



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 21st SEPTEMBER 2011

PRESENT: Councillor D Cook (Chair), Councillors S Claymore, M Oates, J Garner and M Greatorex

The following officers were present: Anthony E Goodwin (Chief Executive), John Wheatley (Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate Director (Resources)), Jane Hackett (Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer), Rob Barnes (Deputy Director (Housing and Health)), Stefan Garner (Deputy Director (Finance Exchequer and Revenues)), Tina Mustafa (Housing Operations Manager), Paul Weston (Head of Asset Management - Property Services), Steve Pointon (Housing Strategy Manager), James Roberts (Economic Development and Enterprise Manager) and Jane Eason (Senior PR Officer)

49 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B Beale and R Pritchard.

50 CORPORATE UPDATE

Karen Adderley gave a presentation on Staffordshire Alcohol Misuse Project – Tamworth Pilot

51 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 August were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor J Garner and seconded by Councillor M Oates)

52 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations on Interest.

53 TAMWORTH AND LICHFIELD ECONOMIC STRATEGY

The report of the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Enterprise seeking endorsement of the Strategy and associated next steps was considered.

- RESOLVED That :
- 1 Cabinet endorsed the strategy in terms of its overall vision, key themes, issues and priorities, and;
 - 2 Cabinet endorsed the next steps in developing the action plans with partners within the Business and Economic Partnership and the Councils participation in this process.

(Moved by Councillor S Claymore and seconded by Councillor J Garner)

54 MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES

The Leader agreed at the request of the Chair of Corporate Scrutiny to write to the Leader of the County Council in relation to the purchase of land for a BMX track.

55 BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING PROCESS

The report of the Leader of the Council seeking agreement to the proposed budget and medium term financial planning process for General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account for 2012/13 was considered.

- RESOLVED That the proposed process for the General Fund and Housing revenue Account Budget and Medium Term Financial Planning process for 2012/13 be adopted.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor M Oates)

56 QUARTER 1 2010/11 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The report of the Leader of the Council providing Cabinet with a performance and financial health-check was considered.

- RESOLVED That Members endorsed the contents of the report.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor J Garner)

57 CHARGES FOR LEGAL WORK

The report of the Leader in the absence of the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Assets advising Members of the current position, the nature of the

work undertaken by the Legal and Democratic Services Team and the resource implications was considered.

RESOLVED That Members endorsed the contents of the report and approved:

- 1 the general principles of imposing a charge for discretionary legal services;
- 2 the creation of a standard form of response to leasehold enquiries and the implementation of standard fees as detailed in the report, and;
- 3 the implementation of standard charges for the areas of legal work in accordance with the schedule at appendix 1.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor S Claymore)

58 TRANSFER TO RESERVE - ICELANDIC IMPAIRMENT REVALUATION

The report of the Leader of the Council seeking Cabinet approval to create a specific reserve for 'Icelandic Impairment Revaluation' and to transfer £473,726.26 to that reserve for the year ending 31st March 2011 was considered.

RESOLVED That Cabinet gave retrospective approval for the creation of the Temporary Reserve for 'Icelandic Impairment Revaluation', required as part of the finalisation of the 2010/11 accounts resulting from changes to Icelandic Banking impairment valuations, in the sum of £473,726.26, as detailed within the body of the report.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor J Garner)

59 LOCAL AUTHORITY MORTGAGE RATE FOR MORTGAGES GRANTED UNDER HOUSING ACT, 1985

The report of the Leader of the Council in the absence of the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Assets, in accordance with section 438 of the Housing Act 1985, making the statutory declaration of the local authority mortgage rate from 1 October was considered.

RESOLVED That Cabinet approved the following:

- 1 the statutory declaration of interest was to be charged at 6.87%, and;
- 2 the rate to be reviewed again in 6 months.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor M Oates)

60 DISPOSAL OF COUNCIL OWNED GARAGE SITES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The report of the Portfolio Holder Quality of Life and the Portfolio Holder Corporate Services and Assets seeking agreement in principle to the disposal of 26 Council owned garage sites for the purpose of developing affordable housing as per previous Cabinet decision to disinvest in sites that are uneconomical to retain was considered.

RESOLVED That:

- 1 Cabinet agreed in principle to the disposal of 26 garage sites to partner Registered Providers (RPs) to develop affordable housing;
- 2 Authority has been delegated to the Portfolio Holder Quality of Life and Portfolio Holder Corporate Services and Assets to agree final decisions relating to the disposal of garage sites following further feasibility assessments, and;
- 3 A further report will be submitted to Cabinet in November to agree a strategy for investment in the retained garage stock and potential disposal of sites not suitable for affordable housing development.

(Moved by Councillor M Oates and seconded by Councillor S Claymore)

61 LANDLORD SERVICES CO-REGULATION AND REQUIREMENT FOR THE TENANTS SERVICES AUTHORITY

The report of the Portfolio Holder Quality of Life seeking to update Cabinet on the interim arrangements for landlord regulation in relation to the Tenants Service Authority (1/7/11-31/3/12), setting out the proposed changes within the Localism Bill to Landlord Regulation from April 2012 and setting out Landlord Services response to the above changes and ensure that tenants are at the heart of influencing, shaping and scrutinising services in line with legislative and best practice requirements was considered.

RESOLVED That Members:

- 1 endorsed the interim position regarding the Tenants Service Authority from 1st July 2011 – 31st March 2012;
- 2 delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder of Quality of Life and Deputy Director of Housing and Health to agree consultation responses to the changes to the regulatory framework for tenants', and;

- 3 agreed that the Tenant Regulatory & Improvement Team within the Landlord Services will oversee compliance with the regulatory requirements within the Tenant Services Authority's code ensuring tenants' shape, influence and scrutinise service improvement .

(Moved by Councillor M Oates and seconded by Councillor D Cook)

62 HOUSING & HEALTH STRATEGY

The report of the Portfolio Holder Quality of Life seeking approval of the draft Healthier Housing Strategy was considered.

RESOLVED That Members:

- 1 approved the draft Healthier Housing Strategy and Year 1 Action Plan;
- 2 delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder Quality of Life to agree any required amendments to the draft Strategy and Action Plan following further consultation with key stakeholders.

(Moved by Councillor M Oates and seconded by Councillor D Cook)

63 COUNCIL HOUSING FINANCE REFORM

The report of the Portfolio Holder Quality of Life updating Cabinet regarding the implementation of Council Housing Finance reform; seeking to agree a waiver to financial guidance in the retention of the Sector Group to provide advice and support in the development of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy; seeking to agree key principles in relation to the development of the Council's 30 year business plan as set out in the report; and seeking approval of the implementation plan shown at Appendix Four was considered.

RESOLVED That Cabinet agreed:

- 1 to waive financial guidance in the retention of the services of Sector Group to provide advice and support in the development of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy;
- 2 the key principles which will guide the development of the Council's 30 year business plan as set out in the report, and;
- 3 the implementation plan shown at Appendix Four.

(Moved by Councillor M Oates and seconded by Councillor M Greatorex)

64 EMPTY HOMES AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

The report of the Portfolio Holder Quality of Life seeking approval of a revised version of the Financial Assistance Policy due to the inclusion of financial assistance geared towards preventing homelessness, the ending of the Kick Start Partnership and the introduction of the Home Improvement Trust and changes in the way Empty Homes Grants are delivered; and seeking approval of the Empty Homes Policy and advising members to date of the progress made on returning Empty Homes back into use in the private sector was considered.

RESOLVED That Cabinet approved the:

- 1 revised Financial Assistance Policy attached at Appendix 1;
- 2 Empty Homes Policy attached at Appendix 2, and;
- 3 endorsed the progress made on returning Empty Homes into use.

(Moved by Councillor M Oates and seconded by Councillor S Claymore)

65 VIREMENT OF ASBESTOS BUDGET INTO HOUSING CAPITAL WORKSTREAMS

The report of the Portfolio Holder Quality of Life seeking Members approval of the virement of £100,000 in respect of Asbestos Testing and Removal capital programme budget, into the main capital programme workstreams under which asbestos removal works take place was considered.

RESOLVED That Members approved the virement of £100,000 in respect of Asbestos Testing and Removal capital programme budget, into the main capital programme workstreams under which asbestos removal works take place

(Moved by Councillor M Oates and seconded by Councillor D Cook)

Leader