

CABINET MEETING – 9 JUNE 2022
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

MINUTES, PART I

Author(s):

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Purpose of Report:

Presents the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2022, Part I.

Action Required:

To confirm the minutes as a correct record.

At a Meeting of the **CABINET** held in **CITY HALL (COMMITTEE ROOM 1)** on **TUESDAY 22 MARCH 2022** at **10.00 a.m.**

Present:-

Councillor G. Miller in the Chair

Councillors Chequer, Farthing, K. Johnston and Stewart

Also present:-

Councillor F. Miller, Deputy Cabinet Member
Councillor Edgeworth

Part I

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 8 February 2022, Part I (copy circulated) were submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 8 February 2022, Part I, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were made:-

Agenda Item 18: Use of
Compulsory Purchase
Powers and Side Roads
Order to Support the
Upgrade of the A1290

Councillor G. Miller together with Patrick Melia, Chief Executive and Peter McIntyre, Executive Director of City Development declared interests as members of the Board of the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) LLP and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the report.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Williams and P. Walker.

Performance Report – Quarter 3 of 2021/22.

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide performance information in relation to Quarter 3 of 2021/22.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Stewart highlighted that the report set out the progress made during Quarter 3 of 2021/22 in the delivery of the City Plan, spanning the period 2019 to 2030. He explained that the report detailed the progress made under each of the three key themes of the plan namely Dynamic Smart City, Healthy Smart City, and Vibrant Smart City, as well as progress made against additional Organisational Health indicators for the council.

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

2. RESOLVED that the performance information in relation to Quarter 3 performance of 2021/22 be accepted and noted.

Award of grant funding to the Moorsley and District Community Interest Company.

The Executive Director of Corporate Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to consider accepting grant funding from Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (SCCG) and approving the award of a grant to Moorsley and District Community Interest Company (MDCIC).

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Stewart highlighted that Moorsley and District CIC had an exciting project to redevelop “The Hut” in the Coalfields area, a base for a wide range of community activities. He reported that the CIC had already raised nearly £400,000 of funding towards the development, which had a cost estimate of around £480,000.

Cabinet Members were advised that the Council had worked with the CCG to secure a grant offer of £65,000 towards the facility. To assist with the practicalities around funding flows, the CCG would make a grant to the Council and then the Council would subsequently enter into a grant agreement with the CIC. However, there were no financial implications for the Council other than making the necessary arrangements to monitor the scheme to ensure the grant delivered its intended aims.

The Chair having reported that it was great to see partner organisations working well and flexibly together, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the Executive Director of Corporate Services be authorised to accept a grant award of £65,000 from SCCG and award a subsequent grant of the same amount to the MDCIC, on terms to be agreed by the Executive Director of Corporate Services in consultation with the Cabinet Secretary.

New Wear Footbridge – Project Update and Advance Orders

The Executive Director of City Development submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide an update on the progress of the New Wear Footbridge (“the Scheme”) and to seek approval to place advance orders for materials and/or works, where appropriate to do so.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Johnston highlighted that following a competitive procurement process, Volker Stevin Ltd were appointed as the preferred contractor for the Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) stage of the Scheme in October 2021. He explained that the purpose of PCSA stage was to enable the preferred contractor to develop the design to a sufficient level of maturity in order to agree a lump sum contract price for the full Scheme, prior to entering into the main works contract.

Councillor Johnston reported that prior to the completion of the PCSA period and the award of the main works contract, the ability to place orders for advance works and materials in a timely manner was required. He advised that this would allow the necessary flexibility to react to adjacent Riverside Sunderland Schemes and volatile market conditions, in particular steel, in order to obtain cost and time benefits for the Scheme. He added that this approach would minimise the cost risk associated with raw materials and managing the interface with adjacent projects.

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

4. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the progress update provided be noted;
- (ii) the Executive Director of City Development, in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Dynamic City Portfolio Holder, be authorised to place advance orders for materials and/or works in connection with the Scheme, where considered appropriate; and
- (iii) a further report be submitted to Cabinet for consideration prior to the award of the main works contract for the delivery of the Scheme.

