

Cabinet

Minutes

Monday 9 May 2011

PRESENT

Councillor Stephen Greenhalgh, Leader
Councillor Nicholas Botterill, Deputy Leader (+Environment and Asset Management)
Councillor Mark Loveday, Cabinet Member for Strategy
Councillor Helen Binmore, Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Councillor Joe Carlebach, Cabinet Member for Community Care
Councillor Lucy Ivimy, Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor Greg Smith, Cabinet Member for Residents Services

ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Colin Aherne
Councillor Stephen Cowan
Councillor Andrew Jones

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Harry Phibbs.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

3. TRI-BOROUGH WORKING UPDATE

Cabinet considered a paper which worked up the proposals considered in February by this Authority, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) and Westminster City Council (WCC) in the report, 'Bold Ideas for Challenging Times'. It was noted that the paper was not available for circulation five clear days before the meeting as officers did not have all the information required in order to be in a position to report on progress made since the meetings in February.

Councillor Cowan expressed concern regarding the following issues:- the ability of senior management to prioritise their time for our Council's issues during a crisis, a lack of exit strategy in the event of the parties wanting to pull out of the arrangements, and the exclusion of the Opposition from the Tri-borough

decision making process. He asked if any of the Councils faced a Baby P type crisis how would the Council ensure that all the resources were not diverted to the crisis faced authority. He was of the view that Westminster City Council had some issues with its budget and was nervous with the pace of the report.

The Leader noted that the progress report was not a binding document. The previous report had outlined issues around democratic accountability, sovereignty guarantee and exit strategy. The proposals set out a robust and sensible way to remove significant overheads without affecting frontline service delivery. Dedicated child protection resources will be provided at borough level. He noted that the Administration would accept written submissions from the opposition on its ideas to develop the proposals as part of the consultation process.

Andrew Christie, Director of Children's Services, stated that each Borough will have designated officers for Child Protection and Children in Care. The new proposals will provide more capacity, greater strength and depth to cope with any peaks and troughs. Both the Royal Borough Kensington and Chelsea and the Council have experience of dealing with major child protection issues. Both organisations provided Haringey Council with support during the Baby P case.

The Leader reassured the meeting that each Council was responsible for setting its own budget and there will not be any cost shunting between Boroughs. Robust debates were taking place on a transparent and sensible approach to the distribution of costs and savings.

Jane West, Director of Finance and Corporate Services, stated that budget setting, Medium Term Financial Strategy, closing of accounts and setting of council tax will all be done locally. The Council will only be responsible for costs attributed to its activity. The Leader moved the recommendations contained in the report.

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations set out in section 3 of the report as outlined below be approved:

Cabinet endorse the report in full and, in particular:

- (i) note the positive public response to the proposals;
- (ii) note the draft business cases highlight continued confidence in achieving £35m savings target;

Adult Social Care

- (iii) mandate continued negotiations with Central London Community Health around integrated health and social care services, with a view to putting before Cabinets firm proposals later in the year;
- (iv) mandate continued discussions with GP consortia around joint commissioning arrangements;

- (v) note the intention to put proposals for a single Director of Adults' Commissioning and for the creation of a combined commissioning hub to June Cabinets;

Children's Services

- (vi) note firm proposals for combined Fostering and Adoption and Youth Offending services, and for a single Local Safeguarding Children's Board - recommendations to endorse proposals to be put to the June Cabinets;
- (vii) note that firm proposals around a single management team to be recommended to June Cabinets;
- (viii) note that proposals for a combined Education Service are being reviewed to ensure that they reflect current policy requirements and that a further report will be brought to June Cabinets;

Corporate Services

- (ix) note progress to date in developing proposals and to note the intention to bring more detailed cases particularly for combined HR, IT and Finance services to June Cabinets;

Libraries

- (x) note firm proposals around a combined library service and to invite public comment and views from scrutiny committees - recommendations to endorse further developed proposals to be put to June Cabinets; and

Environmental Services

- (xi) note first stage proposals for a combined RBKC and H&F senior management team and plans to begin the process of reconfiguring services, with an invitation to WCC to later combine as contractual arrangements allow - a more detailed implementation plan to be brought to June Cabinets.

Reason for decision:

As set out in the report.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

As outlined in the report.

Record of any conflict of interest:

None.

Note of dispensation in respect of any declared conflict of interest:

None.

4. FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

RESOLVED:

The Forward Plan was noted.

5. **SUMMARY OF OPEN DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS, AND REPORTED TO CABINET FOR INFORMATION**

RESOLVED:

The summary was noted.

6. **SUMMARY OF URGENT DECISION TAKEN BY THE LEADER, REPORTED TO THE CABINET FOR INFORMATION**

RESOLVED:

The summary was noted.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm
Meeting ended: 7.26 pm

Chairman