

At a meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC CENTRE (COMMITTEE ROOM NO. 1) on WEDNESDAY, 8TH APRIL, 2009 at 2.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor P. Watson in the Chair

Councillors Allan, Anderson, Blackburn, Charlton, Rolph, P. Smith, Speding and Trueman.

Part I

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 11th March, 2009, Part I (copy circulated) were submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Receipt of Declarations of Interest

The following Councillors declared personal interests in the undermentioned reports as Members of the various bodies indicated:-

Item 5 – School Place Planning fo the Future	Councillor Allan	Governor of Hasting Hill Primary, Thorney Close Primary
	Councillor Anderson	Governor of Hetton Primary
	Councillor Blackburn	Governor of Easington Lane Primary, Hetton Lyons Primary
	Councillor Rolph	Governor of Newbottle Primary School

	Councillor P. Smith	Governor of St. Leonard's RC Aided Primary and Plains Farm Primary
	Councillor Speding	Governor of Barnwell Primary and Shiney Row Primary
	Councillor Trueman	Governor of Barnwell Primary and Columbia Grange
Item 08 – Performance Report April – December 2008 (Progress in Implementing the Local Area Agreement and New National Indicator Set)	Councillors Rolph and Blackburn	Members of South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership Joint Executive Committee
	Councillor Anderson	Substitute Member of South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership Joint Executive Committee
	Councillor Speding	Governor of Barnwell Primary and Shiney Row Primary
Item 12 – Football Development Opportunities	Councillor Speding	Football Foundation
Item 18 – Children and Young People's Plan 2009/10 and 2010-25	Councillor P. Watson	Learning and Skills Council, Safer Sunderland Partnership, Children's Trust
	Councillor P. Smith	Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board (Observer), Children's Trust, 14-19 Steering Group, Early Years and Childcare Partnership
Item 19 – Education Improvement Partnership	Councillor Allan	Governor Hasting Hill Primary, Thorney Close Primary, Sandhill View School
	Councillor Anderson	Governor of Hetton Primary

	Councillor Blackburn	City of Sunderland Partnership, Governor of Easington Lane Primary, Hetton Lyons Primary and Hetton Lyons Nursery
	Councillor Charlton	Governor of Hylton Red House Academy
	Councillor Rolph	Governor of Houghton KEPHIR School and Newbottle Primary School
	Councillor P. Smith	14-19 Steering Group, Governor of St. Leonard's RC Aided Primary and Plains Farm Primary
	Councillor Speding	Governor of Barnwell Primary and Shiney Row Primary
	Councillor Trueman	Governor of Blackfell Primary and Columbia Grange
	Councillor P. Watson	City of Sunderland Partnership
Item 20 – Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Waves 7 – 15 Outcome of Expression of Interest and Invitation to Submit Readiness to Deliver Submission	Councillor Rolph	Houghton KEPHIR
Item 24 – Land at Farrington Row	Councillor P. Watson	Sunderland ARC

Councillor Anderson declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 5, "School Place Planning for the Future" as her grandchild attended Hetton Primary School, and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the item.

Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillor Timmins.

Reports of the Meetings of the Personnel Committee, Part I

The reports of the meetings of the Personnel Committee held on 10th and 26th March, 2009, Part I (copies circulated) were submitted and consideration was given thereto.

(For copy reports – see original minutes).

2. RESOLVED that the reports of the meetings held on 10th and 26th March, 2009, Part I be noted.

At this juncture, Councillor Anderson withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the following item.

School Place Planning for the Future

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide feedback on responses to the Stage Four consultation on School Place Planning for the Future held in February/March 2009, provide information upon the current position of the Hylton Red House, Castle View, Monkwearmouth and Hetton clusters and to seek approval for the publication of a statutory notice in relation to Gillas Lane Primary School for a reduction in the Published Admission Number (PAN) for the schools set out in the report.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the responses to the Stage Four consultation on School Place Planning for the Future be noted,
- (ii) the following proposals for schools involved in the Stage Four consultation be noted and approval be given to Officers to continue working upon the School Place Planning exercise, including the submission of further Cabinet reports at the appropriate time,
 - (a) Hylton Red House cluster – a single school serving the Hylton Red House and Witherwack communities be established in line with the Primary Strategy for Change programme and timescales. In the immediate term governing bodies of all three schools, Hylton Red House Primary, Hylton Red House Nursery

and Willow Fields Primary, to consider the establishment of a federation to assist and support in consultation and community involvement.