North East Screen Industries Partnership

The Executive Director of City Development submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval to contribute to the North East Screen Industries Partnership region-wide development programme, and implementation of the associated Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the BBC.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Johnston reported that in 2021, the BBC published a pan-UK commissioning strategy and announced its commitment to increase out-of-London production by 10% by 2028. He advised that within this context, an MoU between the BBC and the North East region as a whole was signed in September 2021. He explained that this set out the BBC's intention to invest up to £25 million over 5 years into regional programming and content, with regional partners seeking to commit £11.4 million alongside the BBC's investment, to support creation of a sustainable screen industries eco-system working closely with Northern Film and Media.

Cabinet Members were advised that the implementation of the MoU would be taken forward through the newly established North East Screen Industries Partnership, which would oversee a co-ordinated regional Screen Industries Development Programme. It would focus on supporting economic recovery, regeneration, and growth of the screen industries through strengthening infrastructure to support the sector; through job creation; through business creation, growth and resilience; and by developing, attracting and retaining talent, as well as positively raising the profile of the region.

Councillor Johnston reported that the Development Programme included a range of workstreams, including investment in a Screen Office, creation of a North East Production Fund, Business Support and Skills Development, and Marketing. He advised that the Development Programme would attract more productions to be filmed in the region; attract independent production companies to relocate to or set up in the region and support ongoing business development of existing and new screen industry companies. He added that it would also deliver skills development programmes, ensuring access from across the region to employment and training opportunities and would work closely with further and higher education partners to ensure that the region had the skilled workforce, and pipeline of future talent, that the industry required.

Cabinet Members were advised that a financial contribution of £158,481 was requested from the City Council in respect of the development programme to be implemented during the 2022/23 financial year.

Councillor Farthing commented that it was an exciting report and opportunity for any filming to place the North East in a positive light and attract a wide range of talent to the area.

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

5. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) Approval be given to a financial contribution of £158,481 to be made via the North East Combined Authority (NECA) in respect of the development programme to be implemented during the 2022/23 financial year pursuant to the MoU from the provision for economic development within the approved capital programme;
- (ii) the Executive Director of City Development, in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services, the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Dynamic City, be authorised to agree the associated Business Case and delivery arrangements relating to the MoU on the terms set out in the report in conjunction with NECA and its constituent local authorities, the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) and the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA); and
- (iii) the Executive Director of City Development, in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services, the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Dynamic City, be authorised to approve the terms of a Grant Funding Agreement with Northern Film and Media (as the regional screen agency) in respect of the 2022/2023 financial contribution alongside the equivalent contributions of the constituent local authorities within NECA.

Link Together Project

The Executive Director of City Development submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval for the delivery, subject to a successful outcome to the external grant application, of the Link Together project ("the Project") in partnership with Durham Wildlife Trust and the Wear Rivers Trust.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Johnston reported that access to good quality accessible greenspaces was important to local residents. He advised that whilst there was a good network of greenspaces within the city, it was recognised that the quality and accessibility of many of these greenspaces could be improved.

Councillor Johnston highlighted that over recent months the Durham Wildlife Trust had been in discussion with the Council to consider the development of a funding bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) to facilitate improvements to the green infrastructure network throughout the Coalfield area. He explained that the proposals had been developed with the Coalfield Area Neighbourhood and Community Board, and the Coalfield Area Committee.

Cabinet Members were advised that following a successful outcome to the Expression of Interest, development work on the Project had progressed. A Stage 1 bid for the Project was submitted to the Heritage Fund in November 2021 to seek to secure the grant funding required for the development phase. It was anticipated that the bid would be considered at its committee meeting on 17 March 2022 and a decision would be issued shortly afterwards. A further application would be made in due course for the delivery phase (Stage 2).

Councillor Johnston reported that in order to ensure that commencement of the development phase of the bid was not delayed, in the event that the NLHF grant was approved, Cabinet approval was being sought for the proposed funding and delivery arrangements, subject to the award of the relevant external funding from the Heritage Fund. He explained that if successful, the Project would deliver green infrastructure and wildlife improvements to thirteen sites across the Coalfield area, ensuring that the project would be of benefit to all of the Coalfield communities.

Cabinet Members were advised that the Durham Wildlife Trust would coordinate the development and delivery phases of the project (Stages 1 and 2 respectively) and coordinate volunteering opportunities alongside the Council to ensure that the Coalfield communities including young people were fully engaged.

