

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Cabinet** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Wednesday 6 February 2013 at 10.00 am**

Present:

Councillor S Henig (in the Chair)

Cabinet Members:

Councillors Foster, Hovvels, Nicholls, Plews, Robson, Stephens, Vasey and B Young.

Also present:

Councillors Armstrong, Arthur, Blakey, Boyes, Graham, Martin, R Ord, Shuttleworth, D J Southwell, Stradling, Tomlinson, Turnbull, Andy Turner, Wilkes and Williams.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Napier.

1 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Plews declared an interest in item 4, as Vice Chairman of Durham City Homes.

2 General Fund Medium Term Financial Plan, 2013/14 - 2016/17 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2013/14 Key Decision CORP/A/10/12/1

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director Resources and Assistant Chief Executive which provided comprehensive financial information to enable a 2013/14 balanced revenue budget to be agreed. It further outlined the medium term financial plan for 2014/15 to 2016/17 and a fully funded capital programme for recommendation to the County Council on 20 February 2013 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Corporate Director, Resources reported on the additional funding that the Authority had been advised would be received from the Government, and that the report to Council would be amended to reflect this. In addition, he reported that there was uncertainty as to whether the Authority was to receive additional funding due to its rural nature, and that the position would be clarified.

The Leader confirmed that if any additional funding was received for its rural nature this would be earmarked for the contingency fund and used for flood prevention.

Councillor J Armstrong, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board advised that the Board together with Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the budget proposals in detail, and was confident that 2013/14 is a balanced budget, had been managed extremely well, and protects front line services. He advised that they would continue to work with Cabinet and officers on the significant challenges ahead.

Cabinet members spoke on the level of cuts that the Authority is receiving from the Government, and of the difficult decisions that the Council is required to make as a result, and that despite this there were some positive elements within the recommendations including council tax bills remaining unchanged, investment in the capital programme, protecting front line services, and new customer access points. Officers and members were congratulated on the work undertaken to bring forward the proposals in such a short timescale, with the final settlement only being announced at the end of December.

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

**3 Contract Award for the Digital Durham Programme
Key Decision CORP/R/13/01**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Resources which sought approval for delegated authority to be granted to the Corporate Director, Resources to award the Digital Durham contract for the provision of superfast broadband in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder, Resources (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

**4 Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Plan 2013/14 to 2016/17
and 2013/14 Budget**

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director, Resources and Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic Development which sought approval of the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA), Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2013/14 to 2016/17 and the 2013/14 budget (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

5 Council Plan and Service Plans 2013-2017

The Cabinet considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which presented the Council Plan for 2013/17 prior to being submitted to Council for approval on 20 February 2013 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

6 Overview and Scrutiny Review of Road Safety for Children and Young People

The Cabinet considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which presented the findings from the scrutiny review of Road Safety with a focus on Children and Young People (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor D Boyes, Chairman of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee presented the report to Cabinet, and provided detail on the scope of the review and its findings.

Cabinet members thanked the scrutiny group for the review work, and would provide a response to their findings in line with the recommendations in the report.

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

7 County Durham Partnership Update Report

The Cabinet considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the issues being addressed by the County Durham Partnership (CDP) including summaries from the Board, the five Thematic Partnerships and all Area Action Partnerships (AAPs). The report also included updates on other key initiatives being carried out across the County (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be noted.