

Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday, 10th November, 2016.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook(Chair), Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Norma Wilburn

Officers: Neil Schneider(CE), Margaret Waggott, Ian Coxon, Judith Trainer, Kirsty Wannop(DCE), Beccy Brown(HR&L), Garry Cummings(F&BS), Richard McGuckin(EG&D), Jane Humphreys, Martin Gray(CHS), Reuben Kench(CL&E), Jamie McCann(CS), Liz Hanley(DPH), David Bond(Proper Officer), Sean McEneaney, Julie Nixon(Transformation Team).

Also in attendance: Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Chris Clough, Cllrs Phil Dennis, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Matt Vickers.

Apologies: None

CAB 80/16 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Steve Nelson declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item titled Council Plan Mid-Year Update 2016-17 as he was a member of the Tristar and Catalyst Board.

Councillor Nigel Cooke declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item titled Council Plan Mid-Year Update 2016-17 as he was a non-remunerated director of Tees Music Alliance.

Councillor Bob Cook declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item titled Governance Proposals for the Tees Valley Mayoral Combined Authority as he was a member of the Board.

Councillor Jim Beall declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item titled Governance Proposals for the Tees Valley Mayoral Combined Authority as he was a substitute member of the Board.

Councillor Bob Cook declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item titled Governance Proposals for the Tees Valley Mayoral Combined Authority as he was a member of the Board.

Councillor Norma Wilburn declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item titled Annual report of the Learning and Skills Service and Update on the Governing Body as she was on the Board of Governors at Stockton Riverside College.

Councillor Bob Cook declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item titled Initial Proposals for New Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries in the North East – Consultation Response as he worked for Stockton North MP.

Councillor Jim Beall declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item titled Initial Proposals for New Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries in the North East due to his party political contacts.

Councillor Steve Nelson declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item titled Welfare Reform Update Q2 2016-17 as he was a Member of the Tristar Board.

Councillor Ann McCoy declared a personal prejudicial interest in agenda item titled Welfare Reform Update Q2 2016-17 as she was a Member of the Stockton District Advice and Information Service Board and left the room when this was considered.

Councillor Steve Nelson Declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item titled Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan as he was a member of the Tristar Board.

**CAB
81/16** **Minutes**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2016.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2016 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**CAB
82/16** **Please note that agenda item 11 and 15 will be considered first.**

**CAB
83/16** **Scrutiny Review of Youth Services**

Cabinet considered a report that presented the findings of the Children & Young People Select Committee following the Scrutiny Review of Youth Services.

RESOLVED that

1. Discussions were commenced with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and with schools to extend the delivery of open access youth provision through the voluntary and community sector and reduce directly provided SBC open access provision.
2. The Council maintain an initial role in shaping open access provision and an on-going co-ordinating role as part of a comprehensive early help strategy.
3. Council Services be re-modelled to strengthen early help and prevention focusing on:
 - Integrated teams
 - The lead professional approach placing children at the centre of service provision
 - Practitioners working together to support families
 - Developing outreach patrols and preventions work
4. The Council continues to provide targeted youth services in line with the Council policy priorities contained in the Council Plan.
5. Youth Offending Services continue to focus on restorative approaches and that this was strengthened to include working with the wider family.
6. The Youth Offending Team be utilised to train and support the wider youth direction teams in restorative approaches.
7. The Youth Offending Team was linked more closely with targeted youth

provision to improve the customer pathway and provide intensive support with a view to preventing re-offending and reducing the numbers of children and young people going into custody.

8.

a) staff consultation be carried on proposed changes to service delivery to implement the new youth service model;

b) the Assistant Director, Early Help, Partnership and Planning Children's Services be authorised to establish new staffing structures to implement the new youth service model in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member(s);

c) Ward Members were kept informed of proposed changes to youth provision in advance of any change to youth provision within their wards.

CAB 84/16 **Travel Support for Adult Service Users and Carers**

Cabinet considered a report that detailed the approach and outcome of the 12 week public consultation on the proposed policy on Travel Support for Adult Service Users and Carers.

The public consultation period was between 11th July and 2nd October 2016.

A range of consultation techniques were used in order to gain feedback from service users, carers, interested groups, including service providers, employees of the Council, and the general public. Details of what the approach included, the questions asked and how the consultation was promoted was provided.

Members were also provided with details of the response received by questionnaire and details of the Service User Group Sessions and public meetings held.

Following the analysis of both the qualitative information and quantitative responses to the specific questions, it was proposed that the policy, at Appendix 1, be approved and implemented as of 1st December 2016. The Charging Policy and Eligibility Criteria were available in the members' library

A programme of workforce development to embed the cultural change and understanding of the policy would be implemented.

In conjunction with community transport, to continue to progress the review of the utilisation of Council transport and associated costs related to both in-house and commissioned services for service users within Adult Services.

RESOLVED that the Policy for Travel Support for Adult Service Users and Carers be approved with effect from 1st December 2016.

CAB 85/16 **Council Plan – Mid Year Update Report 2016/17**

Cabinet considered a report that provided a mid-year update on the key objectives in the Council Plan 2016/17

The report provided details of the Council's visions, principles and culture along with an update on progress against the Council's objectives by theme.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Elections Update

Consideration was given to a report that provided feedback from May 2016 Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Elections and the EU Referendum June 2016 and considered the implications of planning for the forthcoming Mayoral Elections in May 2017 and future election programmes.

The report highlighted what went well, lessons learned and the next steps needed to allow the Returning Officer to undertake a successful Combined Authority Mayoral Election in 2017 and plan for future polls.

Elections teams faced unprecedented challenges in 2016 with nationwide polls in May followed by the EU Referendum in June, both coming on the back of the transition to Individual Electoral Registration (IER). By way of illustrating the scale of the work undertaken in Stockton

PCC Election

- 400 assenter details on nomination papers had to be checked against the electoral register, across four Council areas
- 101 agents were appointed
- 100 polling stations were booked
- 435 staff were appointed to 1,078 jobs
- 32,249 postal ballot packs were issued and 17,224 were receipted and opened
- 1021 postal votes were returned on polling day which all had to be opened and processed for verification as soon as possible after 10pm

EU Referendum

- 100 polling stations were booked
- 536 staff were appointed to 1,098 jobs
- 34,953 postal ballot packs were issued and 31,520 were receipted and opened representing an unprecedented 90% turnout of postal voters
- A staggering 1950 postal votes were returned on polling day which all had to be opened and processed for verification as soon as possible after 10pm

The interest in the EU Referendum and extension of the registration deadline also resulted in a surge of registration and postal vote applications which put additional pressures on the Electoral Team working to new IER processes at a time when work on administering the elections was gathering pace. During the statutory elections period:

- 8,626 registration applications were received
- 1499 registration applications were received during the 24 hour extension to the registration deadline between 8 and 9 June
- 2,418 postal vote applications were received

Overall, the 2016 polls at Stockton were delivered successfully despite the significant challenges. Clear leadership, effective team working and project management enabled a timely and planned approach to delivery including positive working relationships with partners and suppliers and thereby achieving a successful election outcome. Clear roles and good communications

contributed to this success and stood the Council in good stead for future elections.

Regular meetings were held in the region and sub region particularly in the early planning stages. These meetings and good communication with the Electoral Commission and Association of Electoral Administrators continued to be invaluable in sharing ideas and best practice.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**CAB
87/16**

Governance Proposals for the Tees Valley Mayoral Combined Authority

Following the Authority's approval of the Devolution Deal; the formation of the Tees Valley Combined Authority on the 1 April 2016; and the making of the Order creating the position of Mayor for the Tees Valley Combined Authority area, public consultation had taken place on the functions of a Tees Valley Mayor and how the Mayor could work within the Combined Authority.

The report to Cabinet now sought the Council's approval to give consent to the Order being made that would determine the powers of the Tees Valley Mayor. A similar report was being presented to all five Borough councils in the current cycle of meetings. Once all five councils had given their consent, along with the Combined Authority which would meet on the 25 November 2016, the Secretary of State would lay the Order before Parliament on or after 28th November 2016. Following the Parliamentary process and approval over the New Year period, the Secretary of State would then make the Order, and it would be brought into force.

The report emphasized that where a Council operated executive arrangements (a Leader and Cabinet system or an elected Mayor and Cabinet model), the decision to give consent was legally an executive (not a full Council) function.

The draft Order provided by Government, a copy of which was provided for consideration, was continuing to be developed. The Order in its final form, at the point at which it was to be laid in Parliament, would be the version which the Authority would be asked in due course to give consent to being made.

The draft provided that the Mayor would be required to be part of any majority vote, if that vote was to pass. This requirement was included in the Councils Devolution Deal, and it had been indicated that the principle would be reflected in all Combined Authority Orders.

Given this, the Combined Authority's draft constitution had been revised in order to introduce a provision which would enable a proposal which had the support of the majority of the Combined Authority's cabinet members, but not the Mayor, to be stayed, and considered further, with a view to reaching a consensus, prior to the submission of an alternative proposal.

A copy of the Combined Authority's draft constitution was made available for Members consideration and comment.

RESOLVED that:-

1. Consent be given to the proposed Order being made by the Secretary of State.
2. Authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to give the Council's final consent to the Order being made when requested by the Secretary of State.
3. Consideration be given to the draft Mayoral Combined Authority constitution, with any comments from Cabinet being referred to the Combined Authority for consideration when reaching its decision on approval of the constitution, and

Cabinet's report and decisions be submitted to Council, in order to update all Members regarding the proposals for the Tees Valley Mayoral Combined Authority and the arrangements for giving the Authority's consent to the making of the Order establishing the powers of the Tees Valley Mayor.

**CAB
88/16** **Minutes of Various Bodies**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution or previous practice the minutes of the meeting of the bodies indicated below were submitted to Members for consideration:-

TSAB – 18th October 2016
TVCA Board – 24th August 2016

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings detailed in the appendices be approved / received, as appropriate.

**CAB
89/16** **Spark of Genius North East LLP: Joint Venture - Progress Update**

Cabinet considered a report that updated on the progress in implementing the Joint Venture arrangement with Spark of Genius. It provided information on the business model, the residential homes and the independent special school established as part of the Joint Venture and sought approval for further proposals to be taken forward.

Particular reference was made to:-

- The Council's external auditors, Mazars, undertook an assessment of the Spark of Genius NE Limited Liability Partnership as part of its audit of 2013/14 financial year. This assessment found evidence of a controlled and innovative process in procuring a new way of providing statutory services.
- The current Ofsted status of the three homes was rated good as was King Edwin School.
- King Edwin has appointed a new head teacher on 1st April 2016 and there is now increasing sign of stability.
- The need to ensure young people were protected from harm and risk posed by their current environment.
- Opportunities to consider additional elements of service provision which could be delivered through the joint venture, such as, additional residential children's homes or other specialist provision.

RESOLVED that

1. The update be noted;
2. The principle of locating the fourth home in a neighbouring authority area be endorsed;
3. Decisions on further developments be delegated to the Director of Finance and Business Services and the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

CAB 90/16 Annual Report of the Learning and Skills Service and Update on the Governing Body

Cabinet considered a report that provided information on the successes and strategic decisions taken by the Learning and Skills Service during academic year 2015/6. It also provided an update on the newly established Governing Body for Learning and Skills.

In July, the Service was visited by a MATRIX assessor to carry out the 3 year review of their quality accreditation. The MATRIX was a quality kitemark for information, advice and guidance. The Service passed their review and the assessor went on to say that out of 160 providers he worked with across the country, Stockton Learning and Skills was ranked in his top 3.

RESOLVED that the performance of the L&S Service and the progress made in the development of the Board of Governors be noted.

CAB 91/16 Initial Proposals for New Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries in the North East - Consultation Response

Cabinet considered a report that provided an update on the initial proposals for the new Parliamentary constituencies in the North East.

Details were provided of the proposals for the North East and Stockton. Views on the proposals for Stockton-on-Tees Borough area were canvassed via email and at three Member Drop-In Sessions and the principal comments were provided in the report.

RECOMMENDED that

1. The comments specified at paragraphs 10 – 13 of the report regarding the initial proposals produced by the Boundary Commission for England be recommended to Council as the Authority's formal representations.
2. That, subject to this, the Assistant Director Administration, Democratic and Electoral Services be authorised to submit the agreed representations to the Boundary Commission for England before the deadline of 5 December 2016.
3. That a further report be submitted to Cabinet following the end of the initial consultation period.

CAB 92/16 Welfare Reform Update Q2 2016-17

Consideration was given to a report that provided an update on the monitoring

of outcomes and impacts of welfare reform and a summary of actions undertaken by the Council to mitigate against circumstances arising from the implementation of these changes.

The monitoring framework was set out under the following issues:

- Advice and Information Services;
- Discretionary Housing Payments;
- Social Fund/Crisis Payments;
- Housing;
- Local Council Tax Support Scheme;
- Employment; and
- General/cross cutting

The reduced Benefit Cap was introduced from 7 November 2016, lowering the maximum amount of benefits payable to claimants outside London by £6,000 to £20,000 (£384.62 per week) for couples and single parents and by £4,800 to £13,400 (£257.69 a week) for single people.

The benefits included in calculating the reduced Benefit Cap were detailed.

In Stockton, those affected by the Benefit Cap would have their Housing Benefit payments reduced to bring them to the weekly cap levels.

This much reduced level of Benefit Cap led to 384 couples and single parents being identified as likely to be adversely affected. No single claimants were identified as likely to be adversely affected by the new level of Benefit Cap.

The Welfare Rights Unit had worked in partnership with Stockton Families First, other Council departments and landlords and had managed to contact most of these families, prioritising contact with those at risk of the greatest level of financial reduction.

Details were provided on the outcomes of 206 family's contacted to date. Further attempts would be made to engage with the 55 families that had decided not engage with the Unit.

The Local Government Finance Act imposed a duty upon local councils from 2013-14 to adopt a Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS), to replace Council Tax Benefit. Members considered a number of options for Stockton's LCTSS and, following public consultation, agreed on the "shared reduction" option with all working age claimants paying a minimum contribution of 20% of the Council Tax charge.

There had been an independent review undertaken of the operation of LCTSS throughout England and Wales, but as yet no formal response from the government. On that basis, Cabinet were asked to recommend to Council that the existing LCTSS was retained for the financial year 2017-18. Local Council Tax Support Schemes were not fully funded so there can be some impact on the medium term financial plan and reports will be provided as part of the financial report to Cabinet. Any future scheme review would require full consultation with the public.

SBC commissions a contract for the provision of borough wide advice and

information services. The aim of the service was to provide residents with access to a high quality advice and information service which meets local needs from simple diagnosis and information through to legal advice, assistance and advocacy and representation at court proceedings. The current contract was awarded to Stockton Advice and Information Services (SDAIS) for two years and expired in March 2017.

RESOLVED that

1. The contents of this report be noted.
2. The performance monitoring outcomes and observations provided be noted.

RECOMMENDED that

3. **The current Local Council Tax Support Scheme was retained for the financial year 2017-18 (see paragraphs 17 to 18).**

RESOLVED that

4. **The contract for the provision of borough-wide advice and information services to Stockton District Advice and Information Services (SDAIS), for a period of three years from April 2017, with an option to award a contract extension for a further two years from April 2020 (see paragraphs 19 to 22) be approved.**

**CAB
93/16**

Stockton-On-Tees Borough Local Plan

Cabinet considered a report that provides an update on work undertaken since the last report to Cabinet on the production of a Draft Local Plan for consultation, completion of an evidence base review, consultation on and refinement of the Statement of Community Involvement and completion of a Sustainability Appraisal.

The report followed a report to Planning Committee for use of the Draft Local Plan and Sustainability Appraisal for consultation and sought a recommendation from Cabinet to Council to approve the documents for consultation.

With regard to the next steps, the following timetable provided an indication of activities and milestones in the production the Local Plan:

- 'Regulation 18' period of public consultation - 21st November 2016 to 20th January 2017
- Spring 2017- Review and amend documents in response to representations received
- Summer 2017- Prepare the 'Publication Draft' version of the Local Plan, associated documents and the evidence base for the 'Regulation 19' stage public consultation
- Autumn 2017- Submission of Local Plan associated documents and evidence base for Examination in Public

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

- 1. Comments from Planning Committee on the Draft Local Plan, Policies Map and Sustainability Appraisal and adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement be noted.**
- 2. The Draft Local Plan, Policies Map and Sustainability Appraisal be approved for consultation.**
- 3. The delegation for any minor changes to the Draft Stockton on Tees Local Plan, Policies Map and Sustainability Appraisal to the Director of Economic Growth and Development in consultation with Chair of Planning Committee and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport be approved.**
- 4. The Statement of Community Involvement be adopted**
- 5. The proposed timescales for consultation on the Draft Local Plan, Policies Map and Sustainability Appraisal be noted.**