

Cabinet  
2 October 2018

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL CABINET held on Tuesday 2 October 2018 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE.

PRESENT: Councillors T.Kingsbury (Deputy Leader and Executive Member, Housing and Community) (Chairman)

D.Bell (Executive Member, Resources)  
S.Boulton (Executive Member, Environment and Planning Delivery)  
T.Mitchinson (Executive Member, Leisure, Culture and Communications)  
B.Sarson (Executive Member, Regeneration, Economic Development and Partnerships)  
F.Thomson (Executive Member, Governance and Public Health)

OFFICIALS Chief Executive (R.Bridge)  
PRESENT: Corporate Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance) (N.Long)  
Corporate Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) (K.Ng)  
Corporate Director (Housing and Communities) (S.Russell)  
Head of Law and Administration (M.Martinus)  
Head of Planning (C.Haigh)  
Head of Property Services (P.Gray)  
Governance Services Manager (G.R.Seal)

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50. COUNCILLOR MANDY PERKINS (LEADER OF THE COUNCIL)

The Cabinet and Officers observed a minute's silence at the start of the meeting in memory of Mandy following the very sad news of her death on 29 September 2018.

51. PUBLIC QUESTION

51.1. Question from Cathy Roe - Litter and Fly Tipping in Hatfield

Question

"What actions will the Cabinet support to solve problems related to litter and fly-tipping in Hatfield"?

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Answer

The question was answered by Councillor S.Boulton (Executive Member, (Environment and Planning Delivery)).

“Thank you for taking the time to highlight your concern about litter and fly tipping in Hatfield. I am pleased to provide the following reply.

One of our top priorities is to keep the whole Borough as free from litter and fly-tipping as possible.

We set funding aside each year for dedicated cleansing teams in Hatfield, including litter picking, the emptying of litter bins, sweepers and a fly-tipping clearance service. In addition to this, we continue to review the locations of all our litter bins and we have installed a number of new bins in this area, some at your request.

The cleansing service is supported by regular communications about responsible business and household waste storage and collection and we recently joined forces with 15 other organisations in Hertfordshire to launch a campaign cracking-down on fly-tipping across the county, through the introduction of the SCRAP code.

The Council also continues to support local community groups in their hard endeavours to keep their local neighbourhood clean and as you are aware, we will continue to support your Clean Up Hatfield initiative through clearing of waste collected and the provision of litter picking equipment as needed.

We will continue to review our work and schedules to ensure cleansing standards are maintained and improved, where needed in Hatfield and the rest of the borough.

Once again, thank you for your question to the Cabinet.”

52. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

53. ACTIONS STATUS REPORT

The status of actions agreed at the Cabinet meeting on 4 September 2018 in the report of the Corporate Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance) was noted.

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54. RECOMMENDATION FROM COMMITTEE

The following recommendation from the meeting of the Standards Committee on 3 September 2018 was considered:-

54.1. Approval of New Anti-Bribery Policy

The Standards Committee had considered the approval of the new anti-Bribery Policy. The Council had already in place an Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy that set out procedures to ensure that the Council was not involved in fraud and corruption. The need for an independent stand-alone policy specifically dealing with bribery had been identified.

Members had commented on the Policy and Procedures and asked for clarification of some of the proposed amendments. One of the amendments was to remove the Gifts and Hospitality link and insert the hyperlink to the Member Code of Conduct. Appropriate training for Members and Officers in relation to gifts and hospitality was discussed and a question was raised about the location of the Members' Gifts and Hospitality Register. Officers advised that the information regarding accessing the Members' Gifts and Hospitality Register would be circulated to Members. It was agreed that the approved Policy would be shared with Parish Councils in the future. The Policy would also be available online.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed Anti-Bribery Policy, as recommended by the Standards Committee, be approved.

55. RISK MANAGEMENT

Report of the Corporate Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance) bringing to Members' attention the current strategic and top operational risks facing the Council, as determined by Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service. These risks had been reviewed at the performance clinic in August 2018 and reflected the assessments in place for the quarter July to October 2018.

The Cabinet noted that in the list of strategic risks the Change Management description had been updated and a new risk entered on the effects of Brexit.

RESOLVED:

That the current Strategic Risk Register as updated and top operational risks with comments in respect of each risk where shown be noted.

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56. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/ENVIRONMENT INFORMATION REGULATIONS

Report of the Corporate Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance) giving the Cabinet an overview of the process for the implementation and administration of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR), together with an explanation of the statistical information provided.

