

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Cabinet** held in **Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham** on **Wednesday 16 May 2018** at **10.00 am**

Present:

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

Cabinet Members:

Councillors J Allen, 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 Brown

Also Present:

Councillors J Clare, S Dunn, D Hall, B Kellett, H Liddle and C Martin

1 Public Questions

A question had been received from Mr Jones in advance of the meeting, however as he was not present a written response would be provided.

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Proposal to close the Sherburn Hill site of Sherburn Primary School on 31 August 2018 [Key Decision: CYPS/06/17]

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services which sought approval to close the Sherburn Hill site of Sherburn Primary School on 31 August 2018, 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 the local area (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor B Kellett, local county councillor, and Ms SA Brown spoke on behalf of affected members of the community against the closure of the site.

In highlighting their reasons they emphasised that the closure of the site at Sherburn Hill would have a devastating effect on community life in the village, an alternative use of the building as a community building would be too expensive to run, how well the school had been performing, and the effect on the children and families on making the journey to the other site 1.4 miles away on a busy main road which would add to the parking difficulties at the one site for pick up and drop off. Councillor Kellett asked that if the site was to close that free transport be provided.

In response Councillor Gunn, portfolio holder advised that the alternative use of the site could not be considered until a decision had been made about the school, that there is a school transport policy which applies to all schools, and explained how the policy applied in this situation. She understood their concerns however in explaining the reasoning for supporting the closure which would see an improvement in education provision and unity in having one site, pointed out that the numbers at the school had reduced substantially, and it was under pressure financially. She pointed out that no alternatives had been put forward during the consultation, and that she had given this much consideration.

Other Cabinet members spoke of their support and reasoning for the closure, and all had carefully considered the factors as identified in the report.

Resolved:

That the recommendations in the report be approved.

5 Children and Young People's Services Update: Education Attainment and Standards 2017 – Secondary School Outcomes

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services which provided Cabinet with a summary of educational outcomes in County Durham 2017, with a particular focus on KS4 as a priority area for intervention and improvement (for copy see file of minutes).

Cabinet members spoke of the excellent achievements, and offered their congratulations to the pupils, and schools. This showed a strong and improving picture for Durham, and that the challenges faced by a change in national curriculum, which had been difficult for areas such as Durham, being overcome.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

6 Review of Special Guardianship Policy and Procedure – Assessment, Provision and Review of Support Services

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services which, further to the review of the Special Guardianship Policy and Procedures during 2017, sought to provide Cabinet with an overview of the proposed changes and the actions undertaken to ensure the assessed needs of children/young people subject to a Special Guardianship Order are met and there is compliance with the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005. The report also highlighted the importance of providing a consistent and timely method of reviewing support, and, ensuring Special Guardians and children/young people, subject to a Special Guardianship Order, have the appropriate access to a wide range of services and support (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

7 Public Health and Children and Young People's Services Update: Best Start in Life

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services and the Director of Public Health which provided an update on national and local developments with regard to giving every child the best start in life (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

8 First World War Centenary Signature Commemorative Programme

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services which outlined the proposed programme of events and activities taking place across the County in commemoration of the end point in the First World War (for copy of report see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

9 Update on North East Combined Authority Delegated Transport Activity

The Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services which provided an update on transport activity carried out by the Council under delegation from the North East Combined Authority (NECA) (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

10 Overview and Scrutiny Review, Cybercrime

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Transformation and Partnerships which presented the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee review report on Cybercrime (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor H Liddle, Vice Chairman of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Chairman of the Working Group presented the report to Cabinet, and provided detail on the scope of the review and its findings. She thanked Members, officers, partners, and everyone who had been part of the working group.

Cabinet Members thanked Councillor Liddle and asked that their thanks be conveyed to 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.

11 Exclusion of the public

Resolved:

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

12 Commercial Development Opportunity in the County

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services and Corporate Director of Resources which requested approval for a commercial development opportunity in the County (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor C Marshall responded to a question from Councillor C Martin.

Resolved:

That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.