

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

6TH DECEMBER 2017, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors G. N. Denaro (Leader), K.J. May (Deputy Leader),
M. A. Sherrey, C. B. Taylor and P. J. Whittaker

Officers: Mrs. S. Hanley, Ms. J. Pickering, Mrs. R. Bamford, Ms. D. Poole,
Ms. C. Flanagan and Ms. A. Scarce

63/17 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor B. T. Cooper.

64/17 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

65/17 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 1st November 2017 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 1st November 2017 be approved as a correct record.

66/17 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 30TH OCTOBER 2017**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 30th October 2017 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 30th October 2017 be noted.

67/17 **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

The Head of Business Transformation introduced the report and in so doing explained that it reflected the Council's strategic direction in relation to performance, as part of the Corporate Performance Strategy which had been agreed previously. It was proposed that a report would be brought before Cabinet bi-monthly and would contain corporate performance measures, such as sickness absence and would also concentrate on a particular strategic purpose, this would allow each to

be considered throughout the year. The template attached to the report showed the areas which would be covered and it was envisaged that access to the Measures Dashboard would also be available in the meeting in order to see “live” data. Members were being asked to comment on the template and to make any amendments that they deemed necessary. The report would also go to the Overview and Scrutiny Board on a quarterly basis

It was confirmed that as part of the development there would be training provide for Members in respect of accessing the Measures Dashboard and that work was being carried out to optimise the Dashboard in order to improve access and the speed, it was hoped that this would be completed by early next year.

Members discussed the inclusion of sickness absence and agreed this needed to be monitored on a regular basis. Officers confirmed that Members would be able to access “live” data from their iPads and this would be displayed at each meeting.

RESOLVED that the approach to performance reporting to through the use of the Measures Dashboard and a bi-monthly report.

68/17

BROMSGROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY - ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA REPORT

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Strategic Housing advised Members that this item had been withdrawn, as following discussions with officers and feedback from Councillors, a full review of the scheme would take place before any changes were made. The review would include ensuring that the right households were being targeted and any other funding which was available.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Strategic Housing asked for it to be minuted that he had been disappointed with the comments that had been made at full Council when funding of the scheme had been considered, particularly in respect of the work of officers.

69/17

FEES AND CHARGES 2018/19 REPORT

The Executive Director, Finance and Resources reminded Members that the fees and charges were reviewed annual by the Heads of Service and relevant Managers and that an average increase of 2.8% had been agreed. Officers had looked at each individual item from a cost recovery and a commercial aspect. The report format was clearer than in previous years and provided detail around those fees and charges which were over/under 2.8%, it was hoped that this format would be further improved for next year. It was highlighted that Portfolio Holders should be aware of those fees and charges within their areas of responsibility.

It was noted that a small section of the appendix to the report was marked as confidential, however for the purpose of discussions under

this item it was not necessary for the meeting to go into confidential session.

Following presentation of the report, Members discussed a number of areas in more detail:

- Charges for interment for non-residents.
- Junior Sports/holiday clubs – it was confirmed that the charge was for 5 days.
- Strategic housing increases were in line with inflation.
- All charges were rounded up to the nearest 10p.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve all fees and charges that are included within Appendix 1 of the report and which have a proposed increase/decrease for 2018/19 of over/under the current agreed budget assumption of 2.8%.

RESOLVED that all fees and charges as detailed within Appendix 1 which are increased by 2.8% be approved.

70/17

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT CONSULTATION - GOOD DESIGN

The Head of Planning and Regeneration introduced the report and highlighted that it was a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which combined a number of policies within the District Plan. The aim was to give a local steer around enhancement and good design for the local area. The request was to put this out to consultation, with the outcome being feedback in due course. It was confirmed that the consultation period would be 8 weeks, due to the Christmas period, although usually the period was 6 weeks, without a school break within that period.

Particular reference was made to home extensions and the Head of Planning and Regeneration informed Members that the aim was to achieve “street scene” integrity wherever possible and to ensure that the original buildings were what “caught the eye” rather than the extension work, she went on to provide details of the “step down/step back” principles in respect of extensions and alterations and how these can detract from the linear effect. The SPD attempted to give more description around what would be acceptable, although it was accepted that it was important not to be over subscribed and to allow the Planning Officers and Planning Committee to make a judgement.

Following presentation of the report Members discussed a number of areas in more detail:

- The use of dormer windows within roof extensions – it was discussed that these were environmentally friendly and allowed light into spaces, in order for them to become habitable and make use of the available space. The Head of Planning and

Regeneration made reference to other types of roof windows which allowed for the existing roof line to be maintained, thus retaining the original integrity of a building.

- Bin storage – particularly on new developments. Members discussed how traditionally this had been a brick built store, but as the size and number of bins had increased, the storage of bins at the front of properties had become more significant. The Head of Planning and Regeneration suggested that this was something which developers needed to be mindful of at an early stage.
- The cost and charging mechanism for new bins - it was confirmed that where a development was for 11 or more dwellings, the cost of bins could be included within Section 106 monies. Members considered how it would be possible to charge new residents for a bin and asked officers to consider this. Although it was highlighted that this could potentially create a two tier system, which would be difficult to administer.
- Restrictions in respect of free standing signage and potential issues which may arise for buildings within the high street which were restricted due to conservation issues. A particular example was given by the Deputy Leader, which the Head of Planning and Regeneration agreed to take up outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED that the public consultation for the draft High Quality Design Supplementary Planning Document be carried out.

71/17

QUARTER 2 FINANCE MONITORING AND EFFICIENCY PLAN UPDATE 2017/18

The Executive Director, Finance and Resources presented the Quarter 2 Finance Monitoring Report for 2017/18 and explained that she was looking into how the timescale for reporting of financial monitoring could be reduced. Reference was made to the Revenue Budget Summary within the report where it was noted that there was an overall shortfall of £141k. This was largely due to loss of income in respect of planning fees for a number of larger applications and the business rates grant assumption made in respect of Stourbridge Road Car Park site, the sale of which had been delayed.

In respect of the Capital Budget Summary it was highlighted that the new vehicles were now on order and the final payment for the new Sports and Leisure centre was due for completion in late November. However, it was reported that the Council continued to have balances for 2017/18 of £4.316m and that reserves had not changed significantly, with £500k remaining for economic development.

It was highlighted that the Efficiency Plan target of £726k had now been projected at being able to deliver £946k which was a mix of savings and increased income generation, which was encouraging and would offset the shortfall being predicated in respect of the planning application income.

RESOLVED that the current financial position for the quarter April to September 2017 be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.45 p.m.

Chairman