

CABINET

Decision Notices and Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 14 March 2019 at 5.00pm at Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY, 20 MARCH 2019

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY, 25 MARCH 2019)

Present: Councillors R A Overton (Deputy Leader and Chair), L D Carter, A R H England, R C Evans, H Rhodes, S A W Reynolds and P R Watling.

Also Present: Councillors A J Eade (Conservative Group Leader) and W L Tomlinson (Liberal Democrat/Independent Group Leader).

CB-055 Apologies for Absence

Councillors S Davies and J C Minor

CB-056 Declarations of Interest

Councillors R A Overton, R C Evans and S A W Reynolds declared an interest in item CB-063.

CB-057 Minutes

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 January 2019 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CB-058 High Need Review & Strategic Plan for Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) – Phase 1

Key Decision identified as **High Need Review & Strategic Plan for Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND)** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 13 February 2019.

Councillor S A W Reynolds, Cabinet Member: Education and Skills presented the report of the Assistant Director: Education and Corporate Parenting which provided an update on the recently completed review of High Need provision for school aged children with special education needs and disabilities.

Members noted the findings of the review, which concluded:

- The number of children with SEND in the local area was high in comparison with regional and national averages.
- The overall proportion of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) who attend a special school was higher in Telford & Wrekin than the regional and national averages.
- The needs of children were changing.
- There was limited capacity to extend special schools at their current locations.

The proposals outlined the strategy which included increasing the specialist resource provision in mainstream schools and specialist provision as a satellite site for primary school aged children. These had been identified as priorities to ensure that children could attend school as close to home as possible. Schools had shown interest in the proposals.

Members welcomed the report and noted the inclusivity of the strategy.

The Conservative Group Leader asked about capacity at Haughton School and if this had been inbuilt into the strategy. It was confirmed that future planning work for Haughton School had been undertaken.

RESOLVED that –

- (a) the information in the report be noted and the proposed developments set out below be approved:**
 - i) the development of resource base provision in mainstream schools in partnership with special schools**
 - ii) the formal development of a SEMH resource base provision for children in KS2 in partnership with the Linden Centre**
 - iii) the development of further resource provision in light of needs and resource available**
- (b) that the Assistant Director: Education & Corporate Parenting be authorised, after consultation with the Lead Member for Education and Skills to take all required action and utilise the three year grant totalling £848,837 to develop the specialist resourced bases required and contribute to any further expansion of specialist provision, as deemed necessary in light of demand.**

CB-059 Pride in Our High Streets – Supporting Business

Key Decision identified as **High Street Challenge** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 13 February 2019.

Councillor L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Finance, Commercial Services & Economic Development, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment. It was reported since the launch of the programme in 2015, more than £1.5million had been invested into supporting businesses in the Borough's high streets. The report set out proposals to invest a further £700k into high streets.

The Pride in Your High Street Scheme comprised of three projects. The first of which, the Young High Street Challenge was a competition for young people which aimed to engage them with high street regeneration. The competition was won by students at Wrekin College, and their store, Retro Shack, would shortly be opening in Wellington.

The second project was the Empty Unit Incentive Package, which provided a start-up grant, to date 7 businesses had been supported, with a further two in the pipeline. The businesses ranged from cafes, to a haberdashers and a hairdressers.

The third project was the property façade scheme. It was noted that this was not a grant and was managed by the Council's biT service. 62 landlords had so far agreed to the scheme.

The Council had expressed an interest in the Government's Future High Street Fund. The Council would submit bids for Wellington and Oakengates in the first round and Madeley and Dawley for the second round.

Members welcomed the report. Members acknowledged the success of the scheme, which had produced real business across the Borough.

The Conservative Group Leader welcomed the report but highlighted the schemes should not just enhance the visual appeal of high streets. The Liberal Democrat / Independent Group Leader stated that High Streets should be destinations in their own right.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the success of the Pride in Our High Street Programme be noted
- (b) submission of bids to the first round of the Future High Streets fund for Wellington and Oakengates led by the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Delivery, be approved
- (c) the receipt of any funding that may be secured through the Future High Streets fund be approved
- (d) the submission of bids to the Heritage High Street Fund to be led by the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Delivery be approved.

CB-060 **Fostering Modernisation Plan (Review of Foster Carers Fees and Allowances)**

Key Decision identified as **Foster Carer Fees** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 13 February 2019.

Cllr P R Watling, Cabinet Member for Children & Adults Early Help & Support, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Children's Safeguarding and Family Support. It was reported that over the previous three years there had been an increase in the use of Independent Fostering Agencies, which were more expensive than Local Authority Carers.

The report proposed to modernise and simplify the fee and allowances scheme for carers within the Telford & Wrekin fostering service. The proposals would increase the number and capacity of Telford & Wrekin fostering service carers, reduce the number of children placed with Independent Fostering Agencies and increase the number of children placed locally.

Members noted that foster carers valued the support offered by the Council and stated that the scheme was the next step in the journey in supporting foster carers.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the revised fees and allowance structures for Telford & Wrekin Council's foster carers be approved, and;**
- (b) the scheme is to commence on 1 April 2019 and a 12 month review and evaluation be completed in April 2020.**

CB-061 Procurement Update

Key Decision identified as **Procurement Intentions** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 16 January 2019.

Councillor L D Carter, Cabinet Member: Finance, Commercial Services & Economic Development, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement & Commissioning which provided an update on the Council's Procurement Intentions Document and the latest information regarding effective procurement and contract management.

It was noted that council wide procurement continued to drive savings through robust competitive tendering and real time negotiation when brokering services.

All procurements, where possible, had an aspect of social value being delivered as an essential part of the outcome. The social value return on investment meant that less could be spent and more received with smart procurement. Bidders would be guided as to the type of social value that would most benefit the community or could offer solutions in line with their own corporate social responsibility priorities. An increase in social value outcomes helping our communities to help themselves, had been noted.

The regular Procurement Intentions Document was set out at Appendix 1 to the report. The document presented up and coming procurements for the next few months.

RESOLVED that –

- (a) the procurement updates in the report be noted; and**
- (b) the Procurement Intentions Document (Appendix 1 to the report) be noted and, where indicated, authority be delegated to appropriate officers (as per the Contract Procedure Rules) to progress new procurements through the tender process to contract award.**

CB-062 Declaration of Lilleshall Hill Local Nature Reserve

Non-Key Decision

Councillor R A Overton, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Housing and Enforcement, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment.

The Council had made a commitment to the retention of locally important green spaces which had value to local communities. This already included the protection afforded to the Green Network through policies in the adopted Local Plan, through the existing 200 Green Guarantee Sites and 15 Local Nature Reserves. The report sets

out proposals to designate a new Local Nature Reserves at Lilleshall Hill. Through this commitment the area of LNR protected would increase by 4.6 hectares to a total of 519.96 hectares of approved LNR. The extent of LNR provision was more than double Natural England's target and meant that 89% of households were within 300m of greenspace. Maps showing the proposed LNRs were attached to the report at Appendix 1.

These proposals had been developed in liaison with the local community including the local Parish Council and would involve local friends groups and volunteers carrying out small scale conservation tasks as part of the management of the sites. The designation of additional LNRs further reflected the Council's commitment to promoting health and wellbeing.

The selection, declaration and management of Local Nature Reserves was a function of local authorities. Following the approval, the site would progress through a formal process with Natural England prior to final legal declaration.

Members welcomed the report. The Conservative Group Leader praised the community and volunteers for their support in this project.

RESOLVED that –

- (a) the declaration of Lilleshall Hill Local Nature Reserve be approved, and;**
- (b) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment (and any officer authorised in writing by that Assistant Director) to complete the declaration process.**

CB-063 Better Homes for All: Tackling Rogue Landlords & Improving Private Rented Housing – A Progress Update

Non-Key Decision

In accordance with his previous declaration of interest Councillor R A Overton vacated the Chair before this item of business, with Councillor L D Carter taking the Chair.

Councillor L D Carter, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Communities, Housing & Enforcement, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Customer & Neighbourhood Services. The report provided Cabinet with an update on the programme.

Members noted the report, which stated:

- That funding had been received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to develop a new Rogue Landlord Taskforce team.
- Six prosecutions had taken place for Housing Act Offences and, where appropriate, rogue landlords had been added to the new national rogue landlord database.
- Changes to legislation for Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs), which required any property where five or more people shared kitchen and bathroom facilities must be licensed.

- In 2018, 283 fixed penalty notices for anti-social behaviour were issued, which included fly tipping, fly posting, littering and graffiti. This was over four times the amount of notices issued in 2017. It was reported there had been a 40% decline in fly tipping incidents since 2015.
- The Landlord Accreditation Scheme relaunched in August 2018 and there were 93 members registered.
- The first better Homes for All Awards had taken place.

RESOLVED that the progress outlined in the report in pursuit of Better Homes for All be noted.

Following determination of this agenda item Councillor R A Overton resumed his position of Chair.

CB-064 Local Offer to Care Leavers

Non-Key Decision

Councillor P R Watling, Cabinet Member for Children & Adults Early Help & Support, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Children's Safeguarding and Family Support. Since September 2018, Local Authorities in England had been required to publish their local offer for care leavers, which provided information about services offered to care leavers.

The report provided an update on the Local Offer since the document had initially been published, which included:

- Liaison with the Care Leaver Covenant to develop national initiatives for care leavers.
- Introduction of Council Tax Exemption for care leavers until the age of 21.
- Priority housing for care leavers.
- Free Aspirations membership and public swimming for care leavers and concessionary membership for their companions.
- One to One sessions with the Marches Growth Hub focused on career routes and learning.
- Bi-annual survey.
- Pages on Telford & Wrekin Council website with advise, guidance and contacts for care leavers.
- Introduction of a mentoring service

Members welcomed the updated offer for care leavers.

RESOLVED that the progress made against the requirements of the Children and Social Care Act 2017 in relation to children in care and care leavers be noted.

CB-065 Development of a Regional Permanency Arrangement

Non-Key Decision

Councillor P R Watling, Cabinet Member for Children & Adults Early Help & Support, presented the report of the Assistant Director: Children's Safeguarding and Early Help. The report outlined the proposals for the development of a regional adoption and permanency partnership for the North Midlands, who would work together to find homes for Looked After Children.

The partnership would be a unique arrangement to maximise resources, capacity and flexibility to deliver improvements in service delivery, effective practice and the long term outcomes for these children, whilst maintaining the independence of each Local Authority involved.

Members welcomed the proposals and considered that the partnership would enable better outcomes for children. Members considered that it was vital that each Local Authority retained their own identity and were advised that all branding for the partnership would include each Local Authority logo.

RESOLVED that –

- (a) the statutory requirement to be part of a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) by 1 April 2020, as set out in the Education and Adoption Act 2016 to acknowledged;**
- (b) the formation of a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) between Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council be approved;**
- (c) the Outline Business Case (OBC) which sets out the ambition of Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council to go beyond adoption and develop a regional model of wider permanency which includes Fostering, Connected Persons and Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) be approved.**

CB-066 New College Wellington

Key Decision identified as **Land Acquisition** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 20 December 2018.

Councillor R A Overton, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Housing and Enforcement introduced the report of the Assistant Director: Business, Development & Employment. The report outlined the proposed acquisition of former New College site in Wellington. The site would enable to expansion of special school provision in the Borough alongside other uses, such as supported accommodation, offices or small business units. The proposals would support the regeneration of College Ward, which was ranked in the 10% most deprived wards nationally.

The Conservative Group Leader advised that he would like to see a report on the state of the building, Members advised that a further report containing this information would be bought to Cabinet.

RESOLVED to note the report and the decision taken by the Leader.

The meeting ended at 5.59 pm

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Jonathan Eatough
Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement & Commissioning
Date: 20 March 2019

Signed:

Date: