

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

At a Meeting of **Cabinet** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Wednesday 16 July 2014 at 10.00 am**

### **Present:**

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

### **Cabinet Members:**

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

### **Other Members:**

Councillors C Carr, J Clare, M Dixon, O Gunn, J Shuttleworth, M Simmons, T Smith, A Surtees, M Wilkes and M Williams

### **1 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **2 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3 Housing Stock Transfer: Outcomes of Formal Consultation - Stage 1 Key Decision: R&ED/07/14**

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development, and Corporate Director, Resources which sought to advise on the outcomes of the first stage of formal consultation on the council's transfer proposal (for copy see file of minutes).

Joyce Lovack (Chair of the Stock Transfer Customer Working Group), and Sam Woodrow, a tenant and former Chairman of the Stock Transfer Steering Group, advised of their involvement in progressing with the proposed stock transfer, and support for the proposals.

Cabinet members asked that their thanks and appreciation of the work undertaken by the Stock Transfer Steering Group, and Stock Transfer Customer Working Group be relayed to those involved. They expressed their thanks also to Cllr E Tomlinson for progressing with this, and to Clive Robson, former Cabinet portfolio

holder for housing for the work undertaken while in his remit, and the officers who had been involved.

**Resolved:**

That the recommendations contained within the report be agreed.

**4 Adoption of North Pennines AONB Management Plan  
Key Decision: R&ED/11/14**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development which provided detail on the review of the latest Management Plan for the North Pennines AONB which would guide the management of its protected landscapes for the period 2014-19, and was presented to Cabinet for adoption (for copy see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the recommendations contained within the report be agreed.

**5 Customer First Strategy Refresh 2014-2017  
Key Decision: NS/22/13**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services which provided detail on the results of the consultation process for a new Customer First Strategy for the Council and sought agreement on the Strategy for 2014-2017 (for copy see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the recommendations contained within the report be agreed.

**6 Proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7 - 11 to 4 - 11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014  
Key Decision CAS/01/14**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Children and Adult Services which sought approval to change the age range of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014, taking account of the Local Authority's duties as prescribed in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to secure sufficient school places, and to secure good outcomes for all children and young people in their local area (for copy see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the recommendations contained within the report be agreed.

**7 Draft Corporate Tree Management Policy**

**Key Decision: NS/25/13**

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director Neighbourhood Services, and Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic Development which sought agreement of the draft countywide tree policy for the management of all trees under Durham County Council's ownership which pose a safety risk to the public highway (for copy see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the recommendations contained within the report be agreed.

**8 Medium Term Financial Plan (5), Council Plan, Service Plans 2015/16 - 2017/18 and Review of the Council's Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme**

**Key Decision: CORP/R/14/02**

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director, Resources and Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the development of the 2015/16 budget, the Medium term Financial Plan (MTFP(5)) and Council Plan / Service Plans 2015/16 – 2017/18 and a review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, which has been in place since 1 April 2013 (for copy see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the recommendations contained within the report be agreed.

**9 Treasury Management Outturn 2013/14**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Resources which provided an update with the annual treasury management report for the year ended 31 March 2014 (for copy see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**10 2013/14 Final Outturn for General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Collection Fund**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Resources which provided details of the revenue and capital outturn for both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2013/14, and also provided the outturn for the Collection Fund in respect of Council Tax collection and Business Rates collection (for copy see file of minutes).

Cabinet members referred to the robust financial planning that was in place with service groupings being well organised and managed in meeting their savings targets.

**Resolved:**

That the recommendations contained in the report be agreed.

**11 Transfer of Land Held in Trust at Peases West, Crook**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development which sought approval for the disposal of an area of land held on trust by the Council at Peases West, Crook to Crook Community Leisure (for copy see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the recommendations contained within the report be approved.

**12 World War 1 Centenary Activity: Victoria Cross Winner's Commemorative Paving Stone Project**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services which outlined the Council's involvement in delivering the Department of Communities and Local Government's Victoria Cross Winner Commemorative Paving Stone Project and proposed a process by which the permanent location of paving stones would be determined (for copy see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the recommendations contained within the report be agreed.

**13 Durham County Council's Festivals and Events Programme Development**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services which reviewed the current position regarding the Council's involvement with festivals and events and to provide a framework to ensure best use of existing

resources to create a vibrant and diverse programme of events and festivals (for copy see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the recommendations contained in the report be agreed.

**14 Lumiere 2015**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services which informed Cabinet of the evaluation of the 2013 Lumiere festival and to consider whether a similar event should be held in 2015 (for copy see file of minutes).

Cabinet members referred to the success of the previous events held in Durham which had brought much media attention, and national recognition, and that the holding of a further event would bring substantial benefits for Durham.

**Resolved:**

That the recommendations contained within the report be agreed.

**15 Dog Control Order - Seasonal Exclusion of Dogs from Seaham Beach**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods which set out proposals for the making of a Dog Control Order which would prohibit dogs from Seaham Beach for the summer months (1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September) with effect from 2015 onwards (for copy see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the recommendations contained in the report be agreed.

**16 County Durham Youth Justice Plan 2014/16**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Children and Adult Services which presented the County Durham Youth Justice Plan 2014-16 for information, prior to full Council approval being sought on 23 July 2014, before submission to the Youth Justice Board (for copy see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted

## 17 **Review of Children's Centres in County Durham**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services which set out the details of a review of the current service delivery model in view of the new Early Years Strategy and the role / requirement of Children's Centre buildings to deliver improved outcomes (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor Wilkes in advising of his support for the proposals expressed his disappointment that members from the other political groups and not just the majority group had been consulted, and questioned whether there were plans to liaise with neighbouring authorities in providing the service.

He suggested that if there was to be a restructuring it may be better to consider the right location rather than having one in each of the 16 cluster areas.

In response Councillor Johnson, advised that there are 43 existing buildings which have been analysed in great detail on a range of data, and that the proposal is to retain children centres services that will improve outcomes for children. He explained that from a managerial and operational position the cluster areas relate to more than children's centres, giving examples of communities for learning, youth pass, and family workers.

The Corporate Director advised that they do have discussions with other authorities in the north east, however an Ofsted inspection in County Durham would relate to that area solely, and the service would concentrate its resources in its own area.

Councillor Johnson advised that the current service had not reached all those that needed it most, and a revised service would need to be easier to access.

Other Cabinet members welcomed the review as there is need to provide a better service, members would listen to the views expressed in the consultation, and hopefully transform the service.

### **Resolved:**

That the recommendations contained within report be agreed.