 2015-19 “Shaping a fairer future”**

Councillor S. Coughlan presented the report:

(see annexed)

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

That the Corporate Plan 2015-19, “Shaping a fairer future” as the context for a four year financial plan be adopted.

## 3272 **Corporate Budget Plan and Treasury Management and Investment Strategy**

Councillor S. Coughlan presented the report and revised recommendations following the final settlement notification received on 3 February 2015:

(see annexed)

### **Resolved**

(1) That Cabinet note:

- (a) 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 levels. (The council has been advised that they will both be approved following meetings scheduled for early February, final figures will therefore be provided prior to or at the Council meeting of 26 February 2015).
- (b) That at the time of despatch of this report, the levy authorities (Environment Agency and Centro) had not formally notified the authority of their final demand. Current estimates have been used for Centro and Environment Agency based on informal communication, but these are subject to formal approval. (The final levies are expected to be approved early February, and will be included within the final papers to Council).

(2) That Cabinet approve:

- (a) The attached report titled Section A: The Findings from Budget Consultation Phase Two: Financial Year 2015/16 and Cabinet Responses.
- (b) The allocation of revenue resources for 2015/16 as set out in Section B: Part 1 "The Revenue and Capital Budget Plan", and subject to required consultation and equality impact assessment, the allocation of revenue resources and savings for 2016/17, and further delegates authority to the relevant executive directors to implement the same, subject to Council approving the budget on 26 February 2015.
- (c) A Walsall council draft net council tax requirement for 2015/16 of £93.70m – with a 1.99% increase in council tax.
- (d) Policy changes as set out in section 12.5 and table 1 of this report, and instruct executive directors to implement these, subject to Council approving the budget on 26 February 2015.
- (e) That delegated authority be given to the Chief Finance Officer to make any necessary amendments, in consultation with the Leader (portfolio holder for finance), to take account of the final levies and precepts which have not yet been notified; any changes arising from final technical guidance or legislation on the budget, and to make any necessary amendments to the statutory determinations and council tax bands to take account of those changes and the resulting final analysis of the budget for 2015/16 and for amendments to those to be submitted and therefore recommended to Council at its meeting on 26 February 2015.

- (f) The capital programme for 2015/16 of £47.96m subject to Council approving the Council's borrowing requirement and capital expenditure plans on 26 February 2015.
- (3) (a) That Cabinet approve and recommend to Council recommendations 2.3.1 to 2.3.3 as amended and table 13 of Corporate Budget plan and Treasury Management strategy.
- (b) That due to changes in the final settlement announced on 4 February 2015 an amended report be submitted to Council to reflect the final budget plan for 2015/16 which will also include any amendments due to receipt of final precepts and levies, technical/legislative guidance and final specific grant allocations.

### 2.3.1 Revenue

- (a) The allocation of revenue resources for 2015/16 as set out in Section B: Part 1 "The Revenue and Capital Budget Plan". (See amended table 13)
- (b) That the recommendations of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in respect of the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the budget calculations and the adequacy of reserves **be approved**, including the levels of central contingency and an opening general reserves of not less than £10.15m, as set out in **Annex 3** of the budget plan.
- (c) The final levy for West Midlands Passenger Transport and estimated levy for Environment Agency below. Cabinet **approve** that the final figures **be substituted** for the provisional one once they are available at the Council meeting on 26 February 2015.

LEVY	AMOUNT (£)
West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority	<b>12,849,678</b>
Environment agency	<b>74,553</b>

- (d) The following statutory determinations (references are to the Local Government Finance Act, 1992 as amended), and subject to any final changes arising from receipt of final precepts and levies, technical/legislative guidance and final specific grant allocations, **and Cabinet approve that these will be substituted** at the Council meeting on 26 February 2015 for the final figures once received:
- I. **£622,297,888** being the aggregate gross expenditure, which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act.
  - II. **£528,594,921** being the aggregate income which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act.
  - III. **£93,702,967** being the amount, by which the aggregate at (d) (I) above exceeds the aggregate at (d) (II), calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year.

IV. **£1,438.32** being the amount at (d) (III) above, divided by the council tax base of **65,147.51**, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (average council tax at band D).

V. Valuation bands

Being amounts given by multiplying the amount at (d) (iv) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5 (1) of the Local Government Act 1992, is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 30 and 36 of the Act as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands.

- (e) The draft precept from the Fire and Rescue Authority and the final precept for the Police and Crime Commissioner, 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 and Cabinet **approve** that the final figures **be substituted** once they are available at the Council meeting on 26 February 2015.

PRECEPTING AUTHORITY	VALUATION BANDS			
Police And Crime Commissioner	A	B	C	D
	£71.03	£82.87	£94.71	£106.55
	E	F	G	H
	£130.23	£153.91	£177.58	£213.10
Fire & Rescue	A	B	C	D
	£36.62	£42.73	£48.83	£54.94
	E	F	G	H
	£67.14	£79.35	£91.56	£109.87

- (f) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (d) (v) 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 2015/16 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below and Cabinet **approve** that the final figures **be substituted** once the final precepts are available at the Council meeting on 26 February 2015.

