



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN, ON WEDNESDAY, 30TH JULY 2014 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor K.V. Reynolds - Leader

Councillors:

Mrs C. Forehead (HR and Governance/Business Manager), D.T. Hardacre (Performance and Asset Management), K. James (Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development), Mrs R. Passmore (Education and Lifelong Learning), D.V. Poole (Community and Leisure Services), R. Woodyatt (Social Services), T.J. Williams (Highways, Transportation and Engineering).

Together with:

S.A. Rosser (Interim Chief Executive) and Mrs S. Aspinall (Acting Deputy Chief Executive),

Also in Attendance:

S. Couzens (Chief Housing Officer), S. Harris (Acting Head of Corporate Finance), T. Maher (Assistant Director Planning & Strategy), L. Travis (Senior Community Education Manager), M.S. Williams (Head of Community and Leisure Services), C. Evans (Committee Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from D. Street (Corporate Director Social Services) and Mrs N. Scammell (Acting Director Corporate Services and S.151 Officer).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor K. Reynolds declared an interest in agenda item 4(3).

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 16th July 2014 (minute nos. 1-13; page nos. 1-6) be approved and signed as a correct record.

MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED

4. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN SAVINGS – VANS AND TRAILERS AT CIVIC AMENITY SITES

The Head of Community & Leisure Services provided Cabinet with an overview of the report, which provided an update and clarification on some definition issues relating to planned restrictions on the deposit of waste by vans and trailers at Civic Amenity Sites.

Cabinet considered a report on 2nd April 2014 in relation to the Medium Term Financial Plan Savings resulting from restrictions to be applied to the use of Civic Amenity Sites by Vans and Trailers. Since this time, further legal advice had been sought in relation to the implementation. The legal view suggested that further clarity be provided to Cabinet in relation to legal definitions, such that a new decision can be made which avoids ambiguity and ensures absolute clarity for members of the public.

Cabinet were asked to consider the updated proposal, as detailed within the Officers report, which builds on that previously agreed while clarifying which wastes will be subject to a charge.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons outlined in the officer's report: -

1. Cabinet agreed that the revised scheme outlined in section 4.6 of the report be implemented from 1 October 2014.
2. Officers review the effectiveness of the scheme after a 6-9 month period and present a further report(s) if amendments to the scheme are required

5. DISPOSAL OF HRA LAND ADJACENT TO FORMER GREENHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

The report, which was supported by the Caerphilly Homes Task Group on 3rd July 2014, proposed to declare the land adjoining the former Greenhill Primary School site surplus to operational requirements, so it can be utilised to support the Council's Local Development Plan for the provision of new housing.

The parcel of HRA land adjoins the former Greenhill Primary School site, which had been offered to United Welsh Housing Association for the purpose of developing new housing. The Planning Department had advised on the benefits of incorporating this parcel land into the development.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons outlined in the officer's report: -

1. The site be declared surplus to requirements of the HRA.
2. The Head of Performance and Property determine the terms of disposal pursuant to the approved protocol.

6. REDUCED FUNDING FOR ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING

Councillor K. Reynolds declared an interest in this item, as a family member used to attend a course, for which funding has been withdrawn. Councillor K. Reynolds left the meeting room during consideration of this item, taking no part in the discussion or voting thereon. Councillor G. Jones took the Chair for this item only.

The report, which was presented to the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee on 8th July 2014, informed Members of the reduction in funding for Adult Community Learning in the 2014/15 academic year and offered options to be considered for future delivery of the service.

Adult Community Learning faces significant reductions in the budget in 2014/15 academic year. The report highlighted the reduction in funding which amounted to £235,470 in this financial year. There were a number of courses previously funded by the grant that no longer qualify for grant funding. The report proposed options for charging learners and increasing room hire charges in order to try to maintain provision and delivery of service for 2014/15.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons outlined in the officer's report: -

1. In order to mitigate the impact of the reduction in tutor hours. It be considered that the service offers courses on a cost recovery basis. It is estimated that the cost would be £4 per hour per learner for accreditation, if required (Courses would continue if they are viable due to the number attending).
2. With regard to the marginal increases in room hire, it be proposed that these fees be increased at a level, which remains competitive.

7. CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report sought Cabinet endorsement of the updated Forward Work Programme for the period August to November 2014.

The Forward Work Programme sets out the key reports that Cabinet expects to receive in the coming months and is updated on a monthly basis to reflect any amendments. It is a legal requirement that such programmes are published. The programme is an important way of tracking progress against targets set in the Council's Improvement Plan

Following consideration and discussion it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and a further report be presented to Cabinet in September. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons set out in the officer's report, the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

8. PROVISIONAL OUTTURN FOR 2013/14

The Interim Head of Corporate Finance highlighted the key issues within the report, which informed Members of the provisional outturn for the Authority for the financial year 2013/14. The information was provisional at this stage as it was still subject to an annual audit by the Authority's External Auditors PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Appendix A of the report summarised the provisional revenue outturn position, which is a net underspend of £16.171m. This included an underspend of £8.437m on the Housing Revenue Account and an overspend of £1.985m on Schools. Service Directorate and Miscellaneous Finance underspends totalled £8.451m, which is a higher level than would normally be the case. Much of this is due to the fact that officers have been mindful of the anticipated significant cuts in funding for future years and expenditure has been curtailed in a number of areas to support the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Appendix B showed the movements on General Fund balances from 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014 and current agreed commitments for 2014/15. The forecast year-end balance for 2013/14 as reported to Council on the 26th February 2014 was £14.499m. The actual position for 2013/14 is a closing balance of £16.027m, which is an increase of £1.528m. The table in paragraph 4.5 of the report provided details of the variation, the most significant element of which was an increased contribution from service areas of £1.147m.

The 2014/15 Budget Report agreed by Council in February included a proposal to utilise £1.2m of the 2013/14 projected Council Tax surplus to support 2014/15 budget savings along with a proposal to set-aside £800k in the General Fund to meet shortfalls arising from the part-year impact of agreed savings. These commitments reduce the General Fund balance to £14.027m.

Since the 2014/15 Budget Report was agreed there are new funding requirements of £300k in relation to the A469 closure remedial works and £735k in respect of the remaining matched funding requirement for 21st Century Schools. Cabinet was asked to support a recommendation to Council that these commitments totalling £1.035m should be met from General Fund balances.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED that for the reasons set out in the officer's report:-

1. The provisional 2013/14 outturn position be noted.
2. Funding of £1.035m be utilised from the General Fund, to meet the requirements set out in paragraph 4.7 of the report.

The meeting closed at 14.24 p.m.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 3rd September 2014.

CHAIR