

Wednesday 9 September 2020 at 6.00 p.m.

Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams

Held in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020; and conducted according to the Council's Standing Orders for Remote Meetings and those set out in the Council's Constitution.

Present

Councillor Bird	Leader of the Council
Councillor Andrew	Deputy Leader and Regeneration
Councillor Martin	Adult Social Care
Councillor Butler	Clean and green
Councillor Towe	Education and skills
Councillor Craddock	Health and wellbeing
Councillor Chattha	Personnel and business support
Councillor Perry	Communities, leisure and culture
Councillor Wilson	Children's

Welcome

At this point, the Leader opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, and explaining the rules of procedure and legal context in which the meeting was being held. He also directed members of the public viewing the meeting to the papers which could be found on the Council's Committee Management Information system (CMIS) webpage.

3603 Minutes

Councillor Bird moved approval of the minutes of the meeting on 12 August 2020 which was put to the vote by way of a roll-call of Cabinet members

The motion subsequently declared carried and it was:

Resolved (unanimously)

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 August 2020 copies having been sent to each member of the Cabinet be approved and signed as a correct record.

3604 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3605 Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985

There were no items to be considered in private session.

3606 **Petitions**

The following petitions were submitted:

Councillor Andrew:

- Traffic calming in Doe Bank Lane
- Injunction to stop unauthorised encampments on land in Bentley

Councillor Hicken:

- Road safety in Wrighton Close, Willenhall

3607 **Questions**

No questions from the public had been received.

3608 **Forward plan**

The forward plan as at 7 September 2020 was submitted:

(see annexed)

Resolved (by assent)

That the forward plan be noted.

3609 **Impact of Covid-19 – Residents survey**

Councillor Bird presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Bird moved the approval of the recommendations which was seconded by Councillor Craddock.

The motion was put to the vote by way of a roll-call of Cabinet members and subsequently declared carried and it was:

Resolved (unanimously)

That Cabinet agrees to a Borough wide residents' survey, its purpose, topics to be included and associated methodology and timeframe.

3610 **Corporate Financial Performance 2020/21 and Covid-19**

Councillor Bird presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Bird highlighted the financial challenges facing the Council and moved the approval of the recommendations which was seconded by Councillor Andrew.

The motion was put to the vote by way of a roll-call of Cabinet members and subsequently declared carried and it was:

Resolved (unanimously)

That Cabinet:

- (1) Note the additional funding allocated to Walsall as set out in sections 4.5 and 4.6 of this report, and that this will be sufficient to cover the additional costs of supporting the council's Covid-19 response in the short term, based on the 'reasonable' case scenario and implementation of recommendation (7).
- (2) Note the conditions on the newly released Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant, and that officers will seek to optimise use of this to release part of the 19 May Cabinet approved allocation for shielding / food parcel support, as outlined in 4.6 (iv).
- (3) Note the forecast impact of Covid-19 to July 2020 as set out in section 4.7 to 4.27, including:
 - (i) The loss of income as set out in sections 4.14 to 4.17.
 - (ii) The additional costs approved through Cabinet, Gold and Silver Control as set out at sections 4.18 to 4.23 and Appendix 1.
 - (iii) The estimated financial impact on the delivery of 2020/21 approved savings, as set out in sections 4.24 to 4.26.
- (4) Note a number of non Covid-19 related demand and other service pressures totalling c£1.8m as set out in 4.28 to 4.33, and actions being taken to address these.
- (5) Note, in summary, total pressures in 2020/21 ranging from c£27m to c£47m, which, after applying the unringfenced Covid-19 Government grant and subject to confirmation of the grant for loss of income being in line with estimates, results in net pressures of between £4m to £23m (subject to any further 'unknowns'). This is set out in sections 4.34 to 4.36.
- (6) Note and approve the following actions which, under the 'reasonable' case scenario will ensure a balanced budget for 2020/21 as set out within section 4.35 of the report:
 - (i) That continued action be taken by Executive Directors to address the remaining £1.8m of non Covid-19 service pressures;
 - (ii) Realignment of £2.4m of growth included within the 2020/21 budget which is no longer required;
- (7) Note that, given the unprecedented situation, and therefore uncertainty concerning future impact, that there is a risk that cost pressures/income losses are significantly above the 'reasonable' case scenario and, whilst it

is unlikely that the 'worse case scenario' will arise in full, it is prudent to plan for this scale of impact. As such, Cabinet are asked to note and approve the following actions to plan for this:

