

MINUTE
of
CABINET

Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 15 September 2016.

Present:

Councillor Jim Fletcher (Leader)	Councillor Elaine Green
Councillor Tony Buchanan (Deputy Leader)	Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Danny Devlin	Councillor Mary Montague

Councillor Fletcher, Leader, in the Chair

Attending:

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Caroline Innes; Deputy Chief Executive; Andy Cahill, Director of Environment; Jim Sneddon, Head of Democratic and Partnership Services; Phil Daws, Head of Environment (Housing and Property Services); Barbara Clark, Chief Accountant; Gillian McNamara, Economic Development Manager; and Paul O'Neil, Committee Services Officer.

Apology:

Councillor Ian McAlpine.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2187. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

INTERIM PROGRESS UPDATE ON DELIVERING OUR EQUALITIES AGENDA AND FULFILLING OUR EQUALITY DUTIES

2188. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Council held on 22 April 2015 (Page 1440, Item 1527 refers), when it was agreed amongst other things to approve the report entitled "Progress on Fulfilling our Equality Specific Duties: Equality Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes 2013-2017" including the revised set of 8 outcomes for publication, the Cabinet considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, providing an update on the progress to deliver the Council's equalities agenda and fulfil its equality outcomes. A copy of the interim progress report was appended to the report.

The report highlighted that steady progress had been made towards making East Renfrewshire a place where all were included and no one was disadvantaged or left behind, and that a continued focus on equality was required by all to maintain progress in the coming years. However, it was noted that more work was required especially in improving equality evidence-gathering and usage, conducting equality impact assessments and improving facilities for and relations with Gypsy travellers.

The Cabinet noted:-

- (a) the progress made in the past year in delivering the Council's equality agenda and fulfilling its equality duties; and
- (b) that elected Members should continue to scrutinise all Council actions for their equality impacts.

BUSINESS GATEWAY SERVICES CONTRACT

2189. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting held on 13 September 2012 (Page 168, Item 174 refers), when it was agreed to participate in the Business Gateway services contract which would provide support for pre-start, new start and growth services to existing businesses in the East Renfrewshire area through a revised Service Level Agreement with Renfrewshire Council, the Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, providing an update in relation to the existing Business Gateway services contract and seeking approval to progress new arrangements for the future delivery of Business Gateway services.

The report explained that since 2012, the delivery of Business Gateway services across East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire had been managed on behalf of the 3 councils by Renfrewshire Council and had been delivered by Lanarkshire Enterprise Services since October 2012.

Whilst noting that an option appraisal exercise had been commissioned to consider the most appropriate model for the future delivery of Business Gateway, the report commented on the future service delivery model and explained that in the absence of an agreement with all 3 councils, it was considered that the best option was to take steps for Business Gateway being managed and delivered locally by each of the 3 local authorities from October 2016.

The report proposed that any new contractual arrangement should only cover a short to medium term timescale as this would allow the conclusion of ongoing discussions around future enterprise delivery which were taking place both within Scottish Government and at a regional level amongst Glasgow City Region City Deal partners. Details of the contractual process were also outlined in the report.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) approved the terms of the report and in particular that Business Gateway services would be delivered separately by each of the 3 local authorities (i.e. East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils) from 1 October 2016;
- (b) noted that services would continue for the short to medium term being provided seamlessly from October 2016;
- (c) noted that there would be flexibility to respond to any changes emerging from ongoing discussions at the national and City Region levels; and
- (d) agreed that delegated powers be granted to the Director of Environment, in consultation with the Chief Officer – Legal and Procurement, to finalise negotiations with Inverclyde and Renfrewshire Councils on the development of a Service Level Agreement, the final distribution of budgets, any TUPE matters and to progress arrangements to deliver future Business Gateway Services as appropriate.

CONSULTATION ON DRAFT LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY (LHS) 2017-2022

2190. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval to proceed to public and partner consultation on the draft outcomes and commitments identified for the Local Housing Strategy (LHS)(2017-2022). A copy of the LHS outcomes and commitments for action was appended to the report.

Whilst noting that the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 required local authorities to prepare a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) which was a 5-year plan setting out the strategic direction for housing and related services for the local area, the report explained that the plan was refreshed 5-yearly reflecting progress and shifting priorities nationally and locally. The current LHS expired in 2017 and the priorities it identified remained relevant and would be reflected in the new strategy.

Details of the four priority areas that had been identified for the LHS were outlined in the report. They included Priority 1: Increase Access to Housing; Priority: Thriving, Attractive and Sustainable/Inclusive Neighbourhoods; Priority 3: Facilitate/Support Independent Living; and Priority 4: Improve Access and Participation. In addition, the Scottish Government had also set out key targets which the LHS must take into account and these were also outlined in the report.

The report concluded by explaining that the LHS shaped the direction that housing and related services would take locally and influenced identification of housing land through the emerging Local Development Plan. A revised Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) would also be developed by November 2016, and would be critical in directing available resources towards delivering targets for new housing supply.

The consultation on the proposed outcomes and commitments for the new strategy would provide the Council with the opportunity to discuss with partners and the community the priorities identified for development of housing and related services over the longer term.

The Cabinet approved the draft outcomes and commitments identified for East Renfrewshire's draft Local Housing Strategy as the basis for a 10 week public consultation beginning from October 2016.

EXEMPTION FROM TENDERING – E-FINANCIALS

2191. The Cabinet considered and approved a report by the Chief Financial Officer, seeking an exemption from tendering procedures in accordance with the provisions of clause 15(ii) of the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts, to enable the award of a contract to Advanced Computer Software Group Limited for the provision of annual maintenance, support and upgrade to the current version of the e-Financial system from 1 April 2017 until 31 March 2019, and an upgrade from the current version of e-Financials to version 5, at a cost of under £150,000.

CHAIR

