

CABINET

Monday, 27 November 2017

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	P Davies (Chair)	Leader of the Council Growth
	Councillors	P Brightmore A Davies G Davies C Jones B Mooney M Patrick C Spriggs J Williamson S Whittingham	Environment Transformation Housing and Community Safety Social Care and Health Children and Families Localism and Engagement Delivering Differently Finance and Income Generation Highways and Transport

In attendance: Councillors R Abbey, C Blakeley and I Lewis

55 MINUTES SILENCE

The Leader paid tribute to ex-Mayor of Wirral and Labour member for Bebington, Councillor Walter Smith, who had recently passed away. The Leader informed that Councillor Smith had been involved in local politics for more than 40 years first as a member of Birkenhead County Borough Council, and subsequently as a member on Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council. He added that Walter Smith embodied all the ideals of a public servant, giving selflessly of his time and commitment to his ward and to Wirral. The Cabinet, and those members of the public in attendance for the meeting, stood for a minute's silence in tribute to his memory.

56 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Cabinet were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on the agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham declared a personal interest in Item No 6, Approval of Business Case and Consultation Approach for the Proposed Extension of Selective Licensing, by virtue of his position as a Board Member of Magenta Housing.

57 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6 November 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.

EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

RESLOVED: That the following Key Decisions that had been taken under delegated powers during the period 27 October, 2017 to date, be noted:

- **Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety - Revised Playing Pitch Strategy for Wirral.**

STRATEGIC ASSET ACQUISITIONS - EUROPA BUILDING

Councillor George Davies, Cabinet Member - Housing and Community Safety (and Deputy Leader of the Council), Cabinet Member - Transformation said:

“We have already pledged to create 5,000 new jobs, and to attract a quarter of a billion of new investment into Wirral by 2020.

“We are well on the way to achieving those targets, and making investment decisions like this one will help us drive forward the regeneration of major town centres such as Birkenhead – helping to revitalise the town, creating thousands of new jobs and quickening the pace of our exciting regeneration plans for the area.

“This is a bold and ambitious move. We are absolutely committed to regeneration in our borough – we will not stop until we have created a thriving local economy, where our residents have opportunity and can access good, high paying jobs on their doorsteps.

“This proposal is yet more proof of our commitment to that pledge. Following exciting recent announcements of a state-of-the-art student accommodation development in Hamilton Square, and the plans to open a branch of the world-renowned Eureka Children’s Museum to Wirral, it is clear that we are building real momentum.

“Later this year we will announce the next stage in the development of the Wirral Growth Company: a radical and ambitious new venture which will drive forward the redevelopment of many areas of our Borough.

“Bringing key sites such as the Europa Building into public ownership will allow us to restore Birkenhead Town Centre back to its former glory in a much quicker timeframe.”

Councillor George Davies introduced a report that sought Cabinet approval to acquire a property known as the Europa Building on Europa Square Birkenhead.

The report informed that purchase of the building formed part of the Strategic Acquisition Programme that supported the key economic goals and aspirations of the Council as set out in the Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) and Wirral Growth Plan.

Members noted that the SRF set out the priorities and challenges for economic growth in the borough having particular focus on the areas of Wirral that offered significant growth potential as identified in the Growth Plan. These areas included Birkenhead Town Centre and its hinterlands, Woodside, Wirral Waters and the A41 Corridor including Wirral International Business Park.

The report further informed that, specifically for Birkenhead, the ambition was to reinforce its position as Wirral's main focus for retail and commercial activity. This would be achieved by creating investment opportunities to attract private sector investment providing that would allow Birkenhead to re-establish itself as the principal retail destination for Wirral. Councillor George Davies apprised Members that delivering on the aims and aspirations of the SRF would support the Council's pledges by helping to create good, high paying job opportunities in support of long term growth aspirations across the whole of the Wirral economy which in turn would benefit all Wirral residents.

Cabinet noted that the Europa Building was the first of a number of strategic acquisitions that the Council would undertake to create these opportunities. The strategic case for the acquisition was set out in the report, and commercial details of the proposal were contained in a technical appendix to the report - exempt from publication due to commercial sensitivity considerations under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED: That the Europa Building, Birkenhead be acquired, on the terms reported.

60 **DISPOSAL OF LAND AT SAUGHALL MASSIE ROAD TO MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**



Councillor George Davies, Cabinet Member – Housing and Community Safety (and Deputy Leader of the Council), said:

“After extensive public consultation and debate, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority gained planning permission to create a new fire station in Saughall Massie.

“This station is vital to ensure the residents in that area are provided the highest possible level of support and protection from the fire service.”

Councillor George Davies introduced a report that sought Cabinet approval to the terms provisionally agreed for the disposal of land at Saughall Massie Road, Saughall Massie, to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) for the construction of a new fire station.

Councillor George Davies Cabinet Member – Housing and Community Safety informed that the transfer of the land was by way of a long lease rather than an outright sale thereby enabling the Council to better control the future use of the site, adding that the disposal of land had arisen primarily as the result of cuts to the Mersey Fire and Rescue Authority budgets by Central Government.

The Leader, Councillor Phil Davies echoed the Cabinet Member’s comment, informing the Cabinet that the matter, part of an extensive process involving legal services and formal planning applications had not been called in by the Secretary of State, and would save lives though improved access to 26 thousand households as a result of the construction of the new fire station supporting the Wirral Plan 2020 pledges to ensure the best use of the Council’s real estate assets and to ensure that Wirral’s neighbourhoods were safe.

RESOLVED: That the land identified be transferred to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service by way of a long lease for the construction of a new fire station.

61

APPROVAL OF BUSINESS CASE AND CONSULTATION APPROACH FOR THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF SELECTIVE LICENSING



Councillor George Davies, Cabinet Member - Housing and Community Safety (and Deputy Leader of the Council), said:

“Wirral residents demand – and deserve – the opportunity to live in good quality, safe, and attractive housing. This simple need remains true regardless of where you live in the borough, or whether you own or rent your home.

“The private rented market in Wirral has almost doubled in recent years. While some of these properties are excellent, with responsible landlords, it is clear that in some areas the Council needs to step in and ensure housing is of the right quality.

“Our Selective Licensing Scheme supports improvement in the quality of housing in the areas of Birkenhead and Wallasey where it is applied. It has brought many social and health benefits along with it.

“Members of all parties have rightly highlighted the success of the scheme, championing it to their residents and calling for its expansion. This report explains

how the scheme works, and proposes a consultation programme is launched to investigate the potential of rolling the scheme out to four areas in East Wirral.”

Councillor George Davies introduced a report that set out a proposal to extend Wirral's Selective Licensing Scheme to four more areas in East Wirral. The Selective Licensing scheme had been introduced to improve private rented sector homes within specific neighbourhoods by requiring private landlords to obtain a license and comply with certain agreed conditions. A Business Case supporting the extension of the scheme and relevant appendices was attached to the report. Cabinet was asked to agree a statutory consultation exercise to seek a wider view on the proposal.

Councillor George Davies informed that Wirral Council had approached the initial introduction of Selective Licensing using a targeted approach focussing on those areas worst affected by a concentration of poorly managed private rentals. He further informed that a 'blanket approach' to tackling the issue, as had been implemented in Liverpool had not been successful, and that the Wirral scheme had been recognised nationally as one of the best such schemes since its introduction in July 2015. He added that the Scheme contributed to the Wirral Plan 2020 Pledge; 'Good quality housing which meets the needs of residents' by improving the quality of Wirral's housing offer for our residents which was a key component of Wirral's Housing Strategy.

Cabinet noted that the Council had used a range of tools for tackling poor management including property accreditation, healthy homes and enforcement action. Whilst this has had some success the benefit that Selective Licensing brought was a co-ordinated, targeted mandatory approach, where the ultimate sanction was that a landlord can be prevented from letting out properties.

The current Selective Licensing Scheme had demonstrated that the targeted approach had accurately identified areas of properties in very poor condition and the evidence had demonstrated that many vulnerable residents do not feel able to complain about their housing conditions so without Selective Licensing it was highly likely that their hazardous housing condition would not have been addressed. Cabinet Members commented on the success to date of the scheme, and welcomed the scheme's extension to incorporate the 4 areas identified.

In conclusion to the Cabinet's deliberations, the Leader informed that housing standards had improved in the areas currently managed under the existing scheme, and re-iterated that the selection of the four proposed areas had been the result of extensive evidence-based research.

