

**CABINET MEETING – 6 JUNE 2012**  
**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 18 April 2012 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. 1) on Wednesday 18 April 2012 at 2.00 p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor P. Watson in the Chair

Councillors Allan, Blackburn, Charlton, Gofton, Kelly, P. Smith, Speding, H. Trueman and T. Wright

Prior to the commencement of the business of the meeting the Chairman advised that this would be Councillor Charlton's last Cabinet meeting. Councillor Charlton would be retiring from office and not standing at the next Local Government Election. On behalf of the Cabinet Members and officers; the Chairman expressed gratitude for Councillor Charlton's past service and wished him well for the future

**Part I**

**Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 21 March 2012 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**

There were no apologies for absence submitted to the meeting.

## **Report of the Meeting of the Personnel Committee, Part I**

The report of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 22 March 2012 Part I (copy circulated) was submitted and consideration was given thereto.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

2. RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 22 March 2012 Part I be noted.

## **Review of the Council's Executive and Committee Arrangements**

The Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services submitted a joint report (copy circulated) to ask Council to note the Leader's proposals to revise the Cabinet Portfolios and to recommend Council approves revisions to the support arrangements for Cabinet, the number of Scrutiny Committees, the strengthening of leadership arrangements for Area Committees and disestablishment of Personnel and Appeals Committees as the first part of an overall review of current governance arrangements.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman highlighted that the changes to the Council's Executive and main Committee arrangements were ambitious and far reaching as most of these arrangements had been in place for at least a decade. He explained that the arrangements needed to change to take into account the challenging environment which the Council faced which included a broad and complex policy agenda and of course serious financial pressures.

The Chairman reported that the changes proposed were not just a response to external factors and pressures but were intended to strengthen sound practical political governance in support of the Sunderland Way of Working. He added that they were essential if the Council was to deliver the agenda of devolution and decentralisation, which lay at the centre of the Sunderland Way of Working, effectively and with appropriate pace and momentum.

Cabinet Members were advised that strengthened Area Committees and governance arrangements were necessary to support the expansion and development of successful Responsive Local Services. The Chairman reported that as the Council was changing the way that front line services were delivered through the Sunderland Way of Working and the governance arrangements, including effective engagement of local Members, needed to keep pace also.

The Chairman drew attention to the proposals which had been designed to strengthen the position of local Councillors at the very heart of decision making on key services and other things which had the greatest bearing upon the communities they served. He added they also respected the fact that Members needed to invest their time and attention where it would have most impact. He explained that therefore it was also proposed to rationalise the current committee structures in order to ensure that maximum effort was placed behind those parts of the governance which were likely to be most critical to delivery of the Sunderland Way of Working.

Cabinet Members were advised that the Council's scrutiny function would, for instance, operate equally as effectively but with fewer structured meetings and the current Personnel responsibilities would continue to be delivered but decisions made at the most effective level of arrangement within the Council's executive.

The Chairman then reported that it was proposed to strengthen the role and capacity of Cabinet in order to play the strong, active, high level Community Leadership role which Sunderland needed. He explained that more and more challenges were facing Cabinet Portfolio Holders and the demands upon them were increasingly complex and involved. He added that the Council's national profile was strong and positive and continued to develop and was well placed regionally. He outlined that within the City the need for newer, stronger, more challenging partnership meant that the Council's community leadership capacity was even more critical than before and the proposals to create Policy Support Members were designed to do just this.

Councillor Charlton reported that it was appropriate to make improvements to the structure as Cabinet had been introduced in 1999 and it was necessary in order to keep up with the demands of the changing roles.

The Chairman having reported that he was confident that the proposals for the executive and committee arrangements were 'fit for purpose' to enable and facilitate the progress which the Council was already making and meet the City's aspirations, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the Council be recommended to:-

- (i) note the Leader's decision to revise Cabinet portfolios, with effect from Annual Council, by reducing the number of Cabinet Portfolios from ten to eight (retaining the three current Leadership Portfolios) and revising Portfolio remits accordingly and to approve changes to Committees to take effect from Annual Council,
- (ii) approve changes to support arrangements for Cabinet, the number of Scrutiny Committees, Personnel Committee, and to strengthen the leadership of Area Committees, as follows;

- (a) Establish the role of Policy Support Member (five Members) to provide additional support for members of Cabinet,
- (b) Reduce the number of Scrutiny Committees from seven to one with one Chairman, one Vice Chairman and six Scrutiny Lead Members,
- (c) Establish five additional roles to support the Chairs and work of the Area Committees and confirm that in each Area Committee there will be one Vice Chair, Lead Area Member with responsibility for 'Place' matters and an Alternate Vice Chair, Lead Area Member for 'People' matters,
- (d) Disestablish Personnel Committee with relevant executive decisions to be made by Cabinet and alternative arrangements to be established for exercise of those functions that are not to be the responsibility of the Executive,
- (e) Disestablish Appeals Committee arrangements following consultation upon options for an alternative appeals mechanism, and
- (f) Authorise the Head of Law and Governance to amend the constitution to reflect the revised arrangements.

### **City of Sunderland local Development Framework : Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options and Supporting Evidence Papers**

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek a recommendation to Council to approve the Sunderland Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options for public consultation. Endorsement was sought for the three updated evidential papers summarised at Appendix 2 regarding the Retail Needs, Employment Land and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Charlton highlighted that the Core Strategy would sit at the heart of city's Local Development Framework and would be one of the key delivery tools of both the Sunderland Strategy and Economic Masterplan. He explained that it would provide a spatial vision for the city until 2032 and set out the broad city wide distribution of new housing, employment, retail and waste developments and the Council had the opportunity to set its own growth requirements.

Councillor Charlton drew attention to the evidence which had been developed to inform the future housing, employment and retailing development requirements in the city. He referred to the detailed analysis of key factors that informed development needs which were appended to the Cabinet report and were built into this version of the Core Strategy. In particular he reported that the evidence supported the following requirements that were set out in the body of the Core Strategy:-

- a minimum of 15,000 new dwellings 80% of which would be distributed to Sunderland and Washington,
- a minimum of 81 hectares of employment land
- up to 78,900 square metres (gross) of comparison goods and 7,500 square metres (gross) of convenience goods floorspace with the City Centre being the priority location for these requirements,
- two strategic sites to the North of Nissan and at Vaux / Farringdon Row, and
- a broad range of uses in those areas identified as Locations for Major Development.

Councillor Charlton advised that the Core Strategy must pass through a number of statutory consultation stages prior to its adoption which was programmed in early 2014. He referred to the public engagement undertaken that had shaped this version of the Core Strategy and that given the introduction of some fundamental new elements to the plan, further extensive public consultation would be undertaken over the summer. He added that in order to make best use of the time between this Cabinet and Council in June, it was also intended to hold more informal engagement exercises with Area Committees and key stakeholders.

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

Cabinet is asked to endorse the contents of the Sunderland Retail Needs Update, the Employment Land Update and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and to recommend to Council that the Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options be approved for consultation in August 2012.

4. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the contents of the Sunderland Retail Needs Update, the Employment Land Update and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment be endorsed so that they can be used as:-
  - (a) Part of the evidence base to inform the emerging Local Development Framework, and
  - (b) Material considerations in determining planning applications.

- (ii) that Council be recommended to:-
  - (a) approve the Sunderland Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options appended to the report (including the Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment reports) for the purposes of public consultation and as a material consideration in assessing planning applications, pending its finalisation following public consultation; and
  - (b) authorise the Deputy Chief Executive to make any required amendments to the Sunderland Core Strategy Preferred Options appended to the report (including the Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment reports) as necessary prior to its publication for public consultation.

### **Revision to School Admission Arrangements - September 2012**

The Executive Director Children's Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval to changes to specific Published Admission Numbers (PANs) for September 2012, previously agreed by Cabinet its meeting held 11 March 2011 and for the Executive Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning City, to be given delegated authority to determine any further exceptional changes to PANs if this was necessary. This was to relieve pressure on reception places due to oversubscription in particular schools in the Washington and South areas of the City.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Smith reported that the proposals in the report sought to address the issue of pressure on primary school places in the Washington and West areas of the City by increasing the previously agreed Published Admission Numbers (PANs) at Biddick, George Washington and Highfield Primary Schools. She also requested that approval be given to delegate determinations of any further exceptional changes to PANs should this be necessary to relieve pressure on school places and prevent a significant number of parents having to go through the appeals process.

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

5. RESOLVED that approval be given to:-

- (i) the revised PANs as set out at 4.1 of the report, and



- (ii) the Executive Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning City, to be given delegated authority to determine any further exceptional changes to PANs if this is necessary.

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

At the instance of the Chairman, it was:-

6. 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.