In addition, performance information had been published on the Council website and discussed at performance clinics.

Since 1 January 2005 all requests for information received by a public authority had to be answered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations. The only exception to this was an individual's request for their own personal data (known as a Subject Access Request) which must be handled under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998 and latterly the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), introduced in 2018.

All recorded information held by, or on behalf of, a local authority was within the scope of FOI or EIR and there was a requirement to respond to requests promptly and in any event within 20 working days. There was some scope to extend this timescale but this must be reasonable and only used in the case of complex and voluminous requests.

RESOLVED:

That the volume and nature of the requests and the general upward trend in demand for information be noted.

57. MEMBER APPOINTMENTS TO CABINET BODIES

The Deputy Leader, Councillor T.Kingsbury made nominations for Members to serve on Cabinet bodies in place of Councillor M.Perkins.

RESOLVED:

That the following Members be appointed to Cabinet bodies:-

Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel – Councillor H.Bromley as Vice-Chairman.

Cabinet Grants Appeals Committee – Councillor D.Bell and with Councillor T.Kingsbury as Chairman.

Affordable Housing Programme Projects Board – Councillor T.Kingsbury.

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**(Note:** This item was accepted as urgent on account of the need to fill vacancies on Cabinet bodies in time for forthcoming meetings and with the Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel meeting on 4 October 2018).

58. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100(A)(2) and (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting for Agenda items 12 to 15 (Minutes 59 to 61 refer) on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of confidential or exempt information as defined in Section 100A(3) and paragraph 3 (private financial or business information) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

In resolving to exclude the public in respect of the exempt information, it was considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

59. ITEMS OF AN EXEMPT NATURE REQUIRING KEY DECISION

The following items of an exempt nature for decision in the current Forward Plan were considered:-

59.1. Award of Corporate Cleaning Contract (Forward Plan Reference FP882)

Exempt report of the Corporate Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) on the award of contract for corporate cleaning.

(1) The Decision Taken

RESOLVED:

That the Procurement Board recommendation that a two year contract (with two optional one year extensions) be awarded to Birkin Cleaning Services commencing on 1 January 2019 be approved.

(2) Reasons for the Decision

The Cabinet had set up a Member Procurement Board to oversee a new procurement for the Council's corporate cleaning contract and had agreed the evaluation process at the application and tender stages.

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59.2. Queensway House, Hatfield Lift Replacement Project (Forward Plan Reference FP883)

Exempt recommendation from the meeting of the Cabinet Housing Panel on 20 September 2018 on the procurement process and award of contract for this project.

(1) The Decision Taken

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet approves the tender process recently undertaken in respect of the renewal of the passenger lift at Queensway House, Hatfield and the award of contract to Aspect Lifts, as recommended by the Cabinet Housing Panel.

(2) Reasons for the Decision

The lift at Queensway House, Hatfield was showing signs of considerable wear and tear with replacement parts harder to find due to the age of the equipment. The lift required full replacement of the equipment and controls including the introduction of features required to bring the lift to compliance with current regulations that stipulated that reasonable provision for access to a building and the use of facilities within such a building must be made.

60. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET PANEL

The following exempt recommendations from the meeting of the Housing Cabinet Panel on 20 September 2018 were considered:-

60.1. Housing Maintenance Service Re-Procurement

The Cabinet Panel considered the Housing Maintenance Service Re-procurement and recommended the approach to be taken to the process to the Cabinet.

The service currently covered the responsive repairs, voids and planned works for the Councils' housing stock.

It was noted that the General Procurement Board set up by the Cabinet would decide on the method of Member involvement in the re- procurement.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet approves the engagement of specialist consultants to advise on aspects of the procurement.

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60.2. Asset Assessment Contract Procurement

The Cabinet Panel considered the tender process for the appointment of an asset management consultant to assess and make recommendations in respect of the development potential of the Council's Housing Revenue Account assets.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Cabinet notes the tender process recently undertaken in respect of the appointment of an asset assessment consultant as agreed by the Cabinet Housing Panel.
- (2) That the Cabinet notes the award of contract to the consultant submitting the best overall tender having been evaluated on the basis of quality, innovation, experience and price as agreed by the Cabinet Housing Panel.

61. WRITE OFF OF OVER £10,000

Exempt report of the Corporate Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) on a non-domestic rate write off of over £10,000.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet agrees to a non-domestic rate write off where the rate-payer had gone into liquidation and no further recovery action could be taken as detailed in the exempt report.

Meeting ended 7.55pm  
GS