



Minutes of the Cabinet

17 December 2019

-: Present :-

Councillor Steve Darling (Chairman)

Councillors Long, Morey, Stockman, Law and Cowell

(Also in attendance: Councillors Barrant, Brooks, Bye, Douglas-Dunbar, Foster, Kennedy, Chris Lewis, Loxton and David Thomas)

55. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Carter.

56. Communications

The Chairman advised that he would be varying the order of the agenda to consider item 9 before item 8 on the agenda.

The Worshipful the Mayor of Torbay, Councillor Douglas-Dunbar, encouraged Members to attend the civic carol service on Sunday, 22 December 2019 at 4.00 pm in The Church of St. John the Apostle, Montpellier Road, Torquay, TQ1 1BJ.

The Cabinet Member for Adults and Public Health, Councillor Stockman advised that the Learning Disabilities Board had been reformed and that they had a productive meeting with several users becoming learning disability champions. It was proposed that they would give a presentation at a future Health and Wellbeing Board on the work of the Board with a view to having membership similar to the Older Persons Assembly.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Councillor Law thanked Councillors for donating prizes for the foster carers' raffle which was attended by a number of Councillors last week.

The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture, Councillor Morey raised the recent positive partnership working with the Council and local partnerships. Meetings have been held with the some of the Cabinet and Conservative Councillors regarding the future of Occombe. Councillors Morey and Darling had met earlier that day with Groundwork South to discuss the important work they have been doing with the Western Valley. Councillors Carter and Morey also attended the official opening of refurbished Brixham Library, which had last been updated 25 years ago.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing, Councillor Long attended the Local Government Association conference on housing and homelessness in Coventry on 6 December, where they expressed interest in our end street homelessness campaign, our local partnership arrangements and political commitment to resolve issues in respect of homelessness and housing (this included the setting up of housing company and providing more affordable housing). The local authority in Swale have a 5 party partnership who were interested in seeing what we were doing in respect of this issue.

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Cowell had been focusing on finalising the budget proposals ready to launch today for consultation. He was continuing dialogue with the community, Torbay Community Development Trust with up to 60 invitees due to be attending a community conference feedback discussion in the second week of January.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Darling had written to the Prime Minister on behalf of the Council congratulating him on a successful General Election and advising of the ambitions and key challenges facing Torbay. The letter also sought how we could continue to work with key Members of Parliament and the Government for the benefit of Torbay. He had attended a meeting with One Public Estate to develop strategic outcomes for our communities on housing and regenerating our town centres.

57. Matters for Consideration

The Cabinet considered the following matters, full details of which (including the Cabinet's decisions) are set out in the Record of Decisions appended to these Minutes.

58. Revenue Budget and Capital Budget 2020/2021 for Consultation

59. Housing Strategy for Consultation

60. Budget Monitoring 2019/20 - Quarter Two

The Cabinet received and noted the submitted report which set out the latest position in respect of the Council's revenue outturn position and mitigating actions identified and the latest position in respect of capital expenditure and funding for 2019. This report had been considered and discussed in detail at the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 11 December 2019.

It was noted that there were no formal recommendations to the Cabinet arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting, however, the Board had requested that they receive regular updates on Children's Services Finance; an update on Crossways to be considered at Council; and for further information in respect of the underspend in the Housing Options budget. An email from the Assistant Director of Community and Customer Services was circulated to all members prior to the Cabinet as follows:

“Expenditure in Housing Options budget, addressing homelessness and prevention activity, has increased significantly in 2019/20. The Flexible Housing Support Grant is utilised to offset some of this expenditure and was more than expected from as part of the financial settlement. As such Housing services is forecasting an underspend of £100k.

Within Community Safety there are a number of vacancies across this service area which contribute to the overall underspend.”

61. The provision of Local Healthwatch and Local Health and Social Care Engagement in the County of Devon

62. New Investment Opportunities

There were no new investment opportunities.

63. New Economic Growth Fund Opportunities

There were no new Economic Growth Fund opportunities.

Chairman

Record of Decision

Revenue Budget and Capital Budget 2020/2021

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 17 December 2019

Decision

- (i) that all Members and the Overview and Scrutiny Board consider the draft revenue and capital budgets and implications of the draft service change, income generations and savings proposals. The Overview and Scrutiny Board (through its Priorities and Resources Review Panel) will consider certain specific issues arising from these savings proposals and report back to the Cabinet by 24 January 2020 on the outcomes of its deliberations and stakeholder representations;
- (ii) the draft proposals for service change income generation and efficiencies are based upon the expected reduction in government grant;
- (iii) that detailed consultation be undertaken with service users who may be affected by specific proposals and that Equality Impact Assessments continue to be developed as required. (The results from this consultation will be considered by the Cabinet with the Cabinet's final proposals being published on 4 February 2020.);
- (iv) that the Chief Finance Officer be given authority to amend these budget proposals for any technical adjustments necessary between services and within the overall envelope of funding in agreement with the Leader of the Council; and
- (v) that the Chief Finance Officer report to the adjourned meeting of the Council on 13 February 2020 on the implications for 2020/2021 as a result of these proposals currently being considered and in light of the final settlement which is expected in late January or early February.

Reason for the Decision

To enable the consultation process on the proposed Revenue Budget and Capital Plan for 2020/2021 to begin.

Implementation

This decision to publish the draft revenue budget and the savings proposals will come into force immediately, so as to commence the formal six week consultation process on the budget, and to permit specific and detailed consultation to be undertaken where necessary.

Information

The Leader of the Council on behalf of the Cabinet has announced their provisional revenue and capital budget including proposals for service change, income generation and efficiencies for 2020/2021 (as available at www.torbay.gov.uk/budget-202021 to enable the consultation

process to start. The savings proposals and development of the budget will support the Council in delivering its ambitions as set out in the Corporate Plan.

Additional supporting financial information will be supplied in due course to help inform the consultation and scrutiny. Information will be placed on the Council 2020/2021 Budget webpage at www.torbay.gov.uk/budget-202021.

Members and officers have been considering the impact of the significant reductions to government grant and, as a result of these reductions, the Council is faced with a number of difficult decisions to ensure services can be delivered within a much reduced financial resource base compared to previous years. The proposals have been set in recognition of the need to ensure resources are prioritised in accordance with agreed plans but mindful of the further reductions to local government grant.

The Cabinet wishes to hear the views of all Members of the Council, the Overview and Scrutiny Board and external stakeholders together with specific service users on their proposals before finally recommending a budget to the Council in February 2020.

Councillor Steve Darling proposed and Councillor Cowell seconded a motion, as set out above which was agreed unanimously by the Cabinet.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

Alternative options were not considered.

Is this a Key Decision?

Yes – Reference Number: I061003

Does the call-in procedure apply?

No

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

18 December 2019

Signed: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Date: 18 December 2019

Record of Decision

Draft Housing Strategy and Associated Documents for Consultation

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 17 December 2019

Decision

That the draft Housing Strategy, together with the drafts of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, the Housing Standards Enforcement Policy and the Houses in Multiple Occupation Standards, be published for consultation.

Reason for the Decision

The Housing Strategy forms part of the Council's Policy Framework setting out the Council's ambitions, aims and objectives in respect of housing. The Cabinet now wishes to gather feedback from the wider community in Torbay on the proposed content of the Housing Strategy and some of its associated documents (many of the housing related Policies/Strategies follow a separate consultation process/timeline).

Implementation

This decision will come into force immediately so as to commence formal public consultation.

Information

As part of the work of developing the draft Community and Corporate Plan, a proposed new Housing Strategy for Torbay had been prepared which set out the Cabinet's plans towards meeting its priority of improving the delivery, affordability and quality of housing in Torbay.

The Council's housing responsibilities cover a broad range of issues, from identifying land for new homes to improving old ones and meeting the wide variety of housing needs of our communities. More detailed strategies and policies sit beneath the Housing Strategy, setting out the Council's aims and delivery plans in specific areas. A number of these have been reviewed alongside the Housing Strategy and it is proposed that the following documents are subject to consultation at the same time:

- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
- Housing Standards Enforcement Policy
- Houses in Multiple Occupation Standards

Councillor Long proposed and Councillor Morey seconded a motion, as set out above which was agreed unanimously by the Cabinet.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

None

Is this a Key Decision?

Yes – Reference Number: I060815

Does the call-in procedure apply?

No

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

18 December 2019

Signed: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Date: 18 December 2019

Record of Decision

The provision of Local Healthwatch and Local Health and Social Care Engagement in the County of Devon

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 17 December 2019

Decision

That Cabinet approve the decision (subject to ratification by parallel governance processes in Devon and Plymouth councils and the CCG) to award contracts for Lot 1 (Local Healthwatch) and Lot 2 (Local Health and Social Care Engagement), of the jointly commissioned services with Devon County Council and Plymouth City Council (and NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group for Lot 2) to the providers named in exempt Appendix 1 to the submitted report.

Reason for the Decision

For the past two years, commissioners of social care and health services in Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council had been working towards enabling a single supplier to provide the Local Healthwatch consumer voice organisation on behalf of the three local authorities.

Completion of a joint competitive tendering process had resulted in a recommendation to award a contract (subject to approval by the parallel governance mechanisms in each commissioning organisation and the council's own relevant due diligence processes) for the provision of Local Healthwatch (Lot 1).

Alongside the new Local Healthwatch function, commissioners in the three local authorities and the CCG were recommending the award of a contract for locally commissioned engagement on health and social care issues (Lot 2).

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on Friday, 3 January 2020 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The submitted report sought approval to award contracts (subject to ratification by parallel governance processes in Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council and the NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)) for the provision of the Local Healthwatch and Local Health and Social Care Engagement in the County of Devon.

The new contracts would be for jointly commissioned services with Devon and Plymouth councils for both Lot 1 (Local Healthwatch) and Lot 2 (Local Health and Social Care Engagement), with the CCG also being commissioners for Lot 2. Devon County Council would be the contracting authority on behalf of the commissioning organisations.

The contracts would commence on 1 April 2020. The provider for Lot 1 would be required to maintain the discrete public-identities of Healthwatch Devon, Healthwatch Plymouth and Healthwatch Torbay, whilst spreading the good practice achieved to date in each local authority area across the whole county.

Councillor Stockman proposed and Councillor Long seconded a motion, as set out above which was agreed unanimously by the Cabinet.

(Note: during consideration of this item the press and public were formally excluded from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information (as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)) was likely to be disclosed.)

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

Alternative options were set out in the submitted report but were not discussed at the meeting.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

20 December 2019

Signed: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Date: 20 December 2019