Councillor Johnston reported that existing Section 106 funding had been identified by the Council which could be spent through the Project, which would be in alignment with the purposes for which it had been collected. He advised that by utilising these funds as match funding as part of a wider Heritage Fund bid as proposed, increased the scope and scale of the benefits that could be delivered compared with spending the Section 106 funding in isolation. The total cost of the Project (across the initial development stage and subsequent delivery stage) was anticipated to be £1,961,125, with £1,005,382 being sought from the Heritage Fund. The match funding was proposed to be from Section 106 funds, the Coalfield Neighbourhood Fund and the North East Community Forest with a contribution from volunteer in-kind support.

Councillor F. Miller welcomed the proposals as access to greenspaces was important for the mental health of residents and she hoped that there were similar aspirations to develop the greenspace areas in Washington.

Councillor Chequer was also delighted with the proposals as they could impact on health outcomes and reduce health inequalities. She reported that she looked forward to the development of GPs social prescribing to include access to greenspaces.

The Chair having highlighted that these proposals clearly demonstrated the Council's determination to deliver a greener, cleaner environment as part of the Council's low carbon commitments to be carbon neutral by 2030 and the city by 2040, it was:-

6. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) subject to the award of the relevant external funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), the Executive Director of City Development, in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services, the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Dynamic City, be authorised to take all necessary steps to deliver the Project, including to agree and enter into Funding Agreements with the NLHF and a Partnership Agreement with Durham Wildlife Trust (DWT) and the Wear Rivers Trust (WRT) in respect of the Project; and
- (ii) the proposed funding arrangements for the delivery of the Project be approved as set out in the report (subject to the award of the relevant external funding) and the resultant variation to the Capital Programme be approved.

Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and Warm Homes Fund

The Executive Director of City Development submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval for the delivery of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 1 project and, subject to the award of external funding, the Warm Homes Fund (WHF) projects.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chair highlighted that the Council had been successful in recent years in securing significant levels of external funding to deliver priority activities and projects that supported the objectives of the City Plan and which would assist in the delivery the Council's low carbon commitments established through the Low Carbon Framework and Action Plan.

The Chair advised that the report covered two funding bids, the first being the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. He explained that the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (Wave 1) would provide funding for fabric-first improvements to social housing to improve their energy.

Cabinet Members were advised that the Council, as lead applicant and working closely with Gentoo, had secured up to £1,236,513 of grant funding from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) through Wave 1 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. The project would enable decarbonisation upgrading works to 604 homes owned by Gentoo across Sunderland. These would include loft insulation, a combination of loft and window upgrades, and fabric enhancements - such as external wall insulation and flat roof upgrades. The works would bring all of the properties up to an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C rating. The project would be delivered in full by Gentoo, who as the landlord of the properties would be wholly responsible for providing the match funding required as part of the overall project cost of £2,668,115.

The Chair reported that as part of the delivery of the project, the Council would be required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with BEIS. He advised that a back-to-back partnership agreement would be entered into with Gentoo and a Project Board would be established, including relevant officers from the Council alongside colleagues from Gentoo, to oversee management and monitoring of the project. Subject to Cabinet approval, the project would commence on 1 April 2022 and must be completed by 31 March 2023.

The Chair then referred to the second funding bid, the Warm Homes Fund. He reported that at the time of writing, the outcome of this bid was unknown, however he was pleased to advise that the Council had now been notified the bid had been successful.

Cabinet Members were advised that in 2017, National Grid and Community Interest Company Affordable Warmth Solutions (AWS) established the £150 million Warm Homes Fund (WHF) to help make households in Great Britain warmer, healthier, and more economical to heat. The Council in partnership with Groundwork North East, the Citizens Advice Bureau and GP Alliance had been awarded up to £948,143 of grant funding from the Warm Homes Fund to support the delivery of installation of affordable heating solutions in fuel poor households within the city.

The Chair explained that the bid was made up of two interrelated projects. The first project (Lot1) would deliver Air Source Heat Pumps to 135 properties within the city. The second project (Lot 2) would provide energy advice and guidance to support to households. He added that subject to Cabinet approval, a Project Board would be established to oversee management and monitoring of the project.

Cabinet Members were advised that both the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund project and proposed Warm Home Fund projects would make a direct contribution to the strategic priority within the Low Carbon Framework which was focused on the built environment. They both reflected the partnership approach which was considered essential to Sunderland being able to deliver against its ambition in relation to emissions reductions. They would also both contribute to reducing fuel poverty, reducing health inequalities, and improving the comfort and wellbeing of residents.

Councillor Farthing congratulated the team for the success of the funding bid. She drew attention to the high level of fuel poverty in the city and these schemes would go some way to addressing the issue. She added at a recent workshop by the Citizen's Advice Bureau highlighted fuel poverty and raised awareness of benefits that could be claimed to assist residents.

