

MINUTES OF CABINET

Tuesday, 7 October 2014
(6:05 - 6:30 pm)

Present: Cllr Darren Rodwell (Chair), Cllr Saima Ashraf (Deputy Chair), Cllr Dominic Twomey (Deputy Chair), Cllr Laila Butt, Cllr Evelyn Carpenter, Cllr Cameron Geddes, Cllr James Ogungbose, Cllr Lynda Rice, Cllr Bill Turner and Cllr Maureen Worby

Also Present: Cllr Rocky Gill, Cllr Sam Tarry and Cllr Dan Young

30. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

31. Budget Strategy 2015/16

Before consideration of this item, the Leader reminded those present that as a number of the budget savings proposals (as set out in Appendix B) would be subject to public consultation at the relevant Select Committees, he did not intend to open them up for questioning at this evening's meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Finance presented a report setting out the high level revenue budgets and savings proposed for 2015/16 to 2017/18, within the context of the Government funding reductions.

The report focused on:

- A summary of the national funding position and the provisional finance settlement;
- The Medium Term Financial Strategy and a three year summary level financial model for the Council;
- The current net budget gap for 2015/16 to 2017/18 of £53.5m, although that may change significantly when the Government announces the finance settlement;
- Proposed savings representing changes to services which are operational and/or organisational and do not represent a change in policy and/or have front line service implications that could be implemented following Cabinet approval. Those savings would still be subject to consultation with the relevant stakeholders, such as staff and the Trade Unions in line with Council policy, and
- Proposed savings that require formal public consultation prior to Cabinet taking a decision on implementation.

The Cabinet Member for Finance highlighted the financial pressures that the Council faced, which amongst other things included addressing the financial implications of the Care Act 2014, the Children and Families Act 2014 and changes to regulations governing the use of CCTV for parking enforcement.

A wide range of savings proposals had been put forward and were before

Members in Appendix A (savings proposals for Cabinet approval) and Appendix B (savings options requiring public consultation before the Select Committees in October and November 2014). The outcome of the public consultation would be fed back to Cabinet in December to enable final decisions to be made, which would then feed into the main Budget Framework and Council Tax setting report to both the Cabinet and the Assembly in February 2015.

The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that if all the proposed savings were made, the Council would still be short of funding and therefore officers have been instructed to come up with more saving proposals to meet the challenging targets set by the Government.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration enquired as to the anticipated costs the Council may be facing in relation to implementing the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2014, as well as the potential loss of income from the changes around CCTV parking enforcement. The Chief Finance Officer advised that the estimated costs of the legislative changes could mean needing to identify an additional £1.25m, whilst the potential loss of income from CCTV parking enforcement was currently estimated at £1.5m, although that could rise.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Schools sought more details on the funding reduction of £1.823m on the business rates deficit which the Chief Finance Officer clarified was based on assumptions of income against the anticipated numbers of claims likely to arise.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Note the current projected financial position for the Council for 2015/16 to 2017/18 as set out in this report;
- (ii) Approve the saving proposals for management implementation for 2015/16 to 2017/18 as set out in Appendix A to the report; and
- (iii) Note and release for consultation the savings proposals that require formal consultation as set out in Appendix B to the report.

32. LGA Peer Challenge Report and Implementation Plan

The Leader presented a report setting out the findings of the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge which took place in late July 2014.

The Council had invited the LGA to undertake a Corporate Peer Challenge to help provide reassurance, challenge and to give an indication about the organisation's ability and capacity to deliver on its plans, proposals and ambitions. The Leader commented that the Council was aiming to become more corporate focused and a fully fit-for-purpose organisation and, with that in mind, he was pleased to advise that many of the recommendations set out within the Peer Review report were already being undertaken.

The Leader further advised the Cabinet that he had been informed that the Council had achieved 'Bronze' status in its Investors in People accreditation.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Note the findings in the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge report at Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (ii) Agree the implementation plan at Appendix 2 to the report and that quarterly progress updates be presented to Cabinet as part of monitoring the corporate delivery plan.

33. Corporate Delivery Plan

The Leader presented a report on the Corporate Delivery Plan which would enable the Council to monitor progress against the delivery of the new vision and priorities as agreed by the Assembly on 17 September 2014.

Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree the Corporate Delivery Plan 2015/16 - 2016/17 at Appendix 1 to the report, including the priority projects and key performance indicators (KPIs); and
- (ii) Agree that progress be reported to Cabinet quarterly and to the Public Accounts and Audit Select Committee every six months.