- (i) That officers make plans to accelerate delivery of Walsall Proud Programme (WPP) benefits wherever possible;
 - (ii) That the S151 officer review, revise and where appropriate centralise relevant budgets which may have been under-utilised during the lockdown period;
 - (iii) The S151 officer to review, revise and where appropriate, release a proportion of existing earmarked reserves, in consultation with the Leader of the Council (portfolio holder for finance), and in accordance with existing delegations;
 - (iv) That the S151 officer review, revise and where appropriate utilise the council's approved Use of Flexible Capital Receipts Strategy, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to capitalise the costs of transformation.
 - (v) The S151 officer to allocate general fund reserves, in consultation with the Leader of the Council (portfolio holder for finance) and in accordance with existing delegations and the medium term financial strategy, noting that this may require replenishment of general fund reserves during the 2021/22 budget setting process.
- (8) Note that, by agreeing these actions now to address this shortfall, this will allow a greater focus on assessing the impact of Covid-19 on 2021/22 and identifying options to address that impact as 2021/22 is a much more challenging position.
- (9) Note the updated benefits range in relation to WPP and approve an amendment to the investment cost to benefit ratio from 1:3 to 1:2.5 as set out in 4.27.

3611 **Corporate Plan Quarter 1**

Councillor Bird presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved (by assent)

That Cabinet review and endorse the performance information provided in the appendix.

3612 **Towns Fund Acceleration Programme and Town Deal Board**

Councillor Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Andrew highlighted the opportunity and moved the approval of the recommendations which was seconded by Councillor Bird.

The motion was put to the vote by way of a roll-call of Cabinet members and subsequently declared carried and it was:

Resolved (unanimously)

- (1) That Cabinet approves the formation of the Town Deal Board in accordance with government guidance (appendix 1), to represent both Bloxwich and Walsall areas, supported by an Advisory Board for each area.
- (2) That Cabinet approves the projects selected for the Bloxwich and Walsall Town Fund areas (map in appendix 2), as set out within the attached project tables (appendix 3), as the Bloxwich and Walsall Towns Fund Acceleration programme, to take up the £1.5million available.
- (3) That to ensure delivery before the 31.03.2021, Cabinet delegate's authority to the; Executive Director for the Economy, Environment & Communities in consultation with the Deputy Leader & Regeneration Portfolio holder to agree the final membership and operating arrangements for the Town Deal Board/s, and any necessary changes to the contents that form the Towns Fund Acceleration programme.

3613 Residential and nursing care services for older people, complex care and mental health services

Councillor Martin presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Martin moved the approval of the recommendations which was seconded by Councillor Bird.

The motion was put to the vote by way of a roll-call of Cabinet members and subsequently declared carried and it was:

Resolved (unanimously)

- (1) That Cabinet approves the award of the new contracts for Residential and Nursing for Older People, Complex Care and Mental Health from 1 October 2020 to 31 March 2023.
- (2) That Cabinet delegate authority to the Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Care (ASC) to award contracts on behalf of the Council to providers who apply for and meet the requirements of the Residential and Nursing Application Process as detailed in 4.2 below and to subsequently authorise the variation, sealing or signing of any associated contracts, deeds or other related documents.

- (3) That Cabinet approves the extension of the CBS Framework from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023 and delegates authority to the Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Care to subsequently authorise the variation, sealing or signing of any associated contracts, deeds or other related documents.
- (4) That Cabinet approves the extension of contracts for the Transitional beds from 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021 and delegates authority to the Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Care to subsequently authorise the variation, sealing or signing of any associated contracts, deeds or other related documents.
- (5) That Cabinet notes the recommendations of this report will not change the current fee rates payable by the Council for all the above services. Furthermore, the quality expectations of Providers to improve and/or maintain good outcomes for all service users remains.

3614 **Resilient Communities working group**

In introducing the item the Leader announced that he had appointed Councillor Garry Perry as Deputy Leader for Resilient Communities with the authority to engage other portfolio work on behalf of the Leader. He noted that Councillor Andrew would continue as the statutory Deputy Leader who was empowered to act in his absence.

Councillor Perry thanked the Leader for appointing him to the role and the other Portfolio Holders for their support.

The report of the Scrutiny Overview Committee was submitted:

(see annexed)

Councillor Perry explained how the Resilient Communities model had developed during the COVID-19 pandemic and the positive impact it had.

Resolved (by assent)

That the report of the Scrutiny Overview Committee be noted and a report responding to the recommendations submitted to the next meeting.

3615 **Covid-19 working group**

The report of the Scrutiny Overview Committee was submitted:

(see annexed)

Councillor Perry responded to the working group report by explaining the response to the adversity caused by the pandemic. He noted the significant number of responses made by Making Connections to support the local community. Other

Portfolio Holders reported support provided which included: housing homeless residents, supporting looked after children, enabling the Council workforce to work remotely and keeping care homes supplied with personal protective equipment.

Resolved

That the report of the Scrutiny Overview Committee be noted and a report responding to the recommendations submitted to the next meeting.

The meeting terminated at 7.29 p.m.

Chair:

Date: