

Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet

Wednesday 13th September, 2017 at 6.00 pm
In Committee Room 2 at The Council House, Dudley

Present:

Cabinet Members:

Councillor P Harley (Leader – Chair)
Councillor D Vickers (Deputy Leader – Vice-Chair)
Councillors S Clark, L Jones, I Kettle, P Miller, K Shakespeare and D Stanley

Opposition Group Members Nominated to attend the Cabinet:

Councillors P Lowe, J Foster, J Martin, D Sparks and Q Zada (Labour Group);
Councillors P Brothwood and D Perks (UKIP Group)

Officers:

T Oakman – Deputy Chief Executive (Strategic Director People), A Lunt – Strategic Director Place, I Newman – Chief Officer Finance and Legal Services, H Martin – Chief Officer Regeneration and Enterprise, A McCormick – Chief Officer Corporate Transformation and Performance, M Farooq – Lead for Law and Governance and M Johal – Senior Democratic Services Officer

18 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors N Barlow and A Millward.

19 **Declarations of Interest**

No Member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.

20 **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19th July, 2017, be approved as a correct record and signed.

21 **Capital Programme Monitoring**

A joint report of the Chief Executive and Chief Officer Finance and Legal Services was submitted on progress with the implementation of the Capital Programme and a number of proposed amendments.

Reference was made to the North Priory Community Centre and it was indicated that an invitation would be sent to the Leader of Walsall Council to attend the official opening due to his previous involvement with the project.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to the funding bid being successful, the Low Carbon Place Strategy expenditure be included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 6 of the report.
- (2) That the Urgent Amendment to the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 7 of the report, be noted.

22 **Review of Dudley High Rise Accommodation Post Grenfell Tower**

A report of the Strategic Director Place was submitted providing background information into events at Grenfell Tower, implications for the Council and outlining the response to ensure that Dudley Council's High Rise accommodation is as safe as possible against fire risk.

In considering the report a Member of the Opposition Group requested that residents and Ward Members be kept informed on updates and that any information or leaflets in this regard be circulated and shared as soon as possible. It was commented that there was confusion on action to be taken in the event of a fire and it was requested that appropriate advice be given to tenants to confirm whether they should "get out or stay put" during a major incident. Also, consideration be given to review Emergency Planning procedures particularly to address issues in relation to the lack of accommodation to rehouse tenants which had arisen in the Grenfell incident. Reference was made to the use of sprinklers and it was commented that it was believed that the Fire Service were in support, however it was acknowledged that there were mixed views.

In responding to the above issues the Chair of Audit and Standards Committee referred to emergency planning and indicated that the matter was included as an agenda item for consideration by the Committee at the meeting to be held in December, 2017. The Deputy Chief Executive stated that the Chief Officer Health and Wellbeing had reviewed emergency planning and business continuity procedures. The Strategic Director Place confirmed that following the Grenfell incident meetings had been held and appropriate advice given to all tenants in high rise blocks. Current advice was to stay put unless it was clear to get out and the Strategic Director Place undertook to ensure all were aware of this, including Ward Members.

Resolved

- (1) That the impact and implications for the Council relating to the Grenfell Tower incident, be noted.
 - (2) That the Council's response to the incident to review fire risk in all high rise blocks, as well as to review fire risk assessment policies and procedures in order to ensure that they are comprehensive, be noted.
 - (3) That further reports be submitted to the Cabinet detailing the causes of the Grenfell Tower fire and implications for the Council as it becomes clearer.
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23 Dudley's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2022

A report of the Strategic Director People was submitted on the progress towards refreshing Dudley's Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2017-2022 and the governance process for adopting the strategy within the Council.

Arising from the presentation of the report a Member of the Opposition Group welcomed the review of the Strategy, but, raised a number of concerns, particularly to the lack of reference to housing as it was considered this had a significant detrimental effect on people's physical and mental health and wellbeing. With regard to reference in the Strategy on doing things differently and in particular relating to a new relationship with communities, it was queried how this would be linked at Ward level as individual Wards may interpret issues differently and it was commented that efforts needed to be made to ensure a blanket approach was not taken. Other issues raised included how the Strategy linked to the Multi Community Provider (MCP), food banks were a good source of nutrient for a significant number of people and what work or action had been undertaken to achieve the three priorities. Actions taken and any discussions on a regional or national level were also queried with regard to achieving reduction in poverty, loneliness and isolation. With regard to Government funding an update was requested on discussions in achieving a Fair Deal for Dudley.

In responding to the above issues the Deputy Chief Executive indicated that the Strategy had been considered and endorsed by various groups including the Health and Well Being Board which had all political representation. The MCP was integrated to the work of the Strategy with regard to the prevention element and there was a need to ensure resources were allocated properly and appropriately. Reference was made to the Neglect Strategy which was aimed at addressing poverty, loneliness and isolation to incorporate housing issues. The Cabinet Member Housing stated that efforts were being made to build additional Council Housing, putting in place stringent measures including issuing of fines to landlords with a view to eradicating poor housing. A Member of the Opposition Group acknowledged the good work being undertaken to address the issues but stated that the Council could do more to promote and communicate to the public.

Resolved

That the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017 – 2022, be endorsed.

24 **Revision of Byelaws Made Under Section 19 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964**

A report of the Strategic Director People was submitted on the revision of byelaws made under Section 19 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964.

Resolved

That the Council be recommended to approve the revision of byelaws made under Section 19 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964.

25 **Adoption of the Householder Local Development Order (LDO)**

A report of the Strategic Director Place was submitted for the adoption of the Householder Local Development Order (LDO).

Arising from the presentation of the report a Member of the Opposition Group referred to the approach to reduce statutory consultation. It was considered that neighbours should be encouraged to discuss applications between themselves with a view to reaching a compromise should there be any disputes. Also it was suggested that a paragraph be included in the document to inform people that although the process was being streamlined there were consequences where non-compliance was identified. In referring to paragraph 6 of the report a Member of the Opposition Group suggested that where it states householders are advised to notify affected neighbours it be changed to include the word “must” to make it mandatory.

Reference was made to developments that would affect public sewers and that applicants were advised to check if proposals were affected by a public sewer. It was indicated that consideration be given to areas where water was shared as this could affect access to pipe work if built over. The importance of complying with Building Regulations was also highlighted.

The Chief Officer Regeneration and Enterprise responded to queries and indicated that a tick box could be inserted on the application for applicants to indicate whether neighbour consultation had been undertaken.

Resolved

That, subject to consideration of comments made relating to neighbour consultation, public sewers and inclusion of wording to highlight the consequences of non-compliance, the Householder Local Development Order (LDO) be approved for adoption and implementation from 2nd October, 2017.

26 **Approval for Adoption of the Dudley Town Centre Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP)**

A report of the Strategic Director Place was submitted for the adoption of the updated version of the Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP) for Dudley Town Centre.

Resolved

That the adoption of the Dudley Town Centre Conservation Area Management Plan and its proactive implementation throughout the lifetime of the Townscape Heritage scheme and beyond be approved and supported.

27 **Approval for Adoption of the Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document**

A report of the Strategic Director Place was submitted for the adoption of the Council's Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document.

A Member of the Opposition Group referred to information in the document relating to the overall quantum of parking in the main town centres and queried the rationale to reduce parking by 40% in Town Centres. A comment was also made in relation to difficulties encountered by wheelchair and other users in freely accessing pavements due to inconsiderate parking.

The Chief Officer Regeneration and Enterprise undertook to provide a response to the query on the reduction in parking in Town Centres.

Resolved

That the Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document be approved and adopted.

28 **Approval for Adoption of the Shop Front and Advertisement Supplementary Planning Document**

A report of the Strategic Director Place was submitted for the adoption of the Council's Shop Front and Advertisement Supplementary Planning Document.

Resolved

That the Shop Front and Advertisement Supplementary Planning Document be approved and adopted.

29 **Approval for Adoption of the Revised Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document**

A report of the Strategic Director Place was submitted for the adoption of the Council's current Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document.

Resolved

That the revised Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document be approved and adopted.

30 **The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter 2017**

A report of the Strategic Director Place was submitted for the adoption of the Council's Shop Front and Advertisement Supplementary Planning Document.

Arising from the presentation of the report a comment was made on the need to manage complaints internally with a view to reaching a local resolution and to simplify the complaints process. It was considered that the 3 Group Leaders consider the matter with a view to streamlining the process.

Resolved

- (1) That the report and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Letter for 2017, be noted.
- (2) That the Chief Executive, Strategic Directors and Chief Officers continue to ensure that requests for information on complaints received are dealt with by the date requested to ensure that the Council's excellent performance on response times can be maintained.
- (3) That Directorates continue to monitor and review their complaints activity to ensure ongoing good practice and to achieve the speedy local resolution of complaints wherever possible.
- (4) That the matter be included as an agenda item at a future meeting of the 3 Group Leaders for further discussion on streamlining the complaints process.

The meeting ended at 7.13 p.m.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL