

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 4TH DECEMBER 2013 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Leader), M. A. Sherrey (Deputy Leader),
D. W. P. Booth, M. A. Bullivant and M. J. A. Webb

Officers: Ms J. Pickering, Mr G. Revans, Mrs S. Sellers and Ms R. Cole.

63/13 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor C. B. Taylor.

64/13 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

65/13 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6th November 2013 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

66/13 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 18th November 2013 were submitted.

In relation to minute 57/13 (Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme), it was noted that a further report on Parkside would be submitted to Cabinet in January 2014.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

67/13 **SHARED SERVICES BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Shared Services Board held on 17th October 2013 were submitted.

It was noted that some of the ways of working which had been successfully developed within Redditch in relation to Trees and "Place" interventions, would be adapted and trialled in parts of the Bromsgrove District.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

68/13 **CAR PARKING REVIEW**

The Cabinet considered a report on a review of car parking within the District. The report comprised a detailed analysis of the existing provision of parking in Bromsgrove and was intended to provide a complete context against which Members could consider any changes they may wish to introduce.

As part of the consideration of the report the Portfolio Holder made reference to the work undertaken by the Bromsgrove Older People's Forum in collating comments calling for lower car park charges. This included a petition comprising approximately 100 signatures, together with 71 completed pro forma and 20 comments received via Email.

The Cabinet considered the report in detail, in particular the following issues:

- financial implications of changes to the charging structure and the subsequent potential impact on expenditure on services such as Shopmobility and town centre improvements;
- the town centre economy and the vacancy rate within the town centre;
- the town centre development proposals and the likely impact of these on a number of the car parks within the town;
- the existing support for car park users including a flexible payment tariff, the availability of permits and the additional hour for Blue Badge holders;
- the current capacity of the car parks, including a breakdown of the types of spaces available;
- the existing charges and a full record of previous changes in parking tariffs since 2005;
- the overall number of ticket sales and income generated over a six year period;
- the income from Excess Charge Notices and off street Parking Contravention Notices, including the reduction in income following a change in enforcement policy;
- an analysis of the length of stay in both short stay and long stay car parks and the split between morning, afternoon and evening usage;
- the introduction of the Civil Parking Enforcement regime in May 2013;
- a detailed comparison of the costs of parking in Bromsgrove with the cost of parking in neighbouring and/or similar areas. As was to be

expected this indicated that Bromsgrove was cheaper than some Authorities for some periods and more expensive than others;

- the recent visit of officers to Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council as it had been suggested that Bromsgrove may wish to adopt a similar policy to that Authority by reducing car park charges. The report detailed the likely reduction in income this would entail for Bromsgrove and the uncertainty over the outcome of the changes introduced in Altrincham.

The Cabinet felt the report covered all aspects of car parking in Bromsgrove in great detail and provided a comprehensive picture of the current position. Thanks were expressed to officers for the work undertaken on the report.

Cabinet noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Board had included car parking within the Board's Work Programme. Therefore in order that the report could be considered in detail by a wider range of Members it was

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Board be requested to consider the report, together with the representations received as a result of the petition and to feedback views/comments to the Cabinet.

69/13 **APRIL - SEPTEMBER (QUARTER 2) FINANCE MONITORING REPORT 2013/2014**

The Cabinet considered the report on the Council's financial position for the period April to September 2013.

It was noted that the overall revenue position showed a predicted underspend of £17,000 at present. The Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) referred to amendments to figures within the Capital Budget Summary for Environmental Services in relation to the Vehicle and Equipment Replacement Programme. This did not impact on the total figures.

Members' attention was drawn to the predicted level of Capital expenditure anticipated by the end of the financial year and Portfolio Holders were requested to work closely with Heads of Service to work towards this.

RESOLVED that the current position on revenue and capital as detailed in the report be noted and service underspends be used to offset the savings requirements in Corporate Services.

RECOMMENDED that £32,000 be vired from Salaries to Other Local Authorities within Business Transformation to fund the proposed Academy to be implemented with Stoke City Council, subject to 50% of this sum to be recharged to Redditch Borough Council.

70/13 **REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S ARRANGEMENTS FOR SECURING FINANCIAL RESILIENCE**

The Cabinet considered a report from the Council's External Auditors, Grant Thornton, in relation to a review of the financial resilience of the Authority.

Members noted that the majority of the financial framework in place was robust but that a number of improvements had been identified in respect of the approach to financial governance.

The action points in relation to the significant variation to the budget in the last quarter of the year and the monitoring of savings identified were being addressed by the Management Team as specified in the Action Plan within the report.

RESOLVED that the review of Financial Resilience be noted together with the actions to be undertaken by this Council.

The meeting closed at 7.15 p.m.

Chairman