

At a meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC CENTRE (COMMITTEE ROOM NO. 1) on Wednesday 3 December 2014 at 2.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor H. Trueman in the Chair

Councillors Gofton, Kelly, G. Miller, Mordey, P. Smith and Speding

Part I

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5 November 2014 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. Watson.

Procurement of Replacement Cremation Equipment Sunderland Crematorium

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval for the procurement of replacement cremation equipment at Sunderland Crematorium.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Mordey highlighted that Cabinet was recommended to approve the procurement of replacement cremation equipment at Sunderland Crematorium and to authorise the Deputy Chief Executive to appoint a supplier that provided the most economically advantageous option to ensure the continuous efficient operation of the crematorium service. He reported that the Council operated three cremation units at its Crematorium based at Bishopwearmouth Cemetery which dealt with around 2,400 cremations per year. He advised that the equipment was coming to the end of its planned operating life.

Cabinet Members were also advised that the proposal to replace the equipment would also provide the opportunity to upgrade the environmental emissions control equipment on each cremator unit. The cost of the replacements would be in the region of £900,000.

Councillor Mordey reported that following the upgrade works the Council would also carry out some further improvements to the chapel providing a new exit canopy which would enhance the experience of families using the facility. He explained that there was funding available to do this work from the capital programme and it was anticipated that the works would be completed in spring 2016.

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

2. RESOLVED that approval be given to the procurement of three cremators and associated equipment at Sunderland Crematorium to replace the existing equipment which is approaching the end of its working life in order to maintain the efficiency and effectiveness of the council's crematorium service.

Proposals for an alternative service delivery model for ICT

The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to present the overall aim and objectives of a proposal for an alternative service delivery model for ICT to future proof and further develop the current offering, support new models of service delivery and reduce costs. The report also sought approval to procure a specialist partner to deliver an alternative approach to ICT to ensure that ICT and connectivity requirements underpin the delivery of the key priorities for the city.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Trueman highlighted that it had been recognised that there was a need to change the traditional approach to how ICT was delivered within Sunderland to create the flexibility and innovation required and to support the increasing diversity in alternative models of service delivery. He reminded Cabinet Members that the initial phase of this work investigated the potential of a shared ICT service with Durham County Council, supported by a strategic/commercial partner and this exercise concluded in June this year with Cabinet approving the recommendation not to pursue the implementation of a shared service due to the different objectives of the two organisations.

Cabinet Members were advised that further work had since been undertaken to explore the best possible option for Sunderland and in recognition of the strategic importance of ICT, both in the delivery and transformation of services and in the economic and social development of the region, the recommendation was to seek a strategic partner to help the Council to develop and deliver an alternative approach to ICT. Focused upon the delivery of the key priorities of the city as part of the Community Leadership Programme, a strategic partner would support the Council's role as an enabler and influencer and a commissioner of services, with a new capacity and capability for partnering and networking.

Councillor Trueman reported that it was recommended that the refinement of the full requirements and the associated benefits be undertaken via a competitive dialogue procurement process with a further report submitted to Cabinet in due course prior to contract award. He advised that at this stage it was envisaged that the Council's contribution would be in the form of its current ICT estate, assets and associated revenue budget subject to on-going efficiency reductions. He drew attention to the significant associated opportunities and savings which would arise, as set out in the report, through future commissioning and other revenue savings, for example, from the rationalisation of systems.

Cabinet Members having given consideration to the report, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) approval be given for the procurement process for the appointment of a support partner to deliver an alternative approach to ICT;
- (ii) a further report on the outcome of the procurement process be submitted to Cabinet prior to contract award; and
- (iii) the Assistant Chief Executive, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, be authorised to appoint the necessary external procurement support for the purposes of the above.

Proposal to set up a Community Interest Company as an alternative business model for the Tyne and Wear Care Alliance (TWCA) and to arrange for the novation to the new company of existing contracts for training currently being delivered by TWCA

The Executive Director of People Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to set out the proposal to establish a new structure and business model for the Tyne and Wear Care Alliance (TWCA) which included the novation of existing training contracts currently being delivered by TWCA.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Miller highlighted that the TWCA was currently situated within the People Services Directorate and it worked in partnership with independent care sector employers to support workforce development. He reported that TWCA was responsible for the delivery of external training contracts held by the Council, such as Skills Funding Agency and Skills for Care funding, and was recently rated 'Good' in an Ofsted inspection. He added that in a review of the service it had been recognised that an alternative service delivery model would be beneficial both to the Council and the TWCA.

Cabinet Members were advised that the TWCA played a significant role in the provision of training to the care sector in the sub-region. It had become necessary to adopt a delivery model that could enhance and better sustain its operations and provide a means for potential expansion into a regional entity, as existing arrangements did not assist TWCA to maximise outputs and seek new commercial opportunities necessary to deliver the maximum benefit for the care sector. After consultation with staff and strategic partners, it was agreed there would be substantial benefits in transforming TWCA into a Community Interest Community.

Councillor Miller recommended that Cabinet give approval to implement the new model as set out in the report and reiterate the Council's commitment to maintaining ongoing dialogue with staff and Unions, and in doing so to amend the recommendation detailed in the report to confirm that approval would be subject to such consultation with implementation to be on, or after 1 January 2015.

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

4. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the information provided in the report be noted and, subject to on-going consultation with staff and Trade Unions and the final approval of the Company's 3 year business plan by the Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Finance and the Executive Director of People Services, in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Secretary, agree to the establishment of a new Community Interest Company to be implemented on or after 1 January 2015 in order to operate the existing business of the Tyne and Wear Care Alliance on the terms set out in this report,

- (ii) the Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Finance and the Executive Director of People Services be authorised to take all necessary steps to secure the establishment of the TWCA CIC, including appropriate pension arrangements, in consultation with the Cabinet Secretary, and
- (iii) approval be given to the award of a contract and/or the novation of current and ongoing funding between the Council and TWCA for the delivery of Health and Social Care training throughout Tyne and Wear from the 1st January 2015, subject to TWCA being accepted onto the Skills Funding Agency's Register of Training Organisations and on terms to be determined by the Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Finance and the Executive Director of People Services.

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

At the instance of the Chairman it was: -

5. 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 in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraphs 3 and 5). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

(Signed) H. TRUEMAN,
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.