

CABINET - 11 April 2019

MINUTES

Present: Councillors: R Sleigh OBE, I Courts, T Diccico, K Grinsell, R Hulland, K Meeson, T Richards OBE, A Rolf, J Tildesley, J Burn and G Slater

Officers: Nick Page, Deborah Merry, Andrew Kinsey, Sam Gilbert, Anne Brereton, Louise Rees, Karen Murphy, Sangeeta Leahy, Emma Tinsley-Evans, David Biss, Steve Eccleston, Martin Clayton and Jane Game

1. APOLOGIES

None received.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllrs Courts and Richards reminded Members they represented the Council on the North Solihull Regeneration Partnership Board in relation to item 13 on the agenda.

3. QUESTIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None received.

4. MINUTES

The private Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2019, were submitted for information.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2019 be received for information only.

5. DEFRA FUNDING FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A BUSINESS CASE CONSIDERING INTERVENTIONS TO IMPROVE AIR QUALITY

The Cabinet was provided with an update on the recently issued Ministerial Direction which required Solihull Council to develop a plan to reduce roadside nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) for a section of the A45, which had previously been identified by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) as potentially exceeding roadside NO₂ concentration limits as set out in the national air quality objectives. The stretch of the A45 affected was a short stretch from the M42 junction towards the airport.

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Cabinet approval was sought to accept £500,000 funding from 'The Joint Air Quality Unit' (a joint unit between DEFRA and the Department for Transport), to deliver the Ministerial Direction to develop a plan to bring forward compliance on the affected stretch of road in the shortest time possible, with a final plan submitted by 30th April 2020.

Members were reminded that on 17th January 2019, Cabinet approved the measures to deliver the Ministerial Direction requiring Solihull Council to take steps to implement measures and also approved the request to The Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) for revenue grant funding of £824,373 to enable delivery of the proposed measures within the required timeframe. The programme of measures was currently being implemented.

Subsequently in March 2019 DEFRA published their 2017 national modelling projections for NO₂ and identified that one of the road links where work was already being undertaken to reduce NO₂ as previously detailed, potentially had a longer term exceedance of the legal limit with projected compliance in 2024. As a result, a further legally binding direction had been issued to mandate Solihull Council to develop a plan to bring forward compliance in the shortest time possible.

The Direction required an initial plan by 31st July 2019 and a final plan to be submitted by 30th April 2020. The allocated funding of £500,000 from JAQU was to enable development of the plan in line with the guidance which would be provided by JAQU, and used to implement the plan.

Members on receiving the report noted that the work required under the first Ministerial Direction would continue, Members also noted that although there were no houses on identified stretch of road, there was a footpath hence the need for the work.

RESOLVED:

- (i) **That Cabinet approves the acceptance of the resource grant payment of £500,000 to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, to develop a local plan to bring forward compliance in the shortest time possible in line with the guidance which will be provided by JAQU; and**
- (ii) **That delegated responsibility for ensuring delivery of the Ministerial Direction be given to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Housing.**

6. KNOWLE, DORRIDGE AND BENTLEY HEATH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REFERENDUM RESULT

Cabinet was invited to agree that the Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Plan be 'made' following a successful referendum.

Members were advised that a referendum was held on 19 March 2019 and

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the regulations required that if the majority of those who voted in the referendum were in favour of the neighbourhood plan, then the neighbourhood plan must be 'made' (i.e. formally adopted as part of the statutory development plan for the Borough) by the Local Planning Authority within 8 weeks.

The Neighbourhood Area had an electorate of 14,781 and turnout was 35.66%. The referendum result showed clear support for the Neighbourhood Plan with a total of 5056 votes cast in favour and 207 votes against. This equated to 96% voting 'yes and 4% voting 'no". The regulations set out that a neighbourhood plan came into force as part of the statutory development plan immediately after it had been approved at referendum, whether it was 'made' or not. However, it needed to be formally 'made' by the local planning authority within 8 weeks hence the report to Cabinet.

Members welcomed the report, noting that this was the first Plan not to be generated by a parish council, and Members recognised the work that the local community had put in to the process. Members also wanted to thank Officers for the support they had provided to the local community as well.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the result of the Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Plan Referendum held on 14 March 2019 be noted;
- (ii) That as a result of a successful referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan now forms part of the Borough's statutory Development Plan be noted; and
- (iii) That it be agreed that accordance with the statutory requirements, the Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Plan be formally 'made'.

7. SOLIHULL GREEN PROSPECTUS –PROGRESS REPORT

The Cabinet was invited to consider the progress of the Council's 18/19 Green Prospectus and invited to approve the Green Prospectus Progress Report.

The Cabinet Member for Managed Growth introduced the report and provided both background and context as set out in the report. The report was provided to update on previously approved actions using an approved format and governance framework.

The progress report illustrated the wide variety of projects that were being delivered across all of the sustainability themes. It was important that all themes were advanced in order to ensure overall sustainability was delivered and to avoid one sustainability theme being advanced at the expense of others.

On receiving the report a view was expressed that the targets detailed in the Prospectus were not challenging enough, that in comparison to other local

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authorities the Council was not doing as well as it thought and there was a lack of detail around working with partners. Members supported the approach being taken which was one of an incremental approach which was sustainable and measurable and right for the Borough. Members acknowledged that there was more that needed to be done, and they were committed to progressing the work in a sustainable way.

RESOLVED:

That the progress of the Green Prospectus be noted and that the Progress Report be approved.

8. PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSED NEW CHILDREN'S MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS (REPORT TO FOLLOW)

The Cabinet was provided with a report introducing the proposal for the children's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Solihull, which replaced the current Solihull Local Safeguarding Children Board in line with changes introduced by the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

Members were advised that Children and Social Work Act 2017 had brought about significant change to local children's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The Act amended certain safeguarding provisions within the Children Act 2004 by removing the statutory requirement for areas to have Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB's).

There was now a requirement for the safeguarding partners (which were the local authority, chief officer for police and the local clinical commissioning group for the area) to make arrangements to safeguard children and promote their welfare within their area. Additionally, the safeguarding partners needed to name relevant agencies that they considered appropriate to work with in exercising their functions, and those named agencies then had a duty to co-operate.

The legislative changes introduced a great degree of flexibility as to how the three safeguarding partners achieved these responsibilities. The report provided further detail regarding the new arrangements and the fact that the Council had worked closely with the DfE as an early adopter, of the new arrangements.

The reasons for the preferred option for the future multi-agency children's safeguarding delivery included;

- **It provided for a more 'learning focused' and flexible approach to improving children's safeguarding arrangements in Solihull;**
- **It retained the engagement of Solihull partners within the arrangements;**

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- **It retained the strengths of the current Solihull Local Safeguarding Children Board arrangements (for example the multi-agency audit process and training offer);**
- **It focused activity on the delivery of improvements in line with the partners' safeguarding priorities;**
- **It had a robust independent scrutiny framework;**
- **It was compliant with the legislative requirements of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children – July 2018'; and**
- It delivered all of the above within the agreed multi-agency funding arrangements for the current Solihull Local Safeguarding Children Board.

On receiving the report Members sought a number of reassurances around the robustness of the independence of independent chairman, the scrutiny function and information sharing, all of which were vital to the success of safeguarding children. Officers were able to provide Members with these assurances.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed future children's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Solihull be supported.

9. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS – INVESTMENT REVIEW 2018/19

The Cabinet was provided with an update on economic conditions in Solihull, specifically the investment trends for 2018/19, as a key indicator of economic health and an identified priority for the regional devolution agenda.

Members were advised that full year for 2018/19 showed that whilst enquiries were slightly down compared to the same period in 2017/18 investments and jobs were up. The slow down in new enquiries could indicate some nervousness in the property market in the short term, but it was also showing that companies who had been looking in the medium/longer term were continuing with their investment plans and making a commitment to remain, expand or relocate to Solihull.

The report went on to detail trends from a national, regional and Solihull perspective.

Members welcomed the report and noted that in difficult times, the Council's strategy around UKC was reaping rewards, by creating the required conditions for growth.

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RESOLVED:

That the investment trends and their implications for the delivery of Managed Growth be noted.

10. LEADER'S STATEMENT

At the conclusion of the public meeting the Leader confirmed that he would be stepping down as Leader of the Council at the end of the municipal year. He expressed his thanks to his Cabinet for their support and the Chief Officers and Officers of the Council who worked tirelessly for the benefit of the Borough.

The Leader also thanked Cllr Robert Hlland, the Cabinet Member for Resources and Delivering Value who was not standing for re-election on to the Council, for all of his work as a Cabinet Member and as a ward Councillor.

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED:

That, pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting for the remainder of the business to be transacted, on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information in terms of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the said Act.

12. MINUTES

13. LAND AT DAMSON PARKWAY, SOLIHULL

14. FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE NORTH SOLIHULL REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP

7.30 pm