

**Committee and Date**

Cabinet

31 May 2017

CABINET

**Minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2017 in the Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND
12.30 - 1.05 pm**

Responsible Officer: Jane Palmer

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Present

Councillor Malcolm Pate (Leader)

Councillors Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader), Karen Calder, Lee Chapman, Simon Jones, David Minnery, Cecilia Motley, Malcolm Price, Stuart West and Michael Wood

160 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

161 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None were declared.

162 Minutes**RESOLVED:**

That the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22 March 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

163 Public Question Time

No questions had been received from members of the public

164 Scrutiny Items - Report from the Planning Task and Finish Group 2016/2017

The Chairman of the Planning Task and Finish Group [and Chairman of the Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny Committee] presented the report and recommendations from the Planning Task and Finish Group that had been endorsed by the Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 23 March 2017.

He explained that the Task and Finish group had focussed on two broad issues, namely:

1. The business processes relevant to the delivery of the regulatory process as covered by the planning service review; and
2. How the planning service could demonstrate a contribution to economic growth

Members noted issues that had been highlighted by the Task and Finish group included:

- The need for all areas of the Council to work together and feed in harmony into the planning process in a timely manner
- Strengthening and improving communications with Town and Parish Councils
- Working with applicants to ensure that they were aware of the information they needed to provide
- The need to ensure that local Members are made aware of issues in their areas at an early stage in the process

Referring specifically to concerns relating to communication with Parish and Town Councils, the Portfolio Holder commented that hard paper copies of planning documentation could not continue to be provided and the preferred means of communication was electronic. An increase in the standard consultation period from 21 days to 31 days was noted but some Members still did not consider the increased period to be sufficient.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing, Regulatory Services and Environment paid tribute to the work undertaken by the Task and Finish Group and suggested that the number of Planning Committees could be revisited by the new Council following the May elections and that the outcome of the Government's Planning White Paper should be borne in mind. He stressed that, when considering planning applications, outcome was more important than speed and made particular reference to paragraph 187 of the National Planning policy Framework [as detailed on page 7 of the report].

RESOLVED:

That the following recommendations from the Planning Task and Finish Group be endorsed:

1. That following the election in May 2017 there will be a new Council when the Committee options can be revisited;
2. That the business review recommendations detailed in the report, be implemented;
3. That the recommendations and responses to the RTPI 'Fostering Economic Growth' be embedded into the culture and operation of the Planning Service;
4. That the Council recognises that the performance of the planning process is dependent not only on the Planning Team, but also on the resource and capacity of internal and external consultees to the process.

165 Proposal to approve the establishment of the Shropshire Education Trust (a Local Authority Facilitated Multi-Academy Trust)

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People presented the report from the Director of Children's Services outlining the initial progress in exploring the appetite for a school led Multi Academy Trust ("MAT") for Shropshire. He stated that a final decision would need to be made whether or not to proceed by 9 June 2017 based on the number of schools expressing an interest in joining the Shropshire Education Trust. He added that no additional financial costs to the Council were anticipated as the Department of Education grant [£25,000 to each school converting to an academy] could be used to meet the costs associated with conversion and the establishment of the Shropshire Education Trust.

A Member commented that there was no proof that academies provided better education than Local Authority controlled schools but considered that, given the current Government's policy, the proposal was a step in the right direction. Another Member commented that schools were being forced along the Academy route. However, approval to establish a MAT for Shropshire was supported by the majority.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the development of the Shropshire Education Trust to sit outside of the Local Authority, be supported;
- ii) That Members and Trustees of the Shropshire Education Trust will include representation from the LA (capped at 19.99% under current legislation) and, if church schools are involved in the Shropshire Education Trust, representation from the Diocese
- iii) That the appointment of Members and Officers of the Shropshire Education Trust be approved in order to progress matters
- iv) That the initial start-up costs of the Shropshire Education Trust of up to £65,000 be met if the costs cannot be recovered in the event that the Trust is not viable
- v) That it be noted that further analysis in respect of the full extent of set up costs is underway, and that a follow up paper will be brought before Cabinet should additional set up costs be required in order to proceed to a proposal to the Regional Schools Commissioner.

166 Revocation of Air Quality Management Area

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing, Regulatory Services and Environment presented a report from the Director of Public Health relating to the revocation of the Air Quality Management Area in Oswestry as the measured levels of nitrogen dioxide were well below the levels set by the National Air Quality Objective.

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Public Health be authorised to revoke the Air Quality Management Order for Oswestry under section 83(2)(b) of the Environment Act 1995.

167 Exclusion of the Public and Press

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and Paragraph 10.4 (3) of the Council's Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded during consideration of the following item.

168 Connecting Shropshire Phase 2b - Procurement Outcomes

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Business and Economy presented the confidential report of the Director of Place and Enterprise on the outcome of Connecting Shropshire's Phase 2b procurement process.

RESOLVED:

That the three confidential recommendations, as detailed in the report, be approved.

169 Confidential Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the confidential Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22 March 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

Signed

(Leader)

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Date:

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