

Cabinet

Minutes

Wednesday 16 February 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 Harry Phibbs, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement
Councillor Lucy Ivimy, Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor Greg Smith, Cabinet Member for Residents Services

ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Michael Cartwright
Councillor Elaine Chumnerly
Councillor Stephen Cowan
Councillor Wesley Harcourt
Councillor PJ Murphy

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Harry Phibbs submitted an apology for lateness.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Item 3 Tri-Borough Working – Councillor Elaine Chumnerly declared a personal interest as an employee of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

3. TRI-BOROUGH WORKING

The Leader welcomed Members to the meeting. He outlined the vision of Tri-Borough working and noted that both Members and Officers had worked hard to draft the proposals. He invited comments and questions from Opposition Councillors.

Councillor Cowan stated that he was opened minded to proposals to merge services with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea but had concerns about Westminster City Council's financial position. He requested assurance that resources would not be concentrated on resolving Westminster issues at the expense of the others. He asked what controls had been put in place to ensure that the Council will receive a fair share of officers' time and resources.

He further queried whether the Council had undertaken due diligence, in-depth risk analysis and assessment of the proposal. He concluded he could only support a tri- borough relationship which was beneficial for the Council. He questioned why these two boroughs rather than other neighbouring ones.

In response, the Leader stated that the integration would lead to a 50% reduction in the number of middle and senior managers and a 50% reduction in the overall "overheads", cutting down the management costs and general overheads. There was a common political will and ambition amongst the three Councils to work together. The boroughs have geographical and social commonalities which allowed it to progress the proposals. These factors were important to bring together the groups successfully. The three Councils' intent is to localise where they can and aggregate where they should. The proposals are not recommending homogeneous blocks. The boroughs will only combine services where it makes sense. The workforce will focus on local areas. None of the proposals will put vulnerable children at risk.

The Leader reiterated that the Council was not at the point where exhaustive due diligence had been undertaken. The report was a framework document outlining the principles and way forward. Each service would be looked at in detail. The next step would be to draw up implementation plans which will be fully costed. These plans will be considered and approved by each borough's Cabinet (or Cabinet Member) according to each borough's Constitution. The detailed control would be in the service level agreements and implementation plans.

He concluded that the sovereignty guarantee addressed the democratic accountability issues. This is the beginning of the consultation process. The full report will be consulted on widely from February to April 2011.

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations set out in section 2 to this report be approved.

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. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items of business on the grounds that they contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of a person (including the authority)] as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption currently outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

[The following is a public summary of the exempt information under S.100C (2) of the Local Government Act 1972. Exempt minutes exist as a separate document.]

5. EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 10 JANUARY 2011 (E)

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 January 2011 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record of the proceedings, and that the outstanding actions be noted.

Meeting started: 6.30 pm
Meeting ended: 7.05 pm

Chairman