Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 8 October 2013

Present:
Members: Councillor G Duggins
Councillor D Gannon
Councillor A Gingell
Councillor D Kershaw
Councillor R Lancaster
Councillor E Ruane
Councillor P Townshend (Deputy Chair)

Non-Voting Opposition Members:
Councillor J Blundell

Other Members: Councillors C Fletcher, T Skipper and S Thomas

Employees (by Directorate):
S Brake, People Directorate
V Castree, Resources Directorate
D Cockroft, Place Directorate
M Godfrey, People Directorate
R Moon, Place Directorate
H Peacocke, Resources Directorate
T Pinks, Resources Directorate
M Reeves, Chief Executive
M Salmon, Resources Directorate
C West, Executive Director, Resources
M Yardley, Executive Director, Place

Apologies: Councillor A Andrews, K Caan, P Hetherton, J Innes, L Kelly, A Khan, A Lucas and J McNicholas

Public Business

63. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

64. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd September 2013 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

65. Property Disposal Programme 2013/2014 - 2016/2017

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director, Place, identifying a site disposal programme of recognised housing development sites that could result in 1100 new houses being built over a 4 year period, to meet one of their 20 priorities to identify within a year how 1000 new homes could be built in Coventry. In addition, the Council’s budget for 2013/14 required the continuation of significant
savings stretching into the medium term, which were primarily being achieved through the Council’s ABC Programme. The Programme’s Fundamental Service Review for Strategic Property required the Council to save £3m per annum from its property portfolio by 2016/17. This target could only be achieved through a combination of property solutions including rationalisation of operational property, optimisation of the commercial property portfolio, and disposal of property assets. The report set the work of the review team in identifying an indicative programme of asset disposals for the period 2013/14 to 2016/17 that would contribute an estimated £1.1 million per annum revenue towards the target when all disposals had been completed, as well as providing 1100 new homes in Coventry.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet approves recommendations (1) to (4) below and recommend that the Council:

(1) Approves the indicative Capital Disposal Programme set out in the Appendix to the report, subject to detailed terms being approved in accordance with the Council’s Constitution and Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

(2) Approves that the proceeds of sale, over and above the values required to support the approved capital programme, be allocated to reduce debt servicing costs in accordance with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy which provides that the prudential borrowing should be repaid from capital receipts as they are generated.

(3) Approves that the savings realised through debt reduction be allocated against the savings targets for the Strategic Property Fundamental Service Review.

(4) Give delegated authority to the Executive Director, Place, to approve any variations in the Programme in consultation with the Cabinet Member (Business Enterprise and Employment).

66. Houses in Multiple Occupation - Recommendations from Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee detailing the work of a Task and Finish Group set up by the Committee in March 2013 to look at options for addressing residents’ concerns about Houses in Multiple Occupation (HiMO). This issue was chosen for review work due to an increasing number of complaints received about these properties, particularly from residents in certain areas of the City.

RESOLVED that Cabinet refers the following recommendations of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee to the relevant Cabinet Members, with oversight provided by Cabinet Member (Housing and Heritage):

1) That the Cabinet Member (Business, Enterprise and Employment) obtains further detailed evidence, and gives serious consideration to the use of an Article 4 Direction, supported by planning policy, to support
sustainable, contented and healthy communities as part of the wider housing strategy.

2) That the Cabinet Members (Public Services) and (Community Safety and Equalities) investigates further establishing ‘clearaway’ days to manage waste in communities heavily populated by HiMOs, in partnership with the Universities and third sector.

3) That the Cabinet Member (Community Safety and Equalities) use existing enforcement powers more effectively to manage issues caused by HiMOs and private rented sector houses, including waste and noise issues.

67. Outcomes of Fair Funding Consultation to Schools 2014/15

The Cabinet considered a joint report detailing the results of the consultation on proposed changes to the Fair Funding Scheme of Delegation (the Scheme) and sought approval for recommended changes to the Scheme and Fair Funding Formula. Local Authorities were required, under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, to have schemes of delegation setting out the financial controls and arrangements that would operate between schools, nursery providers, and the Local Authority,

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:

(1) Approves the recommended changes to the Fair Funding Formula.

(2) Authorise the relevant Executive Directors, in consultation with the Cabinet Member (Education) and the Schools Forum, to make minor amendments to the final detail of the recommended changes, in order to comply with the School Finance (England) Regulations 2013.

68. Caring for our Future - Consultation on Reforming What and How People Pay for their Care and Support - Consultation Response

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director, People, that would also be considered by the Council at their meeting on 22nd October 2013, detailing the City Council's response to a Department of Health (DH) consultation on reforming what and how people paid for their care and support. The Cabinet also considered a Briefing Note of the Executive Director, People, detailing the recommendations and comments made by the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) following consideration of the report at their meeting on 25th September 2013 (their minute 19/13 refers.)

The Department of Health published the ‘Caring for our future: reforming care and support’ White Paper in July 2012 and in February 2013 the Government announced reforms to give more certainty and peace of mind over the costs of old age, or of living with a disability and committed to reforming the funding of care and support. The proposals represented the biggest changes in adult social care
since 1948 and would affect Local Authorities, Health partners and providers of care and support and covered issues including assessment of care, how this care was met, how this care was paid for, the impact of the reforms on the care market and the required changes to local authorities to deliver this change.

The proposals were welcomed as a significant step forward in improving and simplifying the charging framework for adult social care, with the introduction of a standardised approach across all settings providing the local authority and the public with much needed clarification.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet recommends that the Council approves the consultation response.

69. Adult Social Care Annual Report 2012/2013 (Local Account)

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director, People, detailing the Adult Social Care Annual Report 2012/13 (Local Account) that described the performance of Adult Social Care and the progress made against the priorities set for the year. The Cabinet also considered a Briefing Note of the Executive Director, People, detailing the recommendations and comments made by the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) following consideration of the report at their meeting on 25th September 2013 (their minute 17/13 refers.)

Councils were expected to produce a Local Account that demonstrated the performance of adult social care to local citizens and provided an opportunity to be open and transparent about the successes and challenges of the year and to show how outcomes were improving for the people Adult Social Care supports. The report would be shared with local people, people who used services, carers and partner agencies and their feedback would inform the approach to producing next year's report.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet approves the publication of the report.

70. Accountable Body Report for the Successful Regional Growth Fund 4 Bid

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director, Place, that would also be considered by the Council at their meeting on 22nd October 2013, detailing the Council’s success in securing Regional Growth Fund (RGF) money on behalf of the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) and requesting that the City Council acted as accountable body for the successful RGF4 Programme.

In October 2012, £24.3m was secured from the third round of RGF (RGF3). The Programme offered £1m in grants to businesses, and provided funding for three key infrastructure projects – the Friargate Bridge Deck, Whitley Interchange and improvements to M40 Motorway Junction 12.

The City Council had been successful in the fourth round of bidding (RGF4) with a bid for a programme of business grants worth £4m to help businesses invest in
new equipment, premises or products, leading to the creation of up to 500 new jobs in Coventry and Warwickshire.

The funding Programmes were key to the CWLEP’s and the Council’s current economic development agenda; almost £13m in RGF3 cash was being used to fund the Friargate Bridge deck, which was needed to allow the Kickstart Project and to attract major tenants to the Friargate development. Both RGF3 and RGF4 were closely aligned to the emerging City Deal proposals and would form an important part of the support that Coventry and Warwickshire offered to businesses, particularly in advanced manufacturing sectors.

The condition on which both of these bids had been won was that the City Council acted as accountable body.

The Cabinet acknowledged the work undertaken by officers to secure the Regional Growth Fund bids which had brought significant investment into the City and asked that this recognition and their thanks be placed on record.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet recommends that the Council recognise the funding opportunity secured through Regional Growth Fund Round 4, and authorises the City Council to act as guarantor for the Programme.

71. Outstanding Issues

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director, Resources, containing details of an outstanding issue and summarised the current position in respect of the matter.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet notes the date for future consideration of matters relating to the outstanding issues item listed in the report.

72. Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 2.35 pm)