Councillor Chequer reported that more and more residents would be moving into fuel poverty which would exacerbate health inequalities. She added that anything the Council could do to minimise this impact was welcome.

The Chair concurred and added that such schemes were so welcome particularly in view of the Government's failure to tackle the energy crisis and the huge increases in cost of living for residents. He added that this was another example of local authorities leading the way.

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

7. RESOLVED that Cabinet:-

- (i) approve the delivery of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 1 project and receipt of £1,236,513 from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS);
- (ii) authorise the Executive Director of City Development, in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Dynamic City, to take all necessary steps to deliver the SHDF Wave 1 project, including to agree and enter into an Agreement with Gentoo Group Ltd ('Gentoo') for delivery of the SHDF Wave 1 project reflecting Gentoo's role as the main delivery partner;
- (iii) approve delivery of the Warm Homes Fund (WHF) project;
- (iv) authorise the Executive Director of City Development, in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Dynamic City, to take all necessary steps to deliver the WHF projects, including the procurement and appointment of a contractor to deliver the proposed installation works and to agree and enter into a Partnership Agreement with Groundwork North East and the Citizens Advice Bureau as the main delivery partners; and
- (v) approve the proposed funding arrangements for delivery of the SHDF Wave 1 and WHF projects as set out in this report and approve the resultant variation to the Capital Programme.

Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) Holmeside Bus Rationalisation (Highway Improvement Scheme)

The Executive Director of City Development submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval to progress the delivery of one of the City's TCF Funded schemes, namely the Holmeside Bus Rationalisation (made up of enhancement works to introduce a new One-Way Gyratory System and Sunderland Station Public Realm work).

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chair highlighted that following the previous TCF update to Cabinet on 13 July 2021, the project had been under development in line with two other projects which formed part of a wider project within the City centre linking the other TCF funded schemes namely the South Sunderland Station and the new Multi Storey Car Park. He reported that the estimated cost of £2.885 million would bring together the various projects and funding from within the current approved Capital Programme into one project, as per the following to include:

- Holmeside Bus Rationalisation – with a TCF grant of £880k together with £255k of Council borrowing – making a sub-total of £1.135 million;
- Railway Station Public Realm – with Council Borrowing of £750,000; and
- Integrated Transport Grant – of £1 million.

Cabinet Members were advised that due to the funding and construction deadline of 31 March 2023 associated with TCF, there was a requirement to appoint an external main contractor with capacity to immediately deliver the proposed works within the timescales set out. An option to do nothing was not recommended as it might result in external funding for these measures being lost to the Council.

The Chair invited Councillor Edgeworth, who was observing the meeting, to comment. Councillor Edgeworth observed the deadlines and timelines mentioned in the report to immediately deliver the proposed works. He advised that there had been some consternation within his ward in relation to the proposal to introduce a one-way westbound traffic movement along with a gyratory system to rationalise vehicle movements around the City as this had not been advised during the consultation process. He expressed concern for the elderly and disabled residents having to locate alternative bus stops.

Councillor F. Miller welcomed the report and its proposals and stressed the vital importance to the city of improving the highway infrastructure.

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

8. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) approval be given to the Council entering into a funding agreement with the North East Joint Transport Committee, on such terms to be approved by the Executive Director of City Development, in consultation with the Dynamic City Portfolio Holder and the Executive Director of Corporate Services;
- (ii) the funding arrangements for the estimated scheme costs of £2.885 million to implement the improvement works be approved;
- (iii) subject to the completion of the relevant funding agreement with the North East Joint Transport committee, the Executive Director of City Development, in consultation with the Dynamic City Portfolio Holder and the Executive Director of Corporate Services, be authorised to take all necessary steps to procure the delivery and completion of the scheme;
- (iv) it be noted that Cabinet approval will enable the timely progression of the on-site delivery of the Holmeside Bus Rationalisation (Highway Improvement Scheme);

- (v) it be noted that this scheme will support the City Plan objectives of becoming a dynamic and vibrant city with the improved highway infrastructure and driving regional economic growth, job creation and other regeneration benefits to the City to support business, retail for residents and visitors.

