

Wednesday 28 October 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 Perry	Deputy Leader and Resilient Communities
Councillor Martin	Adult Social Care
Councillor Wilson	Children's
Councillor Butler	Clean and green
Councillor Towe	Education and skills
Councillor Craddock	Health and wellbeing
Councillor Chattha	Personnel and business support

3616 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.

3617 Minutes

Councillor Bird moved approval of the minutes of the meeting on 9 September 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 9 September 2020 copies having been sent to each member of the Cabinet be approved and signed as a correct record.

3618 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3619 Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985

Resolved (by assent)

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.

3620 Petitions

Councillor Andrew submitted a petition from residents of Beacon Heights and surrounding country lane areas requesting road safety measures.

3621 Questions

No questions from the public had been received.

3622 Forward plan

The forward plan as at 5 October 2020 was submitted:

(see annexed)

Resolved (by assent)

That the forward plan be noted.

At this point the Leader brought forward items 15 and 19. In bringing these reports forward, the Leader made the following statement:

“I have brought forward the item on Resilient Communities as it is an important item to reflect on in the current situation, but before I call on Cllr Perry to speak to the report I do wish to say something in respect of the current situation regarding coverage of the Free School Meals debate.

It is fair to say that my comments have created controversy, not for the first time. It is also fair to say that the issue has sadly become a political football both locally and nationally and I stand by that point of view.

We have a model in Walsall, a Resilient Communities model which values our partners in the public sector, values our community organisations and values our communities. I think we are unique in Walsall and we lead the way with this Resilient Communities approach.

I want the residents of Walsall to know that I have raised and discussed the matter of support for vulnerable people with my Cabinet Colleagues in the last

few days and we are united that we will not allow our support for vulnerable people to become a political issue in the current extremely challenging Covid crisis. We leave that to other parties.

We collectively believe that we provide the right level of support to vulnerable people and we tailor that support to Walsall. This message has got lost in recent days as the focus has shifted away from the support that is provided to who can score the biggest political point. This Cabinet will not follow or be influenced by political point scoring, we will always do the right thing for our communities.

I could give you many examples of the investment this Cabinet have made to support our communities both during the COVID-19 pandemic and before. You, I am sure you will hear about some of these tonight as we go through our agenda. However I am happy to open up our approach to examination to the public to ensure that we are doing the right thing for the communities in Walsall.

I am therefore announcing that have requested officers to commission and carry out a short, sharp and timely appraisal of our support for people who are financially vulnerable. This appraisal will be given the full support of my administration to look at relevant areas and make recommendations on if/how we can improve.

I will be clear, none of us are perfect, but my Cabinet and I do have the best interests of all of our residents at the heart of our thinking and decision making.

The appraisal will be independently led and will look at provision by the Council, key partners, children and families, the Community and Voluntary Sector including foodbanks and other community groups.

It will both confirm and produce findings which will be brought back to this Cabinet for further discussion and the outcomes will be publically shared.

The residents of Walsall should know that this Cabinet will always try to support our most vulnerable and no one owns this agenda. It inherent on us all in a society that is decent and kind.

I have said throughout the last few days we are in a difficult financial position, like many others, and this position has been hugely impacted by the single largest public crisis since the second-world war, but we must focus our resources on where it is needed most. I would hope that the independent appraisal will be able to produce its initial findings in four weeks so that any further support measures that may be required can be put in place in time for the Christmas break.

This work builds on our resilient communities approach and hopefully will end some of the destructive politicking which helps nobody and it particularly does not help the vulnerable residents of Walsall. “

3623 Covid-19 – community response

Councillor Perry presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Perry 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)

That Cabinet approves further expenditure of £108,000 from the Emergency Assistance grant, allocated for a further five months of support for shielded residents who do not meet the criteria for support from Adult Social Care.

3624 Resilient communities – portfolio holder report

Councillor Perry presented the report:

(see annexed)

(Note: Dates in Paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 of the of the report should read 2029 and not 2020).

Resolved (by assent)

(1) That Cabinet restates its commitment to a Resilient Communities Model to

deliver the PROUD promises of improved customer experience, improved employee satisfaction and greater efficiency and effectiveness.

(2) That Cabinet receives a further report in January 2021 on progress towards a Resilient Communities approach.

