

**CABINET MEETING – 15 JANUARY 2014**  
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I**

**Title of Report:**

MINUTES, PART I

**Author(s):**

Head of Law and Governance

**Purpose of Report:**

Presents the minutes of the last meeting held on 19 December 2013 Part I.

**Action Required:**

To confirm the minutes as a correct record.



**At a meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC CENTRE (COMMITTEE ROOM NO. 2) on Thursday 19 December 2013 at 2.00pm.**

**Present:-**

Councillor P. Watson in the Chair

Councillors Blackburn, Gofton, Kelly, Miller, Speding and H. Trueman

**Also present:-**

Councillor Wood

**Part I**

**Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 4 December 2013 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**

There were no declarations of interest.

**Apologies for Absence**

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

## **Creation of a Combined Authority**

The Chief Executive submitted a report, together with a supplementary report, (copies circulated) to provide an update on developments in relation to the proposed creation of a Combined Authority and to request that consideration be given to the Council's response to the Secretary of State's formal consultation on the proposals.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman highlighted the report and reminded Cabinet Members that the emerging proposal for the creation of a Combined Authority had been discussed in various fora, including the other 7 authorities, over the past twelve months. He added that the officer's report provided the latest position and the results of the recent local consultation exercise undertaken to assist the Cabinet to come to a view on the proposed formal response to the Secretary of State. He invited Cabinet Members to make comments on the proposals and during the discussion the following issues were raised by Members:-

- The creation of a Combined Authority was accepted in principle, as a way forward for closer and integrated partnership working with the other LA6 authorities;,
- However at this stage there remains a number of questions and concerns regarding the detail of the proposals, in particular in relation to the following matters:-
  - (a) the appropriate integration of public transport arrangements across the LA7 area and the fair and proportionate allocation of transport funding across the area;
  - (b) the detailed governance arrangements for the proposed authority;
  - (c) the policy framework for the proposed authority and how transport and economic priorities would be agreed, set and delivered;
  - (d) the relationship between the proposed authority and the North East Local Enterprise Partnership; and
  - (e) further information on the estimated costs of the proposed authority and how this would be apportioned between the constituent members, in particular the financial implications for the Council in comparison with the current cost for the discharge of the functions through the existing arrangements.

Concerns were also expressed by Members that the local public consultation exercise on the proposals with local residents, businesses and the voluntary sector had only resulted in five hundred responses which was a very small sample to base such an important decision on.

Cabinet Members were aware of the tight timescale to respond to the Secretary of State. At this stage further information and clarification was required on the detail of the proposals to ensure that the proposals were in the best interests of Sunderland and its residents and local businesses. It was very strongly felt that Sunderland must not be disadvantaged in any way through the proposals.

The Chairman reported that this was a proposal to establish a new statutory authority across the LA7 area in respect of transport, skills and economic development. Whilst closer and integrated partnership working across this wider geographical area in these key areas was very important, the proposed authority would fundamentally change the existing governance arrangements for these functions across the area. Therefore, it was also very important that the detailed proposals were in the best interests of Sunderland and include appropriate and fair arrangements for all of the LA7. Every effort would be made to achieve answers to the issues raised within the timescales to enable a formal response to be made to the Secretary of State.

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

2. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the update on the current position in relation to the proposed development of a Combined Authority for the Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear area be noted,
- (ii) the results of a public consultation exercise undertaken in the past two weeks, in order to pay due regard to the views of local people on key factors and implications for Sunderland be noted, and
- (iii) taking the above into account, the views of the Cabinet be incorporated into the city council's response to the Secretary of State's consultation on the proposed creation of a Combined Authority and that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to finalise the response as appropriate and submit it by the deadline.

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

At the instance of the Chairman it was: -

3. 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 the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) and information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings and the public interest in maintaining these exemptions outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information because of the serious consequences for the authority and others if the information should come into the public domain. (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3 and 5).

(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.