

CABINET

Decision Notices and Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 11th December, 2014 at 4.00 p.m. at the AFC Telford Learning Centre, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY, 17th DECEMBER, 2014

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY 22ND DECEMBER 2014)

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

CB-60 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 November 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CB-61 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor W.L. Tomlinson (Liberal Democrat/Independent Group Leader). (NB: the Deputy Group Leader, Cllr G.M. Green, had also had to submit her apologies)

CB-62 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor K Sahota declared for the purposes of transparency an interest in agenda item 5 – Wellington Town Centre Regeneration – in relation to his wife's business and took no part in the voting on this item.

CB-63 SCRUTINY REVIEW OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Key Decision identified as **Scrutiny Review of Youth Unemployment** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 12 November 2014.

Councillor K.R. Guy, Chair of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee, presented the Committee's report on Youth Unemployment in the Borough.

The Committee had decided to look at this issue in response to concerns at the higher than average rates of youth unemployment in Telford & Wrekin, and how this was affecting the life chances of young people in the Borough. Three key lines of enquiry had been undertaken:

- Investigating what barriers existed locally for young people to getting work;
- Examining whether all agencies were playing their part in supporting young people into work;

- Investigating whether there were any gaps and/or overlaps in current provision.

The Committee took evidence from the Cabinet Member, Council Officers, staff from other relevant agencies and education providers, and local business and skills leaders. Members also visited a number of Job Junctions to see them in action and to hear the views of staff and customers, and spoke to a number of the Council's apprentices who had experienced unemployment. The apprentices' contribution had been extremely valuable.

Over the period of the Review (November 2013 to September 2014) the rate of youth unemployment in the Borough had fallen faster than the national and regional average, and the Committee had concluded that the direction of travel was good in terms of the Council's response to the issue and the measures that had been taken. These included moving the Skills team to Business Support, the investment of resources in the Job Junctions, Job Box mentors and delivering the Jobs Fair at the International Centre. Although the downward trajectory of youth unemployment was encouraging, there was still a long way to go, and the Committee had put forward a number of recommendations which were set out in detail in the report. These were intended to build on the good work already achieved, with particular emphasis on ensuring that all partners and agencies work in a co-ordinated way in aligning employment opportunities and future skills with FE provision.

Councillor S Davies, Cabinet Member: Neighbourhood Services, Employment & Skills, responded to the report on behalf of the Cabinet. He thanked the Committee for the work they had done. The detailed response to each of the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations was appended to the report attached to the agenda. Nine of the thirteen recommendations had been wholly accepted, with the remaining four being partially accepted. It was noted that many of the recommendations were already in the process of being implemented under the Youth Unemployment Programme, with considerable positive progress having been made over the past 9 months. More could be done, but Government was not providing any funding to help the Council. A number of examples of this work were listed in the report.

Members welcomed the Scrutiny report, and the efforts being made by the Council to provide apprenticeships. However it was noted that Government had created an uneven playing field, with all the support for apprenticeships and getting young people into work being directed to private sector providers.

RESOLVED – that the recommendations made by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee be noted, and the response set out at Appendix 1 of the Cabinet Member's report be approved;

CB-64 WELLINGTON TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

Key Decision identified as **Wellington Centre Regeneration** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 12 November 2014.

Councillor C.F. Smith, Cabinet Member: Housing, Development & Borough Towns, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment, which updated Members on the proposals contained in an Action Plan for the regeneration of Wellington Town Centre, and the proposed arrangements for implementing them.

In January 2014, Wellington Town Council published a report setting out a vision for the future of Wellington Town Centre. The Town Council then approached the Borough Council to assist in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report. This had led to the development of an Action Plan – a copy of which was appended to the report. The draft Action Plan focussed on land and activities within the Town Centre, and set out the priorities for delivery over the next two years. The main focus in the initial stages would be the delivery of key priority sites that had been vacant or required re-development (eg former Charlton Arms Hotel being converted to residential apartments and new dwellings).

Wellington Town Council was providing £25k over the next 18 months to support delivery, matched by the Borough Council in officer time. A Wellington Project Board had been established to oversee the delivery of the Action Plan, and the terms of reference for the Board were appended to the report.

In order to kick-start re-development of the sites identified within the Action Plan, as well as other stalled sites, it was proposed that £180,000 of the existing capital allocation for Housing Development Delivery be re-allocated to support delivery of projects in Wellington. On specific projects, external funding sources would also be approached to support delivery.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the working arrangements with Wellington Town Council as set out in the report, and the proposals contained within the Wellington Town Centre Regeneration Action Plan (as shown at Appendix 1 of the report), be endorsed;**
- (b) that a funding agreement be entered into for the receipt of £10,000 in 2014/15 and £15,000 in 2015/16 from Wellington Town Council to Telford & Wrekin Council, with these sums being match funded in terms of an ‘in kind’ Officer contribution;**
- (c) that the use of £180,000 of the existing Housing Development capital allocation for tackling the Priority Sites/Areas set out in the Action Plan be approved, and that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Housing, Development & Borough Towns, to determine the allocation of that spend.**

(Having declared an interest in this item, Councillor K Sahota did not vote on the above resolutions)

CB-65 TRANSFER OF 0-5 CHILDREN'S PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSIONING TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Key Decision identified as **Transition of 0-5 Commissioning Responsibilities** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 12 November 2014.

Councillor R A Overton, Cabinet Member: Public Health & Public Protection, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Health, Wellbeing & Public Protection, which outlined the changes in responsibility for the commissioning of public health services for 0-5 year olds. This was the final part of the overall transfer of public health services to local government begun in 2013.

From 1 October 2015, the public health commissioning responsibilities for children 5 and under would transfer from NHS England to local authorities. The transfer encompassed the 0-5 Healthy Child Programme which included health visiting and Family Nurse Partnership services. Only the commissioning role was being transferred – health visitors would continue to be employed by the Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust.

The report set out the arrangements for the transfer of financial resources from NHS England to local authorities in 2015/16 based on the spend on 0-5 services at the point of transfer. From 2016/17 onwards, the 0-5 baseline would be added to existing local government public health grant allocations. A transition steering group had been established chaired by the Assistant Director: Health, Wellbeing & Public Protection, and work was underway with the Area team and the provider to progress the transfer and to ensure that, post transfer, 0-5 services would be fit for purpose. This collaborative approach had been well received.

In response to questions about the funding arrangements, the Director of Health, Wellbeing & Care advised that there was a potential danger of cuts in NHS funding, and that the budget available needed to match the service before moving to full commissioning from April 2016.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the transfer of public health commissioning responsibilities for 0-5 year olds from NHS England to Local Authorities on 1 October 2015 be noted;**
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Director of Health, Wellbeing & Care, in consultation with the Director of Children & Family Services; the Cabinet Member: Public Health & Protection; and the Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families, to undertake the transfer of commissioning arrangements including all matters relating to any contracts and commissioning.**

CB-66 USE OF COUNCIL STREET FURNITURE AT FUTURE ELECTIONS

Key Decision identified as **Use of Council Street Furniture at Future Elections** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 12 November 2014.

The Returning Officer/Managing Director presented a report which set out the conclusions of a review of the current policy whereby the Council allowed election posters to be attached to street furniture (principally lamp posts) provided that the posters were taken down within 14 days after the close of poll.

During the European elections earlier this year, election posters on the street furniture in a number of areas of the Borough were damaged or de-faced, some with offensive language or symbols on them. Complaints were received, and Council officers incurred time and expense taking these posters down. Complaints had also been received about the number of posters in certain parts of the Borough and the detrimental appearance they made. It was also apparent from a survey of other West Midlands Councils that Telford & Wrekin was now amongst a minority that allowed posters to be affixed to street furniture.

In the light of this, it was decided to consult with interested parties and local residents on whether election posters should be banned from Council street furniture. A list of the people consulted and the responses received were circulated as Appendices to the report. A majority of the people or organisations that responded were in support of the idea of a ban. Having taken into account the consultation responses, the Returning Officer advised that he was recommending Cabinet to agree to withdraw consent for the use of Council owned street furniture or any other means of displaying election posters on Council owned land with effect from 1 January 2015. The rationale and reasons were set out in the report.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the Returning Officer's recommendation to ban the display of election posters on Council property at any time with effect from 1 January 2015 be agreed;**
- (b) that the existing powers to prosecute for breaches of the law be noted.**

CB-67 DRIVING DELIVERY OF THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES: 2014/15 6 MONTH PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Non-Key Decision

