

CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10 APRIL 2019

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CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10 APRIL 2019

Present:

Councillor G Baxter MBE Leader (in the Chair)

Councillor M Gordon
“ P R Kerry

Councillor J Lilley
“ R Smith

Also Present:

D Swaine - Joint Chief Executive Officer
L Hickin - Joint Strategic Director – People
K Apps - Acting Joint Head of Economic Development
L Pepper - Housing Options Team Leader
J Dethick - Chief Accountant
S Sternberg - Joint Head of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer
A Maher - Senior Governance Officer

677 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N Barker and E A Hill.

678 Declarations of Interests

Members were requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or other interests, not already on their register of interests, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

No declarations were made at this meeting of Cabinet.

679 Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 13 March 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

Matters referred from Scrutiny

680 Homelessness Scrutiny Review

Cabinet considered a report of Councillor T Reader, Chair of the Communities Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2018/19, which sought approval to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee’s review into Homelessness.

Cabinet heard that the aim of the review had been to assess how the Council had responded to the new duties and responsibilities placed on the Authority by the Homelessness Act 2017.

As part of the review, the Committee had looked at:-

- how well the Council was working with partners;
- whether the “Homelessness Forum” had proved to be effective; and
- if there were any area where the service could be improved.

Cabinet discussed the report. There was a consensus that this had been a valuable review and that the Committee had produced a good, well-reasoned, report. In this context, Members considered the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee. These recommendations were welcomed and Cabinet felt that, for the most part, they should be supported.

Concern was expressed, however, about the Scrutiny Committee’s recommendation set out in paragraph 1.5 in Appendix 1 to the report, that the Council should ring fence its Homelessness Prevention funding. Cabinet felt that this might have the unintended consequence of limiting the scope to provide support for those threatened with homelessness, if high demand meant that the ring-fenced budget had been exhausted.

Cabinet concluded that financing homelessness services, by continuing to fund them through the Council’s General Fund, provided greater flexibility in terms of helping those facing homelessness and so should be retained.

RESOLVED – That:-

- (1) The recommendations set out in paragraphs 1.1 to 1.4 and 1.6 to 1.9 of Appendix 1, attached to the report, be agreed.
- (2) The recommendation set out in paragraph 1.5 of Appendix 1, attached to the report, be not agreed.
- (3) Officers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, be requested to respond accordingly to the Scrutiny Committee.

REASON FOR DECISION – To ensure that the Council is responding effectively to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED & REJECTED – Not responding to the Scrutiny Committee’s recommendations would mean that an opportunity to review and improve current service provision would not have been taken. This would not be appropriate and so was rejected.

Non Key Decisions**681 One Public Estate Review – Dronfield and Eckington Town Centres**

Cabinet considered a report of Councillor G Baxter MBE, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Strategy and Transformation, which informed Members of the progress of the One Public Estate project in the town centres of Dronfield and Eckington and to obtain approval for the NEDDC representation on the Project Control Board (PCB).

Cabinet discussed the proposed governance arrangements, how other organisations would serve on the Project Control Board, and the Council's key role as the financially "accountable body" for both funds, covering each of the town centres.

Members discussed and welcomed the progress that had been made with the project. They also considered and endorsed the proposed governance arrangements as set out in the report. In this context they supported the suggested representation for the Council on the Project Control Board.

RESOLVED – That Cabinet approves the recommended Governance structure as set out in paragraphs 1.7 to 1.9 of the report and Appendix 1 to the report.

REASON FOR DECISION – To ensure the objectives and priorities of North East Derbyshire District Council are represented on the Dronfield and Eckington Public Sector land/premises and service provision review Project Control Board.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED & REJECTED – The governance structure proposed follows standard principles for projects of this size and complexity.

682 Member Development Annual Report 2018/19

Cabinet considered a report of Councillor R Smith, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance and Chair of the Member Development Working Group, which enabled Members to review the Member Development work that had been undertaken during the 2018/19 municipal year.

Cabinet discussed the report. Members welcomed the extensive work which had taken place over the municipal year to deliver Member Development activities. Cabinet supported this work and the progress that had been made and welcomed the progress that had been made to help Members to acquire the skills and knowledge which they required in order to carry out their roles effectively.

RESOLVED – That Cabinet notes the Member Development Annual Report 2018/19.

REASON FOR DECISION – To enable Cabinet to consider the Annual Report on Member Development during 2018/19.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED & REJECTED – Cabinet could determine not to receive a Member Development Annual Report. This option was rejected as the Annual Report provides an opportunity to consider any future issues that may arise and which they would like to see included in future programmes.

683 Urgent Business (Public Session)

There was no urgent business to be considered in the public session at this meeting of Cabinet.

684 Exclusion of Public

RESOLVED - That the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the following items of business to avoid the disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 & 3 Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) Order 2006). [The category of exempt information is stated after each Minute].

Non Key Decisions

685 Temporary Accommodation & Prevention Officer Role

Cabinet considered a report of Councillor E A Hill, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing Strategy. The report made it clear that the Homelessness Prevention Service required permanent additional capacity in order to meet the ongoing requirements placed on it by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

The report recommended that a “Temporary Accommodation and Prevention Officer” post be established in order to meet this requirement. Cabinet supported this approach.

RESOLVED –That Cabinet:-

- (1) Agrees to the financial implications of the proposal.
- (2) Requests that the Chief Executive Officer establishes the post of Temporary Accommodation and Prevention Officer on the permanent establishment.
- (3) Following the cessation of Flexible Support Homelessness Grant (FSHG), approves the additional budget to fund the above post in the Medium Term Financial Plan, effective from 2020/21 onwards on the terms as set out in the report.

REASON FOR DECISION – To enable the Council to meet the additional statutory requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED & REJECTED – Not providing additional capacity on a permanent basis was considered and rejected, as this would impact on performance and the overall effectiveness of the service.

(Paragraphs 1 & 3)

686 Urgent Business (Private Session)

There was no urgent business to be considered in the private session at this meeting of Cabinet.

CAB MINS (0410) 2019/AJD