

# CABINET

Monday, 13 July 2015

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	P Davies (Chair)	Leader of the Council
	Councillors	AR McLachlan	Governance, Commissioning and Improvement
		G Davies	Neighbourhoods, Housing and Engagement
		AER Jones	Support Services
		C Jones	Adult Social Care and Public Health
		C Meaden	Leisure, Sport and Culture
		P Hackett	Economy
		Tony Smith	Children and Family Services
		B Mooney	Environment and Sustainability
		S Whittingham	Highways and Transport

## 23 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Phil Davies declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item No. 7 on the agenda – Wirral Business Support – Birkenhead Business Improvement District Proposal - by Virtue of him being a Non-Executive Director of the Wirral Chamber of Commerce. He informed that he would be vacating the Chair and leaving the meeting whilst this item of business was under consideration.

## 24 MINUTES

### RESOLVED:

**That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 9 July 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.**

## 25 FINANCIAL MONITORING OUT-TURN REPORTS FOR 2014/15

Councillor Phil Davies introduced a report by the Section 151 Officer, detailing the out-turn for 2014/15 and concluding the reporting for 2014/15. There were separate Appendices for Revenue (including details of the Reserves), Capital (including resources used to fund the Programme), and the Collection Summary (including Council Business Rates and Sundry Debts).

Councillor Phil Davies informed that it was pleasing to see that the revenue outturn had produced an underspend of £0.5m and he congratulated all concerned. He also was pleased with the capital spend of £32.5m that compared to a predicted spend at Month 10 of £39.5 million.

Councillor Phil Davies also made reference to the excellent projects that had been funded over the last year as follows:

- Major works at Somerville School and classrooms at Holy Trinity and Woodchurch Road Schools.
- Health and wellbeing through the new 3G football pitches and fitness suite at Guinea Gap and the Arrowse Park Sports Pavilion.
- Economic regeneration through Regional Growth Fund grants to support businesses and also further investment into New Brighton.
- Investing into highways and road safety and also works to Cleveland Street Depot and the new Salt Barn.
- Support for the vulnerable through the completion of the new Foxfield School and Disabled Facilities Grants/aids and adaptations.

### **RESOLVED: That**

#### **Revenue**

- (1) **the Revenue Out-turn for 2014/15 which showed an underspend of £0.5 million be noted;**
- (2) **the transfer of the underspend to General Fund Balances be confirmed;**
- (3) **the Reserves as detailed in the Annex to the report be confirmed;**

#### **Capital**

- (4) **the additional re-profiling of £9.9 million from 2014/15 to 2015/16 be noted;**
- (5) **the financing of the Programme for 2014/15 be noted;**
- (6) **the Programme for 2015/16 and beyond be kept under review to ensure it is realistic and deliverable;**

#### **Collection Summary**

- (7) **the Council Tax in-year collection rate of 95.5% being an improvement upon the 95.4% rate in 2013/14 be noted;**
- (8) **the Business Rates collection rate increased from 98.2% in 2014/15 from 96.9% in 2013/14 be noted;**
- (9) **the Sundry Debtors arrears at 31 March 2015 stood at £30.9 million which was an increase on the position at 31 March 2014 for the reasons set out be noted; and**

- (10) the sundry debts for Adult Social Services and Other Directorates detailed in the report be written-off against the Provision for Bad Debts.**

26 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT**

Councillor Phil Davies introduced a report by the Section 151 Officer stating that the Council's treasury management activity was underpinned by CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management, which required the production of annual Prudential Indicators and a Treasury Management Strategy Statement on likely financing and investment activity. The Code also recommended that members were informed of treasury management activities at least twice a year.

The Section 151 Officer's report fulfilled the Council's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) Investment Guidance.

The report informed that the Council had achieved in-year savings from the re-profiling of the Capital Programme and the temporary use of internal funds offsetting the requirement to externally borrow. The use of these internal funds reduced the sums available to invest but in times of low interest rates there were overall benefits. As a consequence Treasury Management activities achieved one-off savings of £2 million in 2014/15. The Council had also complied with the Prudential Indicators.

Councillor Phil Davies noted in particular that during 2014/15 there had been one-off savings from borrowing activity of £2.3 million which included the use of internal funding so had a consequential impact on investment income which was reduced by £0.3 million. Overall treasury management activities resulted in a saving of £2.0 million in 2014/15 and this sum has been returned to the General Fund balances.

**RESOLVED: That**

- (1) the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2014/15 be noted;**
- (2) the Treasury Management Strategy (Minimum Revenue Provision policy) be amended; and**
- (3) the transfer of the saving of £2 million from capital financing activities in 2014/15 to the General Fund balance be noted.**

## 27 PUBLIC HEALTH INNOVATION FUND

Councillor C Jones introduced a report by the Director of Public Health that informed that in June 2013, a non-recurrent underspend had been identified within the public health grant for 2013-15. With the support of the Cabinet Portfolio Holder the Director proposed that consideration be given to seeing how the underspend could be used to benefit the local population through investing in other areas across the Council, thereby enabling them to contribute further to the delivery of public health outcomes as defined by the national Public Health Outcomes Framework.

As a result, all strategic directorates had been invited to submit proposals for non-recurrent spend which would then be assessed for their public health impact and prioritised for investment.

The Cabinet noted that in total 39 proposals with a total value of £3.57m across 2013-14 and 2014-15 financial years had been assessed as having relevant public health outcomes. These projects had been reviewed and updated in July 2014 when it had been reported to the Cabinet that some projects would have reduced commitments through the realisation of efficiencies and rephrasing. The revised budget for revenue projects was £2.5m.

It had been agreed that all the projects would provide evaluations at the end of the project period and the report included links to those evaluations.

The Cabinet had approved a budget reserve of £500,000 which would be allocated against public health innovation, once the evaluation of Public Health Outcomes Framework projects had been concluded. The Director's report made recommendations in relation to this funding. They were made in the context of a recent announcement of a significant cut in the public health grant during this financial year. Whilst the detail of the cut had not yet been finalised, application of the national proportion of the cut (7.4% of the total national public health grant) meant a loss to Wirral of around £2.3 million. However, the Cabinet noted that there was a risk that the cut could be greater than this.

### **RESOLVED**

**That an investment of £240,000 of the Public Health Innovation reserve be approved for the following projects:**

- Project CYP3: The G.I.R.L.S Project**
- Project CYP7: Connect for Wellbeing**
- Project DASS3: The Breeze Long Term Conditions Programme**
- Project R&E4: Forest Schools**
- Project S&R1: Cycle Wirral**

## 28 OUTCOME OF REPRESENTATION PERIOD ON PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE PENSBY HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS AND PENSBY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Councillor Tony Smith introduced a report by the Director of Children's Services, advising of the outcomes of the representation period which had taken place in relation to the proposals for the amalgamation of Pensby High School for Boys and Girls, as agreed for publication at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 12 March 2015. (Minute No. 159 refers.)

Appended to the Director's report was:

- Appendix 1 – The Statutory Notice
- Appendix 2 – The Statutory Proposal Document
- Appendix 3 – The Decision Makers Guidance

The reasons why these proposals were being put forward were that as a single school with a single budget, there was far more opportunity for the governing body to reduce duplication and create efficiencies in many areas, and to put into place the appropriate number of staff to operate the new fully merged teaching timetable. The school also intended to occupy the Girls building and a small part only of the Boys building, which would reduce the overall costs to the school budget for cleaning, caretaking, heating and lighting etc. Should the two schools remain separate within the Federation, both would be subject to a budget in line with the number of pupils on roll. This would be likely to have an impact on teaching and standards.

All pupils on roll at the two schools would transfer to the mixed sex school, to be called Pensby High School, from 1 September 2015, if they wished to do so. The intention of the amalgamation was to take the best practice from the two predecessor schools and to build on it to improve standards and raise ambition and aspiration. This had been supported by the views of the majority of respondents to the original consultation. The amalgamation of the two schools also provided that both boys and girls living in the local area would have a local school for the future.

Councillor Phil Davies thanked all of the Officers who had supported the project.

**RESOLVED: That the following linked proposals be approved:**

- (1) the closure of Pensby High School for Boys from 31 August 2015;**
- (2) a prescribed alteration to the gender intake of Pensby High School for Girls from 1 September 2015; and**
- (3) the Director of Children's Services be authorised to take all necessary steps to implement these proposals and ensure the**

prescribed procedures are followed in furtherance of the proposals.

Councillor Phil Davies left the meeting.

Councillor Ann McLachlan in the Chair.

29 **WIRRAL BUSINESS SUPPORT - BIRKENHEAD BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT PROPOSAL**

Councillor Ann McLachlan introduced a report by the Head of Regeneration and Planning which set out the current progress of the BID proposals for Birkenhead Town Centre along with the implication to the Council of the BID, any subsequent successful ballot in favour of creating a BID; and recommended courses of action for the Council on these matters.

Councillor Ann McLachlan informed that the Chief Executive of the Wirral Chamber of Commerce had requested that the report be deferred for consideration as the Chamber of Commerce had a number of concerns and proposals relating to the report. Representatives of the Chamber of Commerce wanted to meet with Council Officers prior to a decision being made by the Cabinet.

**RESOLVED:**

**That Officers be requested to meet with representatives from the Chamber of Commerce and the matter be deferred to the Special meeting of the Cabinet scheduled for Monday, 20 July 2015, as an urgent item of business.**

Councillor Phil Davies back in the Chair.

30 **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:**

**That under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.**

31 **PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: HEAD LEASE WITH COMPANY NAMED IN REPORT.**

Further to Minute No. 166 of the Cabinet meeting held on 12 March 2015 Councillor Pat Hackett introduced a report by the Strategic Director – Regeneration and Environment. The report set out the background, current position and included details of the Heads of Terms that the Council would be entering into to allow the scheme to commence.

The Strategic Director was in attendance at the meeting to answer Members' questions.

**RESOLVED: That**

- (1) the Cabinet agrees to the Council taking out a 10 year Head Lease (with an option to renew at year 10) and via a back to back agreement sublet the completed unit to the Company named in the report. In the event of the company defaulting on its sub lease the cost of the Council's Head Lease will be underwritten from the newly established Property Development Fund; and**
- (2) the Heads of Terms reported in Appendix 1 to the report be agreed.**