

**DECISIONS SHOULD NOT BE IMPLEMENTED BEFORE  
TUESDAY 18 APRIL 2017**

**CABINET  
4 April 2017**

**PRESENT** – Councillor Dixon (in the Chair); Councillors Harker, C L B Hughes, McEwan and A J Scott. (5)

**INVITEES** – Councillors Curry and Mrs H Scott. (2)

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** – Councillor Crichlow.

**APOLOGIES** – Councillors Copeland, Wallis and I G Haszeldine. (3)

**C139. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

**C140. REPRESENTATIONS** – There were no representations made by Members or members of the public in attendance at the meeting.

**C141. MINUTES** - Submitted - The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Cabinet held on 7 March 2017.

**RESOLVED** - That the Minutes be confirmed as a correct record.

**REASON** – They represent an accurate record of the meeting.

**C142. MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET** - There were no matters referred back for reconsideration to this meeting.

**C143. ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY** - There were no issues arising from Scrutiny considered at this meeting.

**C144. KEY DECISION – (1) Accessibility Strategy - Children’s Services (Special Education Needs and Disability)** - The Cabinet Member with the Children and Young People Portfolio introduced the report of the Director of Children and Adults Services (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the Children’s Services Accessibility Strategy (also previously circulated) and the actions required to comply with legislation, including the undertaking of an Equality Impact Assessment (also previously circulated).

Particular reference was made to Schedule 10, of the Equality Act 2010, which required all Local Authorities to prepare an Accessibility Strategy, in relation to schools for which it was the responsible body.

The submitted report stated that an Equality Impact Assessment had been undertaken; the Accessibility Strategy set out guidance for schools on a number of areas, including increasing participation in the school curriculum, improving the physical environment of schools and improving the delivery of information; the strategy was linked to the Special

Education Needs Inclusion and Commission Strategy and the Local Offer; a training package had been developed, which was available to all schools, including academies; outlined the legal requirements; and the Council's actions to meet those requirements.

**RESOLVED** - (a) That the Accessibility Strategy – Children's Services (Special Education Needs and Disability), as appended to the submitted report, be agreed.

(b) That the Equality Impact Assessment, as appended to the submitted report, be noted.

**REASON** - It is the Local Authority statutory duty to have an Accessibility Plan for the schools for which it is responsible.

**(2) Procurement Plan Update** - The Cabinet Member with the Efficiency and Resources Portfolio introduced the report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services and Resources (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the Annual Procurement Plan (also previously circulated), including the assessment of contracts as strategic or non-strategic; updating Cabinet on the outcomes of procurement(s) previously designated as Strategic and the decisions taken by the Procurement Board to waive the Contract Procedure Rules; and providing a general update on the function and activity of the Corporate Procurement Unit.

Particular reference was made at the meeting to the current situation in relation to the contract with Barnardos, for the provision of services for the prevention of child sexual exploitation.

**RESOLVED** - (a) That the assessment of strategic and non-strategic contracts, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the submitted report, be approved, and that:

- (i) further reports/updates on the procurement process for those contracts designated as strategic (including decisions made by the Procurement Board) be brought to Cabinet;
- (ii) the contract award decisions for the contracts designated as non-strategic be delegated to the appropriate Director, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the submitted report; and
- (iii) the contract award decisions for the contracts designated as strategic, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the submitted report, be delegated to the Procurement Board to approve and report back to Cabinet.

(b) That the contents of the report, in respect of the update of strategic procurements, Procurement Board waiver decisions and the general update, be noted.

**REASONS** - (a) In respect of strategic/non-strategic contracts, the recommendations are supported by the following reasons: -

- (i) the Contract Procedure Rules require Cabinet to approve the designation of contracts as strategic and non-strategic;

- (ii) the contracts designated strategic are of high value and high significance in respect of the impact on residents, Health and Safety and public safety; and
- (iii) the contracts designated non-strategic are of a lower value and lower significance in respect of the impact on residents and public safety.

(b) In respect of Procurement Board waiver decisions, the recommendations are supported by the following reasons: -

- (i) to provide Cabinet with information about the decisions made by the Procurement Board; and
- (ii) in order to comply with the Contract Procedure Rules.

**C145. CHILDREN CENTRES** - The Cabinet Member with the Children and Young People Portfolio introduced the report of the Director of Children and Adults Services (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the proposals for consultation in respect of changes to the delivery of Children Centre services.

The submitted report stated that it was agreed within the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016 that Children Centre delivery could be delivered using alternative methods and that the Child Act 2006 required any key changes to children centre delivery, including the closure of a centre or reducing the services of children centres, to be subject to public consultation.

Particular reference was made to the proposal, which was to continue to provide Children Centre delivery using a 'Hub and Spoke' model, with McNay Street becoming the main delivery centre with satellite delivery points at Skerne Park, Dodmire and Mount Pleasant. References were also made to the consultation process and the financial and legal implications of implementing the proposals.

**RESOLVED** - (a) That the proposed Children Centre delivery model, as detailed in the submitted report, be approved for consultation.

(b) That the consultation plans, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted and approved.

(c) That a further report be submitted to a future meeting of Cabinet at the conclusion of the consultation

**REASONS** - (a) Changes to the delivery of Early Help services were agreed as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) in June 2016. This included the possibility of changing Children's Centre's delivery points.

