

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Cabinet** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Wednesday 11 September 2013 at 10.00 a.m.**

Present:

Councillor S Henig (Leader of the Council) in the Chair

Members of Cabinet:

Councillors J Brown, N Foster, L Hovvels, O Johnson, A Napier M Nicholls, M Plews, B Stephens and E Tomlinson

Other members:

Councillors B Armstrong, J Armstrong, A Batey, D Bell, J Clare, P Conway, M Dixon, B Graham, J Gray, P Stradling, A Surtees, O Temple, R Todd and M Wilkes

The Leader confirmed the arrangements relating to the public question and answer session prior to every ordinary Cabinet meeting, which in addition to taking questions from members of the public, would also receive questions from the public made through the AAPs. Each AAP would get an opportunity to pose questions to Cabinet throughout the year on a rota basis.

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest

3 Review of School Crossing Patrol Service Key Decision: NS/20/13

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services which summarised a review of the School Crossing Patrol (SCP) Service and recommended the removal of lunchtime provision where it is known that children no longer use the crossing facilities during the lunchtime period. The report also recommended that the existing SCP policy, agreed following a review of the SCP service in 2008, is retained (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

4 Proposal to change the age range of Ouston Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1st January 2014 to create a Primary School and to close Ouston Infant School from 31st December 2013
Key Decision: CAS/02/13

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services which sought approval to change the age range of Ouston Junior School from 7- 11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2014 to create a Primary School, and to close Ouston Infant School from 31 December 2013 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

5 Welfare reform update and review of Local Council Tax Support Scheme
Key Decision: CORP/R/13/03

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Assistant Chief Executive, Corporate Director, Resources and Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic development which updated Cabinet on recent policy developments relating to the government's welfare reforms, the council's response and the expected impact on the county. The report also considered a review of the council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme and the requirement to agree the council's approach to Local Council Tax Support for 2014/15 as well as an early operational review of the Welfare Assistance Scheme and the Discretionary Housing Payments policy, which had been in place since 1 April 2013 (for copy see file of minutes).

Members discussed at length the issues relating to the welfare reform agenda, and were extremely concerned at the effect on County Durham with research showing that the county would lose £188m from its economy due to the changes, and the loss per adult was significantly more than the average loss. The measures put in place would continue to be monitored and the implications of the agenda would be responded to as required.

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

6 Quarter 1 2013/14 Performance Management Report

The Cabinet considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which presented progress against the council's corporate basket of performance indicators (PIs) and

other significant performance issues for the first quarter of 2013/14 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

7 Update on the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan 3

The Cabinet considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the progress made at the end of June 2013 on the delivery of the 2013/14 to 2016/17 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP 3) (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

8 Implications for Durham County Council of the Government's policy programme

The Cabinet considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided the most recent update on the major policy developments and announcements, and analysed the implications for the council and County Durham (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

9 Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2013/14 for General Fund and Housing Revenue Account - Period to 30 June 2013 and Medium Term Financial Plan 4 Update

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Resources which provided a forecast of 2013/14 revenue and capital outturn for the period to 30 June 2013 for the Council's General Fund and Housing Revenue Account and provided an update on the Medium Term Financial Plan 2014/15 to 2016/17 - MTFP 4 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

10 Digital Durham Programme Update and High Level Deployment Plan

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Resources, which provided an update of the Digital Durham superfast broadband programme's progress and built upon previous reports to Cabinet dated 14 December 2011 and 6 February 2013. It sought approval for the Programme's high level Deployment Plan which had been drawn up in consultation with British Telecom, the strategic delivery partner (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor Wilkes who in welcoming the report asked for assistance for those residents in Finchale Abbey who were just outside of the boundaries of the current plan. Councillor J Brown advised that BT Open Reach believe they had this covered, and although Finchale was outside the intervention area the Authority would continue to try and resolve this as they are committed to getting superfast broadband to as many properties as possible.

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

11 Lamplight Centre, Stanley

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development and Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services which sought approval to let the Lamplight Centre, Stanley on a 35 year lease to Stanley Town Council (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.