- (b) Castle View cluster – reduce PAN at Bexhill Primary from 48 to 30 in two phases and re-model and realign the net capacity of the school (see below). In the longer term, a single school serving the community be established, on the most appropriate site, in line with the Primary Strategy for Change (PSfC) programme and timescales.
Note – the single school would replace Bexhill Primary and Town End Primary.
 - (c) Hetton cluster – a single school be established in line with the Primary Strategy for Change programme and timescales. In the immediate term governing bodies of all three schools, Hetton Primary, Hetton Nursery and Eppleton Primary, to consider the establishment of a federation to assist and support in consultation and community involvement.
 - (d) Monkwearmouth cluster – implement the PAN reductions and as set out in (iv) below and remodel accommodation in line with these reductions; and across the cluster, monitor and review the surplus position annually and within the next 2-3 years formulate proposals in light of emerging trends and PSfC.
- (iii) the publication of a statutory notice for the proposal to close Gillas Lane Primary be approved. In the event that the proposal is approved by School Organisation Committee of Cabinet, Bernard Gilpin Primary be named as the receiving school, to be implemented in line with admissions and capacity of the receiving school, and
 - (iv) the following reduction in PANs be approved:-
 - Dame Dorothy Primary School – Reduce PAN from 30 to 25
 - Redby Primary School – Reduce PAN from 60 to 45
 - Seaburn Dene Primary School – Reduce PAN from 45 to 25
 - Grange Park Primary – Re-model accommodation to realign net capacity with existing PAN.

Councillor Anderson was re-admitted to the meeting.

Audit Commission Annual Audit and Inspection Letter

The Chief Executive and the City Treasurer submitted a joint report (copy circulated) on the Audit Commission's Annual Audit and Inspection Letter which reported that the Council had continued to achieve the maximum four star rating in the latest and final CPA results and was judged to be 'improving well' by the Audit Commission.

David Jennings, Comprehensive Area Assessment Lead and Steve Nicklin, District Auditor were in attendance and provided an overview of the report, highlighting the salient points. They reported that the Council was improving well, and had been assessed as 'four star' in its current level of performance. The City had one of the highest employment growth rates in the country, despite the recent economic downturn. New jobs had been created at Rainton Bridge Business Park and through 'Digital Challenge' and 'Software City' initiatives. The City had enjoyed some recent successes on regeneration, but needed to complete its 'whole city' masterplan and develop a clearer focus on supporting local small businesses and re-invigorating the City Centre area.

Mr. Jennings reported that at the time of writing the report, developments at Nissan were a significant disappointment and the Council and partners had quickly begun a well rehearsed partnership response to the job losses, including close working with the companies involved. The priority had been to put into place as quickly as possible an advice and support service which would be accessible to those people likely to lose their jobs. More recent good news in respect of the Government's electric car initiative would safeguard the Company's future in the City.

Attention was drawn to good progress on the theme of 'Healthy City' between the Council and its partners. Increasing numbers of older people were being helped to live at home, with improvements in preventative services and support for independent living. The newly opened Aquatic Centre was improving the Council's ability to deliver its wellness programmes linked to health and well-being. Although the Council and its partners were working hard to address health inequalities, much remained to be done. Sunderland, in common with most of the North East, had health outcomes amongst the worst in England in terms of life expectancy and sickness and disability rates.

Mr. Nicklin then referred to the following other specific improvements this year which included:-

- a more focused approach to equality, diversity, inclusion and fairness;
- greater emphasis on sustainability and protecting the local environment;
- developing the role of the Council's scrutiny function resulting in some useful contributions to policy development;
- the development of asset management strategies; and
- improved arrangements for performance management, with clearer information on performance against targets, IT-based arrangements and a more robust approach when things are not improving, or not improving fast enough.