(b) The proposed model for the Children's Centres needs to be informed by information gathered from consultation and a full understanding of equality impact assessments.

**C146. UPDATE ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENTS** - The Cabinet Member with the Children and Young People Portfolio introduced the report of the Director of Children and Adults Services (previously circulated) updating Cabinet on the improvements made to date within Children's Social Care, since the publication of the

Ofsted report on Services to Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers, on 1 September 2015.

The submitted report outlined the improvements made to date in performance and quality monitoring, practice improvement, stabilising the workforce, performance management, governance and leadership.

Particular reference was made to the priorities for the next three months which included focused emphasis on training needs of managers; continued improvements to quality of practice; development of systematic feedback; continued development of the audit activity; and further development of the training and learning activity.

Discussion ensued on the timeliness of Initial Health Assessments that are completed when a child becomes 'looked after', which although was being monitored and challenged, still remained an issue.

**RESOLVED** - That the information contained within the submitted report, be noted.

**REASON** - That Cabinet agreed they should receive regular update reports on improvement progress.

**C147. SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION PLAN** - The Leader introduced the report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Children and Adults Services (previously circulated) informing Members of the main themes and issues emerging from the recent Enquiry event into the NHS, Sustainable Transformation Plan (STP), and requesting that consideration be given to the next steps.

The submitted report stated that the Enquiry brought forward a number of specific themes and concerns within the proposals, particularly relating to the provision of accident and emergency (A&E), maternity and paediatric care at Darlington Memorial Hospital, including, inter alia:- journey times; population changes and growth; out of hospital care; engagement and staffing; and consolidation of pathology services.

Concern was raised at the meeting in respect of transport times for both patients and visitors should the A&E service cease at Darlington's Memorial Hospital; potential increased mortality risk; and to the delay in producing the Plan.

Particular references were made to the fact that the heart disease/surgery facility in Darlington was one of the best in the country; the importance of Darlington's voice being heard on the STP Board; the development of a sub-group, drawn from those that attended the Enquiry, to enable early consideration to be given to any issues that might arise; and to the importance of A&E to the growing economy of Darlington.

**RESOLVED** - (a) That the outcome of the Sustainable Transformation Plan (STP) Enquiry held on the 17 February 2017, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted.

(b) That opportunities for engagement and discussion with communities potentially impacted by the Sustainable Transformation Plan proposals, be continued.

**REASON** - To enable Cabinet Members to reflect on the views expressed in preparation for the formal commencement of consultation on the Sustainable Transformation Plan.

**C148. CAPITAL PROGRAMME** - The Cabinet Member with the Efficiency and Resources Portfolio introduced the report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services and Resources (previously circulated) proposing a 2017/18 to 2020/21 Capital Programme in relation to Council Financed Schemes.

Particular references were made to the resources available to undertake the Capital Programme; the schemes contained within the programme of essential works; the Economic Growth Investment Fund; and to the Central Park Enterprise Zone.

**RESOLVED** - That it be recommended to Council that the Capital Programme for Council Financed Schemes, be approved, including:-

- (a) the 2017/18 Capital Programme, as summarised in Appendix 2, of the submitted report;
- (b) the creation of an Economic Growth Investment Fund;
- (c) the delegation of the approval of schemes within the Economic Growth Investment Fund to Cabinet; and
- (d) ring-fencing the NNDR received from the Enterprise Zone to Central Park.

**REASONS** - (a) To provide funding for capital schemes.

(b) To assist in the enablement of investments required in order to deliver Darlington's ambitions for sustainable economic growth.

(c) To ensure decisions can be made on a timely basis.

(d) To complete works required at Central Park.

**C149. MEMBERSHIP CHANGES** – No membership changes were reported at the meeting.

**C150. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC - RESOLVED** - That, pursuant to Sections 100A(4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the ensuing items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in exclusion paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.

**C151. BLACKWELL GRANGE HOTEL - SURRENDER OF LEASE AND GRANT OF A NEW LEASE ON REVISED TERMS (EXCLUSION PARAGRAPH NO 3)** - The Cabinet Member with the Efficiency and Resources Portfolio introduced the report of the Director of Economic Growth (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the surrendering of the existing long lease of land at Blackwell Grange Hotel (as shown on the plan appended to the submitted report) and the granting of a new long lease of part of the land to be surrendered, and if required, additional land adjacent to it (as shown on the plan appended to the submitted report).

**RESOLVED** - (a) That the Director of Economic Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with the Efficiency and Resources, be authorised to negotiate and conclude:-

- (i) a surrender of the existing lease; and
- (ii) the grant of a new long lease to the Somerston Group of the hotel buildings and if required additional land around the hotel.

(b) That the terms negotiated be reported to Cabinet in the Schedule of Transactions in due course.

**REASONS** - (a) The new lease will increase rental income to the Council.

(b) The new lease will increase the value of the Council's asset.

(c) Securing control of the unused land He2 will permit the Council to dispose of land for development now rather than at the end of the lease, bringing forward development and securing a significant capital receipt.

**DECISIONS DATED –  
THURSDAY 6 APRIL 2017**