

PUBLICATION: 12th September 2014

DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: 17th September 2014

FOLLOWING THE CALL-IN PERIOD, DECISIONS INCLUDED IN THESE MINUTES MAY THEN BE IMPLEMENTED WHERE THEY HAVE NOT BEEN SUBJECT TO A CALL-IN BY A SCRUTINY COMMITTEE.

** DENOTES KEY DECISION*

CABINET MEETING

At a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Huyton on Wednesday, 10th September, 2014 the following Members were

P r e s e n t:

Councillors

R J Round
Chairperson of the Cabinet
(in the Chair)

Ms S E Gaffney, Mrs J Harris, N F Keats, D Lonergan MRICS, A Moorhead, G J Morgan and G See.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors E Connor and M Murphy.

19. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6 August 2014 were received as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Deputy Chief Executive's representative reported that no declarations of interest had been submitted by Members.

21. KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY APPROVAL OF FURTHER MODIFICATIONS (*)

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Housing which sought approval to publish and consult on further modifications to the emerging Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy.

Members were advised that the proposed further modifications supplemented those which had been approved by the Cabinet on 18 June 2014 and reflected the outcomes of further public hearings which had been held in July 2014. It was indicated that the further changes were needed to ensure that the Plan was found sound and could in due course be adopted by the Council.

An updated schedule of the further proposed modifications had been drawn up and the key elements were summarised at section 5 of the report.

RESOLVED – That

- (i) the further progress which had been made in developing the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy, including the re-convened hearings held by the Inspector in July 2014, be noted;
- (ii) in order to respond to the points raised during the re-convened hearings the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy be further modified to:-
 - (a) remove references to the land to the south and east of Knowsley Village (which is 'safeguarded' for housing development after 2028) being potentially developed before 2028 if needed;
 - (b) emphasise that proposals for development within the proposed Sustainable Urban Extensions (particularly the largest of these at Knowsley Lane, Huyton; East of Halewood; and South Whiston/Land South of M62) must demonstrate a comprehensive approach covering the relevant Sustainable Urban Extension as a whole, including appropriate contributions to the funding of any necessary infrastructure; and
 - (c) include the other detailed policy changes summarised in section 5 of the report;
- (iii) the full schedule of further modifications to the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy, as set out at Appendix B to the report, be approved so that these may be considered during the next steps in preparing the Plan, as set out in section 6 of the report; and
- (iv) delegated authority be granted to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Regeneration, Economy and Skills to authorise any further typographical or other minor revisions to the modifications in Appendix B to the report should this prove necessary.

22. CHOICE-BASED LETTINGS - PROPERTY POOL PLUS POLICY (*)

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Housing which provided Members with an opportunity to consider proposed revisions to the Property Pool Plus Allocations Policy.

The report set out the need to amend the Policy which had been prompted primarily by legislative changes affecting housing allocations, the need to reflect lessons learned during the first years of operation of Property Pool Plus, and recommendations from a Scrutiny Review that had been undertaken in Autumn 2013. It was indicated that consultation on potential areas of change had taken place with a broad range of stakeholders between January and April 2014 and the responses had identified that the majority of respondents in Knowsley, and across the sub-region

generally, were in favour of the proposed changes to the Policy. The key proposals were highlighted at Section 4.4. of the report.

Members were advised that the adoption of the revised Property Pool Plus Allocations Policy would ensure that the Council met its statutory obligation in line with current legislation and guidance, and would ensure that social housing was allocated in a fair and transparent manner to those who were most in housing need.

RESOLVED – That

- (i) the revised Property Pool Plus Allocations Policy, attached at Appendix A to the report, be endorsed;
- (ii) a full meeting of the Council should authorise the implementation of the revised Policy, subject to the unanimous agreement of each partner local authority at its corresponding Cabinet and full Council meetings; and
- (iii) the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet member with Portfolio for Regeneration, Economy and Skills be authorised to agree any subsequent minor modifications to the amended Policy.

23. 2013/14 CAPITAL OUTFURN AND 2014/15 CAPITAL MONITORING (*)

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Finance and Information Technology which presented the Council's Capital Programme 2013/14 outturn and provided an update on the position in relation to the Programme for 2014/15 and future years. The report set out information on the rephasing of schemes, monitoring of the programme and available capital receipts.

It was noted that the final Capital Programme for 2013/14 was £22.923m and schemes totalling £2.855m had been rephased into 2014/15. As at 30 June 2014, 10% of the revised 2014/15 Capital Programme had been spent.

Members were advised that reports to individual Portfolio Holders had included a number of adjustments for 2014/15 with £6.363m being rephased into future years. In addition, there had been adjustments of £0.616m to the 2014/15 Capital Programme and new start schemes under £1m which totalled £3.226m. It was also indicated that schemes over £1m totalling £1.025m had been proposed for inclusion in the Capital Programme for 2014/15 and future years. After adjusting for these items, the Council's revised Capital programme would be £35.141m, of which £20.733m would be planned to be spent in 2014/15.

Councillor N F Keats, Cabinet Member with portfolio for Finance and Information Technology, indicated that the Capital Programme would continue to be monitored to ensure that future spending was in line with the expected phasing of schemes.

RESOLVED – That

- (i) the revised 2013/14 Capital Programme at 31 March 2014 totalling £22.923m, as identified in paragraph 3.1 of the report, be noted;

- (ii) the total expenditure in 2013/14 of £20.532m and consequent rephasing of capital expenditure of £2.855m into 2014/15, as identified in sections 3.2 to 3.10 of the report, be noted;
- (iii) the 2014/15 capital expenditure to date of £2.424m and the expected impact on the delivery of the approved Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 4.2.1 of the report, be noted;
- (iv) the proposals from Portfolio Holders to rephase schemes under £1m of £6.363m from 2014/15 into future years, as set out in paragraph 4.2.2 of the report, be endorsed;
- (v) the proposals from Portfolio Holders for new start schemes under £1m (phased £0.982m in 2014/15 and £1.219m in future years) and adjustments of £0.616m in 2014/15, as set out in paragraph 4.3.1 of the report, be endorsed;
- (vi) the proposals for new start schemes over £1m, as set out in paragraph 4.3.2 of the report, be approved;
- (vii) £0.394m in capital receipts be allocated in order to release revenue reserves, as set out in section 5.2 of the report;
- (viii) no further commitment of capital receipts be considered pending discussions on the 2015/16 Budget, including the potential need to commit further capital receipts in order to release additional revenue reserves, as set out in paragraph 5.3 of the report; and
- (ix) the revised three-year capital programme of £35.141m and the revised phasing, as set out in paragraph 6.1.2 and detailed at Appendix B to the report, be noted.

24. REVIEW OF COUNCIL RESERVES (*)

The Cabinet considered the joint report of the Deputy Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Information Technology which set out the results of a review of all Council-wide and Portfolio reserves which had been commissioned by the Cabinet on 18 June 2014.

Members were advised that since June a fundamental challenge of the appropriateness of all Portfolio and Council-wide reserves had been undertaken. This had included an assessment of the extent to which the reserves were required to meet known commitments and the degree of certainty regarding the cost of those commitments; whether the resources still aimed to deliver a current policy priority; and whether the commitment could be funded in another way. The outcomes of the review were summarised at Section 5 of the report and it was proposed that £15.848m should be released at this stage. Overall, Portfolios had endorsed proposals to release £2.378m (18%) of Portfolio Reserves, which would be released either by reducing the associated expenditure plans or by identifying alternative resources. It was also proposed that £13.470m (30%) of Council-wide Reserves would be released to manage the Council's Financial Strategy, which was outlined in paragraph 4.3 of the report. This equated to a significant reduction in the Council's ability to manage financial risk in future years, but was considered to be unavoidable given the current wider financial challenges.

It was indicated that the Director of Finance and Information Technology would continue to consider the scope to release further resources as part of the Council's budget monitoring procedures.

RESOLVED – That

- (i) resources totalling £2.378m be released from Portfolio Reserves, as set out in paragraph 5.3.2 of the report;
- (ii) resources totalling £13.470m be released from Council-wide Reserves, as detailed in paragraph 5.3.5 of the report; and
- (iii) the future use of one-off resources (including the £15.848m released via recommendations (i) and (ii) above) should support the Council's Financial Strategy in line with the prioritised actions set out in section 4.3 of the report.

Minutes 19 to 24 received as a correct record the 8th day of October 2014.

Chairperson of the Cabinet

(The meeting closed at 2.10 pm)