

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 7 October 2021 at 10.00 am in Telford Room, Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford TF3 4NT

PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2021

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: TUESDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2021)

Present: Councillors A J Burford, E M Callear, L D Carter, C Healy, S A W Reynolds, P Watling, D Wright and S Davies (Chair).

Also Present: Cllr W L Tomlinson (Liberal Democrats / Independent Group Leader) and Cllr N A Dugmore (Conservative Group Leader)

Apologies: Councillor R A Overton and R C Evans

CAB- Declarations of Interest **102**

None.

CAB- Minutes of the Previous Meeting **103**

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CAB- Leader's Announcements **104**

The Leader welcomed the levelling up agenda and the council would work with the Government around the Agenda. There was a 13 year life expectancy gap between the affluent wards within the Borough compared to that of some of the more deprived area. He was disappointed that the Council was in the third wave of levelling up with Shropshire Council ahead of Telford and Wrekin who had provided independent analysis on the Government's criteria. The money available was significant and the Council could use the money for filling the skills gap, upskilling and empowering young people through lifelong learning, support energy poverty due to the cost of living and look to support communities through job opportunities and inward investment. The Leader had written to the two local MPs to work with the Council to make a case for the New Town's Fund although in the context of challenges it was a drop in the ocean and it was asked that all Councillors work together to push for the Council to be placed within the first band of levelling up allocations.

The Government had indicated that they would be asking Councils to raise Council tax from between 5-15%. With the current adult social care pressures

an increase of 9% would be needed in order for the figures to stand still and this would be without any advancement. In order to deal with pressures in children's services and public health inequalities this would mean an increase by double digits. Telford and Wrekin had the lowest council tax in the Midlands and its residents could not afford to pay more council tax. During the comprehensive spending review the cost of living needed to be addressed and to look at ways to reduce the squeeze on families in light of the cut to universal credit. It was asked that Telford and Wrekin made a united pitch and not use this subject for party politics.

CAB- Telford & Wrekin Indoor Sports & Leisure Strategy
105

The Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Visitor Economy presented the report of the Director of Communities, Customer and Commercial Services.

In 2007, the council published its Sports and Leisure Facilities Framework (2007-2027). Nearly 15 years since the strategy was launched and despite the unforeseen changes and financial challenges faced by Local Authorities, many of its key recommendations had been delivered. Current council priorities, local drivers and the wider national sport and physical activity context had moved on and the need therefore existed to develop a new strategy for the borough.

Investment into leisure facilities and services to meet the needs of communities, leisure strategies and to 'Protect, Care and Invest' and to keep local residents active. Facilities at Abraham Darby, Telford Tennis Centre, Telford Park and Telford Langley schools. Wellington, Oakengates, Newport, Horsehay, Telford Ice Rink and Telford Ski Centre have all been extended or refurbished and improved community access to a number of school sports facilities has also been secured in order to make a wider offer to the community from fun clubs to elite performance.

Alongside the improvements to the physical facility stock the council had invested in local policies to encourage, enable and support young people and disadvantaged groups to access high quality community leisure provision. In particular through its continued support and extension of an extensive leisure concessions policy and initiatives such as free swimming for under 18's, recently extended to residents under 25, £1 swimming for the over 50's, £1 children's holiday activities and discounted gym memberships for concessionary groups and young people.

Telford & Wrekin Council was currently the only local leisure provider offering free swimming for U25's and swimming for £1 in respect of concessionary groups and over 50's. In 2019, 156,159 public swim admissions were recorded of which 64,385 were free and 42,699 were £1. Over 2,000 children were currently enrolled on the council's Swim4Life lessons programme. One of the key priorities for this new strategy continued the theme of investment into our swimming provision by looking to deliver new swimming facilities in

Dawley, providing a greater number of residents with the opportunity to walk to their local leisure facilities.

This report summarised progress against the key priorities identified within the 2007 Framework and the rationale supporting the need for a new Indoor Sports & Leisure Strategy.

Members welcomed the report as it showed commitment to health inequalities and was a key part of the health and wellbeing strategy and fit with the objectives of the year of wellbeing which had recently been launched; the local unique leisure offer; income and revenue being invested in front line services; free for local families and care leavers and was used for education as well as holiday hunger programmes and gave wrap around care and they were proud of the in house services provided.

The Leader of the Conservative Group stated that there were a lot of positives with a diverse range of leisure facilities and he welcomed the extra facilities as long as the funds were available. The strategy was dated from 2007 and he felt that if this was looked at again with the updated strategy would the result have been the same. He asked if the timetables could be looked at as there was only 14% of availability on some sites for swimming sessions with the other percentage taken up with lessons, clubs, private lessons and lane swimming.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat/Independent Group expressed support for the additional swimming which had been achieved through the budget and welcomed the free swimming for the under 25s and the £1 swimming for the over 50s and any additional facilities within the Borough.

In response to the Leader of the Conservative Group's concerns, the Leader of the Council clarified the figures with regard to the free and £1 swimming offer within the Borough together with the indoor leisure offer and the positive reaction received from Public Health England. He looked forward to the commitment by the Council to open the new swimming pool and the offer for young people of access to multiple gym provision and swimming provision for less than £5 per week and that all Members should be behind this first class provision.

RESOLVED – that Cabinet

- a) note the successful progress made in respect of the previous strategy and endorse the proposals for a new strategy to reflect current and future community priorities and to actively contribute towards improved levels of physical activity and public health across the borough;**
- b) Delegates authority to the Director: Customer, Community & Commercial Services. In consultation with the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Libraries & Culture to finalise a brief and procure the**

services of consultants to produce an Indoor Sports Strategy for the borough; and

- c) Delegates authority to the Associate Director: Policy & Governance to negotiate and execute any necessary contractual agreements required.**

CAB-106 Creating a better Borough - The Telford Land Deal - Annual Report

The Cabinet Member for Economy, Housing, Transport & Infrastructure presented the report of the Director: Prosperity and Investment.

This report set out the continued achievements of the business winning Council and the Telford Land Deal which, with supported the Councils Growth Fund, was delivering new and higher skilled, local jobs, creating growth and security in the local supply chain alongside new homes and central to the Council's Strategy to Protect, Care & Invest into creating a better Borough.

Cumulatively over the six years of the Land Deal up to the end of 2020/21, the Borough had seen the development of 28 new commercial sites and 20 sites for residential development delivering 941 new homes and enabling 1726 new jobs, and brought back into use 48 acres of brownfield land. The Deal had delivered a gross sales income of £40.2m and attracted private sector investment of circa £300m. These developments would generate estimated additional business rates of circa £2.8m and council tax of circa £1.175m.

During 2020/2021 residential developments sites at Newcommon Way, Majestic Way and Pool Hill Road started on site, together with commercial developments at Halesfield 18 and Hortonwood West 1. During this period the Council had also seen the completion of employment floorspace at Hortonwood West Plot 7 and residential development at Croppings Farm and Horton lane.

Under the Land Deal, the Council has taken ownership of all residual non developable land from Homes England. This provides the additional opportunity to enhance and grow the Borough's provision of Green Network and Local Nature Reserves as well as providing opportunities for carbon offsetting aligning with the Council's commitment to zero carbon.

Members welcomed the innovative project and the favourable impact it brought to start up businesses and inward investment, together with employment opportunities and the positive human factors for families who stay, live, learn and shop within Telford and Wrekin and made a contribution to the Borough. This contributed to the desire to grow the New Town and bring nature conservation and recreation and set aside areas to protect local nature reserves and green network.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat/Independent Group expressed support for the conversion of brownfield sites but would welcome caution with sites such as Shawbirch East and hoped that the Council would look at initiatives around urban greening and gain and that the Council should be an example to others in relation to green development.

The Leader of the Conservative Group expressed support for the very good scheme and the benefit of everyone working together.

RESOLVED - that Cabinet notes the outcomes achieved during the 2020/2021 financial year and overall since the Land Deal commenced.

CAB- Equality & Diversity Update
107

The Cabinet Member for Cooperative Communities, Engagement and Partnerships presented the report of the Director: Communities, Customer and Commercial Services.

This report summarised how the Council had increased its focus on equality and diversity which was at the heart of the Council's cooperative values. As the population became more diverse the Council needed to gain an understanding of needs and take positive action to improve access to services and establishing a community response to hate crime incidents. It highlighted how local organisations had come together, with the Council, to celebrate diversity through community events and school workshops, with thousands of children across Telford & Wrekin getting involved. Improvements had also been made within the Council, with more equality and diversity training, guidance and support being provided to employees.

The Council was committed to continuing to promote equality and diversity, both to our workforce and across the wider community. Future plans would be developed in consultation with local residents through a new Equality & Diversity Strategy. This report also clearly set out the Council's condemnation of unlawful discrimination of any kind, and proposed the formal adoption of nationally recognised definitions of Antisemitism and Islamophobia. This proposal was supported by a number of community organisations.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat/Independent Group welcomed the report and hoped that there was now equality across the sexes and job roles within the Council and that he wished to see the completion of single status.

The Leader of the Conservative Group expressed support but felt it important that all branches of every religious group be included.

RESOLVED – that Cabinet

- a) notes progress to date in promoting equality and diversity;
- b) approves the next steps as contained in the report;
- c) resolves to condemn and speak out against any discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion or any other characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010; and

- d) **endorses and adopts the definitions of Antisemitism and Islamophobia, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report, and grants delegated authority to the Director: Communities, Customer and Commercial Services in consultation with the lead Cabinet Member for Co-operative Communities, Engagement and Partnerships to update the Council’s policies to this effect.**

The meeting ended at 10.36 am

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Anthea Lowe
Associate Director: Policy & Governance
Date: **Wednesday, 13 OCTOBER 2021**

Signed

Date: Thursday, 4 November 2021