

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE CABINET**

**5TH APRIL 2017 AT 6.00 P.M.**

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

Observers: Councillor S. A. Webb

Officers: Mr K. Dicks, Ms J. Pickering, Mrs C. Felton, Ms D. Poole, Ms  
A. Singleton, Mr M. Hanwell, Mr D. Piper, Mr D. Allen, Mrs S. Sellers  
and Ms R. Cole

103/16 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence on this occasion.

104/16 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

105/16 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 28th February 2017,  
1st March 2017 and 22nd March 2017 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 28th  
February 2017, 1st March 2017 and 22nd March 2017 each be approved  
as correct records respectively.

106/16 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

**Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 13th February 2017**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on  
13th February 2017 were submitted.

Reference was made to the recommendations contained within minute  
94/16 relating to the work of the Finance and Budget Working Group.  
Cabinet were in agreement with the recommendations subject to the  
amendment to the wording of recommendation (3) to read:

- (3) Heads of Service be asked to look at all areas where generate  
income and produce a cost recovery statement for further  
consideration.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that subject to the above amendment, the recommendations within minute 94/16 of the Overview and Scrutiny Board be approved; and
- (b) that the remainder of the minutes be noted.

**Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 27th March 2017**

The recommendation contained within minute 109/16 of the Overview and Scrutiny Board relating to the Cabinet Work programme was considered.

It was felt that the recommendation was in accordance with the way the Cabinet sought to operate and therefore it was

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet Members work with Senior Officers and Heads of Service to ensure that items are placed on the Cabinet Work Programme in a timely manner so that the Overview and Scrutiny Board has the opportunity to identify items for pre-scrutiny.

107/16

**WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 16th February 2017 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Service Board held on 16th February 2017 be noted.

108/16

**APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

**RESOLVED** that the appointment of Councillor M. A. Sherrey to the following outside bodies (which are Cabinet appointments) be endorsed:

- Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board (replacing Councillor K. J. May);
- Worcestershire Health Improvement Group (a Sub Group of the Health and Wellbeing Board)

109/16

**REVIEW OF ECONOMIC PRIORITIES AND FUTURE DIRECTION OF TRAVEL**

The Leader welcomed to the meeting Robert Spittle and Jonathan Till, Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively of the Bromsgrove Economic Development Theme Group, which was part of the Bromsgrove Partnership Board.

Cabinet considered a report on a set of revised economic priorities for the District. These were supported by an analysis of the various economic challenges faced by and opportunities available to the District.

Members referred to some of the current challenges. In particular reference was made to:

- Low wage levels for those who live and work in Bromsgrove – 6th lowest in the West Midlands region;
- An imbalanced Housing Market and rising affordability issues – the property to annual income ratio in Bromsgrove being 10.8:1 when generally a ratio of 4:1 is considered to be affordable;
- The demographics of the District which showed Bromsgrove has the 10th lowest proportion of residents in the working age group and that numbers in the 30-39 age group were falling (probably due to the cost of housing)

Members' attention was drawn to the 9 strategic priorities for economic growth set out in section 3.22 of the report:

- Driving economic growth
- Improving Connectivity
- Supporting Businesses to start and grow
- Re-balancing the local housing market
- Developing key sectors
- Driving up and retaining skills locally
- Improving the Centres
- Partnership working
- Leading by example

A range of "early actions" to drive forward delivery of these priorities were contained in Appendix 3 to the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development stressed that in order to take these priorities forward, the co-operation and support of colleagues within the Cabinet and other Members would be crucial as the priorities cut across many areas of the Council's activities and services.

Mr Spittle expressed the support of the Economic Development Theme Group for the proposals which the Group had helped to shape. It was also suggested that it would be beneficial to look to create a wider Task Force to encourage all Stakeholders to work together.

Cabinet recognised that in order to maximise the success of the Economic Development of the District, the co-operation and support of a wide range of stakeholders would be required and therefore the establishment of a Task Force to facilitate this was supported in principle.

Members welcomed the report and the revision of the economic strategic priorities whilst acknowledging there were a number of challenges which would impact upon their implementation.

Issues which were raised during the discussion included:

- potential sources of funding for some of the priorities;
- the role of the West Midlands Combined Authority;
- the role of the Local Enterprise Partnerships;
- highways issues which needed to be addressed;
- parking issues which were being considered;
- Broad Band issues

It was recognised that Bromsgrove District had a good base from which to build and achieve greater economic growth to benefit residents and the District as a whole.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the economic narrative set out in Appendix 2 to the report and the challenges and opportunities faced by the District set out in section 3.14 of the report be noted and endorsed;
- (b) that the 9 strategic priorities for economic growth set out in section 3.22 of the report be approved; and
- (c) that the Early Action Programme set out in Appendix 3 to the report be approved.

110/16

**BEOLEY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Cabinet considered a report on the Conservation Area Appraisal and proposed Management Plan for Beoley Conservation Area.

It was noted that following the previous decision to approve the draft Conservation Area Appraisal, public consultation had taken place with local residents and other interested parties. There had been broad support for the Conservation Area Appraisal, Management Plan and minor boundary changes. Comments were included in Appendix 2 to the report.

Cabinet thanked officers for the detailed work undertaken in respect of this proposal. It was noted that the purpose of the Appraisal and Management Plan was to allow development to take within the Conservation Area in a way which would protect and enhance its character and appearance.

Following discussion it was

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the Beoley Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be approved and its contents endorsed as a material consideration for planning purposes; and
- (b) that the designation of the areas to be added to the Beoley Conservation Area as outlined in the report be approved.

111/16

### **REVIEW OF NEW HOMES BONUS COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME**

Cabinet considered a report on the proposed revision of the New Homes Bonus Community Grants Scheme for 2017/18. The review had been agreed by the New Homes Bonus Community Grants Panel and had been undertaken by Members of the Panel supported by officers.

It was reported that the revised scheme if approved would revert largely to the scheme originally implemented in 2015/16. This would mean that the allocation of funds would be based on where there was evidence of the impact of housing growth.

The application forms and documentation had been reviewed to reflect this and to take account of a number of issues which had been raised previously. As a consequence the application process would be more robust and would require more involvement from Ward Councillors.

The Leader thanked Councillors K. J. May and S. J. Baxter and the officers for their work on this issue.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the revised New Homes Bonus Community Grants Scheme as attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved;
- (b) that the use of 25% of the additional New Homes Bonus Grant received in 2016/17 to calculate the amount of £144k to be allocated to the scheme be approved;
- (c) that an additional amount of £27,157 be added to the total allocation in respect of funds carried forward from the previous year's scheme; and
- (d) that a deduction of £2k be made from the Scheme to cover the cost of administering the Scheme.

112/16

### **WORCESTERSHIRE STRATEGIC HOUSING PARTNERSHIP PLAN**

Cabinet considered a report in relation to the proposed Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan and Memorandum of Understanding.

It was noted that the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership was made up of a range of strategic partners including Adult Services and Health, Children's Services, the Department of Work and Pensions, Homes and Communities Agency and Local Authority Strategic Housing Officers from across Worcestershire.

It was reported that the Plan had been developed in order to reflect the major changes around Health and Housing legislation since the Worcestershire Housing Strategy was published in 2011. The new Housing Partnership Plan sought to capture the legislation in one place and to identify the challenges faced as a result of the changes. It also intended to enable action planning across agencies to respond at a local level to pressures on housing.

It was noted that the Plan was an overarching document setting the strategic direction for housing in Worcestershire and recognised the need for partners to work together to make the most effective use of existing resources to maximise the wellbeing of residents. The Local Memorandum of Understanding sets out how the Partnership will work together to address the housing need and achieve wider benefits to partner organisations.

Members recognised that there would still be a number of challenges to deliver the actions within the Plan but action plans would be developed to assist with this.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan be approved; and
- (b) that the Worcestershire Memorandum of Understanding be approved.

113/16

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

That under Section 100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the items of business the subject of the following minute on the grounds that they involve the disclosure of "Exempt Information" as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, the relevant part being as set out below and that it is in the public interest to do so.

<u>Minute No</u>	<u>Paragraph</u>
114 /16	3
115/16	3

114/16

**ICT INFRASTRUCTURE PROPOSALS**

Cabinet considered a report on a further procurement exercise in respect of ICT Infrastructure resource. It was noted that the full details of the tender specification document had been included within the report. It was also noted that a further procurement exercise had been undertaken as the previous quotation had expired and that only one tender had been received.

Following discussion it was

**RECOMMENDED** that authority be delegated to the Head of Transformation and Organisational Development to proceed with the procurement of a contract to deliver the ICT infrastructure functions with the preferred supplier as set out in Appendix 1 option 2.

115/16

**SHARED SERVICES BUSINESS CASE FOR CUSTOMER ACCESS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Head of Customer Access and Financial Support gave a brief presentation on the Business Case for the Service Review of the Customer Access and Financial Support Service.

The presentation included the following:

- a reminder of the strategic and operational purposes for the service;
- the work undertaken within the service over a three year period to understand how best to meet the purposes and to ensure the roles and capacity needed were understood;
- working with partners such as Connecting Families and BDHT;
- the aims of the proposal and proposed structure;
- key work areas i.e. welfare support, revenues, customer support, quality and improvement and systems development but working as one Team;
- financial savings;
- the impact on staff;
- the reasons for not pursuing alternative operating models

The Head of Customer Access and Financial Support referred to the report and to the Business Case which contained part of the significant amount of the evidence which had been obtained through the transformation process including trial working, gathering of customer demand etc.

Members raised a number of queries to which officers responded. It was also requested that for clarity a Glossary of Terms be included as an Appendix to the report.

It was acknowledged that there would need to be further changes within the service in future due to changing circumstances both nationally and locally.

Following discussion it was

**RECOMMENDED** that the proposals within the Customer Access and Financial Support Services – Service Review Business Case be approved.

116/16

**MRS S SELLERS**

The Leader referred to this being the last Cabinet meeting to be attended by the Council's Principal Solicitor Mrs Sarah Sellers. The Leader thanked Mrs Sellers for her work on behalf of the Authority and wished her well for the future.

Cabinet  
5th April 2017

The meeting closed at 7.25 p.m.

Chairman