

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

CABINET

These minutes are draft until confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting.

Thursday, 23rd November, 2017

Present:

Councillor Tim Warren	Leader of the Council and Conservative Group Leader
Councillor Charles Gerrish	Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency, Conservative Deputy Group Leader North East Somerset
Councillor Vic Pritchard	Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Paul Myers	Cabinet Member for Economic and Community Regeneration
Councillor Karen Warrington	Cabinet Member for Transformation and Customer Services
Councillor Paul May	Cabinet member for Children and Young People
Councillor Bob Goodman	Cabinet Member for Development and Neighbourhoods

145 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

146 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Senior Democratic Services Officer drew attention to the evacuation procedure as set out in the Agenda.

147 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Mark Shelford had sent his apologies for this meeting.

148 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

149 MODERN LIBRARIES PROGRAMME; COMMUNITY LIBRARIES APPROACH - CALL IN RESPONSE

The Chair informed the meeting that the Cabinet had made a decision on 11th October 2017 regarding an approach to Community-led Libraries (Decision E3000 - Modern Libraries Community Led Approach). A Call-in of the decision was held on 13th November 2017 by the Communities, Transport and Environment Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel, and this call-in was upheld. Cabinet therefore would need to consider its response to the Call-In and the Panel's recommendations.

The Chair invited Councillor John Bull to address the Cabinet in his capacity as the Chair of the CTE PDS Panel.

Councillor John Bull read out a statement (*available on the Minute Book at Democratic Services*) where he highlighted three recommendations made by the CTE PDS Panel when the Call In was upheld. Councillor Bull expressed his concerns that an Addendum to the report had only been published less than 24 hours before meeting and that proposals in that document were still short of a full consultation.

The Chair thanked Councillor John Bull for his statement.

The Chair invited Public and Councillors who registered to speak to address the Cabinet. All speakers would have up to 3 minutes and all speakers should only speak to the recommendations of the Panel. The Chair reminded everyone that he used his discretion for this meeting to allow 30 minutes for Public and Councillors to speak and that he would intervene to stop the speaker if they stray from speaking about Panel's recommendations.

Caroline Ambrose read out a statement (*available on the Minute Book at Democratic Services*) where she expressed her concerns on the decision made by the Cabinet on 11th October and highlighted options that the Cabinet would have following the outcome of the Call In.

Kathleen Still read out a statement (*available on the Minute Book at Democratic Services*) where she expressed her concerns on an impact that Cabinet decision might have on Paulton library and the Hub, in particular on current team of volunteers.

Alison Hall addressed the Cabinet by outlining the benefits of Paulton library and its links to Paulton Schools and asked the Cabinet to take on board recommendations made by the CTE PDS Panel on 13th November 2017 Call In meeting before making final decision. Alison Hall also said that Paulton library was not just a place for borrowing books – it was also a social hub for all, contributing against social isolation especially amongst elderly people.

Councillor Joe Rayment addressed the Cabinet by complaining on the timing of this meeting, that the Cabinet should have planned this meeting well in advance, that the Addendum should have been published earlier and that allocated 30 minutes for Public and Councillors to speak was against Constitution.

The Chair reminded Councillor Rayment that he should focus his statement on the recommendations from the CTE PDS Panel.

Maria Lucas (Monitoring Officer) explained that the Constitution requires the Cabinet to consider the report and/or recommendations from the Call-In Scrutiny Panel. The CTE PDS Panel had provided three recommendations when they upheld the Call-In. The Cabinet was required to consider those recommendations and comments on them at this meeting only. Maria Lucas highlighted that the Chair had informed speakers that they could only speak on the recommendations of the Panel. This was single issue meeting, a response to the Call-In outcomes, and no other matters should be discussed at this meeting.

Councillor Joe Rayment concluded his statement by saying that the Addendum did not address issues from the Call-In and the Cabinet should release funding and start the consultation before making any decision on this matter.

Councillor Richard Samuel read out a statement (*available on the Minute Book at Democratic Services*) where he believed that the Cabinet should be clearer on the project goals, set clear objectives for each individual library within an overall strategic context for B&NES libraries, prepare detailed project plans for each site, set out how delivery is to take place, decide if the library can function as a public service within the cost envelope, be clear about the timescales for all sites and manage this as a discrete project. Councillor Samuel urged the Cabinet to take a step back, reconsider all options and make sure that they had acted within the spirit and letter of the law.

Councillor Will Sandry addressed the Cabinet by expressing his concerns that Cabinet decision would have significant impact on Mooreland library in Oldfield Ward. Councillor Sandry also said that Mooreland library had served citizens from more than one Ward and, like Paulton library it had been seen as social hub for residents of Oldfield and neighbouring Wards.

Councillor Liz Hardman read out a statement (*available on the Minute Book at Democratic Services*) where she supported the CTE PDS Panel decision to refer the decision on Branch Libraries back to Cabinet. Councillor Hardman felt that the main reason for asking the Cabinet to re-consider their decision made on 11th October 2017 was down to the lack of any open public consultation. Councillor Hardman concluded her statement by urging the Cabinet to have a rethink on these proposals. In her view, the Community Library Model would not deliver a competent and efficient library service and it would be run with the minimum of support from B&NES, both financial and professional.

Councillor Dine Romero read out a statement (*available on the Minute Book at Democratic Services*) where she felt that the Cabinet Member for Transformation and Customer Services had recommended that the Council should adopt a new approach to library services without having any supporting evidence. Councillor Romero expressed her concerns that, in her view, there was no financial breakdown, and no detail of how the community model might work. Councillor Romero urged the Cabinet to re-think their decision by suggesting that those living in the least advantaged areas would be severely affected by the Community Library Model proposals.

Councillor Patrcik-Anketell addressed the Cabinet by saying that he had abstained from voting on the Call-In proposals as he was not assured with consultation approach in the original report which came to the Cabinet on 11th October or with the status of Mobile Library Service. However, having read the Addendum to the Cabinet Report for this meeting he was satisfied with the recommendations and supported the proposed recommendations of the Cabinet.

Councillor June Player made an ad-hoc statement urging the Cabinet to communicate with the residents on the outcome of the Community Library Model proposals. Councillor Player also requested that Moorland library should continue to run.

The Chair thanked everyone who addressed the Cabinet.

Councillor Karen Warrington read out a statement (*available on the Minute Book at Democratic Services*) where she thanked all the speakers at this meeting. Councillor

Warrington also said that the Cabinet had met to meet today to consider the comments of the CTE PDS Panel held on 13th November which were detailed in the accompanying documentation.

There were two main issues highlighted by the CTE PDS Panel - consultation and certainty over the future of the Mobile Library Services. An addendum the report had clarified an approach to the public consultation. Nevertheless, Councillor Warrington took the meeting through the stages of the public consultation in her statement. Councillor Warrington also said that the Addendum had made it clear that the Mobile Library service was not being stopped. Councillor Warrington concluded her statement by reminding everyone that if the Communities Library Programme did not go ahead, it would put at risk £200,000 of savings which would need to be found from elsewhere.

Councillor Karen Warrington moved the recommendations as per Addendum.

Councillor Tim Warren seconded the motion by saying that this was just start of the process which would trigger the Public Consultation on the Communities Library Programme. Councillor Warren assured everyone that proposals were not about closing libraries in B&NES, but opposite, to protect them from closure. Councillor Warren concluded by saying that Mobile Library Services would continue to operate.

Councillor Vic Pritchard supported the motion by drawing Cabinet's attention to referendum held at Stowey Sutton where massive majority agreed with Cabinet's proposals on Communities Library Programme with 35 people already putting their name down to volunteer at local library.

Councillor Paul Myers also supported the motion by emphasising exemplary work of volunteers in Midsomer Norton and that proposals such as these would bring communities closer.

It was **RESOLVED** (unanimously) to confirm its original decision, as taken on 11th October 2017, with the following clarifications and amendments which address the three issues raised by CTE PDS at its call-in meeting on 13th November 2017:

2.1.1. In the event that the Council is unable to secure a locally agreed Community Run Library provision in any of the existing five Branch Libraries, an options report will be produced for consideration by Cabinet to determine the approach to be taken in that area, having reference to financial consequences and the outcomes of consultation.

2.1.2. The consultation approach will include the matters and approaches detailed in Section 4.

2.1.3. The Mobile Library Service will continue to operate and is not subject to closure.

The meeting ended at 10.30 am

Chair _____

Date Confirmed and Signed _____

Prepared by Democratic Services