Highway Maintenance (Including Bridges) and Integrated Transport Capital Programme 2022-2023

The Executive Director of City Development submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval to the planned Highway Maintenance (including Bridges) and Integrated Transport Capital Programme for 2022-2023 and approve amendments (additions/deferrals) to the 2021-2022 Programme.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Stewart highlighted that the city's highway network was the most valuable asset managed and maintained by the Council valued at £2.2 billion. He stressed that the importance of the network to economic development, growth and accrued social benefits could not be overstated. He reported that providing access to employment, and other key services made a well-maintained, safe and accessible highway network vital to a vibrant economy and gave its residents a sense of place. It was from within this context that the delivery programmes had been developed.

Cabinet Members were reminded that at its March Council meeting, the 2022-2023 Capital Programme was approved. The provisional capital allocations for the Highway Maintenance, Bridge Maintenance and Integrated Transport programmes for 2022-2023 were contained within the Cabinet report. Since that meeting the Department for Transport had confirmed £1.835 million of pothole funding and that all other allocations would remain the same as 2021-2022. A recommendation to approve this financial variation to the capital programme was included in the report.

Councillor Stewart referred to the prepared schedule of streets and bridges which formed the basis of the forthcoming programme and these were set out in appendices 1 to 5 of the report. He added that it should be noted that Programme delivery was dependent upon:-

- statutory and public consultations particularly in relation to the Integrated Transport Programme;
- availability of design and construction resources;
- favourable weather conditions;
- Statutory Undertakers (SUs) and the level of planned activity they had scheduled in each of our programmed streets.

Cabinet Members were advised that the programmes of work would be funded from government grants and prudential borrowing as detailed in Appendix 7 of the report. The locations identified in appendices 1 to 5 were considered to be optimal for the Council.

Councillor Farthing was pleased that the programme also took note of the condition of footpaths and welcomed the schedule of repairs and maintenance planned for Washington South.

The Chair commented that the Government needed to increase its investment in repairs to highways as spending less than £2 million would not stretch to cover the whole of the £2.2 billion value highways network in the city.

9. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the schemes to be delivered that are funded from the 2022-2023 Highway Maintenance Capital Programme allocation be approved as set out in Appendix 1;
- (ii) the schemes to be delivered that are funded from the 2022-2023 Bridge Maintenance Capital Programme allocation be approved as set out in Appendix 3;
- (iii) the schemes to be delivered that are funded from the 2022-2023 Integrated Transport Capital Programme allocation be approved as set out in Appendix 5;
- (iv) the amendments to the schemes to be delivered that are funded from 2021-2022 Highway Maintenance Capital Programme allocation be approved as set out in Appendix 2;
- (v) the amendments to the schemes to be delivered that are funded from 2021-2022 Bridge Maintenance Capital Programme allocation be approved as set out in Appendix 4;
- (vi) the amendments to the schemes to be delivered that are funded from 2021-2022 Integrated Transport Capital Programme allocation be approved as set out in Appendix 6; and
- (vii) the inclusion of the funding for this programme and the resultant variation to the Capital Programme be approved.

Housing Service Update

The Executive Director of Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide an annual update on the Council's Housing Service, review successes and regulatory and compliance requirements.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Johnston highlighted that despite a challenging year, the Housing Team had made significant progress in the delivery of the Housing Delivery and Investment Plan and the development of the Housing Service to the Council's tenants. He was pleased to report that the Housing Team had been recognised for their service excellence and innovation by being shortlisted for both Regional and National Awards. He added that this year, the Council had faced its first Home England Compliance Audit for its development work that had received grant funding. He was delighted to say that the Council through the excellent work by the Development Team had passed this audit with flying colours.

Cabinet Members were advised that the report outlined current performance in the delivery of new homes and that positive progress was being made. The Annual Review report was the second annual report which provided a positive overview of the progress that had been achieved throughout the year and demonstrated how the Council was making a real and positive difference in its communities and supporting its residents.

Councillor Johnston reported that the service was positioning itself for the next step in its journey and that was to ensure that it was performing at best in class and was compliant with all regulatory and safety requirements. He outlined that significant work had been undertaken in developing comprehensive action plans so that the service was compliant in all required areas and met best practice in customer service.

