

Cabinet minutes

Wednesday 7 February 2007 at 6.00 p.m.

in Conference Room 2 at the Council House Walsall

Present

Councillor Tom Ansell	Leader of the Council
Councillor Zahid Ali	Children's services
Councillor Rachel Walker	Environment and street pride
Councillor Adrian Andrew	Regeneration and enterprise
Councillor John O'Hare	Resources
Councillor Alan Paul	Social care, health and housing

1696 Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance was submitted on behalf of Councillors Harrison, Longhi and Perry.

1697 Minutes

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2007 copies having been sent to each member of the Cabinet be approved and signed as a correct record.

1698 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1699 Forward plan

The forward plan as at 19 January 2007 was submitted:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the forward plan be noted.

1700 **Community Meals Service**

The following recommendation of Council from its meeting on 15 January 2007 was submitted:

“This Council calls upon the Cabinet to reconsider pursuing all (legal and imaginative) avenues to ensure that users of our meals-on-wheels service retain the option for a freshly (prime) cooked daily meal.”

Councillor Paul presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved (unanimous)

- (1) That Cabinet note the concerns raised and have been reassured that at no time has the Scrutiny Panel been misled and that the decision to leave the method of delivery of the hot meal component of the service has always been clear, and was based on the outcome of consultation with service users.
- (2) That Cabinet reaffirms its original decision, that the option to provide the service as either a prime cooked meal or a regenerated frozen meal should remain open and subject to the tendering process.

1701 **People and place perspectives – A picture of our community**

Carole Evans, Executive Director presented the report on behalf of Councillor Longhi:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the report and document set out in the Appendix to the report “People and Place Perspectives: A Picture of Our Community” be noted and endorsed for use within the Council’s Corporate Integrated Planning and Performance Framework (CIPPF)
- (2) That the further development of this approach for ongoing use in further years be endorsed.

1702 **Towards a sustainable community strategy/community plan**

Councillor Ansell presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the combined refreshed Community Plan and Progress Report/Towards a Sustainable Community Strategy for the Borough developed by Walsall Borough Strategic Partnership as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved
- (2) That Cabinet note the alignment of this refreshed plan with the Council's Corporate Plan and annual budget for 2007/2008 as set out within the Corporate Integrated Performance Planning Framework (CIPPF) set out in Appendix 2 of the report.
- (3) That the Executive Director of Regeneration be delegated authority to finalise any further amendments.

Resolved to recommend to Council

That the combined refreshed Community Plan and Progress Report be referred to Council as part of the Corporate Integrated Performance Planning Framework.

1703 **Corporate Plan 2007/8**

Councillor Ansell presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the Corporate Plan 2007/8 be approved as a key part of the Council's policy framework, and that the Executive Director (Corporate Services) be delegated authority to make any final changes.

Resolved to recommend to Council

That the Corporate Plan 2007/8 be adopted.

1704 **Draft budget 2007/8: Recommendations of Scrutiny and Performance Panels**

Councillor O'Hare presented the report, together with the recommendation of the Neighbourhood Scrutiny and Performance Panel:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the recommendations of the five Scrutiny and Performance Panel be noted.

1705 Budget setting process 2007/8 – consultation further report

Councillor O'Hare presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the outcomes from budget consultation set out in this report in finalising the Council's 2007/08 revenue budget and capital programme, be noted.
- (2) That the valuable input into the process by the various consultation fora be acknowledged, and that written feedback addressing the key issues raised be provided by officers.

1706 Corporate Revenue Budget Plan 2007/8 to 2011/12

Councillor O'Hare presented the report, together with the Corporate Revenue Budget Plan:

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the corporate budget plan set out in this report and its appendices be noted.
- (2) To note and endorse 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 increases, so these will be tabled at the Council meeting of 26 February. Current estimates have been used within this report based on informal communication from each precepting authority.
- (3) That Cabinet note and endorse that the Walsall Council draft net budget requirement for 2007/08 is £212.924m, and the draft council tax increase is 3.89% - resulting in a band D council tax of £1,246.87; a weekly increase of between £0.60p and £0.90p for the 92.35% of Walsall residents in bands A – D properties.

- (4) That Cabinet note and endorse that on the basis set out in (3) above, the provisional (i.e. subject to formal confirmation) overall council tax increase would be 3.86%, including estimated precepts, resulting in a total band D council tax of £1,382.21.
- (5) That the recommendations of the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) in respect of the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the budget calculations and the adequacy of reserves as set out in of the corporate budget plan be noted and endorsed.
- (6) That delegated authority be given to the Chief Finance Officer to make any necessary amendments to this resolution, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Finance, to take account of the final levies and precepts which have not yet been notified and to make any necessary amendments to the statutory determinations to take account of those changes and the resulting final analysis of the budget for 2007/8 and for that amended resolution to be submitted to Council at its meeting of 26 February 2007.

Resolved to recommend to Council

- (a) That the net levies for outside bodies be noted. At the time of despatch of this report, the environment agency had not formally notified the authority of their final levy and as such this will be reflected in a revised resolution to be tabled at the Council meeting of 26 February 2007. An estimate has been used within this report based on informal notification from the agency.

LEVY	AMOUNT (£)
West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority	12,843,222
Environment agency	93,482

- (b) That approval be given to an opening working balance for 2007/8 set at a prudent level of £4.6m in line with the council's medium term financial strategy.
- (c) That the following opening cash limited budgets for 2007/8 be approved.

BUDGET	2007/8 BUDGET (£)
DIRECTORATE BUDGETS:	
Corporate services	24,607,868
Social care and inclusion	62,387,374
Children and young people	74,251,491
Neighbourhood services	61,868,086
Regeneration	2,804,971
CORPORATE PROVISIONS/CONTINGENCIES ETC:	
Capital financing	13,018,035
Non-service specific central items	1,698,119
Contribution to general reserves	961,688
Less: Capital Charges	-41,610,294

LEVIES:	
Passenger Transport Levy	12,843,222
Environment Agency Levy	93,482
WALSALL MBC NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT	212,924,092

(d) That the following statutory determinations be noted (references are to the Local Government Finance Act, 1992):

- I. **£630,870,275** being the aggregate gross expenditure, which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) (a) to (e) of the Act.
- II. **£417,946,183** being the aggregate income which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32 (3) (a) to (c) of the Act.
- III. **£212,924,092** being the amount, by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 32 (4) as its budget requirement for the year.
- IV. **£117,678,357** being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its General Fund in respect of redistributed Non-Domestic Rates (**£100,194,631**); Revenue Support Grant (**£16,814,726**); and the Collection Fund Surplus(**£669,000**).
- V. **95,245,735** being the amount at (c) above, less the amount at (d) above, all divided by the Council Tax Base of **76,388**, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 33 (1) of the Act as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

VI. Valuation bands

Being amounts given by multiplying the amount at (e) above by the proportions set out in Section 5 (1) of the Act and calculated in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Act of the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands.

A	B	C	D
£831.25	£969.79	£1,108.33	£1,246.87
E	F	G	H
£1,523.95	£1,801.03	£2,078.11	£2,493.74

(e) That the estimated precept from the Fire & Civil Defence Authority and the estimated precept for the Police Authority, 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 be noted and that the final figures be substituted for these provisional ones once they are available at the council meeting on 26 February 2007.

PRECEPTING AUTHORITY	VALUATION BANDS			
	A	B	C	D
Police	£60.83	£70.96	£81.10	£91.24
	E	F	G	H
Fire & Civil Defence	£111.52	£131.79	£152.07	£182.48
	A	B	C	D
Fire & Civil Defence	£29.40	£34.30	£39.20	£44.10
	E	F	G	H
Fire & Civil Defence	£53.90	£63.70	£73.50	£88.20

- (f) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (f) and (g) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts of council tax for 2007/8 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

A	B	C	D
£921.48	£1,075.05	£1,228.63	£1,382.21
E	F	G	H
£1,689.37	£1,996.52	£2,303.68	£2,764.42

- (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 Observer"; and the "Walsall Advertiser" being newspapers circulating in the Authority's area.
- (h) That the appropriate officers 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.

1707 Draft capital programme 2007/8 to 2011/12

Councillor O'Hare presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved to recommend to Council

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.

MAINSTREAM CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2007/8	
SCHEME	ESTIMATED VALUE £
Schools access initiative	521,579
New pupil places	929,999
Local Transport Plan	4,282,000
Modernisation - primary	1,406,775
Modernisation - secondary	1,328,758
Disabled Facilities Grants	400,000
Risk Management	100,000
Uninsured property damage	200,000
Contingency	250,000
Clear major adaptations	3,261,000
Environmental regeneration capital programme	240,000
Shop Maintenance	115,077
Regenerating Walsall	500,000
Palfrey Park HLF	75,000
Willenhall Lane travellers site	150,400
Public lighting PFI	200,000
Library modernisation plan	325,000
Highways maintenance - capital rather than revenue funding	595,000
Targeted capital bids	202,500
Regeneration schemes falling within the Council's priorities	1,620,000
East locality (Accommodation)	12,000
Walsall arboretum restoration programme	50,000
Memorial safety	100,000
Streetly cemetery extension phase B	100,000
Youth service building refurbishment	100,000
Access for disabled people (Buildings)	200,000
Decriminalisation of parking enforcement	200,000
Asbestos removal	250,000
Improving security In local neighbourhoods	200,000
Secondary school re-development of dining facilities	260,000
Energy efficiency improvements	250,000
Strategic corridors and gateways	400,000
Work to secure safe water supplies	400,000
Town, district and local centres	1,050,000
Highways maintenance	1,000,000
Additional data storage	250,000
Communications network	400,000
Corporate PC refresh programme	490,000
Corporate Printer refresh programme	10,000
Corporate Server refresh programme	140,000
Customer relationship management	200,000
Enterprise servers	2,950,000
Information management	100,000

Network resilience	75,000
Remote data centre	200,000
Remote telephone systems	50,000
Systems upgrade	100,000
Thin client	50,000
Wireless networking	25,000
Replacement of SOSCIS - PARIS project	215,000
Priority 1 backlog - school building repair	2,000,000
Garden waste kerbside collection	289,000
Civic building air condition replacement	50,000
Major repairs to non-education premises	1,189,290
Private sector renovation grants	1,765,000
Housing needs and demand studies	10,000
Private sector house condition survey	50,000
Darlaston Strategic Development Area	200,000
Local access customer service bus	150,000
TOTAL	32,233,378

NON MAINSTREAM CAPITAL PROGRAMME – SCHEMES FUNDED FROM GRANT 2007/8	
SCHEME	ESTIMATED VALUE £
Devolved formula capital	5,296,454
Modernisation - primary	602,903
Modernisation - secondary	569,468
Extended services	880,459
Targeted capital bids	9,000,000
Childrens centres - phase 2	2,574,510
Town Centre Transport Package	5,412,000
Bus showcase	1,000,000
Red routes	2,000,000
Recycling initiatives	527,204
Community Regeneration in Walsall	572,292
Palfrey Park HLF	225,000
Daw End limestone infilling	500,000
Bridge Street/Ablewell Street THI – AWM	50,000
Bridge Street/Ablewell Street THI – HLF	51,071
Bloxwich Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas	100,000
Bloxwich Townscape Heritage Initiative	52,399
Lichfield Street Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme	4,601
New deal for communities	2,347,600
Disabled Facilities Grants	600,000
Willenhall Lane travellers site	451,200
Private sector renovation grants	1,235,000

Improving information grant (PARIS project)	155,000
Improving care homes	380,000
TOTAL	34,587,161

LEASING PROGRAMME 2007/8	
DIRECTORATE	TOTAL BUDGET £'000'S
Neighbourhood Services	6,241
Regeneration	0
Social Care and Inclusion	393
Childrens Services	96
TOTAL	6,730

1708 Annual review of Treasury Management and Investment Strategy

Councillor O'Hare presented the report:

(see annexed)

Resolved to recommend to Council

That the 2007/08 treasury management and investment strategy document set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved and the Prudential Indicators set out in section E of Appendix 1 endorsed.

Resolved

That decisions to effect movements between conventional borrowing and other long term liabilities (eg: leases) and decisions to use capital receipts or unsupported borrowing within the framework of approved prudential indicators be deleted to the Executive Director (CFO).

1709 Corporate risk management

The following recommendation of Audit Committee from its meeting on 16 January 2007 was submitted:

“....

- (3) That the Risk Management strategy be referred to Cabinet for their consideration and request for endorsement.”

Carole Evans presented the report on behalf of Councillor Longhi:

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the Corporate Risk Strategy be endorsed.

1710 Joint Area Review

The report of the Children and Young People Scrutiny and Performance Panel was submitted:

(see annexed)

Councillor O'Hare pointed out that a sum of £50,000 had been included in the Corporate Budget Plan towards preparation for the Joint Area Review.

The meeting terminated at 6.40 p.m.

Leader:

Date: