

Lancashire County Council

Executive Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 4th November, 2014 at 2.00 pm in Cabinet Room 'D' - The Henry Bolingbroke Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Bill Winlow (Chair)

County Councillors

A Atkinson	P Hayhurst
Mrs S Charles	S Holgate
D Clifford	M Iqbal
C Crompton	J Oakes
M Devaney	D O'Toole
G Driver	N Penney

County Councillors Carl Crompton, Michael Devaney and Mohammed Iqbal replaced County Councillors Alyson Barnes, Michael Green and Bernard Dawson respectively for this meeting.

1. Apologies

None

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-pecuniary Interests

County Councillor Hayhurst disclosed a non-pecuniary interest in Item 4(d) – Potential Health Impacts of the Proposed Shale Gas Exploration Sites in Lancashire – as a member of Elswick Parish council and Elswick Community Forum.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 October 2014

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. Reports for decision by Cabinet

The committee considered the following reports to be presented for decision by Cabinet on 6 November 2014.

a. Money Matters - Update on the County Council's Financial Position for 2014/15

The committee agreed to take this item with item 4(b) below.

b. Money Matters - The Financial Strategy for 2015/16 to 2017/18

The Committee received reports setting out updates on the County Council's financial position for 2014/15 and the financial strategy for 2015/16 - 2017/18.

It was reported that the current position represented a forecast underspend of around £4m in the revenue budget, notably taking into account the changes made to the Waste PFI arrangements and contributions from treasury management. Demand pressures continued, particularly in the area of social care, and careful monitoring and management would need to continue.

In terms of the Capital Programme, it was reported that 84.4% of the programme was on target with slippage attributed to, for example, planning issues and the review of the County Council's property portfolio.

The committee then considered the position for the future. It was recognised that there remained the requirement to make savings of £300m between 2014 and 2018, with £142m of those savings agreed by the Full Council in February 2014. The report set out how the financial situation had changed since then, making particular reference to the changes in demand and costs such as demand for social care, landfill tax and waste transport, the potential impact of the Care Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. Changes were also expected in the Education Services Grant, which would benefit the County Council by £4m, as well as business rates, council tax and the New Homes Bonus, would also mean additional costs of £4.6m over the next three years.

The committee noted that the general election in May 2015 brought additional uncertainty to a wide range of issues connected with local government financing and services. By 2017/18, it was highlighted that the County Council would have an expected total overall revenue budget of £689m.

It was reported that Cabinet on 6 November would publish the full set of options developed by officers for the service offer that the council will make in future. It was highlighted that these were not at this stage options chosen by Cabinet, but the full set of options developed, in order for there to be a full and open consultation, including with the Budget Scrutiny Working Group. Cabinet would then agree its proposals for the formal consultation at its meeting on 8 January 2015.

Resolved: That the recommendations in the reports to Cabinet be noted and that no additional comments or suggested alternative recommendation be made.

c. Preston Bus Station and Multi Storey Car Park

The committee were presented with a report setting out a number of proposals in respect of Preston Bus Station and Multi Storey Car Park which would support

the vision of creating a modern and vibrant public service hub. The development would include a new Youth Zone for young people, the refurbishment of the bus station, the creation of a public open space and the upgrading of the multi-storey car park.

The committee were taken through the recent history of the site and also particularly the proposals to develop a Youth Zone in Preston. It was reported that the proposal to site the Youth Zone at the Bus Station site was supported by Onside, the organisation behind Youth Zones across the country, and also represented a better financial deal for the council than the original proposal on the County Hall car park site.

It was made clear that the £3m contribution from the CYP capital programme was that set aside by the previous administration for the Youth Zone.

The Committee considered the information presented, particularly in relation to the estimated costs and funding arrangements.

It was proposed and seconded that:

The cabinet be asked to defer the decision to give an opportunity

- a. To ensure all appropriate costs were included in the assessment, to guarantee a life span for the building of 25 years
- b. To ensure that the costs are properly funded
- c. To seek opinions on the site of the Youth Zone from young people, via the Youth Council

On being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

In considering the recommendations to Cabinet, it was noted that it was intended to amend recommendation 4(6) to read 'To review with external grant funding organisations the potential for external grant funding'.

Resolved: That the recommendations in the report to Cabinet be noted and that support be given to the proposed amendment to recommendation 4(6) to read 'To review with external grant funding organisations the potential for external grant funding'.

d. **Potential Health Impacts of the Proposed Shale Gas Exploration Sites in Lancashire**

County Councillor Liz Oades attended for this item and spoke with the permission of the committee in accordance with Standing Order 19(1).

The Committee received a report setting out the potential health impacts of the proposed shale gas exploration sites in Lancashire. This was as a result of the health impact assessment undertaken on the two proposed sites at Preston New Road and Roseacre Wood.

The main key risks, identified by the health impact assessments, to the health and wellbeing of residents living near to the two proposed sites included:

- Lack of public trust and confidence, stress and anxiety from uncertainty that could lead to poor mental wellbeing;
- Noise related health effects due to continuous drilling;
- Issues related to capacity for flowback waste water treatment and disposal.

It was reported that the intention of the impact assessment was to provide an analysis specific to the current state of shale gas exploration in Lancashire, and that, whilst evidence from elsewhere in the world was taken note of, the work had been conducted in direct reference to the two sites in consideration, part of which involved direct engagement with local people. It was explained that an important part of the work had been to establish a baseline, and, as part of that, it was recognised that the current data available may not be able to identify issues at a very local, sub-ward level.

