

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Cabinet** held in **The Main Hall, The Glebe Centre, Murton, Seaham, Co. Durham, SR7 9BX** on **Wednesday 7 February 2018** at **10.00 am**

Present:

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

Cabinet Members:

Councillors J Brown, O Gunn, L Hovvels, O Johnson, C Marshall, A Napier, K Shaw and B Stephens

Apologies:

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J Allen

Also Present:

Councillors J Blakey, J Clare, K Corrigan, S Dunn and M McKeon

1 Public Questions

There were no public questions.

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 to 2021/22 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2018/19 [Key Decision: CORP/R/17/02]

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Resources and the Director of Transformation and Partnerships which provided comprehensive financial information to enable Cabinet to make recommendations to full Council to agree the 2018/19 balanced revenue budget, an outline Medium Term Financial Plan MTFP(8) 2018/19 to 2021/22 and a fully funded capital programme. The report also included a review of the Council's Discretionary Rates Relief and Business Rates Hardship Relief Policy and set out details of the mainstream primary and secondary funding formula for schools in 2018/19 (for copy see file of minutes).

In presenting the report the Corporate Director of Resources advised that the figures based in it were on the provisional settlement, and that as details of the final settlement had only been released yesterday any final adjustments would be reflected in the report for full council consideration. He pointed out that there had been late notification of one-off adult social care funding for 2018/19, and confirmation was awaited of individual local authority allocations. The Corporate Director thanked the staff, colleagues and members for their assistance in bringing this report together.

Cabinet members commented on the scale of the funding cuts that had already been made, and that it was anticipated that austerity would continue well into the next decade. Durham had already made savings of £209m, and was still estimated to make at least a further £44m. The unfairness in the distribution of the funding continued for Durham in comparison to other authorities, and this impacted on Durham's spending power. It was pointed out that once again finding these savings was increasingly difficult, and all efforts were being made to protect front line services as far as possible.

It was disappointing that there was no additional funding for children's social care, or funding the local government pay award which if accepted would represent a significant increase in the pay bill. Although the late notification of one-off funding for adult social care was welcomed it was not recurring beyond 2018/19.

Details of the government's increase in the council tax referendum limit to 3% to reflect cost pressures were noted and that the core spending power figures quoted by government assumed that all council's increased council tax up to this new limit in 2018/19 and 2019/20. Published government figures for 2018/19 also assumed that the Adult Social Care precept would increase by 3% however Cabinet members noted that Durham were proposing a 2% increase.

Public consultation on the budget and council tax was undertaken with over 3,000 people being engaged in the process, and almost 80% of those providing views believed the councils approach to making savings was reasonable. The feedback from overview and scrutiny was welcomed and all were thanked for their input.

Cabinet members thanked officers for another year of accurately forecasting, and diligent planning, and thanked the members and officers who had input into the process.

Resolved:

Upon a recorded vote being taken a unanimous vote in favour of the recommendations detailed in the report, subject to final adjustments to reflect the final settlement, being recommended for full council approval was reached by Cabinet members.

5 School Admission Arrangements for Academic Year 2019/2020, and Proposed changes to the oversubscription criteria for admission to Community and Voluntary Controlled Nursery Schools and Nursery Units from 1 September 2018 [Key Decision: CYPS/02/17]

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services which sought approval of the proposed oversubscription criteria for admission to Community and Voluntary Controlled Nursery Schools and Nursery Units from 1 September 2018 to take account of the council's statutory duty to provide 30 hours free childcare per week for entitled 3 and 4 year olds; and requested that Cabinet consider and approve the proposed admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the 2019/20 academic year (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations in the report be approved.

6 Proposal to Change the Age Range of Bowburn Junior School from 7-11 to 3-11 From 1 September 2019 in an Enlarged New Build to Create a Primary School and to close Bowburn Infant and Nursery School as a registered school on 31 August 2019 [Key Decision: CYPS/03/17]

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Service which sought approval to change the age range of Bowburn Junior School from 7-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2019 in an enlarged new build to create a Primary School and to close Bowburn Infant and Nursery School as a registered school on 31 August 2019, taking account of the Local Authority's duties as prescribed in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to secure sufficient places, and to ensure good outcomes for all children and young people in this local area (for copy see file of minutes).

In response to a question from Cllr Mckean, Councillor Gunn commented on the impact that the new primary school and its facilities in Bowburn would have on the wider community.

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

7 Regulation 7 Direction - Proposals to restrict Letting Boards in areas of high number student properties

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services which requested Cabinet to authorise the Head of Planning and Assets to make a proposal to the Secretary of State under Regulation 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 for a

Direction which would operate to withdraw deemed consent for the display of Letting Boards within the Durham City Conservation Area (for copy of report see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendation in the report be approved.