

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE CABINET**

**WEDNESDAY, 6TH FEBRUARY 2013 AT 6.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Leader), Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP (Deputy Leader), Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP, M. A. Bullivant, C. B. Taylor and M. J. A. Webb

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Ms. S. Hanley, Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. R. Bamford, Ms. J. Willis, Mr. M. Dunphy, Mrs. S. Sellers and Ms. R. Cole.

104/12 **APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received.

105/12 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

106/12 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 9th January 2013 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

107/12 **HOUSING GROWTH CONSULTATION**

The Cabinet considered a report on proposals for a public consultation to be undertaken in respect of proposed Housing Growth to meet the development needs of Redditch until 2030. The consultation would be undertaken jointly by Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council between 25th February 2013 and 8th April 2013.

Members were reminded reported that under the Localism Act (2011) there was a legal obligation for Local Authorities to co-operate with each other in relation to planning for sustainable development, in particular with regard to the preparation of development plan documents. The need for Redditch's housing had been objectively established as required by the National Planning Policy Framework through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment which showed that Redditch's housing target up to 2030 should be 6,400 dwellings. It was noted that Redditch only has the capacity to accommodate 3,000 dwellings within its area and therefore the remaining 3,400 would need to be developed in the Bromsgrove District although they would contribute to meeting Redditch's housing target.

It was reported that officers from both Authorities had worked closely together to identify potential sites which could accommodate development and a number of sites had been closely assessed taking into account many factors. The two preferred sites which were identified within the report as the most suitable for growth were Foxlydiate (1) and Brockhill East (2).

It was appreciated that this was the beginning of the consultation process and that as well as public comments other issues would need to be taken into account as part of this process including Highways and Transport issues.

Members considered the draft consultation document attached as Appendix 1 to the report and felt that it was a very clearly written document which would assist the public with a basic understanding of the issues and how they could take part in the consultation process.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Housing Growth Consultation document together with the supporting Background Evidence report and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal, be approved for joint public consultation between 25th February 2013 and 8th April 2013.

108/12 **PARTNERSHIP WORKING WITH WORCESTERSHIRE TELECARE**

The Cabinet considered a report detailing the changes which Worcestershire County Council had decided to make in relation to the way in which the provision of Telecare (Lifeline) Services in Worcestershire was funded by the County Council. It was noted that the County Council now intended to make payments through one single organisation rather than to individual providers together with other proposed changes to give residents an updated and improved service. This could include additional services such as "Telehealth".

It was reported that officers from Community Services had been in discussions with Worcestershire Telecare with a view to submitting a joint tender for Supporting People Funding to provide a Lifeline service across Worcestershire. This would be on the basis of Worcestershire Telecare acting as the lead contractor and sub-contracting the Bromsgrove and Redditch elements of the service to be provided by Community Services. It was noted that whilst the tender specification had not yet been issued, it was likely that in order to bid for the contract it would be necessary to involve a third party equipment provider.

The likely financial implications in relation to the potential loss of funding received through Supporting People were noted but at this stage officers were not in a position to assess the full options.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the proposal for the Community Services Team to enter into a joint working agreement with Worcestershire Telecare (and a third party equipment provider if required) in order to bid for a contract with

- Worcestershire County Council for the provision of Telecare Services across Worcestershire be approved; and
- (b) that in the event the bid is successful, delegated authority be granted to the Acting Head of Community Services and to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services to finalise and implement the necessary legal agreements for the provision of Telecare services under the new arrangements.

109/12 **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2013/2014 - 2015/2016**

The Cabinet considered a report giving an update on the Medium Term Financial Plan 2013/14 to 2015/16.

Reference was made to the additional cost pressures which the Authority would be facing due to a number of issues including:

- A reduction in Council Tax Benefit Grant received
- Changes to welfare reform and the impact on the Authority from residents' service need
- Transfer from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit
- Impact of the current national economic situation

Members were also reminded of the impact of loss of income in areas such as planning and building control applications and of the effect on the Revenue budget of borrowing in future years to fund projects such as a new Leisure Centre.

Reference was made to the actions which had been taken through Shared Services and transformation work to reduce costs but with a view to protecting front line services. Further savings from transformation had been built into the Medium Term Financial Plan and Heads of Service were working to achieve these. The Leader also reminded the Cabinet of decisions taken in respect of Business Rate Pooling in order to maximise the benefit to the Authority.

The Executive Director (Finance and Resources) referred to additional "one off" pressures on the budget these being work required in connection with the "Green Deal" scheme and a need to undertake an updated Travellers and Gypsy Site Assessment. It was likely these costs would need to be met from balances.

Members discussed the options available around the level of Council Tax in order to address the current budget gap of around £70,000 and to achieve a balanced budget.

It was noted that The Medium Term Financial Plan would be considered at Cabinet on 20th February 2013 and that recommendations would be made to the Council which was to take place on the same date.

**RESOLVED** that the current position for 2013/2014 – 2015/2016 be noted and that officers be requested to review the savings that can be delivered in order to achieve a balanced budget.

110/12 **FEES AND CHARGES 2013/2014**

The Cabinet considered a report on Fees and Charges for 2013/2014.

There were a number of queries in relation to the charges and in order to enable Portfolio Holders to discuss these further with Heads of Service it was therefore

**RESOLVED** that consideration of Fees and Charges for 2013/2014 be deferred until the meeting of the Cabinet on 20th February 2013.

111/12 **REDEVELOPMENT OF FORMER PARKSIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL, BROMSGROVE**

Consideration was given to the report on financial arrangements in respect of the development of the joint Bromsgrove District Council/Worcestershire County Council facility at Parkside, Bromsgrove. Together with a Civic Centre for the District Council and office accommodation for both Authorities, the facility would incorporate the relocation of the Customer Service Centre, Bromsgrove Library and the Registrar Service.

The report outlined the background to the proposal including the decision previously taken to develop the joint facility within the former Parkside School. There would be important benefits in relation to the Regeneration of the Town Centre and a significant reduction in this Council's future running and maintenance costs in comparison to the existing Council House building. It was reported that the energy costs in particular would be greatly reduced.

The report referred to the work which was now required to develop legal agreements establishing cost sharing and future funding arrangements in order that the project could progress.

Members felt that it was important that the benefits which the development would bring were recognised.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (a) that the Capital Programme 2013/2014 be increased by a further £130,000 and that this sum be paid to Worcestershire County Council in order to acquire a fifty per cent interest in the former Parkside Middle School; and
- (b) that capital assets relating to the relocation of services from The Council House on completion of the redevelopment be released and these capital receipts (estimated at approximately £2,100,000) be used to support the capital expenditure previously agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the costs of the redevelopment programme for the Parkside building, to be led by the County Council, be shared on a fifty/fifty basis with a gross estimated capital cost of £6,900,000;

- (b) that this Council enters into a Development Agreement with Worcestershire County Council in respect of the procurement of the project, on the basis that risks and costs are to be shared equally between Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council; and
- (c) that a joint Management Agreement be implemented to create a Management Board to regulate the future use of the proposed joint facility and to ensure that running costs are apportioned in accordance with the proportion of floor space occupied.

The meeting closed at 7.40 p.m.

Chairman