

CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2020

Present:

Councillor Alex Dale (Chair)
Councillor Charlotte Cupit (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Paul Parkin
Councillor Carolyn Renwick

Councillor Alan Powell

Also Present:

G Callingham	Director of Growth and Economic Development
K Hanson	Joint Director of Environment and Enforcement
J Dethick	Head of Finance and Resources, Section 151 Officer
S Sternberg	Joint Head Of Service - Corporate Governance & Monitoring Officer
K Drury	Information Engagement & Performance Manager
N Calver	Governance Manager
M E Derbyshire	Members ICT & Training Officer
A Maher	Senior Governance Officer

CAB/54/ Apologies for Absence 20-21

Apologies of absence were submitted by Councillor M Foster and Councillor J Kenyon.

CAB/55/ Declarations of Interest 20-21

There were no Declarations of Interest.

CAB/56/ Minutes of Last Meetings 20-21

The minutes of the Cabinet meetings, held on 8 October 2020 and 29 October 2020, were approved as a true record.

CAB/57/ Funding to Voluntary and Community Organisations - Presentation of Outcomes for 2019-20 20-21

The report to Cabinet explained the outcomes achieved by voluntary sector organisations funded by the Council during 2019-20. The report also explained that the decision to provide this funding had been made by the previous Administration.

Members considered the report. They noted that the various organisations had provided information in order to illustrate how the grant aid had helped them contribute to the Council Plan 2019-23 targets.

RESOLVED - That Cabinet noted the outcomes achieved by voluntary sector organisations funded by the Council, under the previous Administration, during 2019/20.

REASONS FOR DECISION - To appraise Cabinet of the work carried out by those voluntary sector organisations which had received grant funding from the Council and how this had contributed towards achieving its targets and objectives.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED - No alternative options were considered.

**CAB/58/
20-21** **Empty Property Strategy 2021-24**

Cabinet considered the proposed Empty Property Strategy for the District. The new Strategy, it was explained, would apply only to North East Derbyshire. It would replace the existing joint strategy with Bolsover District Council, which was due to expire shortly.

Cabinet discussed the Strategy. Members heard that it would aim to bring back into use 15 long term empty properties every year. It would seek to do this through a series of initiatives, such as promoting leasing schemes to empty property owners, holding 'landlord events' to help develop a healthy private rented sector and by establishing a property matching service, to help bring together the owners of empty properties with those who might want to buy them.

Cabinet emphasised its ongoing commitment to reducing the number of empty homes in the District. Members hoped that this could be achieved through encouragement and by assistance to their owners, but they recognised that other actions might also have to be taken in order to achieve this goal. In this context, Cabinet noted the specific proposal that a consultation exercise takes place on whether to introduce a Council Tax premium for empty properties.

RESOLVED - That Cabinet endorsed the proposed Empty Property Strategy for 2021-24 and agreed that it be adopted.

REASONS FOR DECISION - Adopting the Strategy will enable the Council to reduce the number of long-term empty properties in the District. This would result in more housing becoming available in the District and receipt of additional New Homes Bonus. It would also lead to greater community sustainability and so help deliver the Council's Growth Strategy.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED - Not implementing the Empty Property Strategy would seriously impact upon the Council's ability to reduce the number of long term empty properties within the District and its ability to deal effectively with the problems associated with empty properties.

**CAB/59/
20-21** **Single Equality Scheme 2019-23: Review Year One**

Cabinet considered performance information on the Council's Single Equality Scheme 2019-2023. In this context, Members heard that there had been an increase in the number of apprenticeships within the Council, provided to both

existing employees and new starters. Members noted specific examples of the apprenticeships which had been established, the support that had been provided to the individual apprentices and the likely long term benefits to them.

Cabinet discussed the Council's ongoing commitment to promoting equality within the District. Members highlighted, the introduction of an Older People's Strategy, adoption of the British Sign Language Charter and work to support children in care and those who had left care, as clear examples of this commitment.

Cabinet was reminded of how the Council had made a commitment to a countywide and District Council local 'offer' for children in care and care leavers. Members also recalled how the Council had agreed to support the development of a countywide 'care leaver covenant' and had shown strong support for veterans and the armed forces community. The Council had done this by reaffirming its commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant and by agreeing to become an Armed Forces Champion. Cabinet had also recently altered the housing allocations policy to help support veterans and their families.

RESOLVED - Cabinet noted the progress achieved during the first year of the Council's the Single Equality Scheme 2019-2023.

REASONS FOR DECISION - To appraise Cabinet of progress made towards achieving the Council's Single Equality Scheme objectives.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED - No other options were considered. The Council has a statutory duty to publish information demonstrating its compliance with the General Equality Duty.

**CAB/60/
20-21** **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

**CAB/61/
20-21** **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 Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the local Government Act 1982 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) Order 2006).

The category of exempt information is stated after each Minute.

**CAB/62/
20-21** **Environmental Health Service Review**

Cabinet considered proposals for specific structure changes to the Joint Environmental Health Service. Cabinet was informed that the structure changes would enable the Service to deliver the Council's priorities, especially around enforcement and also ensure its long term effectiveness. Members welcomed the proposed approach and agreed to endorse the structure changes.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That Cabinet supported the proposed restructure of the Environmental Health Service.
- (2) That Cabinet requested the Head of Paid Service to use his delegated authority, in consultation with the Joint Director of Environment and Enforcement and the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, to make the proposed changes to the Establishment, as specified within the report.
- (3) That the additional cost associated with the revisions to the Environmental Health structure be included in the Medium Term Financial Plan and recommended to Council for approval.

REASONS FOR DECISION - The changes will enable the Council to provide a professional and expert Environmental Health Service to residents and businesses in the District.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED - The option of not making the proposed changes to the Environmental Health Service were considered but rejected. It would be more difficult to improve enforcement activity, tackle environmental crime and provide an effective Environmental Health Service for the District if the proposed changes were not made.

(Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3)

**CAB/63/
20-21**

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Contingency Planning Update

Cabinet received an update on the contingency planning arrangements that were now ongoing at a regional and national level to help combat the outbreak of the Coronavirus (Covid-19).

(Paragraph 4)

**CAB/64/
20-21**

Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.