The report set out a total of 45 recommendations to address how the above risks, and other issues set out in the report, could be mitigated by the County Council, Environment Agency, the Department for Energy and Climate Change and the Health and Safety Executive. It was confirmed that the County Council would continue to press the case for industry specific regulation with the government.

The Committee supported a proposal to add the wording 'and a rigorous inspection programme' be added to the end of Recommendation 39.

Resolved: That the recommendations in the reports to Cabinet be noted and that Cabinet consider the words 'and a rigorous inspection programme' be added to the end of Recommendation 39.

e. **Report of the Cabinet Working Group on the Care and Urgent Needs Support Scheme**

The Committee considered the report of the Cabinet Working Group on the Care and Urgent Needs Support Scheme which set out a review of the scheme's first year of operation.

It was reported that the scheme was aimed at supporting the most vulnerable people, often at times of crisis, and in general was a valued and effective scheme. It was recognised that there significant uncertainty over future funding, and whilst initial funding had been transferred from the Department for Work and Pensions, the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2015/16 did not include continuation of the funding. It was confirmed that the County Council would continue to lobby government for continuation of the funding.

Resolved: That the recommendations in the reports to Cabinet be noted and that no additional comments or suggested alternative recommendation be made.

5. Forthcoming Individual Cabinet Member Key Decisions

The committee considered the following key decisions due to be taken by individual Cabinet Members.

a. Preston Western Distributor Road and North West Preston East West Link Road. Public Consultation Report and Adoption of the Preferred Routes

The Committee considered a report setting out a proposal to adopt and protect the routes for the Preston Western Distributor (PWD) and the routes for the associated links serving strategic housing development areas in North West Preston, namely the East-West Link Road and Cottam Link Road.

It was confirmed that an extensive consultation had been undertaken, and many responses received, although most responses concerned the implementation of the work rather than the specific route. Where specific responses were received on the proposed route, these were set out in the report, along with the council's response.

Resolved: That the recommendations in the report to the cabinet member be noted and that no additional comments or suggested alternative recommendations be made

b. Provision of Residential Disabled Parking Bays In Lancashire

The committee considered a report setting out a proposed revised and updated policy on Residential Disabled Parking Bays. It was reported that the new policy took into account a number of emerging issues and was intended to ensure that the policy could fully address exceptions and appeals. It was also confirmed that it was intended to speed up the process of implementation and reduce cost through the use of advisory bays, with the option of legally enforceable Traffic Regulation Orders being used where required.

Resolved: That the recommendations in the report to the cabinet member be noted and that no additional comments or suggested alternative recommendations be made

c. Re-commissioning Domiciliary Care for People with Learning Disabilities in Supported Living in Lancashire 2015 to 2020 under a Revised Framework

A report was presented setting out proposals for Re-commissioning and Procuring Learning Disability Supported living (Domiciliary care) services over a 3 year period with the option of a further 2 years under a revised Framework from June 2015

The proposals were based on a wide ranging review which included formal consultation with existing providers of supported living, self-advocates, family members and a range of other stakeholders, with a focus on what has worked well in the existing scheme, what has not worked well and what needs to change going forward. It was reported that, while

savings needed to be made, the proposals represented an opportunity to work with providers who shared the county council's vision for the future of services.

Resolved: That the recommendations in the report to the cabinet member be noted and that no additional comments or suggested alternative recommendations be made

d. **Commissioning of Integrated Home Improvement Services**

The committee considered a report seeking approval to re-commission a range of separately provided services as Integrated Home Improvement Services across the county.

The Committee supported the proposals, but noted that some aspects of the report were unclear and that a rewrite of certain parts of the explanation would be helpful.

Resolved: That the recommendations in the report to the cabinet member be noted and that no additional comments or suggested alternative recommendations be made

e. **Reconfiguration of Supporting People Funded Services**

The Committee received a report on the reconfiguration of Supporting People funded services. It was noted that a reduction of £4 million to the Supporting People Budget had already been agreed in the County Council's Revenue Budget 2014/15. However, it was clearly identified in the Equality Analysis submitted as part of those proposals that consultation would be undertaken prior to decisions being made regarding savings to individual services. The outcome of those consultations and the final proposals were now being reported.

Resolved: That the recommendations in the report to the cabinet member be noted and that no additional comments or suggested alternative recommendations be made

f. **Review of Library Opening Hours 2014**

The Committee received a report outlining the outcome of the annual review of Library opening times. A wide consultation had been held, and where specific proposals for individual libraries had not been supported by the consultation, these had not been taken forward. It was reported that the net combined effect would be an overall increase in opening hours of 50.75 hours per week, the equivalent of 2%, which will be achieved with no additional staffing costs.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that he intended, at his decision making session, to add a further recommendation to the effect that all County Councillors in divisions affected by the changes would be contacted and their views sought.

Resolved: That the recommendations in the report to the cabinet member be noted, including the proposed additional recommendation made by the Cabinet member to the

effect that all County Councillors in divisions affected by the changes would be contacted and their views sought, and that no additional comments or suggested alternative recommendations be made

6. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business

7. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held at 2pm on Tuesday 2 December 2014 at County Hall, Preston.

I Young
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston