

Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday, 18th June, 2014.

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr Barbara Inman); Cllr Mrs Lynne Apedaile, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Derrick Brown, Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Michael Clark, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Gillian Corr, Cllr Evaline Cunningham, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Phillip Dennis, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Robert Gibson, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Ben Houchen, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Elliot Kennedy, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Terry Laing, Cllr Miss Tina Large, Cllr Colin Leckonby, Cllr Ken Lupton, Cllr Ray McCall, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Mrs Kathryn Nelson, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg, Cllr David Rose, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Tracey Stott, Cllr Steve Walmsley, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr David Wilburn, Cllr Norma Wilburn, Cllr Mrs Mary Womphrey, Cllr Mick Womphrey, Cllr Bill Woodhead and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

Officers: N Schneider (CE); J Danks, L King (R), J Humphreys (CESC); P Dobson (DNS); P Kelly (DPH); J Nertney, P K Bell (LD).

Also in attendance: Members of the public.

Apologies: Cllr Paul Baker, Cllr Mark Chatburn, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Jean Kirby, Cllr Alan Lewis, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Andrew Stephenson and Cllr Norma Stephenson.

C Declarations of Interest

31/14

Councillor Lupton declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 7 - Members' Question as his grand children attended Ian Ramsay School.

C Minutes

32/14

The minutes of the meeting held on 30th April 2014 were signed by the Worshipful the Mayor as a correct record.

C Public Question Time

33/14

The Principal Solicitor informed Members that no Public Questions had been received.

C Members' Policy Seminar Programme

34/14

Consideration was given to a report that provided Council with an overview of content from the Members Policy Seminar in May 2014 that provided an update on the work of Tees Valley Unlimited including governance arrangements, Local Enterprise Partnership, achievements, specific initiatives and next steps.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

C NEPO Transformation – Introduction of New Arrangements for the Leadership & Governance of the NEPO Service and Regional Collaborative Procurement

35/14

Consideration was given to a report on the revised arrangements for the leadership and management of the NEPO Service and Regional Collaborative Procurement.

The North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) was responsible for

organising collaborative contracts through which councils purchase goods and services. It was governed through a Shared Services Arrangement entered into on 28th October 2010 by the 12 local authorities in the North East (the "LA12"). Gateshead was the host authority for NEPO (i.e. employing the NEPO staff and holding its financial assets) and supports its work with the provision of a range professional and support services. The LA12 pay an annual subscription to contribute to NEPO's costs.

Following an extensive review during 2013, and subsequent reports to the Regional Chief Executives' Group, the Executive Subcommittee of NEPO, and to the ANEC Leader's and Elected Mayors' Board it was resolved to take steps to improve its efficiency and effectiveness, including exploring options, and then to set up arrangements, for the purpose of transforming the way in which regional procurement will be delivered in future.

Consequently it was agreed to:-

- Create a revised accountability structure and strengthen member involvement with the NEPO Service via ANEC (the Association of North East Councils Ltd).
- Clarify strategic leadership through ANEC's management structure and governance.
- Improve the operational relationships between NEPO and the LA12.
- Improve credibility for NEPO and provide clarity about its new role and agree areas of common purpose managing delivery and harnessing collaboration.
- Apply a flexible approach to local sub regional and regional procurement using NEPO or alternatives within or outside of the region
- Clarify what activities and procurements should be led under the NEPO branding for the LA12
- Create sustainability for the NEPO Service via appropriate funding arrangements and business plans.

At its meeting on 9th April 2014 the Executive Sub-committee of NEPO approved a detailed report outlining new and revised functions and objectives for the NEPO Service and future collaborative procurement activity; it proposed establishing a new arrangement for the governance of the NEPO Service and for regional collaborative procurement generally via ANEC.

It was agreed that the NEPO Joint Committee should be disestablished by the LA12 and new governance and delivery arrangements for the collaborative procurement service be created under ANEC. Decisions were to be considered formally by ANEC and a final meeting of NEPO's Joint Committee will be convened.

These changes would require the LA12 to terminate the current Joint Committee arrangement and, through ANEC, agree a new arrangement under the Leaders and Elected Mayors' Group (as ANEC's Member Management Board) with strategic direction and advice available through the proposed

member-led Collaborative Procurement Subcommittee advised by two lead Directors of Resources on behalf of the Directors of Resources Group. Under this proposal issues can if necessary be referred to the Regional Chief Executives' Group.

Local Authorities would appoint members to the NEPO Collaborative Subcommittee at Cabinet/Annual Council as appropriate.

The Leaders and Elected Mayors' Group of ANEC would have the following responsibilities:-

- Overarching responsibility for North East collaborative procurement activity and the NEPO Service.
- On the recommendation of the Collaborative Procurement Subcommittee, approval of the annual business plan, annual report and work programme.
- Receive regular six-monthly updates from the NEPO Collaborative Procurement Subcommittee and;
- Receive reports on other relevant issues where necessary for decision.

The Collaborative Procurement Subcommittee would have the following responsibilities:-

- Develop an annual business plan and work programme for North East collaborative procurement activity including the existing regional service known as NEPO and to prepare and agree an annual report for approval by the Leaders and Elected Mayors' Group.
- Monitor and scrutinise the provision of collaborative procurement services and their budget.
- Monitor the range and effectiveness of collaborative procurement activity being undertaken generally.
- Provide the Leaders and Elected Mayors' Group with assurance on all aspects of internal controls and risk management.
- Keep under review appropriate strategic plans, a regional procurement strategy and an appropriate performance management framework.
- Ensure that there are appropriate and effective arrangements for stakeholder engagement in the NEPO service and;
- Ensure appropriate protocols and procedures are in place to secure the effective operation of the service and collaborative procurement across the north east.

Following completion of a staffing review staff transfer arrangements would be undertaken in accordance with TUPE regulations and all existing assets and contracts would be passed to ANEC Ltd under the terms of an agreement to be entered into between the 12 constituent authorities of NEPO and ANEC Ltd.

The intention was for the new structure and governance to come into effect on 1 July 2014 and for TUPE to apply from 1 August 2014.

Gateshead Council had had a long and successful association with the provision of legal and financial support services to NEPO. ANEC Ltd had indicated that, subject to formal approval, it wished to continue with those arrangements going forward, at least for an initial period to support a smooth transition to the new governance and service delivery model. Accordingly, and for that purpose, it was envisaged that a further agreement would be entered into between ANEC Ltd and Gateshead Council under which those support services arrangements would continue to be provided to them on similar terms as previously.

Cabinet had considered the report at its meeting held on 12th June 2014 and a copy of the relevant minute extract had been circulated to Members.

RESOLVED that:-

1. Any consequential changes be made to its Constitution to give effect to these revised arrangements.
2. The Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Finance be appointed to serve on the Collaborative Procurement Subcommittee of ANEC.

C
36/14

Members' Question Time

The following question had been submitted by Councillor Lupton for response by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:-

"There has clearly been a significant failure in performance at Ian Ramsey Church of England Aided Comprehensive School with Ofsted identifying that there has been a decline in students standard of attainment, too few students reach the standards they are capable of, teaching is inadequate and teachers expectations are low, students do not display positive attitudes to learning and behaviour is not consistently good in lessons, leadership and management are inadequate with leaders and managers, including governors, being over optimistic and there are not enough checks or challenges to teachers about the performance of different groups of students.

For the school to go from Good (a rating of 2) in 2011 to Inadequate (the lowest rating of 4) in 2014 would indicate a total lack of monitoring and interpretation of evidence, which has led to the school failing our young people and their parents.

Could I therefore ask the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People how such a failure in performance came about and what actions are being taken to rectify the problems identified by Ofsted in this school?"

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People responded with:-

"Ian Ramsey Church of England Aided Comprehensive School was judged inadequate by Ofsted in March 2014. It is one of a number of schools across the Country that have seen a drop in Ofsted rating over this period.

Since the last inspection of Ian Ramsey in 2011 there have been 3 different Ofsted frameworks introduced. These frameworks (the basis of any inspection and the ensuing judgements) have, each time, raised the bar and introduced a new and different focus upon which schools are judged. I think we would not argue with that as we want the best education for our children.

Despite these more challenging frameworks - the 'raising of the bar' and changing focus - we have maintained our position in secondary Ofsted performance. At the start of 2011, 2 schools were in Ofsted categories if we take judgements of predecessor academy schools into account. Currently, we have 1 school and 1 academy in a category if we take the judgement if the predecessor school into account. 10 schools/academies were grade 3 or above at the start of 2011 and 10 schools/academies are grade 3 or above currently. At the same time we have significantly improved the position in primary schools. Only 1 of 59 primaries in Stockton an academy has a historic Ofsted category judgement and in excess of 95% of them are good or outstanding. According to nationally available data from Ofsted, at the last published position, 83% of children in Stockton attended schools that were good or better against a national average of 80%. And we are securing really sound foundations in our primary schools with 91% of our primary schools good or better as opposed to a national average of 80% (and a North East average of 87%) Our own up to date information for our primaries shows 96% - an increase of 5% since January this year. We are aware of the need to continue this performance through our secondary schools and academies and are active in doing so. That is why I have highlighted the primary school figures.

The framework that was in place at the time of the last inspection of Ian Ramsey (in 2011) focussed upon attainment and especially the proportion of young people who achieved GCSE in 5 or more subjects including English and Maths at Grade C or above. The floor target – below which schools were not expected to dip - was and remains 40%. Across the Borough, performance was reported at 49% in 2009 rising to 57% in 2013. At Ian Ramsey, 65% of young people achieved these grades in 2011 and in 2013 the figure was 60%. The prediction for Ian Ramsey this year is above 70%.

It is worth noting that, In the interim year – 2012 - this figure had dropped to 56% and Ian Ramsey was one of the many schools across the country that protested about the intervention in English grade boundaries by the examination boards I wrote to Michael Gove at the time about this. Having taken this 'hit', Ian Ramsey like many other schools across the region and the country responded, resulting in a 4% improvement the following year.

When compared to all Stockton secondary schools, Ian Ramsey has consistently been above the average. Of course, this does not mean that we haven't identified it as a school that could and should do much better – we have. There has been a focus of attention upon Ian Ramsey and the situation was being monitored and improvements sought. I know this is what you are interested in Councillor Lupton. The local authority was clear in the challenge to the school to improve outcomes for young people and had required actions and interventions to support this.

Our own local Authority Challenge Framework was updated in 2013, to reflect

the changes in the Ofsted framework. Where one or more trigger is identified this results in additional challenge to schools and I can share with members the fact that, in Ian Ramsey, 3 triggers were identified in September 2013, following the results of the public examinations and this was presented at a members policy seminar. One of these triggers was the disparity between the schools assessment - that Ian Ramsey was a good school - and the local authority view that it was a school requiring improvement. The local authority responded swiftly, challenging governors and the leadership team of the school and requiring them to make interventions to bring about improvements. This was shared with Ofsted during the inspection, as was the authority's evaluation of the school – which was that it was a requiring improvement school (grade 3). The local authority had disagreed with the school assessment of good (having regarded it requiring improvement). Indeed, this disparity in self-assessment was one of the triggers that instigated challenge to the school.

Since the inspection, the local authority has worked closely with the Diocese of Durham and Newcastle to effect swift change. We have submitted to Ofsted a Statement of Action and School Action Plan and the implementation of this plan is underway with the Chief Adviser working closely with the Acting Head teacher of the School, Mrs Gill Booth. We have supported the Diocese in identifying and providing additional capacity in leadership and in the proposal for Academy Conversion as part of a Multi Academy Trust with the Venerable Bede Academy in Sunderland. The governing Body has been augmented to ensure strong governance for the school in the next few months prior to becoming an academy.

We continue to provide this challenge and support to Ian Ramsey and other schools despite the reductions in funding and resource to the local authority over the past 5 years, despite the huge challenges to schools posed by the academies programme and despite the changing and unclear expectations from national government in terms of the role of the local authority in relation to schools and academies.

We are fortunate that we have consistently taken the view that whatever the expectations are from national government, we will continue to bring challenge and support to our schools and academies because it is the right thing to do because they are our children and not all local authorities do that. This includes stepping in and working alongside all involved when a school or academy is judged to be inadequate – and making sure that the powers of intervention we get at that point in time are used to bring about rapid improvement and move the school from this category – as we have seen most recently at North Shore, Thornaby Academy and St Michaels. And we have worked alongside the Department for Education and Academy Sponsors, given the current view that the way to move coasting and under performing schools is for them to become academies. From 12 secondary schools, we now have 6 academies and 2 in the process of conversion.

Our contribution to school improvement and how well we know our schools has been acknowledged by Ofsted. In 2013 the newly introduced Ofsted framework required inspectors to include a comment about the role of the local authority. Since that time there have been 4 inspections of secondary schools and 14 primary inspections. Repeatedly, the local authority contribution has been recognised with very positive comments about our challenge, support and

knowledge of our schools."

Councillor Lupton asked the following supplementary question:-

"The Head teacher at Ian Ramsay has felt it appropriate to resign and Councillor Mrs McCoy has presented lots of excuses for the situation at Ian Ramsay School, what I would like to know is will anyone else resign because of the failings?"

Councillor Mrs McCoy responded with:-

"Anyone with any Human Resources knowledge will know that it would be totally inappropriate if I responded to that question. We have a clear vision for our schools and we always keep members informed."

C 37/14 Forward Plan and Leader's Statement

The Leader of the Council gave his Forward Plan and Leaders Statement.

Since Council last met on the 30th April, Cabinet met on the 15th May 2014 and 12th June 2014 and, in addition to the regular items considered:-

- The Scrutiny Review of Access to GP, Urgent and Emergency Care
- An update report on Local Growth Fund
- A report on the Repair and Renew Grant Scheme for flood support
- An update report on the Globe
- School term dates for 2015/16
- A report on the work to tackle Hate Crime
- A report on the North Tees District Heating scheme
- An update report on the Asset Review, School Capital and site disposals
- The Xentrall annual report
- The annual report on the Council's Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act activity
- A report on the introduction of new arrangements for the leadership and governance of the NEPO service and regional collaborative procurement.

Looking ahead to the next Cabinet meeting to be held on 17th July 2014 significant items on the agenda to be considered were as follows:-

- The year-end performance and MTFP report
- A report on the Social Fund pilot
- A review of the financial support to the voluntary, community & social enterprise
- A report on the Coroners service
- The annual report on the troubled families programme
- An update report on Welfare Reforms
- A report on the Leisure Facilities management grant
- A scrutiny report on street café furniture and 'A' board advertising
- A report on the supplementary planning document on affordable housing

Along with the other four Tees Valley Local Authorities the Leader of the Council signed Tees Valley City Deal along with The Minister from the Cabinet Office.

The Spring / Summer events season continued to go well. The Tees Regatta in May and the Mayor's Sunday Service were both great successes. The Leader of the Council was looking forward to the World Market and Armed Forces week with the flag raising ceremony here at the Town Hall. The Fire Engine and Vintage vehicle show would take place at Preston Park and then the cycling festival on the weekend of 11th – 13th July 2014.