Councillor R A Overton, Cabinet Member: Public Health & Public Protection, presented the report of the Managing Director which gave an overview of the performance against the Council's priorities identified in the Medium Term Strategic Plan for the first 6 months of 2014/15, and an update of the strategic

risk register. There was an amendment at paragraph 4.5.3 of the report – the recycling rate had increased from 44.8% (not 40%) at year end to 51% at the end of September (an increase of **13.8%**)

Of the 33 measures that were able to be compared to 2013/14 year end performance, 64% had improved, 24% had got worse and 12% remained the same. As a 'business supporting, business winning Council', there was clear progress in driving economic and housing growth in the Borough. Linked to the growth agenda, the Council's programme to tackle youth unemployment had resulted in a fall in the youth unemployment rate from 32.1% to 20.9%. It was also supporting the development of the Borough's workforce of the future through the work with schools to raise attainment – 81% of pupils were now attending schools rated as good or outstanding.

An area of concern was the number of 16-24 year olds presenting themselves as homeless, largely as a result of the Government's welfare reforms. There remained some pressures in adult social care and tackling health inequalities. Whilst there were some areas of improvement, the number of children who were obese or overweight had increased. In terms of recycling rates, there had been an improvement following the start of the new kerbside recycling service in April. The rate was now over 50% for the first time, and resulted in an additional 1300 tonnes of waste being recycled.

The updated Strategic Risk Register was appended to the report, and set out the key risks which had been identified for 2014/15 and the mitigating actions in place to manage these risks.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the 6 month performance for 2014/15 be noted;
- (b) that the updated Strategic Risk Register be noted and approved.

CB-68 REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES – MARCHES LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

Non-Key Decision

Councillor K.S. Sahota, Council Leader, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services, which set out the arrangements for Elected Member representation on the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and associated bodies.

The Marches LEP was a public/private partnership tasked with regenerating the economic vitality of the Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin region. It was overseen by a Board, and it was proposed to formally confirm the Leader as the Council's representative on the LEP Board. In July 2014, Cabinet approved the establishment of a Marches LEP Joint Committee consisting of a Cabinet Member from each of the three local authorities. It was proposed to formally appoint the Leader as the Council's representative on the Joint Committee. Finally, a Committee had been established to undertake

the local decision making role in the Marches for the distribution of European Structural and Investment Funding (ESIF). Each of the local authorities in the Marches region was entitled to appoint one representative to this Committee, and it was proposed that the Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise be the Council's representative.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the Council Leader be confirmed as the Council's representative on the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership Board;
- (b) that the Council Leader be appointed as the Council's representative on the Marches Joint Executive Committee, and that Leader be delegated to appoint a Deputy who can represent the Council in his absence;
- (c) that the Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise be appointed as the Council's representative on the Marches European Structural & Investment Funding Committee for a three year period with delegated authority to make decisions as appropriate on behalf of the Council within the context of EU/national regulation of ESIF Committees.

CB-69 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it may involve the disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

CB-70 PROPERTY INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO - INVESTMENT

Key Decision identified as **Property Investment Portfolio - Investment** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 20 November 2014. In accordance with the Regulations, the relevant Scrutiny Chair had agreed to the decision to be taken in private session with less than 28 days notice, as the decision was urgent and could not reasonably be deferred.

Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member: Finance & Enterprise, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment, which sought approval for short term borrowing to support the ongoing rationalisation of the Property Investment Portfolio (PIP).

The PIP comprised a range of industrial, retail and office premises and played a vital role in accommodating local businesses as well as providing revenue income to support the delivery of Council services.

The report provided details of recent investments and acquisitions to the PIP, which would result in a capital shortfall pending the disposal of further assets. It was therefore proposed to access short-term borrowing to fund the shortfall. The report also referred to a review of the investment strategy for the PIP and possible changes in how it was funded.

RESOLVED -

- (a) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Development, Business & Employment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources & Service Delivery, to undertake the acquisition and disposal of PIP assets as outlined in the report;
- (b) To RECOMMEND to COUNCIL that the PIP be granted approval to short term prudential borrowing to fund commercial investments outlined within the report;
- (c) To RECOMMEND to COUNCIL that necessary changes to the capital programme and revenue budget to facilitate the ongoing rationalisation of the PIP, as outlined in the report, be approved;
- (d) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services to seal or sign any documents required to give effect to the recommendations contained in this report.

The meeting ended at 4.54 pm.

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Jonathan Eatough
Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services
Date: 17 December 2014

Signed:

Date: