

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 17TH JULY 2024, AT 3.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors K.J. May (Leader), B. McEldowney, K. Taylor,
S. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

Officers: Mrs. S. Hanley, Mr. G. Revans, Mrs. R. Bamford,
D Goodall, Mr. M. Bough, Mrs. R. Green and Mrs J. Gresham

1/24 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. Baxter and S. Colella.

2/24 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3/24 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 13TH MARCH 2024**

The minutes from the Cabinet meeting held on 13th March 2024 were submitted for Members' consideration.

It was highlighted that there was a typographical error in the resolution for Minute number 94/23 – Cost of Living Funding Proposal. Members noted that the figure should have read £38k rather than £32k. Officers undertook to make this amendment.

RESOLVED that subject to the preamble above, the minutes from the Cabinet meeting on 13th March 2024 be approved as a true and accurate record.

4/24 **LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader announced that there was a Cabinet Advisory Group (CAG) meeting due to take place in respect of the Play Audit and Investment Strategy on 18th July 2024 and that all Members were invited to attend.

RECOMMISSIONING OF THE PROMOTING INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICE (HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY)

The Strategic Housing & Business Support Manager presented the Recommissioning of the Promoting Independent Living Service (Home Improvement Agency) report for Members' consideration.

In doing so, it was reported that the Home Improvement Agency (HIA), known as Promoting Independent Living (PIL) worked with Bromsgrove District Council, five other Local Housing Authorities and Worcestershire County Council in order to provide a wide range of services which included Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), Home Repairs Assistance and Dementia Dwelling Grants.

The contract with the current provider, Milbrook was due to finish at the end of March 2025 and a tender exercise was due to take place shortly in order to procure a contractor for this service in the future.

The tender was due to be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Service Implementation
- Partnership and Engagement
- Continuous improvement and innovation
- Staff Management
- Customer Service
- Additional Social Value

Following the presentation of the report, the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and Strategic Housing thanked the Strategic Housing & Business Support Manager for the work that had been undertaken in this area. A brief discussion followed in respect of how funding was allocated and who provided the final agreement of expenditure. It was confirmed that once the HIA had received a request for repairs or installation of equipment these were then reviewed by the Council prior to sign off.

RESOLVED that

- 1) approval be given to recommission the Promoting Independent Living Service;
- 2) authority be delegated to the Head of Community & Housing Services, in consultation with the Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services and following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and Strategic Housing to agree

the final process, timetable and evaluation model for the appointment of a new contractor to deliver the Home Improvement Agency service; and

3) to award the contract to the successful provider(s).

6/24

THE BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAN

The Policy Manager presented the report for Cabinet's consideration. It was reported that the development of the Council Plan had taken place over a number of months and had begun with some sessions supported by the Local Government Association (LGA). Once key priorities had been identified, there were two further workshops with Cabinet Members and the Corporate Management Team (CMT) to progress further the key priorities that had previously been identified.

The final Council Plan provided an overarching vision for the District with the four new priorities as follows:

1. Economic Development
2. Housing
3. Environment
4. Infrastructure

It was also noted that operationally, The Council Plan, informed the service business planning process and helped to determine the Medium Term Financial Plan. The priorities and objectives contained within the Plan would be monitored using specific measures in order to ascertain the success and any areas of improvement.

Following the presentation, the Leader thanked the Policy Manager for all the hard work that had gone into producing such a comprehensive vision for the District for the next four years.

There were some discussions regarding Planning Policy and the future of building in the district, particularly in terms of design statements of future builds within the District. It was reported by Officers that this would form part of the Local Plan and that it would be more appropriate to discuss these kinds of design aspirations as part of a future Strategic Planning Steering Group (SPSG) meeting.

RECOMMENDED that

The Council Plan be approved.

PRODUCTIVITY PLANS

Prior to the presentation of the Productivity Plans it was noted by the Chief Executive Officer that although it had stated that there were some recommendations in respect of this report, it was a resolved item that could be agreed by Cabinet. It was further reported that an announcement reflecting the above would be made at the Full Council meeting that evening, therefore the report would not need to be considered at the Full Council meeting.

Cabinet was informed that the Productivity Plans had been produced as a result of a letter sent by the then Minister for Local Government to all Local Authority Chief Executive Officers regarding the preparation of these plans in order to review productivity across services. It was noted that these plans would help the then Government ascertain the areas that were working well and identify any common themes in order to provide value for money for residents.

Guidance had been provided and included the following suggested themes and if possible, refer to the work already undertaken by the Council in these areas:

- How the Council had transformed the design and delivery of services to make better use of resources.
- How the Council took advantage of technology and made better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources.
- The Council's plans to reduce wasteful spend within the organisation and systems.
- The barriers preventing progress that the Government could help to reduce or remove.

In exploring these areas, it appeared that the Council was already successful in many areas included in the guidance. These areas were as follows:

- The Council already undertook significant Shared Service work and had done so since 2008.
- The Council were leveraging Levelling Up Funding to regenerate the Town Centre.
- The Council was using ICT to drive service efficiencies.
- The Council used Partnerships to drive effective Service Delivery.

- The Council linked finance and performance monitoring with regular reporting.
- The Council used Benchmarking and data to drive service improvement.
- Staff, and their skills, were core to delivery.
- The Council listened to the communities' requirements.

Following the discussion of the report, the Leader thanked Officers for their hard work in putting together the Productivity Plans. It was noted that they had provided confirmation that the residents in the District received value for money from the services delivered and that Members and Officers should be proud of the Council's achievements.

RESOLVED that

The Productivity Plan, be approved and published on the Council's Website and forwarded to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities before 19th July 2024.

8/24

TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE HEAD OF LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PROPERTY SERVICES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSIDERS TO BE OF SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING

There was no Urgent Business on this occasion.

9/24

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 11TH MARCH AND 22ND APRIL 2024

Cabinet considered the minutes from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meetings on 11th March 2024 and 22nd April 2024. In doing so it was noted that there were some recommendations contained within the minutes that related to the Foodbank and Community Shop Provision Task Group report that was due to be considered by the Cabinet at its next meeting on 24th July 2024.

Councillor P. Whittaker highlighted that he had not been included in the attendees for the meeting of the Board held on 22nd April 2024. However, he confirmed that he was indeed in attendance at this meeting. Officers undertook to update the attendees accordingly. It was also requested that Officers ensure that the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board be invited to all meetings of the Cabinet.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meetings on 11th March 2024 and 22nd April 2024 be noted.

10/24

LEVELLING UP UPDATE ON WINDSOR STREET CONTRACT AND MARKET HALL

Cabinet considered the Levelling Up Update on Windsor Street Contract and Market Hall report. Following the presentation there were several questions from Members in respect of the future funding from the defunct Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP). There were also some queries regarding the value of the Windsor Street site and the potential of an increase in value in the future once it had been cleared.

In terms of commencement dates, Members were informed that the commencement date would be around August 2024 with the hope of completion around the end of 2024 or early 2025.

The issue of vandalism was raised as part of the discussion. It was noted that there had been Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) issues experienced on the vacant site, which had been closely monitored by the Police, security team and the Minor Works team at the Council. There had been a decrease recently and it was hoped that the demolition of the site would result in no further issues in this area.

RESOLVED

- 1) To note the challenges and work done to date;
- 1) that City Demolition be appointed to carry out the demolition of existing buildings and associated site remediation, removal of existing redundant services and utilities; and
- 2) that A 10 week extension in the Market Hall Pre Construction Service Agreement (PCSA) in order to fully validate costs be approved.

The meeting closed at 3.48 p.m.

Chairman