RESOLVED - That:

- (1) the draft proposal for implementing Selective Licensing in the additional four proposed areas in the Borough based on the robust evidence base, be approved;**
- (2) the consultation plan and draft Business Case as attached to the report as the basis for public consultation on Selective Licensing, be approved; and**
- (3) delegated authority be given to the Head of Operational Housing Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety to undertake minor amendments to the Business Case should further evidence be made available which should be included in the consultation.**

62 **INTEGRATED COMMISSIONING HUB**



Councillor Christine Jones said:

“The people of Wirral told us that they want improved and more fully integrated services in relation to health and care.

“In order to deliver a more joined up system our social care, health, public health and children’s commissioners need to work effectively together to define the improvements that are required to work with the public to define outcomes and to make sure that resources are used effectively right across the system to deliver them.

“To this end we are bringing together a range of resources from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Local Authority to create a single commissioner for Wirral, working through formal shared arrangements, and a Committee in Common to ensure that the Council and the CCG can effectively deliver their Health and Care functions.

“The aim is to deliver the right care, in the right place, at the right time, in order to ensure that our residents are able to be as independent as possible but get access to important health and care services when they need them.”

Councillor Christine Jones introduced a report that followed earlier Cabinet reports of 16 January 2017 and 27 March 2017; it focussed on a key part of the broader integration of health and care services. The planning, funding and commissioning arrangements for all age health and care services.

Members noted that Cabinet approval had previously been sought to progress with the development of a single commissioning organisation bringing Local Authority functions together with the CCG, and that agreement had also been gained to commission a due diligence exercise to fully understand the potential benefits and risks of pooling resources with the NHS.

The report informed that the due diligence exercise was now complete and work had progressed in a number of areas. The report included a summary and response to the due diligence, the final business case, proposed governance arrangements and key elements of the Target Operating Model (TOM).

The report further informed that the proposal to create an integrated commissioner for health and care on Wirral would enable the commissioning of all age services to be commissioned through a single commissioner fulfilling the statutory health, care and wellbeing functions of the Council and the CCG. It would also support more effective delivery of strategic outcomes through a single planning framework and structure.

Councillor Christine Jones apprised Cabinet Members that the single commissioner initiative would enable the health and care system to use Wirral's resources together to jointly create a more sustainable health and care system. Commissioning would provide system leadership and a focus on strategic outcomes for people, alongside the Place Based Care delivery arrangements that would ensure that the health and care provider system was fully integrated working together, with pooled budgets to deliver those outcomes for Wirral.

In response to comments made to him ahead of the meeting, the Leader informed Cabinet and those members of the public in attendance that the proposed integration of commissioning was neither an attack on the NHS, nor privatisation of the service, but had come about by the need to use Council and Health Service budgets wisely as a result of Central Government cuts.

The report contained **exempt** information at Appendix 2 as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. It was in the public interest to exclude the press and public under **Paragraph 3** *'Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information) i.e. the information contained in the appendices was commercially sensitive.*

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) the Full Business Case as appended to this report, be received;**
- (2) the content of this report including the sections relating to due diligence, governance and target operating model (TOM) be noted;**

(3) a Cabinet Committee be established, to sit alongside the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Governing Body of the NHS as a committee in common, to oversee the work of the single integrated health and care commissioner for Wirral and to take such Cabinet decisions as are required in respect of the Council's relevant functions;

(4) work continue with regard to the TOM and governance arrangements with the implementation of a single commissioning arrangement for 1 April 2018; and

(5) a further progress report be brought to Cabinet in April 2018.

63 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Prior to consideration of the remaining items of business the Leader expressed his gratitude and huge thanks to Mr Tom Sault, Director of Finance and Investment (S151 Officer) who was attending his last meeting of Cabinet prior to his retirement in December.

The Leader informed that Mr Sault had completed 44 years of service with the authority, and during that time had done some fantastic work for the Council and Wirral residents. On behalf of all Members, he wished Mr Sault a long and happy retirement.

64 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That, under section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during 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 in that it contains commercially sensitive information. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

[paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)]*

65 STRATEGIC ASSET ACQUISITIONS - EUROPA BUILDING - EXEMPT APPENDIX

RESOLVED: That the content of the exempt appendix (reference report Agenda Item No. 4 – Minute No. 59) be noted.

66 INTEGRATED COMMISSIONING HUB - EXEMPT APPENDIX

RESOLVED: That the content of the exempt appendix (reference report Agenda Item No. 7 – Minute No. 62) be noted.