

Special Cabinet Minutes

Date: 26 November 2018

Time: 5.30 - 5.45 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Ms K S Wood (Executive Leader of the Council - in the Chair)

Councillor Mrs J A Adey	- Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor D H G Barnes	- Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Communications
Councillor S Broadbent	- Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration
Councillor D A Johncock	- Cabinet Member for Planning
Councillor Mrs J D Langley	- Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor G Peart	- Cabinet Member for Community
Councillor D M Watson	- Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
Councillor L Wood	- Cabinet Member for Digital Development & Customer Services

By Invitation

Councillor Z Ahmed	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Strategy and Communications
Councillor Miss S Brown	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Community
Councillor C Etholen	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Digital Development and Customer Service
Councillor A R Green	- Chairman of the Council
Councillor G C Hall	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor M Harris	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration
Councillor M E Knight	- Leader of the East Wycombe Independent Party
Councillor D Knights	- Chairman of the Improvement and Review Commission
Councillor R Raja	- Leader of the Labour Group
Councillor A Turner	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning

Also present: Councillors C B Harriss, A Lee, H L McCarthy, J A Savage, R J Scott and P R Turner

56 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Adoh (Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing) and D Carroll (Cabinet Member for Youth and External Partnerships).

57 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

58 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW DISTRICT UNITARY COUNCIL

Prior to the commencement of this item, the Leader confirmed that recommendation (v) as set out in the report had been withdrawn.

The Chief Executive of the Council gave a comprehensive introduction to the report before Cabinet and the background to the processes that had been undertaken thus far in relation to a new single unitary district for Buckinghamshire. She confirmed that on Thursday 1 November 2018, James Brokenshire, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, published a written ministerial statement with his decision about unitary councils in Bucks. The Secretary of State's decision was to establish a new single unitary district council for Buckinghamshire, to come into effect in April 2020.

It was noted that the key issues within the written statement that could be modified before the proposal was implemented were the number of councillors, perhaps providing for three-member electoral wards, and whether the May 2019 district elections should be delayed for one year.

The Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services, Wycombe District Council, then set out the legal requirements in relation to the creation of the non-continuing authority. She confirmed that all existing councils would be abolished and a new unitary council created. The report confirmed that the five councils to be replaced were Aylesbury Vale District Council, Buckinghamshire County Council, Chiltern District Council, South Bucks District Council and Wycombe District Council.

During the presentation, the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services, set out how the Shadow arrangements could operate and she confirmed the timescales for future decisions.

The report before Cabinet sought delegated authority for the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to agree the wording of the representations to be made to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. It also sought approval to ensure that sufficient resources were available to respond to the requirements of the proposed orders and to support transition within the council.

Members noted that, following approval by Cabinet, the report was due to be considered by Full Council at a special meeting subsequent to this meeting.

The following decisions were made to respond to the announcement of the Minister and to seek to secure the best arrangements for the delivery of services to the residents of the Wycombe District. The decisions were also made to enable the Council to meet the legal requirements of the proposed Structural Change Orders including the provision of the Shadow Authority budget and project management support.

RESOLVED: That (i) the wording of the representations to be made to the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government in response to the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) and the proposed content of the Structural Change Orders on single tier arrangements for Buckinghamshire be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader;

(ii) it be noted that the Leader of the Council would continue to take part in discussions with the Districts and County Leaders, Ministers and other parties with a view to taking forward the implementation provided that where decisions were required from the authority these would be made in accordance with existing governance requirements;

(iii) the meetings of the Member group on Modernising Local Government be re-established to act as a consultative body on the wording of representations and implementation; and

(iv) the need to set aside a provisional budget in 2019/20 for the delivery of the implementation to include the proportion of the costs of the Shadow Authority as may be required be noted; such as project management resource and any other costs in 2019/20 that may fall directly to WDC subject to a review at year end by the Head of Finance and Commercial in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources.

Chairman

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

Karen Satterford	- Chief Executive
Catherine Whitehead	- Head of Democratic, Legal & Policy.
Ian Hunt	- Democratic Services Manager
Catherine MacKenzie	- Principal Democratic Services Officer