

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Cabinet** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Wednesday 7 May 2014 at 10.00 am**

Present:

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

Members of Cabinet:

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

Other Members

Councillors J Armstrong, J Blakey, J Clare, R Crute, K Dearden, M Dixon, J Gray, J Hart, K Hopper, A Surtees and R Todd

Apologies:

An apology for absence was received from Councillor L Hovvels

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 April were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2 Declarations of interest

Councillors Plews, and Tomlinson, declared an interest in items 3 and 4, due to their position on the Shadow Housing Board. They took no part in the discussion and withdrew for that part of the meeting.

3 Housing Stock Transfer Offer Document Key Decision R&ED/06/14

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development and Corporate Director, Resources which sought approval of the Council's proposed Offer Document to begin formal consultation with the Council's secure and introductory tenants on the transfer proposals (for copy see file of minutes).

The Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development advised of an amendment to recommendation 2 in that delegated authority be given to the Corporate Director for Regeneration and Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Resources, and Economic Regeneration.

Joyce Lovack (Chair of the Stock Transfer Customer Working Group), John Grantham (Vice 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 also expressed their thanks to Cllr E Tomlinson for progressing this, and to Clive Robson, former Cabinet portfolio holder for housing for the work he undertook while in his remit, and the officers who had been involved.

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report, with the amendment to recommendation 2 as detailed above, be approved.

**4 Future of the Housing Repairs and Maintenance Direct Labour Organisation
Key Decision R&ED/05/14**

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development and Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services which set out proposals for the transfer of the Council's Durham Housing Maintenance Direct Labour Organisation (DLO), currently providing the repairs and maintenance function to Durham City Homes (the Council's in-house provider), to the new County Durham Housing Group should the large scale voluntary transfer of the Council's housing stock take effect in March 2015 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

5 Hitachi Rail Europe

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development which provided background to the project's development and future plans, along with a context of other significant projects in strategic companies in County Durham, the contribution of inward investment to the County's economic prosperity, and potential issues in skills that might need to be addressed to ensure that County Durham is a top location for business (for copy see file of minutes).

Cabinet members welcomed the report, and that this development was good news for the county.

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

6 Non Residential Car Parking Standards

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development which set out the background to parking standards used by the County Council for non-residential development and proposed a change to the current guidance for developers. The new guidance would also be incorporated in to the emerging County Durham Plan together with residential parking standards approved in 2013 and adopted as Council Policy (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendation contained in the report be approved.

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

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

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

8 County Durham Partnership Update

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 key issues from the Board, the five thematic partnerships and all area action partnerships (AAPs). The report further included updates on other key initiatives being carried out in partnership across the county (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

9 Impact of public sector funding and policy changes on the economy of County Durham

The Cabinet considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which presented the findings and recommendations of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members' Reference Group looking at the impact of public sector funding and policy changes of the economy of County Durham (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor R Crute, Chairman of the Chairman of the Economy and Enterprise 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.

10 NHS and Public Health Reform

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services, and Director of Public Health County Durham which provided an update on recent developments related to NHS and public health reform since the last report which was presented on 22 January 2014 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

11 Ofsted Single Inspection Framework for Children's Services

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director, Children and Adult Services which provided details on the new Ofsted Single Inspection Framework (SIF) for Children Services (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.