

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

7 February 2017

Present: Councillor Humphreys in the Chair

Councillors Chambers, Farrell, Hayfield, Reilly, Simpson, M Stanley, Smith, Sweet and D Wright.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Phillips (Substitute Councillor Sweet).

Councillor Bell was also in attendance.

55 **Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

None were declared at the meeting.

56 **Public Participation**

Prior to the meeting, a series of questions was received from Donna Watts, Chairman of Stop the Build Action Group (Dordon/Polesworth) in respect of Borough's Draft Local Plan. In her absence, the Chairman read out the questions and his response is as set out below.

Question: Could the Leader of the Council please clarify: -

- a) **Why the Boroughs draft Local Plan now includes an additional 500 dwellings for Tamworth, 540 dwellings for Coventry and a further 3790 dwellings for Birmingham.**

Under the Duty to Co-operate the Borough Council has a duty to consider the needs of surrounding areas. Previously this was done by Regional Spatial Strategies over which we had very little say. The 500 units for Tamworth was agreed prior to the adoption of the Core Strategy and included in that document. It is being carried forward into the Draft Local Plan.

Coventry is not able to meet its housing need and therefore its shortfall had to be distributed to other places in the market area. The shortfall from Coventry is 17,800 of which we have agreed to take 540.

Similarly, Birmingham is not able to accommodate its housing need, a position that has existed for many years and used to be dealt with via the Regional Spatial Strategy. Their shortfall is 37,900 and we are looking at whether or not we can take 10% of that need.

All allocations from other areas are based on our economic and social relationships with those areas.

b) Whether there could be any changes to the total number of houses proposed in this DRAFT plan as a result of the consultation and recent judgement by a Planning Inspector on the Boroughs 5 year land supply?

The consultation process may highlight issues with sites that cannot be addressed and the total number of houses can only be changed if it can be proved that the Borough cannot physically accommodate those houses.

The judgment by the Planning Inspector in the Ansley case is not relevant to this. In his view we need to provide more housing sites than we currently have otherwise the Inspectorate will grant them for us.

c) How the Borough is expected to benefit from these developments in terms of economic and social regeneration and investment in our infrastructure?

There is a Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan which is on the agenda of this meeting which shows the areas that the Council will seek investment for and in some case sets out in detail what that infrastructure ask will be. A number of our areas have suffered from a lack of regeneration and investment linked to very limited numbers of new housing.

On a wider level, we need to remember that these figures are not invented by officials – they reflect the houses that our communities need. Everyone knows of people who cannot access the housing market, either through cost or availability, and the future economic and social interests of our communities, and the wider housing market we are part of, will be prejudiced if we do not provide the new houses and jobs they need.

d) The nature of any agreements signed by the Council has signed and whether these are publicly accessible e.g. on the website?

There is an Memorandum of Understanding signed with Tamworth BC and Lichfield DC dealing with the 500 units

https://www.northwarks.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/4729/draft_updated_memorandum_of_understanding_april_2013.doc

There is an agreed but yet to be signed MoU with Coventry & Warwickshire local planning authorities to deal with the 540 units

https://www.northwarks.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/1403/download_the_agenda_reports_and_appendices_2_-_280915

There is a signed MoU with BCC to test the delivery of 3790 from the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area.

https://www.northwarks.gov.uk/downloads/file/6561/memorandum_of_understanding_between_birmingham_city_council_and_nwbc

Davina Ridley presented the following question to the Board;

The Council's public consultation form for the Local Plan includes a section asking people for their views and comments on the Sustainability Assessment. Is the Council planning to summarise the main points from the Sustainability assessment so that it can be easily read and understood by members of the public and how will the Council make people aware that this report is now available?

The response from the Chairman of the Board was as follows;

There will be an executive summary of the sustainability assessment. This is written with the public in mind but this is a very technical area as the document has to meet strict legal tests. We intend to provide a further summary to help explain this as best we can. Staff will be available to take members of the public through the document.

With regard to how we will consult, this is set out in 5.2 of the report to this Board (page 15/3). We are open to considering any other requests to meet groups or consult in other ways. The Forward Planning team's contact details are on our website and they can be contacted with any queries about the documents.

57 Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 21 November 2016

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 21 November 2016, copies having been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

58 External Auditors' Annual Certification Report

The Deputy Chief Executive reported on the External Auditors' Annual Certification report.

Recommended:

That the contents of the External Auditors' report be noted.

59 **Corporate Plan 2017/18**

The Chief Executive presented the Corporate Plan for 2017/18. Members were also asked to agree the 2017/18 Forward Work Plan for the Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council.

Recommended:

- a **That the Corporate Plan Targets, as set out in the revised Appendix A circulated at the meeting, be agreed, subject to:-**
 - (i) **Any amendments recommended by the Safer Communities Sub-Committee at its meeting on 14 March 2017; and**
 - (ii) **Any further amendments which may be needed as a result of the adoption of the 2017-18 budget;**
- b **That the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of the Board be given delegated authority to finalise the format of the Plan; and**
- c **That the Service Plan for the Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be agreed.**

60 **The Capital Strategy**

The Assistant Director (Finance and Human Resources) presented an update on the Capital Strategy and the Board was asked to agree the suggested course of action.

Recommended:

That the Capital Strategy, attached as Appendix A to the report of the Assistant Director (Finance and Human Resources), be approved.

61 **The Proposed 3 Year Capital Programme 2017/18 – 2019/20**

Management Team put forward proposals for the Three Year Capital Programme and outlined the availability of capital resources.

Recommended:

- a **That the Revised Capital Programme for 2016/17 as set out in Appendix A, be adopted;**

- b That the 3 Year Capital Programme for the period 2017/18 to 2019/20 as set out in Appendix B, be adopted; and**
- c That the prudential indicators as set out in Appendix F to the report, be approved.**

62 General Fund Fees and Charges 2017 – 2018

The Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council reported on proposed fees and charges for 2017/18 and the Board was asked to agree a suggested course of action.

Recommended

That the schedule of fees and charges for 2017/18 as set out in Appendix A be abolished and officers be encouraged to provide materials electronically only (subject to their discretion to provide hard copies in exceptional circumstances).

63 General Fund Revenue Estimates 2017 – 2018

The Deputy Chief Executive reported on the revised budget for 2016/17 and an estimate of expenditure for 2017/18, together with forward commitments for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Recommended:

- a That the revised budget for 2015/16 be accepted; and**
- b That the Estimates of Expenditure for 2017/18, as submitted, be included in the budget to be brought before the meeting for consideration under Minute No. 64.**

64 General Fund Revenue Estimates 2017 – 2018 and Setting the Council Tax 2017 – 2018

The Deputy Chief Executive set out the proposed General Fund Revenue Estimate for 2017/18, and the options available when setting the 2017/18 Council Tax for the Borough in the context of the Authority's Revenue Support Grant settlement, and the effect on General Fund balances.

Recommended:

- a That the savings of £739,220 shown in Appendix I of the report of the Deputy Chief Executive be approved;**

- b That the revised estimate for the year 2016/17 and the revenue estimates for 2017/18 be approved;**
- c That the Council Tax base for 2017/18, as set out in Appendix G be noted;**
- d That the preferred Council Tax option for 2017/18 be agreed by Full Council;**
- e That the Deputy Chief Executive's comments on the minimum acceptable level of general reserves be noted;**
- f That the manpower estimates for the year 2017/18 be approved; and**
- g That a Council Tax resolution be prepared for consideration by the Council, using the recommendations agreed by this Board.**

65 Consultation on HS2 Phase 2b and Class Approvals for Phase 2

The Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council reported on two current consultations relating to HS2 and the Board was asked to agree a suggested way forward.

Resolved:

- a That the consultation responses in relation to the Phase 2b announcement be delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council in consultation with the HS2 Spokesperson and Shadow HS2 Spokesperson; and**
- b That subject to some minor changes to the Class Approvals, no objection is raised in relation to the Draft Class Approvals for para 4 of Schedule 17.**

66 Scheme of Delegation – Land Issues

The Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council sought approval for changes to the Constitution in respect of the scheme of delegation relating to land issues.

Recommended:

That the Assistant Director (Streetscape) and the Assistant Director (Housing) be given delegated powers to approve requests to rent Council land in respect of rental values below £1,000 per annum and to approve requests to grant licences to cross/utilise Council land and that the Constitution be amended accordingly.

67 Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan

The Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council reported on a revised Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan Strategy and the Board was asked to agree the suggested course of action.

Resolved:

- a That the Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan go out for consultation; and**
- b That the working group reconvenes as and when more details on subject areas become available.**

68 Progress Report on Achievement of Corporate Plan and Performance Indicator Targets April – December 2016

The Chief Executive informed Members of the progress with the achievement of the Corporate Plan and Performance Indicator targets relevant to the Executive Board for April to December 2016.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

69 Procurement and Commissioning Strategy 2017 - 2021

The Assistant Director (Corporate Services) presented the draft Procurement and Commissioning Strategy 2017 - 2021 to Members for approval.

Recommended:

That the draft Strategy provided at Appendix A1 to the report of the Assistant Director (Corporate Services) be approved.

70 Revised Child Protection Policy and Update on Child Protection Work

The Assistant Director (Leisure and Community Development) presented a revised Child Protection Policy and gave an update on child protection work undertaken over the last 12 months. Members were asked to approve the revised Policy.

Recommended:

- a That, subject to the inclusion of proposed amendments to the reporting flow chart, the revised Child Protection Policy, attached at Appendix A to the report of the Assistant Director (Leisure and Community Development), be adopted and implemented with immediate effect; and**

- b That the child protection work that has been undertaken over the last 12 months be noted.**

71 Minutes of the meeting of the Safer Communities Sub-Committee held on 6 December 2016

The minutes of the meeting of the Safer Communities Sub-Committee held on 6 December 2016 were received and noted.

David Humphreys
Chairman