Cabinet Members having commended the report and congratulated the team on its achievements, it was:-

10. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Annual Housing review be approved and be published on the Council's website and issued to all tenants and partners;
- (ii) the Key Performance Indicators be approved and performance reports be submitted to Cabinet every 6 months with quarterly performance monitoring delegated to the Housing Services Monitoring Group (HSMG);
- (iii) the Complaint and Compliment Policy and Procedure that supports the compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Compliant Handling Code be approved and that the self-assessment be published on the Council's website;
- (iv) the Compliance and Best Practice Action Plans be approved;
- (v) the widening of the HSMG membership to include membership of up to two tenants be approved and that the details and arrangements of tenant's membership be delegated to the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Dynamic City;

- (vi) the revised outputs for the future HDIP be approved; and
- (vii) the Homes England audit report be approved.

Private Property Acquisitions

The Executive Director of Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval to widen the scope of the Housing Delivery and Investment Plan to enable Private Property acquisitions.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Johnston highlighted that two new ways had been identified to support residents, local communities, provide improved neighbourhoods and improve the health and wellbeing of older homeowners. He explained that the first was by purchasing homes in regeneration areas where the owner wished to move but was reluctant to sell to a private landlord and wished to work with the Council on ensuring that the letting and long-term management and maintenance was to a high standard. He advised that the second was the purchase of properties where the homeowner had no capital to improve the property and the property condition was poor and was creating a position where the owner was or potentially could become ill. The Council would step in to purchase the property and improve it to a high standard with the previous owner moving back as a Council tenant.

Cabinet Members were advised that these new approaches would make an important and positive impact to communities and residents' lives.

Councillor Chequer welcomed the proposals as they would provide opportunities for the elderly to remain warm and comfortable in their own homes.

Councillor Stewart highlighted that the option to purchase property where the owner did not want to sell to a private landlord was vitally important and a positive step forward as areas where there was a prevalence of landlord properties had led to a loss of community cohesion.

Councillor Farthing enquired where the former property owner moved back in as a tenant, in the event of any equity being left over would it then revert to the tenant. The Executive Director of Corporate Services explained that the evaluation of the property and the transaction would need to fit the circumstances by being fair and equitable and not for profit.

Councillor Johnston and the Chair having highlighted that the proposals demonstrated the Council's commitments for investment in the best housing solutions for its residents, it was:-

11. RESOLVED that the widening of the scope of the Housing Delivery Investment Plan to incorporate the acquisition of private properties be approved when:-

- (i) it improves neighbourhoods; and
- (ii) it supports the health benefits of older people who do not have the finances to improve or maintain their homes to the decent homes' standard.

Household Waste and Recycling Management Arrangements

The Executive Director of Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval to the development of waste management arrangements and associated policies.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chair highlighted the Council had a legal duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to collect household waste. He advised that residents had a duty to store, dispose and present their waste in line with the Council's collection arrangements.

Cabinet Members were advised that the Council had issued a charge of £25 for bin replacements regardless of the reason since October 2017. The £25 charge had been in place now for nearly 5 years and required a review. The report proposed a new proposed policy for bin replacement.

The Chair explained that this new policy took account of the financial impact of the Covid pandemic and the recent increases in the cost of living. He advised that it was proposed that new bins were available and free to all residents for 12 months and that this new Bin Replacement Policy would be implemented on 1 April 2022 and run to 31 March 2023 at which point this Policy would be reviewed.

Councillor Farthing welcomed the new Policy. She reported that there were a great number of flats and maisonettes in her Ward that had had to rely on community bins. She explained that the fortnightly collections had resulted in a high number of black bags and side waste accumulating and often resorting to using the recycling bins for general waste. She had requested the Council's Environmental Services team and Gentoo to examine the problem and issue green waste bins and recycling bins. She anticipated that on reviewing the Policy at the end of the twelve months, the Council would find that there would be less need for replacement bins. She added that she would encourage that the Policy would be continued.

Councillor Stewart welcomed the proposals to replace stolen bins free of charge over the next year as many more families would be facing fuel poverty in the coming months due to the government's inadequate action over rising energy bills.

The Chair highlighted that the Bin Replacement Policy had been a complex issue. He advised that not all residents had the ability to secure their bins and charging for a replacement bin when residents were facing escalating costs of living was repugnant. He hoped that taking this small cost away from residents would be helpful and also reduce the pressure on the waste collection teams from dealing with so much side waste. He assured Cabinet Members that the financial impact would be examined and reviewed at the end of the twelve months.

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

12. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the revised Bin Replacement Policy be approved;
- (ii) the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Leader of the Council, be authorised to implement the revised Bin Replacement Policy city-wide; and
- (iii) the proposals to develop future Household Waste and Recycling Management arrangements and associated policies be noted.

Procurement of Refuse Bins, Waste Containers and Accessories

The Executive Director of Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval to procure and award contracts for the provision of refuse bins, waste containers and accessories using an East Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) Framework.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chair reported that the Council, as part of its refuse collection service, was required to provide refuse bins and caddies to residents and associated containers to meet commercial and trade waste needs across the City. He advised that it was the intention to carry out procurement and utilise the new ESPO Refuse and Recycling Products Framework which was established on 1 February 2022. He explained that the contract awards would be made to the supplier offering the most economically advantageous solution under each Framework Lot and as the Council spend over the 4-year contract period would exceed £500,000 and Cabinet approval was required.

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

13. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the procurement and the award of contracts for the provision of refuse bins, waste containers and accessories be approved; and

- (ii) the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services and Deputy Leader of the Council, be authorised to enter into contractual arrangements for delivery of the supplies.

School Admissions Arrangements for the 2023-2024 Academic Year

The Executive Director of Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek for the proposed maintained school admission arrangements for the academic year September 2023-24 and to describe proposed amendments to published admission numbers for the academic year 2022-23, where it is necessary to provide additional places.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Farthing highlighted that the arrangements outlined within the report applied only to maintained schools, with Voluntary Aided, Free Schools and Academies responsible for the establishment of their own arrangements.

Councillor Farthing reported that the Council had now implemented changes to the admission arrangements for local authority-maintained schools proposed for 2022/2023. She explained that they included the inclusion of a sibling link criteria for parents applying for places at local authority maintained junior schools. In addition to this, any applicant, who had applied for a school place within the preference period but who did not secure one of the schools identified within their application, would be offered a place at the nearest school with remaining places. She clarified that this did not remove any parent or carers' rights to appeal to any setting that had been unable to offer a place but would ensure that all children had an offer of an appropriate school place within the admissions process.

Cabinet Members were advised that it was estimated that there would be a surplus of reception and year 7 places across most of the school planning areas in the city in September 2022. Some schools were projected to be oversubscribed but sufficient places existed to offer any parent who had not secured their preferred school place a reasonable local alternative.

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

14. RESOLVED that the following be approved for the 2023-2024 academic year:-

- (i) the admissions policy and procedures associated with the co-ordinated scheme of admissions;
- (ii) the criteria that will be applied for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools where over-subscription occurs; and
- (iii) the published admission numbers (PANs).

Grant Funding to Third Sector organisations providing social care related services

The Executive Director of Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval to award funding to Third Sector organisations providing social care related services.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Chequer highlighted that approval was sought to award one year's grant funding to Sunderland People First and Washington Mind, who were third sector organisations providing social care related support.

Councillor Chequer reported that Sunderland People First (SPF) were a self-advocacy group for people with learning disabilities and autism. She advised that it represented, championed and campaigned for the rights of people with a learning disability and autism to ensure that people were seen as equal citizens in society, that they had their voices heard so that they could have the best life and access to and experience of services that they could and that their rights were promoted and upheld. She added that the Council recognised this important and valuable work and was seeking approval to provide 1 year's grant funding of £101,274 to the organisation.

In relation to Washington Mind, Councillor Chequer advised that it was the lead partner in a consortium with Sunderland Mind and Sunderland Headlight, providing a My Life Support project to people with mental health needs. She explained that the project promoted practical help with day to day living that people with mental health problems often needed in order to stay well and live a full life. The project provided people with information, advice, support and guidance which were essential factors in people developing the capacity to problem solve, stay well and reduce risk of relapse. She added that the Council supports the important work of the project and approval was sought to provide 1 year's grant funding of £100,000 to the organisation.

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

15. RESOLVED that the award of funding for 2022-2023, in the form of a grant be approved to:-
 - (i) 1 year's grant funding of £101,274 to Sunderland People First, who are self-advocacy group for people with learning disabilities and autism, and
 - (ii) 1 year's grant funding of £100,000 to Washington Mind, who are the lead partner in a consortium with Sunderland Mind and Sunderland Headlight, providing a My Life Support project to people with mental health needs

At this juncture, Councillor G. Miller together with Patrick Melia, Chief Executive and Peter McIntyre, Executive Director of City Development declared interests as members of the Board of the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) LLP and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the report.

Councillor Stewart took the Chair during consideration of the report.