In conclusion, Mr. Nicklin reported that the Council continued to deliver good value for money as a result of strong financial management, and once again had achieved the maximum overall score in the use of resources judgement. Notable practice had been identified in a number of areas.

Cabinet Members thanked Messrs. Jennings and Nicklin for their assistance. They welcomed the findings of the inspections which were seen as an opportunity to reflect on the services to make further improvements. Attention was drawn to other items on the agenda and work which the Council had already started to undertake to address the issues raised.

Consideration having been given to the matter, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the contents of the Audit Commission's Annual Audit and Inspection Letter and the presentation by the Comprehensive Area Assessment Lead and the District Auditor be noted and referred to Council for its consideration.

Response of Cabinet – Review of Scrutiny

The City Solicitor submitted a report (copy circulated) to set out a proposed response to Cabinet to recommendations received from the Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee following a review of scrutiny arrangements, and propose consequential amendments to the Constitution. An addendum to the report proposing amendments to the terms of reference of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees was tabled at the meeting.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Anderson in highlighting the report paid tribute to the Chairmen and Members of the Council's Scrutiny Committees for their valued work towards improving the Council's services. She advised that the report reflected the progress Members had made together in reflecting on the arrangements the Council had in place for overview and scrutiny and drew attention to Cabinet's response to the proposals put forward from the Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee included in the report. These provided additional flexibility in some areas and adopt the majority of the Committee's recommendations in full.

Councillor Anderson then referred to a request to Officers to develop proposals for strengthening the Council's overview and scrutiny arrangements still further and these revised proposals were set out in the supplementary report which was tabled at the meeting. She added that the proposals went beyond the arrangements that Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee had asked for, and gave greater capacity to the overview and scrutiny function to respond to issues as they came forward.

Attention was drawn to the terms of reference for each Committee, as set out in the Policy and Co-ordination Committee's report had, for the most part, been left unchanged. They did, though, not provide additional capacity. It was recognised that, as the Committees engaged with City partners more and more, the Council would need each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to increase the time spent in considering partnership issues, including how well the Council was jointly achieving the Partnership's cross-cutting priorities. It was therefore recommended that the Council should establish an additional Committee to make further Committee

time available for this, and to ensure that the City's cross-cutting priorities and key Council projects, such as the building of a New Wear bridge, receive the attention from overview and scrutiny that the City needed.

Councillor Anderson explained that the proposal would increase capacity to focus on the sustainability of activity across the City, and in particular that the Council was building inclusive communities that would endure to meet future challenges as they evolved, ensuring communities were supported by sustainable arrangements for housing and culture and ensuring that major projects were implemented in the way that would best support the needs of the City now and in the longer term. She added that these strengthened proposals were designed to make adequate Member time available to work effectively and respond to emerging issues at the time the Committees' involvement would add greatest value.

Councillor Anderson having reported that Cabinet might want to refer the proposal back to Policy and Co-ordination Task and Finish Group for consideration, it was:-

4. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the report and the proposed response to the recommendations of the Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee be noted, and
- (ii) the amended terms of reference set out at Appendix A of the Addendum to the report, increasing to seven the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees be approved and the necessary consequential changes to the Constitution be considered by Council.

Performance Report April – December 2008 (Progress in Implementing the Local Area Agreement and New National Indicator Set)

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to inform of the current position regarding progress in implementing the Local Area Agreement and the new National Indicator Set across the Council for the period April 2008 to December 2008.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Allan reported that this was the third quarter corporate performance report relating to 2008/2009 performance information and its key focus was on both potential and current performance issues in relation to the delivery of the Local Area Agreement (LAA). He added that the report also provided information in relation to residents' perceptions, satisfaction with, and perceptions of, the Council and the services it provided from the latest survey conducted in Autumn 2008.

Councillor Allan commended the work of Councillors and the Council's Officers to the proactive responses to the residents' views which were at the heart of the Service Improvement Agenda. In particular recognition was given to recent achievements in attracting and maintaining major industries in the City despite the current economic climate.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the performance of the Council against key performance measures as part of the Council's quarterly monitoring arrangements be noted.

Co-operation with China

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide an update on discussions to develop co-operation with China, and to request authorisation to formalise relationships with Harbin Municipal Government and the Nanjing Ministry of Science and Technology.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman highlighted that Sunderland's International Strategy aimed to ensure the City's international engagement supported the Sunderland Partnership in achieving its vision for Sunderland, maximising the opportunities and benefits for the City and its residents. He added that the relationships with Harbin Municipal Government and Nanjing Ministry of Science and Technology would provide opportunities in relation to a number of the key areas of activity within the International Strategy and it was particularly important for Sunderland to have links to China, given that it was expected to be the world's fastest growing economy over the next ten years, to make certain that Sunderland's companies were in a position to take up business opportunities as they arose.

Councillor Anderson referred to the educational links which were being established with China in some of the City's schools and commended the links which had been made on delegates visits.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

6. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the signing of a Friendship Agreement with Harbin Municipal Government to promote friendship and co-operation with the aim of generating economic, educational and cultural benefits for both communities be authorised,
- (ii) the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Nanjing Ministry of Science and Technology to promote co-operation in the software and technology sector be authorised, and
- (iii) the support provided to the University in the development of its ongoing relationship with Liuzhou Municipal Government be noted.

Working Neighbourhoods Strategy – Use of Consultants over £100,000

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) on the Working Neighbourhoods Strategy which set out the proposed approach to the allocation of the Working Neighbourhoods Fund and requested approval to seek consultants to independently set baselines and evaluate the programme and its projects identified to deliver the Strategy.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Charlton having reported that the consultancy project was central to the successful monitoring and evaluation of the Working Neighbourhoods Strategy and ensured value for money, it was:-

7. RESOLVED that the use of consultants to independently set baselines and evaluate the Working Neighbourhoods Strategy programme and projects be approved.

Comprehensive Performance Assessment – Benefits Service Assessment – Auditors Judgement 2008

The City Treasurer submitted a report (copy circulated) to advise of the outcome of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment – Benefits Service Assessment – Auditors Judgement 2008.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Allan in highlighting the report, congratulated the City Treasurer and his Officers, in particular Fiona Brown and Steve Atkinson, on retaining the Council's rating of 4 out of 4 in the Benefits Service Assessment since 2002.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

8. RESOLVED that the outcome of the Auditors Comprehensive Performance Assessment – Benefits Service Assessment – Auditors Judgement 2008 be noted.

Football Development Opportunities

The Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to advise of football development opportunities in Sunderland, with specific regard to the Northumbria Centre (Washington) and the artificial turf pitches (ATP) at Silksworth Sports Complex.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Speding reported that the proposals would ensure that a step change was made in respect of improving the quality of existing facilities. He advised that the artificial pitch at Silksworth Sports Complex was laid in 1983 and was envisaged to have a lifespan of approximately 15 years. The pitch was in need of replacement and a new surface would ensure that usage was increased and an annual income was achieved from a commercial developer. A redevelopment at the Northumbria Centre would ensure that an essential upgrade of the facility was undertaken and the annual subsidy presented a cashable saving to the Council.

Councillor Speding explained that these facility developments supported the Council's and the City's objectives in relation to increasing participation in physical activity, improving health, tackling obesity and addressing anti-social behaviour through providing accessible positive activities. External investment into Council owned facilities would support the achievement of aspirations in the above areas.

Cabinet Members having commended the proposals, it was:-

9. RESOLVED that approval be given to the following proposals in relation to the Northumbria Centre and the ATP at Silksworth Sports Complex:-

- (i) to seek expressions of interest from commercial operators, and
- (ii) to proceed with the selection of commercial operators to lease, develop, manage and operate the football facilities in accordance with the contents of the report, and subject to the necessary agreements being obtained.

City Adventure Centre

The Director of Community and Cultural Services submitted a report (copy circulated) on a proposed variation to the contract with a Design and Build Contractor to include the development of a Play Pathfinder scheme adjacent to the 25m swimming pool at the Sunderland Tennis Centre.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Speding reported that the proposal would ensure achievement of economies of scale in procuring work from a single contractor already appointed to construct a swimming pool on the same site and the construction of the swimming pool and Play Pathfinder scheme involved undertaking building, mechanical and electrical works to the same areas of the existing tennis centre building.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

10. RESOLVED that approval be given to vary the contract with Pellikan Construction Ltd (who are currently constructing the 25m swimming pool at the Sunderland Tennis Centre) to include the design and construction of the City Adventure Centre.

Land at the Former Whitefield Pit, Station Road, Penshaw

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) to rescind the previous Cabinet decision to accept a financial offer for the disposal of the Council's freehold interest in 0.22 hectares or thereabouts of land at the former Whitefield Pit, Station Road, Penshaw.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Allan reminded Members that Cabinet had previously agreed to a request from Bellway Homes to reduce an earlier accepted price for the Council's interest in land at Station Road, Penshaw. He added that the disposal was proceeding as agreed, however Bellway had recently indicated that it could not complete the purchase because of deteriorating market conditions. Therefore he requested that in view of the inability on the part of Bellway to proceed, the previous decision to accept Bellway's revised price be rescinded.

Councillor Allan reported that Bellway had indicated that a development providing affordable housing on the Council land and adjoining land might be possible and Officers would discuss this possibility with Bellway and to report back to Cabinet as necessary.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

11. RESOLVED that the decision made at the Cabinet meeting on 9th July, 2008 to dispose of the Council's freehold interest in 0.22 hectares or thereabouts of land at the former Whitefield Pit, Station Road, Penshaw to Bellway Homes Limited (Bellway) be rescinded.

Proposed Appointment of Consultants for the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor – New Wear Bridge

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval to the commissioning of consultants to provide traffic modelling services and to produce an updated Major Scheme Business Case for the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor – New Wear Bridge (SSTC) project.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Blackburn highlighted the report and advised that a new traffic model that was fully compliant with Department for Transport (DfT) guidance was needed before the next approval stage was reached with the DfT. He added that a new model was also needed so that the effect of the scheme on traffic flows on the A19 trunk road and its junctions could be demonstrated to the Highways Agency. The Major Scheme Business Case that was fully compliant with contemporary guidance must be in place before the DfT would consider granting further formal approval.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

12. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) approval be given to the commissioning of consultants to provide traffic modelling services for the SSTC project, and
- (ii) to produce an updated Major Scheme Business Case for SSTC project.

Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor – New Wear Bridge Acquisition of Land and Making of Statutory Orders

The Director of Development and Regeneration and the City Solicitor submitted a joint report (copy circulated) to obtain approval for the acquisition of land and the making of the Compulsory Purchase and Side Roads Orders for the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor New Wear Bridge project.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Blackburn highlighted the report and added that the report also sought approval to consult on the restriction that the bridge would place on the navigable waterway under the bridge. He referred to the land acquisition and reported that in order to be able to build the new Wear Bridge and its approach roads the Council must own all of the land that would be needed and all of the landowners had been contacted with a view to agreeing terms for the purchase of their land. It could not however be guaranteed that suitable terms could be agreed within the required timescale. Therefore it was necessary to promote a Compulsory Purchase Order in parallel with negotiations in order to be certain that all the land would be available when it was needed.

Turning to the side roads, Councillor Blackburn advised that there would be a need to make some changes to the existing highways in the vicinity of the scheme and the appropriate power to make such changes was obtained by means of a Side Roads Order. Lastly, in relation to the bridge itself, he explained that the construction of a new bridge over the river would restrict the available navigable waterway under the bridge. Before seeking the powers to do this it was necessary and desirable to consult informally with interested parties.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

13. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Director of Development and Regeneration be authorised to acquire such land as may be needed to allow the construction of the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor – New Wear Bridge project,

- (ii) the making of the Compulsory Purchase Order pursuant to Sections 239, 240, 246, 250 and 260 of the Highways Act 1980 to be known as the Sunderland City Council (Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor – New Wear Bridge) Compulsory Purchase Order 2009 be approved,
- (iii) the making of the Side Roads Order pursuant to Sections 14 and 125 of the Highways Act 1980 to be known as the Sunderland City Council (Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor – New Wear Bridge A1231 and B1405 Classified Roads) (Side Roads) Order 2009 be approved,
- (iv) the City Solicitor be authorised to take all necessary action to achieve confirmation of the above Orders, and
- (v) preliminary consultations with interested parties on a proposed Section 106(3) of the Highways Act 1980 Scheme for the new Wear bridge be approved.

Lisburn Terrace Triangle: Draft Development Framework

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval of the Draft Lisburn Terrace Triangle Development Framework for the purposes of consultation.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Blackburn reported that the UDP Alteration Number 2 identified the Lisburn Terrace triangle development site area as a Strategic Location for Change. In doing so, it set a requirement for the City Council to prepare a development framework, setting out key principles and parameters for the site and that these must be reflected in the detailed masterplans prepared by developers for the site. He advised that a policy included in Alteration No. 2 stated that business, housing and non-residential institutions were acceptable uses when the site was redeveloped but general industrial storage and distribution uses would be unacceptable. Other uses would be considered on their individual merits having regard to other policies of the UDP.

Councillor Blackburn advised Cabinet Members that the owner of the majority of the site had expressed a firm and current interest in delivering a mixed-use development at the Lisburn Terrace site and the establishment of a development framework for the site was now required to guide this interest. He added that a draft development framework for the site had been prepared with the involvement of the developer and in order to ensure that those with an interest had an opportunity to comment on the content of the draft Framework, it was recommended that it should be the subject of a formal consultation process. Following the consultation, all comments would be taken into consideration and, where appropriate, reflected in a revised and final draft of the Framework, which would be brought back to Cabinet for decision. The Framework would be used by the developers as a basis for preparing their detailed masterplan and proposals for the site and an approved Framework would be

afforded increased weight as a material consideration when determining future planning applications for the site.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

14. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Draft Lisburn Terrace Triangle Development Framework be approved for the purposes of consultation, and
- (ii) the Draft Lisburn Terrace Triangle Development Framework be endorsed as a material consideration in assessing planning applications, pending its finalisation following consultation.

Children and Young People's Plan 2009-10 and 2010-25

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to present a consultation draft of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2009-10 and to advise of Government guidance and the proposals of the Sunderland Children's Trust to produce a 15 year strategy (2010-25) for the commissioning of services for children and their families.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Smith reported that the proposal would align the Children's Trust governance arrangements for the CYPP with the Sunderland Partnership and Sunderland Strategy, and to formulate a new style 15 year strategy from April 2010 to March 2025 would align with local frameworks and national policy and proposed legislation. She drew attention to the process for consultation across the Trust's partners included in the report.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

15. RESOLVED that the draft CYPP 2009-10 and the proposals for a 15 year commissioning strategy 2010-25 be approved.

Education Improvement Partnership

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval for Sunderland City Council to be a member of an Educational Improvement Partnership (EIP) with Sunderland Schools, Academies and City of Sunderland College through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Smith reported that the proposal would support Children's Services in strengthening and securing the current strong relationship with schools, academies and other providers so that cross sector awareness and ways of working that would benefit children and young people could be promoted and developed and priorities delivered. She added that School Governing Bodies had been consulted and had signed up to the Memorandum of Understanding as appended to the report.

Cabinet Members having commended the proposals, it was:-

16. RESOLVED that approval be given for Sunderland City Council to become a formal member of the recently established EIP which aims to support the national Government drive for Local Authorities, through Children's Services to develop effective partnerships with school, academies and further education colleges.

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Waves 7-15 – Outcome of Expression of Interest and Invitation to Submit Readiness to Deliver Submission

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report (copy circulated) on the outcome of the Expressions of Interest (EoI) submitted to Partnerships for Schools (PFS) for the next Wave of the BSF programme on 30th November, 2008 and the subsequent invitation to submit a Readiness to Deliver submission by 8th May, 2008.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Smith reminded Cabinet Members of the EoI covering Sunderland's first 'follow on' and second 'follow on' projects for a member of secondary and special schools as set out in the Cabinet report on 5th November, 2008 and which were detailed at paragraph 4.2 of the report. She added that following the submission of the EoIs a national initial prioritisation of projects had been undertaken by PFS and was published in early March 2009 and Sunderland featured in the 'first' follow on list, ranked 8th of 95 Authorities, and in the 'second' follow on list, ranked 16th of 70 Authorities. This clearly indicated that in terms of the initial prioritisation based upon deprivation and attainment, Sunderland scored highly for both of its first and second projects.

Cabinet Members were advised that following the publication of the initial prioritisation lists, Sunderland Council Officers were invited to attend a briefing session on 13th March in London with PFS to outline how Authorities could prepare for formal entry into the next waves of the BSF programme and this invitation was limited to 40 Authorities.

Councillor Smith explained that although the Readiness to Deliver submission did not constitute formal entry into the programme it was an essential step in seeking to secure Sunderland's place in the next waves of BSF. Sunderland was one of only 5 Authorities nationally with BSF first 'follow on' projects to be invited to submit at this stage. Approval of the Readiness to Deliver submission would provide the way forward to secure transformation at the earliest possible opportunity for the full secondary estate. She drew attention to the funding regimes and affordability considerations.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

17. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Readiness to Deliver submission be submitted to PfS by 8th May, 2009,
- (ii) the Director of Children's Services be authorised to agree and complete the Readiness to Deliver submission in consultation with the Chief Executive, the City Treasurer, the Leader of the Council, and Cabinet Portfolio Holders for Children's Services and Resources prior to the deadline of 8th May, 2009, and
- (iii) the further stages in the PfS process to determine Sunderland's entry in the future national programme e.g. the PfS Assessment Panel meeting in June and PfS Remit Meeting anticipated to be held in October 2009 be noted.

Neighbourhood Renewal Block Improvements in Castletown

The Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to inform of funding arrangements and to seek authorisation for the proposed procurement of project management and delivery capacity to undertake block improvements to terraced houses in line with the Castletown Masterplan. The report also sought approval to a minor amendment to the Council's Housing Renewal Financial Assistance Policy to enable the Council to provide assistance in the proposed manner.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Trueman reported that the neighbourhood was identified in the Castletown Masterplan as requiring strategic intervention by the Council to assist in prevention of further housing market decline in the older terraced houses directly north of the Ethel Terrace shops. The masterplan designated these streets for external improvements to the homes with a view to restoring confidence in the neighbourhood, assuring residents and sustaining the viability of the housing. It was also seen as a key initiative to complement the new mixed tenure residential development specified in the masterplan for the cleared sites.

Councillor Trueman having highlighted aspects of the area based assistance under the policy, it was:-

18. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) policy FAP13 in the Council's Housing Renewal Financial Assistance Policy be amended in the manner set out in Appendix 3 to the report,

- (ii) the Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services be authorised to:
- (a) proceed with the development of a block improvement scheme to properties in Sheppard Terrace, Alder, Elizabeth and Stanley Streets, Nos. 77 to 85 Castle View (odd nos. inclusive) and 2 and 3 Oswald Terrace, Castletown with a view to improving the appearance and image of the neighbourhood, increasing confidence in the community and local housing market.
 - (b) commence the process of appointing a project manager and commissioning works through an appointed contractor to enable the Council to deliver external improvements to properties in the identified locality.
 - (c) provide area based assistance at a level of 90% of the cost of eligible works and to set a level of contribution required from the owner at a level of 10% of eligible costs on a scheme basis and to include the condition that 100% of the Council's financial contribution will be repayable if a property is sold within two years of the completion of the works.
 - (d) provide assistance to participating homeowners in accordance with a signed agreement with the Council with a condition that the scheduled works will be undertaken by the Council's appointed contractor.

Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

At the instance of the Chairman, it was:-

19. RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during consideration of the remaining business as it was considered to involve a likely disclosure of information relating to any individual, which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual, the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) or to consultations or negotiations in connection with labour relations matters arising between the Authority and employees of the Authority (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4).

(Signed) P. WATSON,
Chairman.

Note:-

The above minutes comprise only those relating to items during which the meeting was open to the public.

Additional minutes in respect of other items are included in Part II.