

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

7TH SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors G. N. Denaro (Leader), C. B. Taylor (Deputy Leader),
K.J. May, R. D. Smith and P. J. Whittaker

Observers: Councillors S. R. Colella, M. Glass, C. A. Hotham, L. C. R.
Mallet and P. L. Thomas

Officers: Ms S. Hanley, Ms J. Pickering, Ms D. Poole, Mr J. Godwin, Mrs
S. Sellers, Mr M. Hanwell, Ms R. Dunne, Mr S. Shammon, Ms K. Manning
and Ms R. Cole.

17/16 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

18/16 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor K. J. May referred to an other interest which she had
previously declared in respect of item 15 relating to the New Inn,
Bournheath.

The Leader indicated that this item was to be withdrawn.

19/16 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6th July 2016 were
submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6th
July 2016 be approved as a correct record.

20/16 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

The Leader welcomed the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny
Board, Councillor L. C. R. Mallett to the meeting.

The minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on
27th June 2016 and 8th August 2016 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and
Scrutiny Board held on 27th June 2016 and 8th August 2016 be noted.

21/16

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD

The minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 22nd June 2016 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services board held on 22nd June 2016 be noted.

22/16

ICT INFRASTRUCTURE RESOURCE

(The Leader reported that this item was no longer considered to be a Confidential or Exempt item and that therefore there was no requirement to exclude the public from the meeting whilst it was considered.)

The Cabinet considered a report on a proposal to address an ongoing problem experienced by the Authority relating to the retention and recruitment of staff with certain specialised technical skills in respect of the ICT infrastructure. It was reported that the staff in these posts performed a key role in maintaining day to day delivery of the Authority's ICT service, including ensuring that the servers and storage enabling business applications to work were operating successfully.

Members noted that the proposed solution was to outsource to an external provider this small section of the ICT Team which involved two posts one of which was currently vacant. This was to address the particular issue described within the report of recruiting and retaining suitable staff. The organisational approach overall would continue to be to share internal resource.

It was reported that at present the cost to the Council of providing the service was currently £34,093 and it was anticipated that following a competitive exercise, the new cost would be approximately £30,000 in the first year. A charge of £225 per month would be made to any supplier retaining members of staff on BDC premises. It was noted that the approach would require the Transfer of Undertakings, Protection of Employment of two posts (one of which was currently vacant).

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the proposal for the functions provided by the ICT infrastructure roles be outsourced to an external provider;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Head of Transformation and organisational Development to undertake a tendering process to identify a suitable supplier to undertake the ICT infrastructure functions; and
- (c) that authority be delegated to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services to finalise and enter into a suitable legal agreement with the supplier identified under (b) above.

23/16

CABINET APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Cabinet considered a report on a review of appointments made by Cabinet to a number of Outside Bodies. The review was required following the change in the Leader of the Council and the subsequent reorganisation of Cabinet portfolios.

RESOLVED that the appointments be made to the bodies as listed in the appendix to the report.

24/16

NEW HOMES BONUS COMMUNITY GRANTS AWARDS

The Cabinet considered the report on the findings and recommendations of the New Homes Bonus Community Grants Panel. The report related to the grants recommended to be made for 2016/17 and also made recommendations in respect of the future allocation of the balance of the unallocated funding from the 2015/16 process and from this year which together totalled £72,328.

In accordance with Cabinet procedure rules and with the agreement of the Leader, Councillor S. R. Colella spoke on this issue.

Councillor Colella referred to the proposed grants awarded within the Hagley area. These comprised £10,000 to Hagley Scouts for a mini bus (which was the full amount requested) and £5,948 to Hagley Football Club for a Community Pavilion (£20,000 requested).

Councillor Colella expressed appreciation for the sums already awarded but requested that consideration be given to increasing the amount in respect of the Hagley Community Pavilion.

In support of this Councillor Colella stated that the pavilion would be used by a number of organisations and groups within Hagley as there was no similar provision at present. The facility would contribute towards this Council's commitment to promote Health and Well Being within the District and would help to address the impact of social isolation particularly in an ageing population. Councillor Colella felt that the scheme met the Council's requirements that projects provided a sustainable legacy which supported the Council's strategic purposes. It was hoped that the project would be completed in 2017 so it would not be possible to submit a further application next year as this would be a retrospective application.

Cabinet noted that the total of £15, 948 awarded to the Hagley Wards was the maximum amount under the 2016/17 scheme which had been drawn up to reflect the number of properties completed during 2014/15 which was the latest year for which the data was available.

Members were however mindful of the resources required to administer the scheme and did not wish to see balances of funding continue to “roll over” from year to year.

The Cabinet expressed thanks to the NHB Community Grants Panel for the work they had undertaken so far but felt that further consideration was required by the Panel particularly in respect of the proposal that further bids be capped at £3,500.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the grants as detailed in the summary of the NHB Grants Panel recommendations attached as appendix 1 to the report be approved; and
- (b) that the NHB panel be requested to meet to reconsider any additional qualifying bids within the terms of the scheme in respect of the remaining balance of £72,328, taking into consideration the suggestion by Cabinet that the maximum award should not be capped as low as £3,500.

25/16

BROMSGROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUND AND SCHEME

The Cabinet considered a report on a proposal to set up an Energy Efficiency Fund and Scheme which would assist home owners within the District to heat their homes more reliably and at a lower cost. This would involve assistance with heating system improvements and other cost efficient energy measures.

It was proposed that the scheme would be delivered by this Council’s energy efficiency advice partner “Act on Energy” who had provided a number of other projects within Worcestershire. The details of funding for the scheme, including the capital funding, were set out in section 3 of the report.

Members noted the details of the proposal as set out within the report. In particular the health benefits arising from warmer homes and the links between an Energy Efficiency scheme and two of the Council’s strategic purposes “Help me to be financially independent” and “Help me to live my life independently”.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that an Energy Efficiency Fund and associated Scheme for home owners in Bromsgrove District be launched and delivered from autumn 2016 – 2019;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Head of Community services to finalise details of the approved scheme and in consultation with the Portfolio for Strategic Housing to make minor amendments to the scheme and review the scheme as required; and
- (c) that authority be delegated to the Head of Community Services to agree a legal contract with Act on Energy to deliver the scheme.

RECOMMENDED that the capital budget of £100,000 previously allocated to disabled facilities grants be transferred to a capital budget for funding the installation of energy efficiency measures and that this be split over 3 years as follows:

2016/2017 - £34,000

2017/2018 - £33,000

2018/2019 - £33,000

26/16

ANIMAL WELFARE MATTERS - COUNCIL OWNED LAND

Cabinet considered a report on a proposed policy in respect of Animal, Bird and Fish Welfare at Events on Council Owned land.

It was noted that the policy as revised had arisen from a Notice of Motion from Council earlier in the year and that as a result of this, Councillors M. Thompson and B. T. Cooper had been involved in the process.

Cabinet considered the policy and it was

RESOLVED that that the policy relating to Animal, Bird and Fish Welfare at Events on Council Land be approved and adopted.

27/16

SPONSORSHIP POLICY UPDATE

The Cabinet considered an updated Sponsorship and Advertising policy attached as an appendix to the report. The policy now included a section relating to types of unacceptable sponsorship which had previously been included within the Sponsorship Agreement.

It was noted that the sponsorship process had now also been included within the policy to improve the clarity of the procedures.

RESOLVED that the updated Sponsorship and Advertising Policy be approved and adopted.

28/16

THE COUNCIL PLAN

The Leader requested Cabinet to defer consideration of the draft Council Plan.

The Council Plan was not subject to statutory deadlines and it was felt that whilst it was a very good document there was an opportunity for some additional work to be undertaken before it was formally considered. It was intended this would be before the end of the year.

RESOLVED that consideration of the Council Plan be deferred.

29/16

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE STRATEGY

Members considered a report on the proposed Corporate Performance Strategy, including how performance would be reported across the Council.

Members discussed the importance of the use of the Measures Dashboard which should give live sets of data and would enable officers and Members to be more proactive and to use the Dashboard on a daily basis. Additional training and familiarisation sessions for Members were being arranged.

RESOLVED that the Corporate Performance Strategy attached as an appendix to the report be approved.

30/16

EFFICIENCY PLAN

The Cabinet considered a report on the Council's Efficiency Plan 2016/2017 – 2019/2020.

Members were reminded that the submission of an Efficiency Plan to the Secretary of State would provide certainty regarding the financial settlement from Central Government over a four year period. It was noted that the New Homes Bonus funding was the subject of a separate consultation and therefore did not form part of the settlement.

It was reported that there had been no specific guidance from Government regarding what was to be included in the Efficiency Plan. It was anticipated however that the basis would be the Medium Term Financial Plan and information from the Council Plan. This would provide the information to the Government as to how the Council is aiming to deliver its strategic purposes to the community within the reduced funding it will be receiving.

It was noted that the Council did not accept the methodology of "negative grant" and that there was an expectation this would be offset by changes to the Business rate legislation.

The Executive Director Finance and Resources referred to the work undertaken by Directors and Heads of Service in providing best estimates in respect of the savings, efficiencies and additional income which could be achieved to address the budget pressures over the four year period.

RECOMMENDED that the Efficiency Plan 2016/2017 – 2019/2020 as set out in appendix A to the report, be approved for submission to Central Government to enable a four year financial settlement to be secured.

31/16

QUARTER 1 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

The Cabinet considered a report on the Council's financial position for Revenue and Capital for Quarter 1 2016/17.

It was noted that there were some variances including an increase in income from planning fees due to two significant applications and a decrease in car parking income. It was queried whether this was related to the Hanover Street Car Park and information would be sought on this from the Head of Environmental Services.

RESOLVED that the current financial position on Revenue and Capital as detailed in the report be noted.

32/16

APPLICATION FOR INCLUSION ON ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE REGISTER - THE NEW INN, BOURNHEATH

It was reported that following the need to defer this application at the last Cabinet the application was now out of time and under the relevant regulations it would not be possible for a decision on designation to be made. It would therefore be placed on the unsuccessful register with an explanatory note.

The meeting closed at 7.15 p.m.

Chairman