A	B	C	D
£1,066.53	£1,244.30	£1,422.05	£1,599.81
E	F	G	H
£1,955.32	£2,310.84	£2,666.35	£3,199.62

- (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 Advertiser" newspaper 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, pursuant to Section 52ZB and 52ZC of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the relevant basic amount of council tax for the Council is not excessive in relation to determining whether a referendum is required.

### 2.3.2 Capital

- (a) The allocation of capital expenditure plans as set out in Section B: Part 1 “The Revenue and Capital Budget Plan”.
- (b) 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. Schemes funded from grant will commence when final allocations are published. Reserve list items will only commence should funding become available during the financial year.

<b>CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16</b>	
<b>MAINSTREAM (COUNCIL FUNDED) SCHEMES</b>	<b>ESTIMATED VALUE £</b>
<b><i>Prior Year Approvals</i></b>	
Social IT Systems Review & Enhancement	550,000
Rushall Primary / EDC alterations	350,000
Libraries Universal Digital Offer – a 21 <sup>st</sup> century Public Library service	54,840
Active Living – Oak Park and Bloxwich Leisure Centres	14,969,854
Bentley Employability and Learning Hub	115,000
Walsall Market	1,750,000
<b><i>Rolling Programme Schemes</i></b>	
Proactive Memorial Safety in Walsall cemeteries	60,000
Public Lighting ‘Invest to save’ for replacement LED lighting	250,000
Highway Maintenance Programme	1,900,000
Highway Maintenance – funding shift from revenue	100,000
Retained Housing Land Inspection/Maintenance of LSVT sites	50,000
Preventative adaptations and Supporting Independence	250,000
Health Through Warmth – Safety Net support	150,000
Aids & Adaptations – statutory element	750,000
<b><i>New Capital Bids</i></b>	
Leamore Park additional fencing	14,000
A single library management system for Black Country	210,000
Walsall Gala Baths refurbishment	1,000,000
Mayrise system mobile working	138,000
Traffic signals – replacement of obsolete equipment	200,000
Traffic signals – invest to save conversion to LED lighting	650,000
LEX remediation works	405,000
ICT essential upgrade to Blackberry server	16,501
ICT essential upgrade to Windows 2003 servers	110,000
<b><i>Council Wide bids</i></b>	



Funding to support essential works including Health & Safety, and other projects that cannot be guaranteed at start of year	1,000,000
Provision for match funded external schemes	350,000
Reserve list projects – allocation to be drawn upon in year	60,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,453,195</b>

<b>NON-MAINSTREAM CAPITAL PROGRAMME – SCHEMES FUNDED FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES 2015/16</b>	<b>ESTIMATED VALUE £</b>
Basic Need	4,393,150
Devolved Formula Capital	571,223
Capital Maintenance	2,784,688
Active Living – Oak Park and Bloxwich Leisure Centres	1,561,717
Aldridge Airport – development of Walsall Country Park including the Top Hangar (match funding may be required for resurfacing of access road)	2,000,000
Beacon Lodge, Community Activity Centre	20,000
Barr Beacon Event Arena	20,000
Allotments and Community Gardens	5,000
Outdoor fitness equipment	25,000
Forest Arts Centre hall conversion	100,000
LTP Highway Maintenance Programme	2,415,000

<b>NON-MAINSTREAM CAPITAL PROGRAMME – SCHEMES FUNDED FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES 2015/16 - Continued</b>	<b>ESTIMATED VALUE £</b>
Integrated Transport Block / Local Transport Plan 2015/16	1,247,000
Darlaston Strategic Development Area Access Project	4,945,132
Disabled Facilities Grant	1,632,000
Community Capital Capacity Grant	797,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,516,910</b>

<b>LEASING PROGRAMME 2015/16</b>	
<b>PORTFOLIO</b>	<b>EXPENDITURE £</b>
Environment & Transport portfolio – vehicles and equipment	2,115,832
Community, Leisure & Culture portfolio – leisure equipment	588,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,703,832</b>

<b>CAPITAL PROGRAMME RESERVE LIST ITEMS 2015/16</b>	
<b>MAINSTREAM (COUNCIL FUNDED) SCHEMES</b>	<b>ESTIMATED VALUE £</b>
Willenhall Lawn Cemetery extension	1,200,000
Local History Centre upgrade of computers	18,252
Darlaston Swimming Pool refurbishment	150,000
Walsall Country Park	68,500
Security improvement programme	5,000
Retained Housing Land Inspection & Maintenance of LSVT sites	50,000
Residential Parking – Construction of new residential parking facilities (verge parking)	250,000
Promotion of Community Health & Safety	240,000
Local safety schemes	400,000
Regenerating Walsall	200,000

Preventative Adaptations and Supporting Independence	750,000
Aids & Adaptations – statutory element	250,000
Leasing vs Buy	2,560,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,141,752</b>

### 2.3.3 Treasury Management

- (a) That Section B – Part 2 – The Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2015/16, including the council's borrowing requirement and the adoption of the prudential indicators, **be approved**.
- (b) That decisions to effect movements between conventional borrowing and other long term liabilities, such as leases, **be delegated** to the Chief Finance Officer.
- (c) That decisions to use capital receipts or unsupported borrowing within the framework of approved prudential indicators **be delegated** to the Chief Finance Officer.

### 3273 **Changes to Borneo Street allotment land**

Councillor Hussain presented the report:

(see annexed)

#### **Resolved**

That Cabinet confirms its authority to proceed with an application to the Secretary of State taking into account the new information that has come to light and the consequent impact upon the risk of securing approval of this application.

### 3274 **A Heritage Strategy for the borough of Walsall**

Councillor Hussain presented the report:

(see annexed)

#### **Resolved**

That the new Heritage Strategy for the Borough of Walsall be approved.

### 3275 **Community hubs – shaping a fairer future**

Councillor Hussain presented the report:

(see annexed)

## **Resolved**

- (1) That Cabinet endorse the policy statement 'Community Hubs –Shaping a Fairer Future'.
- (2) That Cabinet invite each Area Partnership to prepare proposals for community hubs in their area, and for these to be considered by Cabinet.

### **3276 Tendering for replacement mobile phone contract**

Councillor Chambers presented the report:

(see annexed)

## **Resolved**

- (1) That Cabinet approve the Council's participation in the next National Further Competition (NFC10) for mobile services facilitated by Crown Commercial Service.
- (2) That Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director – Resources to enter into a new contract for mobile services, to include entering into an agreement with Crown Commercial Service to participate in the next Further National Competition (NFC10), which will legally bind the Council to the outcome of NFC10 and will result in a contract award to the successful bidder.
- (3) That Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director – Resources to subsequently sign or authorise the signing or sealing of any 'call off' agreements, deeds, contracts and other related documents in relation to mobile services.

### **3277 Private Session**

## **Exclusion of public**

## **Resolved**

That during consideration of the remaining item 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.

At this point, the time being 6.36 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to enable the public to leave the room.

The meeting reconvened at 6.45 p.m.

### 3278 **Children's centre redesign**

Councillor Cassidy presented the report:

(see annexed)

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That the results and feedback from the consultation process for the proposed redesign of Children's Centre services be noted.
- (2) That Cabinet approve the retention of 5 Children's Centre locality hubs in areas of greatest need (Palfrey, Alumwell, Birchills, Blakenall and Darlaston) and the implementation of the proposed model with changes identified in (6) below.
- (3) That approval be given to the closure of the 5 Children Centres (Streetly, Pheasey, Greenfield, Leighswood and Paddock) in the most affluent areas of the borough with effect from 1 April 2015 and approve an outreach delivery model that will continue to deliver a range of universal and targeted services to children and families in these communities. (In the case of Pheasey and Streetly this will include the LA seeking to transfer the risk relating to capital clawback if building not utilised for child focused services).
- (4) That Cabinet approve a model of childcare focussed on enabling the delivery of places for the most vulnerable 2 year olds eligible for 15 hours free entitlement
- (5) That approval be given to the transfer of 6 Children Centre buildings (Fibbersley Park, Bentley, Lighthouse, Brownhills. Leighswood and Greenfield) and assets to LA maintained schools that have a Children Centre on site.
- (6) That Cabinet approve the lease of vacated buildings at Bloxwich, Edgar Stammers, Hatherton for the provision of childcare (including sessional places for 2 year olds eligible for free entitlement to learning).
- (7) That approval be given to the lease of vacated childcare space at Pelsall for the provision childcare services and agree to retain remainder of the building for the delivery of alternative children's services.
- (8) That the implementation of the proposed Children Centre model, adjusted in response to consultation, be delegated to the Executive Director Children's Services to include
  - Extend definition of vulnerable to include all new parents of 0-3's and retain universal provision of Play and Stay and PEEP (Parents Early Education Programme) groups to all families with 0-3s.

- Ensure that there are adequate access points for services by retaining some rooms and venues in Willenhall South, Brownhills and Pheasey to reduce negative impact on parents (women in particular) that have barriers to travel.
  - Retain support to families with children with disabilities and speech and language concerns.
  - Continued integration with Health and Education, particularly Health Visiting Services to provide best start in life for children and families in Walsall by working jointly to deliver early years services from ante natal stage to 5 years.
- (9) That Cabinet approve the savings proposals for the Children Centre delivery model and note that proposals outlined in this report will fully realise these savings.
- (10) That approval be given to the commencement of a procurement process for the provision of Children's Centre services if required and authority be delegated to the Executive Director Children's Services, in consultation with the portfolio holder authority to award contracts.

[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: