

CABINET

Decision Notices and Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 18th September, 2014 at 5.00 p.m. at the AFC Telford Learning Centre, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY, 24th SEPTEMBER, 2014

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY, 29th SEPTEMBER, 2014)

PRESENT: Councillor K.S. Sahota (Leader and Chair), S. Davies, A.R.H. England, W.A.M. McClements, R.A. Overton, H. Rhodes, C.F. Smith and P.R. Watling

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor A.J. Eade (Conservative Group Leader), Councillor W.L. Tomlinson (Liberal Democrat/Independent Group Leader)

CB-32 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 24 July 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CB-33 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor E Clare

CB-34 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

CB-35 SOLAR FARM UPDATE

Key Decision identified as **Solar Farm Update** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 15 August 2014.

Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Neighbourhood Services, Employment & Skills, and Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise presented the report of the Managing Director, which provided an update on progress with the solar farm development and the next steps for the project. Thanks were expressed to Fliss Mercer (Co-operative & Commercial Projects Manager) and her team for all their work on this project.

Further to the decision taken by Cabinet in September 2013 to develop a solar farm at Wheat Leasows, various pre-planning studies were carried out and a public exhibition was held in January 2014. 82% of those who completed feedback forms supported the Council's intention to use renewable energy to provide an income stream to protect front-line services. Full planning

permission was granted in May 2014, and a formal grid offer from Western Power Distribution to connect to the grid had now been accepted. Following a two-stage restricted procurement process, the Preferred Bidder was IZEN Energy Systems. Appended to the report was an updated financial model which included the construction, operation and maintenance costs submitted by the winning tenderer, the final grid connection offer costs and updated income assumptions. The Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise advised that costs were lower and income projections higher than originally assumed, and that, over the life of the project, the solar farm was projected to deliver a net operating surplus of £4.4m.

Work was due to commence on site in mid-September 2014, with installation work due to be completed by December 2014. A clerk of works had been identified to ensure that works on site were carried out to the required standard. A key priority was to agree the best income options for the project. In terms of income for the generation of electricity, there were two options – the Feed-in Tariff (FiT) or Renewable Obligation Certificates (ROC) - and details of each option were set out in the report. Following discussion with external advisors, it was recommended that the FiT was the preferred option, as, while income was similar to the ROC option, it was simpler and more predictable.

In relation to the income from the sale of electricity, there were again two main options – export to the grid and claim the FiT export tariff or sell wholesale through a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). Further information was contained in the report, and following external advice it was suggested that a netting PPA with the Council's current electricity supplier should be investigated. If this could not be progressed, the reserve option would be to go out to the market to secure the most advantageous fixed-price PPA for 1-3 years.

In response to questions about the useful economic life of the solar panels, the Co-operative & Commercial Projects Manager advised that the panels themselves should not need replacing during the 25 year timescale for the project (indeed, they would probably last around 40 years), but the solar invertors (used to convert the current) would need to be replaced at some point. The costs of this had been built into the contract.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the progress to date of the Solar Farm project be noted;**
- (b) that the next steps outlined in Section 4.3 of the report, including the recommendations regarding generation of income shown at paragraph 4.3.14, be approved;**
- (c) that authority be delegated to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Finance & Enterprise and Neighbourhood Services, Employment & Skills, to oversee the negotiation of the most economically advantageous income options for the project;**

- (d) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services to execute all legal documentation necessary to give effect to the resolutions above.

CB-36 REGENERATION OF HOLLINSWOOD CENTRE

Key Decision identified as **Hollinswood Local Centre Regeneration** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 15 August 2014.

Part Recommendation to Full Council in relation to decision (f) below not subject to Call-in

Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Neighbourhood Services, Employment & Skills, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment, which sought approval for detailed proposals for the regeneration of Hollinswood Local Centre.

In response to concerns from residents concerning the physical environment of the local area, Cabinet in January 2014 approved a £1m investment in the regeneration of Hollinswood Local Centre as part of the 'Pride in Your Community' programme. Since then, officers had been working co-operatively with residents, public sector partners and businesses to develop proposals which would deliver major improvements to the area and improve linkages to Telford Town Centre.

The main components of the proposed scheme included:

- Demolition of the existing pub, The Woodcutter
- Demolition and replacement of the existing shops and residential units
- Construction of a new Activity Hub for adults with learning difficulties
- Enhancements to and extension of the community centre.
- Residential development (optional and subject to further feasibility)
- Rationalisation of open space and parking, landscaping improvements and improved linkages to the Town Centre

Further information on each component was contained in the report and in the appended plan. While the Council owned all the required land, it did not own all the assets involved, and negotiations with the landlord and tenants of existing properties would need to be concluded. A further public information event had been held earlier in the week, at which feedback from residents on the proposals had been very positive.

If approval was given, further public consultation work would continue on the design proposals prior to the submission of a planning application. The report also set out the indicative capital cost and sources of funding for the proposals. Any contribution from Hollinswood & Randlay Parish Council was dependent on agreeing the details of the refurbishment/improvement scheme for the community centre building (which was leased to the Parish Council), but it was very much hoped that the Parish Council would be a partner in this project. The scheme would be delivered in conjunction with the development

of the Activity Hub for adults with learning difficulties, the costs for which were dealt with in a separate Cabinet report. In terms of funding, it was recommended that capital receipts of circa £200k that could be realised from the Hadley Local Centre project be re-prioritised to the Hollinswood scheme. Should the capital receipts not be realised, it would be necessary to request Council to approve prudential borrowing of an equal amount.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the regeneration proposals for Hollinswood Centre, as set out in the report, be approved;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, Employment & Skills, to submit an application for planning permission in respect of the Scheme;
- (c) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, Employment & Skills, to negotiate and finalise the terms for demolition, acquisition and disposal of land, buildings and third party interests, and to take all steps necessary to facilitate the delivery of the Scheme;
- (d) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services to take all steps necessary to facilitate land assembly and otherwise to deliver the Scheme, including the execution of all documents and any agreements required to give effect to the resolutions above;
- (e) that the capital expenditure as detailed within the report be approved, and that the required adjustments be made to the capital budget and allocations;
- (f) To RECOMMEND to COUNCIL that Prudential Borrowing of £200,000 be approved if the capital receipts funding as detailed in the report is not secured.

CB-37 DAY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Key Decision identified as **Adult Provider Services** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 15 August 2014.

Councillor A.R.H. England, Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Customer Services, which sought approval to build a new Activity Hub at Hollinswood specialising in providing day activities which would promote health, wellbeing and community engagement for adults with a learning disability (ALD).

In 2012 and 2013 consultation and engagement was carried out with service users, parents, carers and stakeholders with regard to the future development of adult provider services under the banner 'New Options'. Appended to the report was a document that summarised the feedback received during the consultation exercises. This had been used to establish some key principles on how these changes and any future proposed changes in service should be introduced, and these were also appended to the report. Having taken into account the views from the consultation on current day services and suggestions for improvements, it was now proposed to:

- Provide a new, purpose-built Activity Hub in Hollinswood close to the Town Centre and bus routes. The facility formed part of the proposals for the regeneration of Hollinswood Local Centre (see separate Cabinet report), and would be developed in partnership with the local Parish Council and involve sharing the space with the local community.
- Close the Halesfield Day Centre
- Refurbish, remodel and extend the Severns Day Centre in Wellington to become the preferred destination for adults with profound and multiple learning disabilities who required specialist care and support to engage in a wide range of activities. The Lakeside Day Centre at Stirchley, which currently provided that service, would then close.
- Make improvements to the outside walkway on the 1st floor of Downing House Residential Home for ALD service users in Wellington to bring the floor back into full operation, making it accessible to a wider client group.
- Rename Unit TEN in Horsehay to the Skills and Enterprise Hub offering a service to all vulnerable adult groups.
- Merge the Inclusive Education service with Inclusive Leisure, and relocate the services provided to the new Activity Hub/community buildings.

As a result of the deployment of personal budgets, service users would have a much greater choice of providers from which to purchase care and support. It was therefore essential that the Council offered a good, affordable, conveniently located service, and these proposals would help achieve that.

The capital costs of the proposals were fully funded from existing allocations within the capital programme and receipts from the disposal of buildings/land referred to in the report.

Members welcomed the proposals and the opportunity to offer improved facilities for service users.

RESOLVED –

- (a) **that the construction of an Activity Hub for adults with a learning disability, as part of the Regeneration Scheme for Hollinswood Local Centre, be approved;**

- (b) that the remodelling, refurbishment and extension of the Severns Day Centre to a specification to meet the needs of adults with profound and multiple learning disabilities be approved;
- (c) that the improvements to the first floor walkway at Downing House Residential Home, to make the first floor more accessible and available to a wider group of service users who require residential or respite care, be approved;
- (d) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment to negotiate and dispose of the freehold interest in the operational properties/land as detailed in Section 4 of the report, and apply these capital receipts towards the funding of the scheme as detailed in the report.

**CB-38 AWARD OF THE DESIGN & BUILD CONTRACT FOR THE
LAWLEY VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL, LAWLEY**

Key Decision identified as **Award of Construction Contract for the New Lawley Village Primary School** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 15 August 2014.

Part Recommendation to Full Council in relation to decision (c) below not subject to Call-in

Councillor P.R. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Education & Corporate Parenting regarding the acquisition of land for the new Lawley Village Primary Academy and the award of the contract for the design and build of the School.

Cabinet gave their approval in June 2013 to establish a new primary school in Lawley in order to accommodate the demand for school places arising from the continuing development and growth of new housing in the area. In terms of procurement, the new school was included as one of the schemes in the Future Schools Agreement with Shepherd Construction, as an extension of the Building Schools for the Future framework. The contract would be a fixed price of £4.1m, to be funded through £3.6m of Section 106 payments with the remainder from existing Council capital funding. Further details of the funding arrangements were set out in the report, including a further £0.4m for fees and set-up costs.

The proposed freehold site for the school was in the process of being transferred to the Council under the terms of a Section 106 Agreement for the sum of £1. Under Government rules, the new school had to be an Academy and, following an interview process with the applicants, the preferred sponsor for the new school was The Schools' Co-operative Society. Endorsement of this decision was awaited from the Secretary of State.

The timetable for the Academy build was detailed in the report, with the new school due to open in January 2016 at the latest. Once appointed, the new Academy Sponsor would be involved throughout the construction phase and

have continuing input into the design and fit-out solutions that had yet to be finalised.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Education & Corporate Parenting, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, to award the Single School Design & Build contract to Shepherd Construction Ltd for the Lawley Village Primary School, and to finalise and agree all related contract and property related documents (including the Development Agreement and contracts) with the relevant Academy and landowners for various land acquisitions, exchanges, leases, licences, joint use agreements and any other ancillary related agreements/documentation;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services to agree and execute all necessary documentation, including the affixing of the common seal of the Council to contractual documentation as appropriate;
- (c) to RECOMMEND to COUNCIL that a capital approval and estimate for £4.5m in respect of the Lawley Village Primary School be approved.

CB-39 SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING: REVISION OF CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES POLICY ON SEEKING DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS RELATING TO EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

Key Decision identified as **Planning Obligations: Revision of Council Policy on Section 106 Contributions Relating to Educational Facilities** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 15 August 2014.

Councillor P.R. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Education & Corporate Parenting, which set out proposed revisions to the Council's policy on contributions from developers through the planning process for educational establishments. The revised Policy was appended to the report.

The recent Scrutiny review of the planning of school places in the Borough concluded that there was no immediate shortfall. However, because of the rise in the birth rate and an increase in housing developments, which would begin to have an effect on secondary school numbers in 2018, it was felt prudent to look at how any necessary school places could be funded. Under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Council could seek to secure a financial contribution from the developer of any new housing schemes towards educational facilities in the local area. In most cases the level of contribution was based on a need for pupil places using a straightforward formula using DfE cost multipliers which calculated a figure based on the expected number of new children to be generated by the

planned housing. An example of the updated methodology for secondary school pupils was contained in the revised Policy.

If new dwellings were planned more than three miles from the nearest secondary school, then the Council would be obliged to provide transport to and from school for any pupils living there. The revised policy document suggested that this should be taken into account when discussing developer contributions in order to help the Council meet its obligations.

There was also likely to be increasing pressure on specialist provision for children with special educational needs. It was therefore proposed that a percentage of all section 106 contributions towards education provision from across the Borough be allocated to provide funds to extend and improve this specialist provision.

During the ensuing discussion, it was stressed that historically Telford & Wrekin had had surplus places in secondary schools, and so had not been in a position to ask for section 106 contributions to provide more.

RESOLVED – that the revised Policy on seeking contributions from developers relating to educational facilities through the planning process, as shown at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved.

CB-40 EXTENSION TO THE GYPSY & TRAVELLER SITE AT LODGE ROAD, DONNINGTON WOOD

Key Decision identified as **Extension to the Gypsy & Traveller Site at Lodge Road, Donnington Wood** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 27 August 2014.

Recommendations to Full Council in relation to decisions (a) and (b) below not subject to Call-in

Councillor C.F. Smith, Cabinet Member: Housing, Development & Borough Towns, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment which updated Cabinet on the work to extend the existing permanent gypsy and travellers site at Lodge Road, Donnington Wood.

In July 2013 Cabinet approved the acquisition of 3 acres of land off Lodge Road to accommodate a further 12 units. This would enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duty to provide enough gypsy and traveller sites in the Borough – particularly once the planning permission for the temporary transit site at Snedshill expired. The Council then successfully bid for £1.75m of grant funding from the Homes & Communities Agency towards the Scheme. In February 2014, planning permission was secured for the extension to Lodge Road, and work had been undertaken to develop the design and works required to allow a tender process to proceed. Detailed estimates had identified that the cost of the scheme was likely to exceed the available budget due to poor quality ground conditions and the higher than anticipated specification for the accommodation that had been built into the HCA funding agreement.

Despite considerable work being undertaken to reduce costs through modifications to the design, dividing work packages into groundwork and modular build, value engineering and competitive tendering, the Scheme remained around £775k over budget. The report set out proposals to meet the budget shortfall through additional short-term borrowing to be funded by utilising the capital receipt from the sale of the Snedshill site in 2019. The option of not proceeding with the extension to the Lodge Road site had a number of implications, including the loss of significant HCA funding (which needed to be spent by the end of March 2015), the Council being unable to meet its statutory obligations, and a likely increase in illegal encampments.

Members felt that the risks of not proceeding with the Scheme outweighed finding the additional funding, and it was

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to COUNCIL -

- (a) that short term Prudential Borrowing of £775,000, as detailed in the report, be approved;
- (b) that the capital receipt realised from the sale of land at Snedshill for employment purposes is used to repay the short term borrowing as detailed in the report.

RESOLVED -

- (c) that the award of contracts to the preferred contractors be approved, subject to commitments and spend being retained within existing approvals pending consideration of the recommendations at (a) and (b) above by Full Council.

CB-41 TACKLING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT – PROGRESS TO DATE

Non-Key Decision

Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Neighbourhood Services, Employment & Skills, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment which updated Cabinet on a series of pledges that had been approved in January 2014 for tackling youth unemployment in the Borough, with a view to ensuring that every 16-24 year old who was seeking employment or training was supported.

Considerable work had been undertaken to develop the Council's role as an employer, service provider and broker of interventions. This was starting to yield results, with youth unemployment in Telford & Wrekin decreasing at a greater rate than the regional and national figures. The report set out in detail the initiatives and actions that had taken place, including:

- The Council leading by example by providing 105 work experience placements and 130 apprenticeship posts
- Job Box mentors had so far supported 24 people into employment

- 69 vacancies were filled as a direct result of the Partnership in Jobs event held in March 2014, and it was planned to hold another such event in March 2015
- 9 additional Job Junctions had been set up in the Borough, with 105 people having been supported into employment this year.

The report also provided cases studies of young people who had been supported in finding work and training opportunities, as well as details of the Job Box Ambassador scheme, Apprentice Hub model, and the Job Box website.

Members welcomed the progress being made in helping young people find work, and reference was made to the increasing value of the apprenticeships being offered by the Council in terms of vocational qualifications.

RESOLVED – that the progress made to date against the pledges to tackle high levels of youth unemployment be noted.

The meeting ended at 5.46 pm.

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Jonathan Eatough
Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services
Date: 24 September 2014

Signed:

Date: