

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

CABINET

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

Wednesday, 10th July, 2019

Present:

Councillor Dine Romero	Council Leader and Liberal Democrat Group Leader
Councillor Rob Appleyard	Cabinet Member for Adult Services
Councillor Tim Ball	Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning, and Economic Development
Councillor Neil Butters	Cabinet Member for Transport Services
Councillor Paul Crossley	Cabinet Member for Community Services
Councillor Kevin Guy	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Councillor Richard Samuel	Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources
Councillor Sarah Warren	Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services
Councillor David Wood	Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services
Councillor Joanna Wright	Cabinet Member for Transport Services

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair was taken by Councillor Dine Romero, Council Leader.

The Chair read out the following statement:

'Welcome to the first Cabinet meeting of the new administration.

The Lib Dems were elected to take bold action on the issues that affect residents: transport, housing, the climate emergency, and opening up the Council to give local people a voice.

You will see that, as part of our Cabinet structure, we're allowing roles to be job-shared, bringing a range of expertise and perspective into the Cabinet.

We have created a specific Cabinet portfolio for tackling the Climate Emergency.

And we have introduced a new element to our decision making reports – every decision we take is being evaluated for its climate change impact.

This administration is committed to taking decisive action on climate change, and in doing so, enable and inspire change throughout the community.

As I said at our first Council meeting, we are committed to listening to and working with residents.

We are changing the culture of decision making by building a more open, outward looking and consultative Council.

There is an important role for PDS and, before major decisions are taken, Cabinet members will work with the cross party policy development and scrutiny panels, and with the broader population including specialist interest groups, through a range of consultative means.

Finally, just a reminder.

As we said we would, we will be having an independent review of the clean air zone proposal. The clean air zone must protect residents' health, but it must be fair to the least well-off. So we are committed to not, I repeat NOT, charging for private cars. We said this before the election, during the election and since the election, but I know that fears are being raised that this may change. It will not. We are not going to charge for private cars.'

The Chair invited each Cabinet Member to introduce themselves and give a brief description of their portfolios and their aspirations over the next four years.

Each Cabinet Member informed the meeting of the role in the Cabinet, their portfolios and services for which they were responsible, and the area of commitment which they would be dedicated to.

2 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Rob Appleyard declared an other interest in item 14 'RULE 15 Loan Request from Bath Festivals' as his neighbour was one of Bath Festival's principal officers.

5 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was none.

6 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

There were 6 questions from Councillors.

[Copies of the questions and responses, including supplementary questions and responses if any, have been placed on the Minute book and are available on the Council's website.]

7 STATEMENTS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

Neill Young (Moorland and Oldfield Clean Air – MOCA) read out a statement [*a copy of which available on the Council's website*] where he expressed his concerns on road safety and parking issues at Junction Road (B3111).

Councillor Joanna Wright said that she has been speaking with the relevant officers about road safety and parking issues not only at Junction Road, but also for other roads which were in a similar position. Councillor Wright said that it would not be possible to set traffic and safety improvements instantly, and that she would keep the residents up to date with the developments on this matter.

The Chair said that she would allow David Redgewell to address the Cabinet at a later point of the meeting.

NOTE: David Redgewell addressed the Cabinet after agenda item 13 Youth Justice Plan.

David Redgewell summed up his statement [*a copy of which is available on the Council's website*] by saying that the Council, together with the West of England Combined Authority, must deliver a Bus Strategy before finalising the Joint Spatial Plan.

The Chair thanked David Redgewell for his statement by saying that all comments would be taken on board by the relevant Cabinet Member. The Chair added that the funding had been set aside for the Bus Strategy.

8 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

There were none.

9 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

There were none.

10 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

The report was noted by the Cabinet.

11 REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2018/19

Councillor Richard Samuel thanked the Finance Team for their work in setting out the financial position of the Council.

Councillor Samuel introduced the report by saying that the document described the revenue and capital outturn for 2018/19, highlighting net revenue over budget position of £0.92m. The position has vastly improved through actions including a recruitment freeze that have been implemented during the financial year. The improvement has continued since the last report, which forecasted an over budget position of £3.21m based on monitoring for the year to December 2018, mainly due to improvements in income generation within Heritage Services, and a reduction in capital financing costs arising from the review of the capital programme and re-phasing of capital projects.

The 2018/19 approved budget has included the requirement for the delivery of £16.99m of savings. The final outturn position has included achievement of £13.58m or 80% of the savings target compared to 82% delivered in 2017/18. Savings items that were no longer deliverable in 2018/19 have been reviewed alongside other recurring budget pressures and have been incorporated into the financial planning assumptions for the 2019/20 budget. It was expected that delayed savings totalling £3.4m would be delivered in 2019/20.

Councillor Samuel highlighted the main areas of over/under budget; Adult Care, Health & Wellbeing (£0.983m under budget), Children & Young People (£1.761m over budget), Economy & Community Regeneration (£1.050m under budget), Transport & Environment (£0.813m over budget) and Finance & Efficiency (£0.058m under budget).

Councillor Richard Samuel moved the recommendations.

Councillor Dine Romero seconded the motion by saying that it was important to recognise that the Council finances have been suffering from continuous cuts in funding from the government.

Councillor Paul Crossley used this opportunity to highlight contributions from some of the services within his portfolio, in particular bereavement services, crematorium, cemetery, parks, libraries and heritage services.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to:

- 2.1 Note the revenue budget outturn over budget position of £0.92m for 2018/19 and the use of Revenue Budget Contingency to fund the overall shortfall;
- 2.2 Note that no carry forward requests are being put forward for approval;
- 2.3 Approve that all over budgets are written-off as an exception to the Budget Management Rules for 2018/19.
- 2.4 Note the revenue virements for 2018/19 reported for information in Appendix 2(i)
- 2.5 Note the reserve positions and the use of flexible capital receipts shown in paragraphs 3.14-3.16;
- 2.6 Note the outturn position of the 2018/19 capital programme in paragraph 3.22, and the funding outlined in paragraph 3.24;
- 2.7 Approve the capital rephasing and write-off of net underspends as listed in Appendix 3. This reflects the outturn spend position on projects against final budgets as detailed in Appendix 4(ii).

Councillor Richard Samuel said that this was a routine report. The Council's external borrowing as at 31st March 2019 totalled £226.1 million. The Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) as at 31st March 2019 was £300.7 million. The difference from actual borrowing has reflected self-investment of reserves and the savings from avoiding new borrowing was greater than interest rate achieved on investments. The overall outturn for Interest and Capital Financing Budget was underspent of £741K towards overall outturn of the Council. This reflected external interest savings from re-phasing of capital spend.

Councillor Samuel added that overall position has deteriorated since March this year, and that political uncertainty in the country could have an adverse impact on financial markets which could affect interest rates and ratings.

Councillor Samuel concluded his statement by expressing his concern that Brexit discussions have completely taken over the Parliament, and that no other business has taken place, which could have severe negative impact on Local Authorities.

Councillor Samuel moved the recommendations.

Councillor Dine Romero seconded the motion.

Councillor Sarah Warren queried if any of the Council's investments were with the funds invested in fossil fuel companies.

Councillor Samuel responded that, as far as he was aware, there were no investments in fossil fuel companies. Nevertheless, Councillor Samuel would ask the officer to add that information in the next report.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to:

2.1 The Treasury Management Report to 31st March 2019, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice, is noted.

2.2 The Treasury Management Indicators to 31st March 2019 are noted.

13 YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

Councillor Kevin Guy introduced the report by saying that Council has statutory duty to adopt the Youth Justice Plan although it would be a responsibility of the Youth Offending Service Management Board to ensure the delivery of the Plan. Councillor Guy invited the relevant Development and Scrutiny Panel to oversee the performance of the Youth Offending Service Management Board by inviting their members to one of their meetings.

Councillor Guy also said that youth crime was on the rise locally and nationally, and that there has been a serious issue of a small but increasing number of young people being groomed and exploited into offending (including via so-called 'county-lines').

Councillor Kevin Guy moved the recommendations.

Councillor Rob Appleyard seconded the motion by saying that the provision for the prevention of youth offending depends on national funding, which was now reduced

by 0.4%. Councillor Appleyard suggested that Police and Crime Commissioner Board should be more involved in supporting this work.

Councillor Paul Crossley said that in Southdown a number of young people who work with the Youth Offending Service undertook community reparation projects to help develop their understanding of the harm they have caused others and to make indirect amends. These projects included working with the Council Parks Department and community organisations to improve the environment and animal welfare.

Councillor Joanna Wright said that a venue such as Alice Park skateboard site was important for young people in terms of youth crime prevention.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet:

2.1 Agreed the Youth Justice Plan fulfils the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and can be submitted to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales;

2.2 Adopted the Youth Justice Plan as part of the Council's Policy and Budget Framework that can be accommodated within the Council budget;

2.3 Noted that the Youth Offending Service Management Board is responsible for ensuring delivery and ask the relevant Development and Scrutiny Panel to oversee performance.

14 RULE 15 LOAN REQUEST FROM BATH FESTIVALS

The Chair informed the meeting that part of this report has been marked as confidential. However, the Cabinet would debate this matter in public without addressing any points from confidential paper. If any of the Cabinet Members felt that they had to raise the points from the confidential papers, then the Chair would ask the public to vacate the meeting.

Councillor Richard Samuel introduced the report by saying that Bath Festivals has approached the Council for a loan of £75,000 to enable them to continue to implement their new business plan and continue to operate. The organisation needed to raise £300,000 of which it had pledges for £210,000 through a Charitable Investment Bond, plus an offer of a loan of £25,000 from a Charitable Trust but only if Bath and North East Somerset Council would agree to provide a £75,000 loan. Following an assessment of their financial position, the Council's Director of Finance has outlined that a more sustainable way forward would be to offer a one-off grant with conditions to support the group through the next three years. The conditions would enable B&NES to assist with improving the Festival's forward programming.

Councillor Richard Samuel moved the recommendations.

Councillor Dine Romero seconded the motion by saying that a one-off grant would be an investment into something that would be a benefit for the residents.

Councillor Paul Crossley welcomed the proposal and added that the first proposed condition in paragraph 3.3 of the report was quite important in terms of involving residents from all community groups. Council Crossley stressed that one-off grant, with conditions, would enable festival to become self-financed.

Councillor Tim Ball agreed with Councillor Crossley by saying that visiting audience would have to be wider, and the only way to achieve that would be in offering different music genre.

Councillor Richard Samuel welcomed the comment from Councillor Crossley that Bath Festivals should be self-financed and invited the Cabinet to agree with the additional recommendation which would read:

‘The Cabinet agree to receive an interim progress report from the Cabinet Member for Community Services by November 2019 to review the achievement of objectives set by the Council as a condition of the grant.’

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to:

2.1 Approve a conditional one-off grant of £75,000 to Bath Festivals from the Revenue Budget Contingency to ensure that the Council can assist with improving the community reach and accessibility for residents of the Bath Festivals Programme, as well as the profitability of the programme.

2.2 The conditions to be agreed by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

2.3 Receive an interim progress report from the Cabinet Member for Community Services by November 2019 to review the achievement of objectives set by the Council as a condition of the grant.

The meeting ended at 7.30 pm

Chair _____

Date Confirmed and Signed _____

Prepared by Democratic Services