

Lancashire County Council

Cabinet

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 8th September, 2016 at 2.00 pm in Council Chamber, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Jennifer Mein

Leader of the Council
(in the Chair)

Cabinet Members

County Councillor Azhar Ali

County Councillor David Borrow

County Councillor John Fillis

County Councillor Marcus Johnstone

County Councillor Tony Martin

County Councillors Albert Atkinson and Bill Winlow were also in attendance under the provisions of Standing Order No. 19(4).

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from County Councillor Matthew Tomlinson and County Councillor Geoff Driver CBE.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

There were no interests declared.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 July 2016

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2016 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. Executive Scrutiny Committee - Report of the Chair

County Councillor Bill Winlow, Chair of the Executive Scrutiny Committee, reported that the recommendations set out in the reports for consideration for Cabinet had been confirmed with no amendments or additional recommendations.

It was noted that a constructive and lengthy debate was held on all items, particularly the Supporting People and Property Strategy items.

Particularly in relation to the Property Strategy, the Committee and Cabinet members present heard cases presented for the retention of individual library or other buildings,

including in Thornton Cleveleys, Fulwood, Freckleton, Ormskirk, Galgate, Whalley, and Bacup

The Committee also considered by rejected motions to defer the decision to allow for district by district working groups to consider the issues and to keep a number of the facilities open.

The ESC was assured that the responses to the consultation have been made available to members, and would continue to be so, and that Cabinet would take account of these.

ESC also generally welcomed the modernisation of the mobile library fleet and the commitment to Independent Community Libraries. It was also noted that the large number of Expressions of Interest received for County Council properties would be worked through in due course following Cabinet's decision.

5. Money Matters - 2016/17 Financial Position and Medium Term Financial Strategy

Cabinet received a report setting out the financial position as at 30th June 2016, the latest position in respect of the County Council's reserves and the County Council's updated financial outlook (Medium Term Financial Strategy) for period 2017/18 to 2020/21.

Cabinet considered the current predicted overspend and the ongoing risks to the council's financial position due to increasing demand and reduced resources. Particular reference was made to the reserves position, noting that by 31st March 2018, the County Council is expected to have reserves available of £21.772m, with the total current reserve essentially already committed or required to meet the budget shortfall in 16/17 and 17/18. Attention was also drawn to the fact that, whilst the reported funding gap had reduced, this was because of a new assumption built in to the figures that there would be a Council Tax increase of 3.99% each year.

Resolved: That

- (i) the forecast overspend of £11.267m on the 2016/17 revenue budget be noted;
- (ii) the position in respect of the Council's reserves and to agree the transfers outlined in the report be noted;
- (iii) authority be delegated to the Director of Financial Resources, in consultation with the Deputy Leader of the County Council, to authorise appropriate use of the Transitional Reserve within the parameters of the level of funding agreed by Cabinet and Full Council in setting the budget;
- (iv) the revised funding gap of £147.944m as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy be noted

6. Supporting People and the Prevention and Early Help Fund

Cabinet received a report on the outcomes of the consultation on the proposed savings to the Supporting People budget, and the work of the Prevention and Early Help Cabinet Member Working Group and its recommendations in relation to the allocation of the Prevention and Early Help Fund.

It was moved and seconded that, in addition to the recommendations in the report, a further recommendation be added:

"d) To request officers to prepare an agreement with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for the commissioning of domestic abuse and medium to high risk victim services, on the basis of the county council contributing £300,000 pa to those services for a minimum of three years; 2017/18 to 2019/20 from the £1.25m annual allocation under item b) above."

On being out to the vote, the additional recommendation was agreed, and it was therefore:

Resolved:

- i. that the proposal to cease the funding of the non-statutory Supporting People services as set out in the Report be approved
- ii. (that an annual budgetary provision from the Prevention and Early Help Fund of:
 - up to £500k for crisis support
 - up to £1.25 million for domestic abuse services, comprising refuges, medium to high risk victim services and perpetrator services
 - up to £1.25 million to services for homeless people with complex needs.be approved
- iii. that up to £1 million of the planned underspend from the 2016/17 Prevention and Early Help Fund budget during 2017/18 be utilised to facilitate:
 - the reconfiguration of housing and support pathways / services for care leavers and young people who are homeless; and
 - the development of commissioning intentions and re-procurement of services for homeless households with complex needs
- iv. to request officers to prepare an agreement with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for the commissioning of domestic abuse and medium to high risk victim services, on the basis of the county council contributing £300,000 pa to those services for a minimum of three years; 2017/18 to 2019/20 from the £1.25m annual allocation under item b) above.

7. The Property Strategy - Responses to Consultation

Cabinet considered a report on the outcomes of the consultation in relation to the proposals agreed on 12 May 2016 regarding the Council's Property Strategy. The attention of cabinet was drawn to a further petition and a letter from Hyndburn Borough Council's Scrutiny Committee received shortly before the meeting. Cabinet members were also provided with responses on a number of questions raised at the Executive Scrutiny Committee.

Cabinet members noted the comment in the report stressing the importance of having read all of the paperwork, and confirmed that they had read the paperwork, were familiar with the large number of responses received, and were prepared to make a decision at the meeting on that basis, and on the basis of the debate that followed.

Resolved: That

- i. the outcomes of the consultation as set out in the report be noted.
- ii. the Planning and Needs Assessment for the Library Service set out at Appendix "I" be approved as the basis of determining the level of provision for the Council's statutory library service.
- iii. the Library Strategy at Appendix "H" be approved.
- iv. the proposed investment in the Mobile Library Service set out in the report be approved.
- v. the proposed model for an "Independent Community Library Offer" as set out in the report be endorsed on the basis that these community libraries are **in addition to** the provision made by the Council to satisfy section 7 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.
- vi. the exploration of the development of alternative options for the future delivery of library services be continued, including, but not limited to, the extended use of volunteers and the development of a potential model which would allow the Library Service to be run independently of the Council as described in the report.
- vii. the revised proposals for the implementation of the Property Strategy set out at Appendix "B" be approved
- viii. a consultation on the proposal to discontinue use of Upholland Children's Centre, St Thomas the Martyr CE Primary School, on the basis set out in the report be agreed.
- ix. the buildings identified in Appendix "B" as not to be retained for future use are declared surplus to requirements and that the services delivered from them will be discontinued on the basis of the timeline set out at Appendix "P".
- x. officers be instructed to consider the viability of the expressions of interest received in relation to the transfer of Council premises as set out in Appendix "B" and to bring back a further report to the next meeting of Cabinet for consideration.
- xi. the request from the Schools Forum for transition funding for schools with attached children's centres and that this will be the subject of future discussions between officers and the Schools Forum be noted.

8. Report of Key Decisions taken by the Leader of the County Council, the Deputy Leader of the County Council and Cabinet Members

Resolved: That the report of Key Decisions taken by the Leader of the County Council, the Deputy Leader of the County Council and Cabinet Members be noted

9. Report of the Waiver of Procurement Rules by the Deputy Leader of the County Council

Resolved: That the report on the waiver of procurement rules by the Deputy Leader of the County Council be noted.

10. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business

11. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of Cabinet would be held on Thursday 6 October 2016 at County Hall, Preston.

Jo Turton
Chief Executive

County Hall
Preston