

Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday, 19th April, 2012.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook (Chairman), Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr David Rose, Cllr Michael Smith

Officers: N. Schneider (CE), J. Spittle, B. Brown (R), J. Humphreys (CESC), P. Dobson, R. Poundford, D. Kitching (DNS), D. E. Bond, M. Waggot, N. Hart (LD)

Also in attendance: Francis Hayes (Independent Chairman of the Standards Committee), Cllr Ken Lupton

Apologies: Cllr Jim Beall

CAB Declarations of Interest

1/12

Councillors Coleman and Nelson declared personal, non-prejudicial interests in respect of this item as a result of their nomination to Frederick Nattrass and Mill Lane Primary Schools respectively.

Councillor Lupton declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in the item entitled EIT Review of Human Resources and Review of Communications as he had a family member who worked in Communications.

CAB Minutes of Cabinet held on 8 March 2012

2/12

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2012 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

CAB LA Nominations

3/12

In accordance with the procedure for the appointment of school governors, approved at Minute 84 of the Cabinet (11th May 2000), Cabinet were requested to approve the nomination to school Governing Body as detailed within the report.

RESOLVED that appointment be made to the vacant Governorship subject to successful List 99 check and Personal Disclosure, as follows:-

Bader Primary School – Mr Allan Fishpool
Barley Fields Primary School – Mrs L Davidson
Fairfield Primary School – Mrs W Spurr
Frederick Nattrass Primary School – Cllr Steve Nelson
Layfield Primary School – Jane Wright
Mill Lane Primary School – Cllr D Coleman
Preston Primary School – Mrs K Stockley
Rosebrook Primary School – Mrs J Appleby, Cllr J Beall, Mrs A Cains
The Glebe Primary School – Mr J Brodie
Wolviston Primary School – Mr Graham Thirlaway

CAB Economic Climate Update Report

4/12

Cabinet considered a monthly update report providing members with an overview of the current economic climate, outlining the effects that this was having on Stockton Borough, and the mitigations already in place and those being developed.

Members noted some of the positive and negative developments since the last report. Details of the support on offer to people and businesses was also provided.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted and the work being undertaken supported.

**CAB
5/12**

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy Review

Consideration was given to the scheduled three year review of the Council's consolidated Hackney Carriage & Licensing Policy.

The Licensing Committee had agreed a draft revised policy for consultation with the trade and other interested parties at its meeting held on 13th December 2011 (Min L51/11 refers) and further considered the responses received at its meeting held on 8th March 2012.

Cabinet was provided with both a copy of the draft policy and details of the comments received as part of the consultation; the main elements of which concerned:-

- Tinted Window requirements;
- Driver Training & Public Safety requirements;
- Accessibility;
- Vehicle Emission levels;
- European New Car Assessment Programme (Euro NCAP);
- Vehicle Testing.

Details were also submitted of the results of the survey referred in the report clarifying the level of driver qualifications, as well as a copy of the Equality Impact Assessment carried out on the draft policy.

Mr Fiddler (Hackney Carriage Trade Association) was present at the meeting along with members of the trade, and spoke in relation to the comments provided as part of the consultation.

Cabinet was also advised of the proposal to retain both statutory declarations and medical assessments, which had both been questioned by the trade, and were advised of concerns held by officers that the process for obtaining a Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) Driving Licence through the DVLA did not require a CRB test, unlike all licensed drivers in Stockton who were currently subject to an enhanced CRB test every three years. This effectively meant that vehicles capable of carrying more than 8 passengers may be driven by people who would not meet the criteria for hackney carriage or private hire drivers' licences. The issue had subsequently been raised in the House of Commons and officers were currently attempting to establish a voluntary scheme locally.

RESOLVED that:-

1. the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy as presented in Appendix One to the report be approved.
2. the approach to driver training and public safety, as detailed in paragraphs 9 – 14 of the report be approved.
3. Officers be authorised to seek further legal advice with regard to requiring licensed private hire operators to have a proportion of wheelchair accessible vehicles within their fleet dependent on the number of vehicles they operate and if that advice suggests that this would be possible, officers be requested to prepare proposals, consult with the trade and provide a report to Cabinet with potential changes to the policy for their consideration.

CAB 6/12 EIT Task & Finish Review of Human Resources and Review of Communications

Consideration was given to the findings of the EIT Task and Finish Review of Human Resources and the review of Communications.

Human Resources Service undertook an EIT review originally in October 2010 via a phased approach. Phase 1 was completed in December 2010 and achieved savings of £207k whilst Phase 2 had been scheduled to be completed by 31st March 2012 with total savings of £322k required. However, the retirement of the Head of Human Resources resulted in the decision to combine the review of the service with Communications. Once this decision was taken it was decided to defer the rest of the HR review until the new Head of Service appointment was made. This provided an opportunity for the new Head of Service to input into the review and allow the new combined service to be reviewed together.

The proposals sought to ensure that the combined HR and Communications service continued to improve as well as achieve efficiencies. Within Human Resources, 10 posts had now been deleted, 7 of which were at a senior level and 5.3 posts created. Within Communications, 3 posts had been deleted and three posts created. Two of these were at a more junior level and one was a temporary post for one year.

The introduction of two new roles of HR Manager and Communications Manager sought to ensure there was sufficient strategic capability at a senior level as well as delivering clear and workable management arrangements. These posts were particularly important as the New Head of Service post covered a wider Service.

The review of Human Resources and Communications had therefore now been completed and the required savings target achieved. Members present also wished to record their appreciation for the work undertaken by Julia Spittle, the retiring Head of Human Resources, during her time in post and wished her well

for her retirement.

RESOLVED that the outcome of the Human Resources Task and Finish EIT review and review of Communications, be approved.

**CAB
7/12** **Minutes of Various Bodies**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings of various bodies.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following meetings be received/approved, as appropriate:-

Housing and Neighbourhood Partnership – 21 February 2012
Western Area Partnership – 27 February 2012
Eastern Area Partnership – 28 February 2012
Health and Wellbeing Partnership – 28 February 2012
Northern Area Partnership – 5 March 2012

**CAB
8/12** **Executive Arrangements**

Cabinet considered a report that detailed the decisions taken by the Leader of the Council regarding Cabinet Members, Cabinet Portfolios and executive functions and delegated powers under the Council's Constitution.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

**CAB
9/12** **Annual Report of the Standards Committee - 2011/12**

Cabinet considered a report that provided it with the opportunity to consider the Standards Committee's Annual Report for 2011/12 and to recommend it to the Council for approval.

The Report provided an overview of the work of the Committee in the past year. It set out the Committee's main statutory responsibilities, and summarised how they had been discharged. The Report had been prepared in the context of the significant changes proposed to the national and local standards regime, as set out in the Localism Act. These changes were anticipated to become effective from 1 July onwards.

Consultation on the Report had previously taken place with Group Leaders and the relevant Cabinet Member; the Head of Legal Services as Deputy Monitoring Officer; the Head of Democratic Services; the Corporate Governance Group and the Corporate Management Team. The report had also been circulated to Audit Committee Members. Once agreed the Report would be placed on the intranet and the internet for the attention of all Members/Officers and would be made available to Town/Parish Councils.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the Standards Committee's Annual Report be approved.

**CAB
10/12 Annual Report of the Monitoring Officer - 2011/12**

Cabinet considered a report that provided it with the opportunity to consider the Monitoring Officer's Annual Report for 2011/12 and to recommend it to Council for approval.

As with the Standards Committee's Annual Report, the Monitoring Officer's Report outlined the Monitoring Officer's main statutory responsibilities, summarised how they had been discharged during the year and drew attention to some of the main issues that would require attention in the year ahead.

Consultation on the report had previously taken place with Group Leaders and the relevant Cabinet Member; the Head of Legal Services as Deputy Monitoring Officer; the Head of Democratic Services; the Corporate Governance Group; the Corporate Management Team; Audit Committee members and the Standards Committee. Once agreed the Report would be placed on the intranet and the internet for the attention of all Members/Officers.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the Monitoring Officer's Annual Report be approved.