

Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday, 8th December, 2022.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook (Chair), Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Lisa Evans , Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Michael Smith and Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E.

Officers: Mike Greene (CE), Garry Cummings (F,D&R&DCE), Ged Morton, Julie Butcher, Jonathan Nertney, Peter Bell (CS), Reuben Kench (CS,E&C), Emma Champley (A&H), Martin Gray (ChS).

Also in attendance: Cllr Carol Clark.
Members of the public.

Apologies: None.

CAB 48/22 Evacuation Procedure

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the evacuation procedure was noted.

CAB 49/22 Declarations of Interest

For transparency purposes Councillor Bob Cook outlined that with regard to agenda item 6 – A Capital Investment Strategy for Children in Our Care and with Additional Needs – update as he was a governor at Billingham South Primary School.

For transparency purposes Councillor Nigel Cooke outlined that with regard to agenda item 9 – Annual Report of the Governing Body for the Learning and Skills Service as he was the Chair of the Governing Body of the Learning and Skills Service.

CAB 50/22 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2022.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2022 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

CAB 51/22 Financial Update and Medium Term Financial Plan

Consideration was given to a report that reviewed the financial position in the current year (2022/23) and presented outline plans for the 2023/24 Budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The recent Autumn Statement set out headline funding announcements for years 2023/24 and 2024/25. However the position from 2025/26 onwards was exceptionally uncertain and therefore figures were treated with some caution.

Members noted that the despite significant efforts around savings, inflationary pressures had continued and the projected position for 2022/23 was a gap of around £4m. Efforts would continue and if this gap materialised it would need to be funded from Reserves.

The report also outlined the indicative MTFP for future years. There were funding announcements as part of the Autumn statement and the level of funding that the Council would receive had been estimated. This would only be confirmed upon receipt of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement which was expected week commencing 19th December. The pressures around inflation, Children's Services and pay awards experienced in the current year had been projected forward based on estimates and the overall position was an estimated Budget Gap of around £7m.

As part of the Autumn Statement, the referendum limit had been increased to allow Council Tax and the Adult Social Care levy to be increased by an additional 1% for each, in 2023/2024 and with indications that this would continue beyond that. The Budget Report in February would consider the Council Tax levels and the approach to identifying the savings required.

The updated Capital Programme was set out as an appendix to the report and summarised within a table within the report. The Capital Programme would be updated in the report to Cabinet and Council in February 2023.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The updated financial position for 2022/23 be noted.
2. The revised Capital Programme at Appendix A of the report be noted.
3. The emerging issues for the MTFP be noted.

CAB 52/22 A Capital Investment Strategy for Children in Our Care and with Additional Needs - update

Consideration was given to a report on the capital investment strategy for children in the Council care and with additional needs.

The previous capital investment strategy for children in the Council care and with additional needs was reported to Cabinet in February 2022. This outlined the proposed capital allocations for investment in provision to ensure the Council could continue to meet the care and additional needs of children in the Borough. The report provided an update on those proposals and recommended the new allocation of resources for incorporation into the Council's Capital Programme.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The revised capital programme outlined in the report be approved.
2. The drawdown of £1.2m of prudential borrowing to deliver the schemes for children in our care provision referenced in paragraphs 10-20 of the report be approved.
3. The earmarking of the residual £4.8m of the initial £6.0m borrowing approval for the proposed King Edwin School expansion be approved until the full costs of the revised proposal are known.

4. Variations caused by cost movements within the approved programme be delegated to the Director of Finance, Development and Business Services and the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Children's and Young People.

CAB **Improving Quality in Care Homes**

53/22

Consideration was given to a report on improving quality in care homes.

There were 53 registered care homes in Stockton-on-Tees providing care and accommodation for older people and people with a learning disability, autism and mental health needs.

The Care Quality Commission was responsible for assessing the quality of care in residential and nursing homes, however, the Council, as the commissioner of accommodation and care in the borough had a pivotal role in ensuring people's experience of care and support was positive and reflected their needs and expectations.

The Council worked collaboratively with a number of organisations, such as North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, Tees, Esk & Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust, North East and North Cumbria ICS, and CQC, as well as Safeguarding and Infection Control leads, which helped to identify any issues or trends that were impacting quality in care homes.

Collaboration and engagement had helped in identifying some challenges and issues the care homes were facing:

- Recruitment and retention
- Manager turnaround and resilience
- Wellbeing of staff

The report detailed:-

- Current quality in care homes
- Care home engagement
- Quality improvement initiatives

Regarding next steps further work would continue with adult residential and nursing care home providers to improve quality of care and to continue to support them as they respond to any challenges arising.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

CAB **Governor LA Appointments**

54/22

Consideration was given to a report on governor local authority appointments.

In accordance with the procedure for the appointment of school/academy governors, approved as Minute CAB 27/13 of the Cabinet (13 June 2013), Cabinet was invited to consider the nominations to school/academy Governing Bodies listed in the Appendix to the report.

RESOLVED that the following appointment be made:-

Oxbridge Lane Primary School - Sophie Newton (School Nomination)

**CAB
55/22 Annual Report of the Governing
Body for the Learning and Skills
Service**

Consideration was given to a report that provided an update on the work of the Learning and Skills Service in supporting residents, employers and community partners with learning opportunities and employment initiatives to meet social and economic priorities during the 21/22 academic year. It demonstrated the ongoing success of the Learning and Skills Service and its Governing Body as an advisory committee empowered by Cabinet to provide challenge, support and strategic oversight.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.