

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Cabinet** held in **Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham** on **Wednesday 17 December 2014 at 10.00 am**

Present:

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

Members of Cabinet:

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

Also Present:

Councillors J Armstrong, J Clare, P Conway, M Dixon, O Gunn, S Guy, A Hopgood, J Shuttleworth, A Surtees, R Todd and M Wilkes

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Medium Term Financial Plan (5), Council Plan and Service Plans 2015/16-2017/18 and Council Tax Base for 2015/16 [Key Decision: CORP/R/14/02]

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director, Resources and the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the 2015/16 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan MTFP (5) and sought approval for the Council Tax base position for 2015/16 and Council Plan and Service Plans 2015/16 to 2017/18 (for copy see file of minutes).

Cabinet members commented that the level of cuts already imposed is unprecedented in local government, and emphasised the impact it would have if the further significant and deeper level of cuts were to come as predicted in the next parliament. Cabinet members commented on the excellent work undertaken by officers on budget and MTFP, including the accurate forecasting by finance colleagues.

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

4 Quarter 2 2014/15 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 and reported other significant performance issues for the second quarter of 2014/15 covering the period July to September 2014 (for copy see file of minutes).

Members commented that despite the scale of cuts made to the authority, that it was extremely commendable for the authority to perform as it is, and that the statistics were a credit to all including the authority's partners.

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

5 Update on the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan 4

The Cabinet considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on progress made at the end of September 2014 on the delivery of the 2014/15 to 2016/17 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP 4) (for copy see file of minutes).

Cabinet members noted that to date £130m in savings had been achieved, and staff were thanked across the authority for their contribution in continuing to provide such a high level of service in these difficult times.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

6 Welfare reform and poverty issues

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Assistant Chief Executive, the Corporate Director, Resources, and, the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development which outlined how the Council is responding to welfare reforms and poverty issues in the County (for copy see file of minutes).

Cabinet members welcomed the paper which provided more detailed information to previous reports as the scope of the welfare reform work had been broadened. They noted the measures being taken and were extremely concerned at the effect that the governments agenda was having on residents in county Durham. The Authority would continue to help as many residents as it could, and would continue to monitor the position.

Resolved:

That the recommendation contained in the report be approved.

7 County Durham Drug Strategy 2014-2017

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services which presented the first County Durham Drug Strategy 2014-2017 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

8 Transfer of 0-5 Commissioning Responsibilities for Health Visitors and Family Nurse Partnership

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services which provided an update on the progress regarding the transfer of 0-5 commissioning responsibilities (health visitors and family nurse partnership) to local government (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

9 Review of Current Policy on 20 mph Zones and Limits

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services, the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development and the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services which assessed the effectiveness of 20mph speed zones and limits within the County and recommended options for future policy (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor Wilkes, in welcoming the measures to be implemented advised that he had numerous concerns about the criteria that had been used to calculate the 33 schools. These included the computer based system used to prepare the data appeared inaccurate, as the calculation had been taken from the postcode location rather than the entrance or exit of the building, giving the example that due to this some of the colleges should have been included.

Councillor J Armstrong, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board advised that a working group set up through the Safer and Stronger Scrutiny Committee would look at all the issues and feed into the consultation. He welcomed Councillor Wilkes' participation in the group.

Councillor Stephens advised that the report was the starting point of the review, and welcomed the comments to be input as part of the consultation, which included local members, AAPs, governing bodies and community residents associations.

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.