3625 Walsall Proud Programme – Customer Access Management

Councillor Bird presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Bird 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)

- (1) That Cabinet delegate authority to the Interim Executive Director for Resources and Transformation in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to award a contract for the provision of Customer Relationship Management Business and System Integration Services, for an initial term of 2 years with the option to extend for up to a further 2 years, in 12 month increments.
- (2) That Cabinet delegate authority to the Interim Executive Director for Resources and Transformation to enter into the contract, and to subsequently authorise the sealing, signing or variation of any deeds, contracts or other related documents for such services, within the approved budget envelope.

3626 Extension of Walsall Impact Programme

Councillor Bird presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Bird 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)

- (1) That Cabinet approves acceptance of the additional £3,021,628 of European Union and Government grant funding, creating a total budget of £10,471,558 to support the Walsall Impact programme, administered by Dudley Council in their role as the Department for Work & Pensions appointed Accountable Body.
- (2) That Cabinet approves the extension of the Walsall Impact programme through to December 2023, to fully utilise the grant available and provide 1339 additional places, so that an estimated total 5,800 young can receive the support they need to progress into positive outcomes and all results can be evidenced and claimed.
- (3) That Cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director for Resources and Transformation in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, to sign, amend and enter into the appropriate agreements with Dudley Council, together with any subsequent

negotiations as required to secure the funding and ensure delivery of the Walsall Impact contract and associated programmes.

3627 Walsall Inclusive Economic Growth Programme

Councillor Bird presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Bird 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)

- (1) That Cabinet notes the continued success in attracting external resources
and the progress made in the delivery of significant economic outcomes that benefit both the people, the place and the businesses of Walsall.
- (2) That Cabinet approves the retention of resources as set out within in section 4.24 of this report, at £13,193,939, to support the services and staff that form the Inclusive Economic Growth Programme (IEPG), including use of the first three years of Enterprise Zone Historic costs from 2020/21 recovered from the BC LEP at £147,000 per year.
- (3) That Cabinet approves the extension of the Inclusive Economic Growth Programme (IEPG) through to the 31 March 2023, and through to the 31 December 2023 for those staff required to complete the Walsall Impact and Community Grants programmes.
- (4) That Cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director for Resources
and Transformation in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and Regeneration Portfolio Holder to make the appropriate revisions or additions to the Inclusive Economic Growth Programme's design, costs, income, contents, duration and flexibility as required; together with the reinvestment of any identified reserves, and the use of any additional funding secured.

3628 Draft revenue budget 2020/21 to 2023/34 and in-year position

Councillor Bird presented the report and thanked officers involved for their work.

(see annexed)

Councillor 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:

- (1) Note that the service based revenue forecast, based on the position as at August 2020, is forecast to be an overspend of £0.42m, excluding the impact of Covid-19 as shown in Table 1.
- (2) Note that the revenue forecast for Covid-19 pressures after deducting all assumed additional funding is a “reasonable case” overspend of £0.17m with a “worse case” of £9.00m.
- (3) Note that the combined revenue forecast for both Covid-19 and non Covid-19 pressures is an overspend of c£0.59m based on the “reasonable case” and £9.47m in the “worse case”.
- (4) Note the revised financial assumptions and projections within the draft revenue budget, the uncertainty around core funding, and that these assumptions will change as the budget progresses. The impact of this is a revised starting gap for 2021/22 of £33.66m, an increase of £12.60m since February 2020.
- (5) Refer draft revenue policy proposals for 2021/22 as set out in this report and appendix 3 for stakeholder consultation (where required), and for equality impact assessment, with feedback on these informing the final budget.
- (6) Endorse the operational savings for 2021/22 to 2022/23 set out in appendix 4 of this report, and instruct officers to implement these under officer delegations, subject to any required consultation, equality impact assessment, and any changes arising as a result of the latter two.
- (7) Note after taking into account the Proud savings identified to date, should all these policy and operational savings be subsequently included in the final budget report in February 2021, then there remains a revised gap of £12.32m to close to ensure a balanced budget and as such, further saving proposals will to be presented to Cabinet on 9 December 2020.

- (8) Refer this report to Scrutiny Overview Committee on 1 December 2020, to enable the Committee's comments to be considered by Cabinet. All Scrutiny Committees will also receive proposals relating to the individual remit of each Committee.
- (9) Note that the medium term financial outlook position assumes an increase in council tax of 1.99% in 2021/22 and future years, the assumed level of "reasonableness" in respect of referendum principles, and that any changes to those principles, as set by the Secretary of State, may change the overall budget.
- (10) Note that the level of contingency funds and general reserves will need to be in line with the levels set out within the Council's MTFs, the final level to be based on a detailed risk assessment, which will be reported to Cabinet in February 2021.
- (11) Approve the write off of debt as detailed in section 4.26.
- (12) Approve the amendments to the 2020/21 capital programme as set out in section 4.27.

3629 **Carbon neutral Council**

Councillor Bird presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Andrew thanked Councillor Hicken for his work as the Council's champion on this matter.

Councillor Bird 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)

- (1) That Cabinet note the contents of this report and the steps being taken to respond to the Climate Emergency Declaration.
- (2) That Cabinet endorses the approach set out in the report for the development of the action plan and reporting.

- (3) That Cabinet notes the governance structure set out in the report to integrate a fixed term Climate Change Officer into the Clean and Green service structure as part of the wider Proud Transformation Programme.
- (4) That Cabinet approves the requirement for all Cabinet reports to include an impact assessment on climate change mitigation and resilience (as is currently the case for equalities).

3630 **Walsall Revised Local Development Scheme**

Councillor Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Andrew moved the approval of the recommendation subject to the revised scheme being approved with immediate effect 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)

That Cabinet approves the revised Local Development Scheme (at Appendix A to this report) with immediate effect.

3631 **Walsall Nature Conservation Designations**

Councillor Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Andrew 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 approve the adoption of the amended and additional nature conservation site boundaries (as at Appendix A) and as proposed and endorsed by the Birmingham and the Black Country Local Sites Partnership.
- (2) That Cabinet agree to delegate to the Executive Director- Economy,

Environment and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Regeneration the adoption of any further sites proposed and endorsed by the Birmingham and Black Country Local Sites Partnership that are agreed necessary to support the evidence base for the Black County Plan.

3632 Infection Control Fund ring-fenced grant 2020

Councillor Bird presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Bird 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)

- (1) That the Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Care, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, distributes 80%, £1,874,011 of the Adult Social Care Infection Control Grant 2020 in accordance with the Grant conditions as set out.
- (2) That the Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Care, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care distributes the remaining 20% (£468,503), to be utilised to fund other COVID-19 infection control measures and to meet the costs of administering the grant in accordance with the relevant Grant conditions.

3633 Schools Local Funding Formula 2021/22

Councillor Towe presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Towe 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 Schools Funding Formula (Appendix A) that was recommended by Walsall's Schools Forum at their meeting on 14 October 2020.

- (2) That Cabinet notes that the Department for Education may request revisions to the school funding formula and that values attributed in the formula may need to change once the Department for Education reviews the October 2020 census data.
- (3) That Cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills to amend the formula in line with Department for Education requirements and to comply with all and any relevant Department for Education regulations for the 2021/22 Schools Funding Formula.

3634 High Needs Local Funding Formula

Councillor Towe presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Towe 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 approve the principles underpinning the development of the revised local high needs funding model and the timetable for 2021/22 set out in appendix B.
- (2) That Cabinet approve the proposals to move to a formal consultation process on the proposed high needs funding model for 2020/21.
- (3) That Cabinet agree that a further report be received, containing any proposed changes to the model after consultation, to seek final Cabinet approval of that model and its implementation.

3635 Covid-19 – portfolio holder report

Councillor Craddock presented the report:

(see annexed)

In presenting the report, Councillor Craddock thanked the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group for their findings and their recommendations. He also thanked all the health and care professionals, and

their ancillary staff, for their selfless work; and acknowledged the support of partners, staff, councillors, and the voluntary and community sector.

Resolved (by assent)

That Cabinet notes the actions being taken by the Council and with its partners in response to Covid-19.

3636 Access and Inclusion working group

The report of the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee was submitted:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the report of the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

3637 Private session

Exclusion of public

Resolved (by assent)

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.

3638 Disposal of a Council property on Lichfield Street, Walsall

Councillor Andrew presented the report:

(see annexed)

Councillor Andrew moved the approval of the recommendations which was duly seconded. The motion was put to the vote by way of a roll-call of Cabinet members and subsequently declared carried.

Public Summary of Decision:

The Cabinet approved the sale of the Council's freehold interest in Quest Building, 139-144 Lichfield Street and delegated authority to the Executive Director for Economy, Environment and Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio holder for Regeneration to approve the final terms for the disposal

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

The meeting terminated at 7.20p.m.

Chair:

Date: