

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 5TH MARCH 2014 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Leader), M. A. Bullivant, C. B. Taylor and M. J. A. Webb

Observers: Councillor R. L. Dent

Officers: Ms S. Hanley, Ms S. Morgan, Ms C. Flanagan, Mr M. Dunphy and Ms R. Cole

93/13 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D.W. P. Booth and M. A. Sherrey.

94/13 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

95/13 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th February 2014 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

96/13 **REPRESENTATIONS ON THE BIRMINGHAM PLAN 2031**

The Cabinet considered a report on the proposed response to the proposed submission version of the Birmingham Plan 2031.

The Strategic Planning Manager briefly outlined the background to the proposed response. It was stated that whilst there were comments on a range of policies these had been confined to those areas where there were genuine comments to be submitted rather than going through a "tick box" exercise.

The Strategic Planning Manager highlighted the Birmingham identified housing need of 84,000, the capacity for 51,000 and the shortfall of around 33,000 houses together with the implications of this for Bromsgrove District. Members also discussed the position relating to the Green Belt land within Birmingham and within Bromsgrove.

Members felt that it should be strongly emphasised within the response that Bromsgrove District Council is committed to working closely with both Birmingham City Council under the duty to cooperate and the Greater

Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise partnership, to determine the location of any additional development.

Reference was made to the potential impact of retail development at Longbridge and the importance of development at Longbridge remaining in accordance with the adopted Area Action Plan i.e. the regeneration scheme being led by employment and housing.

In relation to TP37 a sustainable Transport Network, Members felt that there should be a stronger reference to the work of the Local Enterprises Partnerships across Worcestershire, Warwickshire and the Black Country.

The Strategic Planning Manager drew attention to the proposed slight rewording within the duty to cooperate statement which was shown within the proposed response. This was to ensure that the position of Redditch Borough Council in relation to Birmingham's duty to cooperate was accurately reflected.

RESOLVED that the proposed response to the Birmingham Plan 2031, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be noted; and subject to the minor amendments referred to in the preamble above, be submitted as Bromsgrove District Council's formal response to the Plan.

97/13 **CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS AND MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR BEOLEY, DODFORD AND HAGLEY CONSERVATION AREAS**

The Cabinet considered a report on draft Conservation Area Appraisals prepared in respect of the Conservation Areas in Beoley, Dodford and Hagley. The associated Management Plans were intended to provide a strategy for the management of the Conservation Areas in order to enhance their character and appearance.

It was noted that the Conservation Area Appraisals undertaken for Beoley and Dodford had identified the need for small boundary changes.

Members noted that if approved, the draft Appraisals would be the subject of a period of public consultation with the comments being reported back to Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the draft Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans for Beoley, Dodford and Hagley be approved, including the proposed extensions to the Beoley and Dodford Conservation Areas;
- (a) that a four week consultation process with local residents and other interested parties be undertaken; and
- (c) that the results of the consultation, with any consequent changes required to the Appraisals and Management Plans, be reported back to the Cabinet for consideration in due course.

98/13 **POLICY FOR SECURING REPAYMENT OF DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS AND LIFETIME LOANS**

Members considered a report which reviewed the current processes for securing Disabled Facilities Grants Home Repair Assistance Lifetime Loans paid to residents for works or adaptations to their home. The review had been undertaken as part of work on Transformation.

It was noted that there was a proposal to change the Council's existing policy of securing repayment of the Grants or loans by way of registering them as a charge against the property at the Land Registry, to securing them by way of a Local Land Charge. This would continue to satisfactorily protect the Council's position should the property be sold.

This would result in a reduction in cost and officer resources required to administer the process and importantly would also be of benefit to the customer as the transaction would be simpler for them to understand and less time consuming.

RESOLVED that repayment of Disabled Facilities Grants and Home Repair Assistance Lifetime Loans be secured by means of registration on the Local Land Charges Register.

99/13 **QUARTER 3 FINANCE MONITORING REPORT - APRIL TO DECEMBER 2013/14**

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

The Financial Services Manager referred to the possibility of improving the management of demand and the financial position of the Council by delegating authority to Heads of Service and Directors to vire salary budgets to other expenditure within their service. This would of course continue to be monitored closely by Financial Services as with other virements.

Members also noted the possibility within the section of the report relating to Sports and Leisure, of utilising Section 106 monies of £34,000 to fund improvements to Sanders Park Tennis Courts. This would entail the increase of the Capital Programme 2013/2014 to include this scheme.

Members considered the finance reports for each department together with the overall summary. It was noted that it was predicted there would be an underspend of £52,000 by the end of the financial year which it was anticipated would be returned to general balances to support future expenditure.

Concern was expressed however that significant expenditure was predicted to take place in the final quarter. Whilst there were some reasons for this, including the current accounting system which meant that capital charges and other recharges were included within the last quarter, it was recognised that it

was important that Portfolio Holders continued to work closely with Heads of Service to address the issues.

The Financial Services Manager undertook to review the structure of the monitoring report including the way in which recharges are shown in future.

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

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that authority be delegated to Heads of Service and Directors to vire funding from salary budgets to other expenditure within their service with a view to providing greater flexibility in managing the demand and financial position of the Council; and
- (b) that the 2013/2014 Capital Programme be increased by £34,000 to include a Section 106 funded scheme at Sanders Park Tennis Courts.

The meeting closed at 7.27 p.m.

Chairman