

Minutes of: CABINET

Date of Meeting: 9 April 2014

Present: Councillor M C Connolly (in the Chair)
Councillors J Smith, T Isherwood, J Lewis, R Shori,
S Walmsley, T Pickstone and I Gartside

Also in attendance: Councillor L Fitzwalter (Chair–School Admissions
Overview Project Group)
Councillor P Heneghan (Deputy Cabinet Member –
Children and Families)

Public Attendance: No members of the public were present at the meeting.

**Apologies for
Absence:** Councillor G Campbell

CA.951 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Connolly declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the fact that his partner is employed by Adult Care Services.

CA.952 MINUTES

Delegated decision:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2014 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

CA.953 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A period of thirty minutes was allocated for members of the public present at the meeting to ask questions about the work or performance of the Council or Council services.

No questions were asked.

CA.954 HOUSING STRATEGY 2013 - 2024 AND ACTION PLAN

The Cabinet Member (Adult Care, Health and Housing) submitted a report presenting the Bury Housing Strategy and Action Plan. The Council's current Housing Strategy is ten years old and outdated. The new draft Strategy uses refreshed data taken from the Bury Housing Need and Demand Assessment (2011/12) and other sources to identify five key themes for action over the next 10 years. The five key themes are:

- Delivering a sufficient and suitable supply of housing in the Borough;
- Affordability;
- Fewer empty properties;
- Good quality accommodation;
- Partnership development.

The draft Housing Strategy has been considered by Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee and has had extensive consultation with Elected Members, the public, house providers and stakeholders.

Decision:

That approval be given to the Bury Housing Strategy and Action Plan.

Reasons for the decision:

Although the Council is not required to submit a Housing Strategy it is still good practice to develop a Strategy which sets out local priorities and provides a guide to registered providers and developers on housing requirements within Bury. The Strategy will assist in decision making and enhance the prospects of external funding bids.

Other options considered and rejected:

To reject or amend the Housing Strategy.

CA.955 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

The Cabinet Member (Communities and Community Safety) submitted a report providing an overview of Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) services in Bury. The report highlighted the devastating impact domestic abuse has on individuals and families. Percentage rates of incidents reported to the police on a ward basis were included with an estimate that the current rate of reporting incidents of DVA to the police is around 40%. In addition key opportunities and challenges were identified for the Council and its partner agencies including:

- Early intervention for victims of DVA;
- Accessing funding;
- Work in schools;
- Continuing Perpetrator Programmes.

Decision:

That the progress made in relation to tackling Domestic Violence and Abuse in Bury and the work being done to enhance services to victims be noted.

Reasons for the decision:

The Council is committed to tackling DAV and has signed the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Commissioner's pledge to 'Say No to Domestic Abuse'.

Other options considered and rejected:

To reject the recommendation.

CA.956 VEHICLE AND PLANT REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME 2013/2014, 2014/2015 AND 2015/2016

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Finance and Corporate Affairs) and the Cabinet Member (Environment) submitted a report updating members on the current status of the 2013/2014 Vehicle and Plant Replacement Programme and

set out proposals for the replacement of vehicles and plant items in the Council's fleet for 2014/2015 and 2015/2016.

Delegated decisions:

1. That approval be given to the amendments to the 2013/2014 Vehicle and Plant Programme.
2. That approval be given to the purchase of vehicles and plant in 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 and to the proposed funding from leasing (or loan if more cost effective) and revenue.

Reason for the decision:

The proposed replacement programme is necessary to ensure continued operation of the Council's functions.

Other options considered and rejected:

To reject or amend the recommendations.

CA.957 SCHOOL ADMISSIONS OVERVIEW PROJECT GROUP

The Chair of the School Admissions Overview Project Group submitted a report to inform Cabinet of the work, findings and recommendations of the Schools Admissions Overview Project Group.

The Project Group was appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to examine the provision and arrangements for school places in the Borough, in particular:

- To review the robustness of the Council's Forecasting Model;
- To examine the areas where problems exist and identify potential solutions and the development of strategy (short, medium and long term);
- To manage expectations (parental, schools and members);
- To identify communication strategies (officers/members with clear roles and responsibilities).

The Chair welcomed the report and thanked Councillor Fitzwalter for the thorough review the Project Group had undertaken in reaching its recommendations. Cabinet looked forward to the submission of further Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews.

Delegated decisions:

That approval be given to the recommendations of the School Admissions Overview Project Group:

- (i) The Group acknowledges the complex nature of school place planning and supports the need for a proactive approach to develop strategies that respond to both short and medium term demands for places.

- (ii) Whilst acknowledging the difficulties in measuring migration into the borough, the Group highlight the need to regularly monitor patterns and developments through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment; the Council's Core Strategy; and regular liaison with neighbouring boroughs.
- (iii) Targeted strategies employed to manage demand pressures continue to be monitored with regular consultations with local headteachers at affected schools.
- (iv) The Group acknowledges that the admissions system is complex but seems to be fair. Members, who are often asked for advice on applications by parents, should be offered an annual briefing from Children's Services on the process and any changes to the system.
- (v) Consideration be given to the development of a simplified summary of the school admissions paperwork provided to parents.
- (vi) Consideration be given to the role of Elected members in the admissions and appeals process.

Reasons for the decision:

Cabinet recognises the valuable work of Overview and Scrutiny in improving the services of the Council.

Other options considered and rejected:

To amend or reject the recommendations.

CA.958 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Delegated decision:

That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business as it involves the likely disclosure of information as detailed in the conditions of category 3.

CA.959 CAPITAL PROJECT STAGE 2 BRIEF - HIGHWAYS CAPITAL MAINTENANCE AND BRIDGE STRENGTHENING PROGRAMMES 2014/2015

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Finance and Corporate Affairs) and the Cabinet Member (Environment) submitted a report informing members of the Highways Capital Maintenance and Bridge Strengthening Programmes. The Programmes have been approved by Council as part of the 2014/2015 Capital Programme.

Delegated decisions:

1. That approval be given to the capital expenditure details for the 2014/2015 Highways Capital Maintenance and Bridge Strengthening Programmes as set out in the report submitted.

2. That approval be given to delegate authority to the Executive Director of the Department of Communities and Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Cabinet Member (Environment) to approve the detailed list of schemes to be funded from the additional Local Highways Funding.
3. To note that the expenditure is approved as part of the LTP-Highways Capital Maintenance Programme for 2014/2015.
4. That the method of financing the programme be noted.

Reasons for the decision:

There is an expectation from the Department of Transport that the funding allocated to the Council is used to keep principal roads and primary networks in a safe, serviceable and sustainable condition.

Other options considered and rejected:

To amend or reject the recommendations.

COUNCILLOR M C CONNOLLY
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 6:pm and ended at6:40pm)