Use of Compulsory Purchase Powers and Side Roads Order to Support the Upgrade of the A1290

The Development Director (Residential) submitted a report and a supplementary report (copies circulated) to obtain approval for the making of Compulsory Purchase (CPO) and Side Roads Orders (SRO) to facilitate the upgrading of the A1290 between its junction with the A19 at Downhill Lane and its junction with Cherry Blossom Way ("the Scheme") and support the further development of IAMP and the recently announced Envision AESC battery plant.

(For copy report and supplementary report – see original minutes).

Councillor Stewart reported that some of the land needed for the A1290 scheme was already owned by the Council or by IAMP LLP. He advised that whilst the Council was seeking to acquire the remaining third-party land by negotiation and agreement with the existing landowners, the use of a CPO and SRO would provide greater certainty of project delivery.

Cabinet Members were reminded that in September 2021, they had agreed, in principle, to the potential use of the Council's CPO powers to facilitate the Scheme after certain preliminary work was carried out to prepare for the CPO. The preliminary work was outlined in section 4 of the report.

Councillor Stewart reported that the SRO was required to stop-up, divert or otherwise alter existing highways that were affected by the Scheme and to facilitate successful project delivery. He drew attention to the supplementary report which had been circulated that set out further information regarding the scope of the proposed SRO to read in conjunction with the main report together with the Order Plan included at Appendix 1 to the report.

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

16. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Development Director (Residential), in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Cabinet Secretary, be authorised to take all appropriate actions necessary for the purpose of negotiating and agreeing terms and conditions to acquire the land and new rights over land which are needed to allow the construction operation and maintenance of the Scheme;

- (ii) the making of a Compulsory Purchase Order (or Orders) be authorised pursuant to sections 239, 240, 264, 249, 250 and 260 of the Highways Act 1980 and all other enabling powers to be known as “The City of Sunderland Council (A1290 Dualling International Drive to A19 Downhill Lane Junction) Compulsory Purchase Order 2022” (“the CPO”) for the compulsory purchase of land and rights required for the Scheme within the area shown on the draft Order Map as set out in Appendix 1;
- (iii) the making of a Side Roads Order (or Orders) be authorised pursuant to Sections 6, 14 and 125 of the Highways Act 1980 and all other enabling powers, to be known as the “The City of Sunderland Council (A1291 Dualling International Drive to A19 Downhill Lane Junction) (classified Roads) Side Roads Order 2022” (“the SRO”) to improve or stop up existing highways, to construct new highways and to stop up and provide replacement private means of access as required to deliver the Scheme;
- (iv) the Assistant Director of Law and Governance be authorised to make the CPO and SRO and take all necessary action to achieve confirmation of the orders;
- (v) the Development Director (Residential) be authorised to agree the final draft of the proposed Statement of Reasons set out in Appendix 2 in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services and Cabinet Secretary;
- (vi) subject to confirmation of the CPO and SRO, the Assistant Director of Law and Governance be authorised to take all necessary action to implement the CPO and SRO and to acquire all land, interests in land and / or new rights over the CPO land and / or possession of the CPO land as necessary, including the service of Notices to Treat and Notices of Entry, or as the case may be, the execution of General Vesting Declarations;
- (vii) in the event that any question of compensation is referred to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber), the Assistant Director of Law and Governance be authorised to take all steps in connection with the conduct and, if appropriate, settlement of such proceedings;
- (viii) the Development Director (Residential), in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Cabinet Secretary, be authorised to seek to acquire the land and rights (or extinguish rights) required for the Scheme by agreement and to take all necessary steps to enable the negotiation of and entering into the agreements necessary to complete such acquisitions;

- (ix) the Development Director (Residential), in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Cabinet Secretary, be authorised to take all necessary steps to enable the negotiation and approval of the payment of relevant and reasonable professional fees incurred by the landowners and others with compensatable interests in taking professional advice in connection with the acquisition of their interests required for the Scheme and related compensation claims and also in advancing the development or implementation of the Scheme; and
- (x) the Development Director (Residential), in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Cabinet Secretary, be authorised to enter into an indemnity agreement with IAMP LLP in relation to all costs associated with the Council's promotion of the CPO and SRO.

Councillor G. Miller was readmitted to the meeting and resumed the Chair. Patrick Melia, Chief Executive and Peter McIntyre, Executive Director of City Development were also readmitted to the meeting.

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

At the instance of the Chairman, it was: -

17. 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 exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

(Signed) G. MILLER,
Chair.

P. STEWART,
Chair.

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.

