

The Cabinet

19th August, 2015 at 3.00 pm
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

Present: Councillor Cooper (Chair);
Councillors Crompton, Y Davies, Eling, Hackett
and Moore.

Apologies: Councillor Khatun;
Councillor Ahmed.

Observers: Councillors Gavan, L Horton, P Hughes, S Jones,
Sandars and Underhill.

135/15 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd July,
2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

Strategic Items

136/15 **Children's Services Improvement Plan 2015-2017 (Key
Decision Ref. No. CS046)**

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services reported that in 2013, Sandwell Children's Social Care Services had embarked on an ambitious and innovative "whole system" approach to improvement. This approach had been designed to stabilise the Service's workforce and bring sustained improvement across Children's Services, including Early Help and Social Care. The Improvement Plan, now submitted for the period 2015-2017, was a continuation of the journey and set out the Council's strategy for Children's Services over the next two years.

Although significant progress had been made in the past two years, the Council was open to challenge and learning and recognised that there was still some way to go.

The Cabinet – 19th August, 2015

Preparation of the Plan had included learning from rigorous self-assessment processes, external assessments, the recent Peer Review conducted by the Local Government Association, the Sandwell Safeguarding Children's Board review of the Sandwell Thresholds Framework and the findings and recommendations from the recent Ofsted inspection. Wider consultation had been carried out on the draft Plan and feedback had been taken on board and fully incorporated into the Improvement Plan.

The Plan contained the following seven areas for improvement:-

1. Implementing Common Methods of Best Practice
2. Delivery of Our Workforce Development Strategy
3. Embedding Performance and Quality Assurance
4. Continuous Development of The Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Agenda
5. Improving Our Response to Child Sexual Exploitation
6. Sufficiency and Permanence
7. Effective Early Help

The Cabinet Member confirmed that the necessary resources had been put in place to ensure the delivery of the actions for improvement outlined in the Plan.

Discussions were ongoing with the Department for Education to agree the next steps to support the ongoing improvement of the Service and the Cabinet Member undertook to keep the Cabinet informed of the outcome of these discussions.

The Cabinet and the Senior Management Board undertook to continue to drive a whole Council approach to improving services for children.

Assurance and monitoring of the delivery of the Improvement Plan would take place through the Performance Accountability Board appointed by the Secretary of State for Education, the Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board and through the Council's own governance arrangements, including the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board, the Children Services Steering Group (monthly), chaired by the Chief Executive, the Children Services Management Team (monthly) and through existing service based governance arrangements that existed.

The Cabinet – 19th August, 2015

In recommending the proposals for approval, whilst the Cabinet Member for Children's Services expressed his disappointment at the recent Ofsted inspection, he felt that the Improvement Plan would help to take Sandwell's Children's Services from good to outstanding. This would entail a multi-agency approach, ensuring that a young person's transition from leaving care from children's to adulthood was right.

The Chair of the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board reported that the Scrutiny Board would be looking at the audit framework in more detail as it was not currently being used to identify development and training required.

In response to a number of questions from the Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Board, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services:-

- confirmed that the Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) agenda was children and young people centred and young people had co-led on the plan. The use of symbols, sign language and picture exchanges had been used as a tool to communicate with young people with special educational needs and learning difficulties and Children's Services had also developed a number of tools for use by schools to ensure that they were working with young people to hear their voice;
- welcomed the suggestion that all Scrutiny Boards could look at identifying support required, within their respective terms of reference, during the transition period of young people leaving care from children's to adults. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services supported this and requested that the findings of the Scrutiny Boards should be considered at a future meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board.

The Leader of the Council was confident that the Council was addressing issues identified by Ofsted and was continually improving Children's Services to help vulnerable young people. The Council would work with those local authorities who had turned their rating around to 'good' in order to share best practice and would continue to focus on reducing the risk of harm to children and young people.

The Cabinet – 19th August, 2015

Resolved:-

- (1) that the Children's Services Improvement Plan 2015-2017 be approved;
- (2) that that the Council's approach to making improvements within Children's Services, as set out in the Children's Services Improvement Plan 2015-2017, be endorsed;
- (3) that quarterly update reports be presented to the Cabinet on the progress made against the Children's Services Improvement Plan;
- (4) that the outcome of discussions with the Department for Education be reported to the Cabinet in due course;
- (5) that in connection with the Children's Services Improvement Plan, the Council's Scrutiny Boards be requested to identify any support required, within their respective terms of reference, during the transition period of young people leaving care from children's to adults.

137/15

Re-Procurement of Smoking Cessation Services for Sandwell (Key Decision Ref. No. ASCH008)

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health sought approval for the re-commissioning of smoking cessation services for Sandwell which would reflect the significant developments in smoking cessation since 2013, including:-

- an upward trend in the use of e-cigarettes as smoking cessation aids by smokers, however, the (current) contract with service providers did not allow the use of e-cigarettes;
- emerging evidence that certain types of incentives, which were not in the current contracts, worked in encouraging smokers to consider quitting smoking;
- anecdotal evidence that traditional referrers into Stop Smoking Services, such as GPs and pharmacists, were referring less people and some groups of health professionals, such as dentists, were not engaged at all to make referrals.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

The Cabinet – 19th August, 2015

The Services would primarily deliver support to three priority groups of pregnant women, young people and people suffering from mental health problems and receiving support from the Mental Health Trust.

The public health commissioning team would work closely with the Council's neighbourhood teams to fully integrate referral and engagement pathways and consolidate access to the smoking cessation services, especially from non-health settings. Commissioners would also develop and deploy local "stop-smoking peer champions" to promote engagement with smoking cessation services and positive behaviour change. Peer champions would be ex-smokers who had gone through the process of smoking cessation. The need for local research around the use of e-cigarettes as smoking cessation aids had also been recognised.

The costs for the re-commissioned service would be up to £910,000 per annum. The contract would be offered for two years with the option to extend for another year, subject to a performance review, and would be commissioned with clear standards for targets, Payment by Result tariffs and would specify a cap on activity volumes based on performance against target and available funding.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health recommended the proposals for approval.

In answering questions from the Chairs of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board and Housing Scrutiny Board, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health confirmed that:-

- data analysts would undertake random sampling to ensure that where people had reported that they had given up smoking, these were legitimate. The permission of those involved would be sought at the outset of the auditing process and therefore there would be no conflict of client confidentiality;
- the success rate of the current contracts was comparable to national statistics, however, it was acknowledged that persuading people to give up smoking was difficult.

The Cabinet – 19th August, 2015

Research had found that those who had set themselves a target were more successful and the Council was trying to reach people who could act as Community Champions in their local area. In welcoming the proposals, the Leader of the Council reaffirmed that more innovative ways needed to be found to help people to stop smoking and the contract that the Council would enter into would enable flexibility to engage with local people.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the Director – Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Finance and Resources and Adult Social Care and Health, proceed with the procurement process to identify a supplier(s) for smoking cessation services for Sandwell and that following the procurement process and the evaluation of the tenders received, award the contract to the identified supplier(s);
- (2) that subject to resolution (1) above, the Director – Governance enter into an appropriate contract with the successful tenderer(s) for the provision of smoking cessation services in Sandwell.

138/15

Alterations and Extension to Tipton Local Housing Office (Key Decision Ref. No. TNS026)

The Leader of the Council sought approval to appoint a contractor to undertake the construction of an extension and internal and external alterations to the Tipton Local Housing Office.

The alterations and extension would provide additional office space to enable locality working by Adult Social Care, Children's Services and the Police. The budget allocated for construction was £275,000.

In accordance with Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules, it was proposed to award the contract to Hill Interior Contractors Ltd who had submitted the most competitively priced tender.

An equality impact assessment was not required for this proposal.

The Leader of the Council recommended the proposals for approval.

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The Cabinet – 19th August, 2015

Resolved:-

- (1) that the Director – Homes and Communities award the contract for alterations and an extension to the Tipton Local Housing Office to Hill Interior Contractors Ltd in the sum of £236,871;
- (2) that subject to resolution (1) above, the Director – Governance be authorised to enter into an appropriate contract with Hill Interior Contracts Ltd.

139/15

High Rise Refurbishment Works to Kynaston House, West Bromwich (Key Decision Ref. No. TNS027)

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Investment sought approval to appoint a single contractor to undertake the external and internal refurbishment work to Kynaston House, Rydding Lane, West Bromwich.

In accordance with Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules, It was proposed to award the contract to Keepmoat Regeneration Ltd as they had submitted the most economically advantageous tender.

An equality impact assessment was not required for this proposal.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Investment recommended the proposals for approval.

In response to questions from the Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Board, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Investment confirmed that:-

- Keepmoat Regeneration Ltd were currently working on a project in Smethwick and as well as meeting all of the Council's key performance indicators, it was also due to deliver ahead of schedule;
- within the tender specification for this work, the Council had stipulated a minimum number of apprenticeships the firm should have and a commitment to work with local schools close to the site. Keepmoat had experience in corporate social responsibility which made them ideal to carry out this work.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

The Cabinet – 19th August, 2015

The £0.4k saving on budgeted expenditure as a result of appointing Keepmoat would be used to make improvements to other high rise blocks in the Borough.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the Director - Homes and Communities award the contract for Refurbishment Works to Kynaston House, Rydding Lane, West Bromwich to Keepmoat Regeneration Ltd for a sum of £2,530,877;
- (2) that subject to resolution (1) above, the Director – Governance enter into an appropriate contract with Keepmoat Regeneration Ltd.

Business Matters

140/15

Black Country Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Investment sought approval to consult on the Draft Black Country Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document.

The draft document set out simplified guidance for dealing with air quality and was aimed at all those involved in the submission and determination of planning applications where air quality needed to be addressed.

Air quality was not limited to local authority boundaries, the associated effects of development could be felt across the wider regional areas. As a result, this joint Supplementary Planning Document had been developed to enable a consistent approach to implementation across the Black Country.

The draft document was subject to a six week consultation period. A further report on the findings of the consultation would be submitted to the Cabinet.

An equality impact assessment was not required for this proposal.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Investment recommended the proposals for approval.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

The Cabinet – 19th August, 2015

Following a question from the Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Board, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Investment confirmed that the reason the document was limited to the Black Country was because it formed part of the Black Country Core Strategy, which was approved in 2011 by the Black Country local authorities. Birmingham was not part of the Black Country and therefore could not be a part of the supplementary guidance. However, if the Council did become a part of the Combined Authority, the current boundaries would be reviewed.

In addition, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Investment provided assurance to the Chair of the Community Safety, Highways and Environment Scrutiny Board that the findings of the Scrutiny Board in relation to the review of air quality would be taken into account in the final document.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the Draft Black Country Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document be approved as a basis for consultation, and that the Director – Regeneration and Economy, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Investment, be authorised to make any minor amendments, as necessary;
- (2) that subject to resolution (1) above, the Director – Regeneration and Economy submit a further report to the Cabinet on the findings of the consultation process.

141/15

Decisions taken by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Environment on 30th July, 2015

The decisions taken by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Environment on 30th July, 2015 were received.

No questions were asked of the Cabinet Member.

The Cabinet – 19th August, 2015

142/15 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved that the public and press be excluded from the rest of the proceedings to avoid the possible disclosure of exempt information under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Strategic Item

143/15 Facing the Future Programme Update (Key Decision Ref. No. FR004)

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources presented additional projects for the Council's Facing the Future Programme's (the programme) an updated Cabinet on the financial position.

Local government was facing unprecedented reductions in funding, with the Council due to receive circa £140million less in funding between 2010/11 and 2017/18. To meet these challenges, and to ensure that front line services were protected where possible, the Council had launched the programme in 2014. The aim of the programme was to avoid blanket percentage cuts across all service areas by identifying transformational projects that could make savings by using a whole Council approach.

The programme currently consisted of ten projects that were targeted to deliver savings of £22million for financial years 2015/16 and 2016/17. These savings were in addition to the £40million that had already been found for this time period through Directorate business plans.

The programme not only aimed to achieve financial savings but also sought to introduce a transformational programme. As such, some of the projects in the programme did not have saving targets attached to them, however, it was recognised that their impact should permeate across the authority leading to savings within individual directorates.

The Cabinet – 19th August, 2015

To ensure that the required corporate savings for 2017/18 would be achieved, the Facing the Future Programme Board were tasked with producing new projects to meet the shortfall. This work had now concluded with twenty five projects put forward to be included in the programme as Phase Two.

The projects were expected to generate savings/income in 2016/17, and in 2017/18. However, there remained a shortfall in 2017/18. In order to meet the predicted budget gap, work was continuing to identify ways of saving money or generating income to meet this gap. This could be subject to change following the Government's Autumn Statement.

In recommending the proposals for approval, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources reported that significant issues had arisen as a result of changes by the Government to the Health and Social Care agenda which now had a detrimental impact on the savings that had previously been envisaged.

In response to questions from the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board and the Housing Scrutiny Board, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources reported that:-

- the Council was looking at options to bring about unified services to make money, however, there would be risks attached if the Council looked at setting up a trading arm which could also affect the market in some cases;
- currently, members were looking at the potential to generate income from the Sandwell Valley. A further report on any proposals would be considered in due course;
- the Council needed to consider motorway advertising signage as a source of income, as previously, the Council had opposed such applications which had subsequently been overturned by the Planning Inspectorate. The Council would need to consider how such advertising could bring in money to the Council and therefore could help services to continue to run;
- the installation of solar photo-voltaic panels on domestic properties in Sandwell had previously been considered in depth, however, at this moment in time, it was not feasible. If

The Cabinet – 19th August, 2015

the cost of producing these panels reduced, the Council would reconsider this option;

- consideration had been given to setting up a Local Housing Delivery Vehicle to develop a range of housing for sale/shared ownership, etc using Housing Revenue Account and General Fund land and buildings. However, currently, it was difficult to deliver a financial return and with current values, including the market rent value, it did not make for a viable business proposition. This could become deliverable in the future and if so, the feasibility of this option would be reconsidered.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the additional projects for phase two of the Facing the Future programme, as now reported, be approved;
- (2) that the proposal to bring forward projects in to the 2016/17 financial year, as outlined in the report now submitted, be approved;
- (3) that the current highlight report and financial position for the Facing the Future programme be endorsed;
- (4) that the increased risk of delivery of the Council's budget as a result of the Transforming Adult Social Care project be noted and a further report be submitted to Cabinet.

Business Matter

144/15

To receive the recommendations of the Land and Asset Management Committee held on 22nd July 2015 (Key Decision Ref. Nos. LAM001 and LAM004)

The Chair of the Land and Asset Management Committee presented the recommendations of the Committee from its meeting held on 22nd July, 2015 relating to the following matters:-

- a) granting a lease to the Windmill Lane Community Centre, Smethwick;
- b) the disposal of Council owned public pay and display car parks in Cradley Heath.

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The Cabinet – 19th August, 2015

Resolved:-

- (1) that, in respect of the Windmill Lane Community Centre, Smethwick:-
 - (a) the Director – Governance grant a lease in respect of the Windmill Community Centre, Messenger Road, Smethwick, to SAFS, Caring Family Support, on terms to be agreed by the Director – Regeneration and Economy;
 - (b) the Director – Governance award SAFS, Caring Family Support a two year grant agreement offer on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director – Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Director – Regeneration and Economy;
 - (c) the Director - Governance enter into or execute under seal, if necessary, any related documentation in connection with the land and property referred to in resolution (1)(a) and (b) above, on terms and conditions agreed by the Director - Regeneration and Economy;

- (2) that, in respect of the disposal of Council owned public pay and display car parks, Cradley Heath:-
 - (a) the land of the Council owned public car parks at Lower High Street, Cradley Heath, as shown on Drawing No. SAM/30500/001, Highgate Street South, as shown on Drawing No. SAM/24460/001 and Haden Road, as shown on Drawing No. SAM/21440/001, be declared surplus to the Council's requirements;
 - (b) subject to resolution (2)(a) above, the Director – Governance dispose of the freehold interest in the land of the Council owned public car parks at Lower High Street, Highgate Street South and Haden Road, Cradley Heath, on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director – Regeneration and Economy;

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

The Cabinet – 19th August, 2015

- (c) the Director - Governance enter into or execute under seal, where necessary, any other legal documentation in connection with the disposal of the land referred to in resolution (2) (a) and (b) above, on terms to be agreed by the Director - Regeneration and Economy.

(Meeting ended at 4.09 pm)

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