



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

# MINUTES

## Cabinet

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** Committee held on **Monday 15th December, 2014**, Rooms 5, 6 & 7 - 17th Floor, City Hall.

**Members Present:** Councillors Philippa Roe (Chairman), Heather Acton, Nickie Aiken, Edward Argar, Daniel Astaire, Melvyn Caplan, Danny Chalkley, Rachael Robathan and Steve Summers

**Also Present:** Councillor Tim Mitchell

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Robert Davis

#### 1 WELCOME

The Leader welcomed everyone present.

#### 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Tim Mitchell declared a non-prejudicial interest in respect of Item 4 as Governor of Millbank Academy.

#### 3 MINUTES (13.10.14)

3.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 13 October 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman accordingly subject to Councillor Tim Mitchell being added to the list of Members present.

#### 4 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ACT: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (SEE REPORT OF THE TRI-BOROUGH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

4.1 Andrew Christie, Tri-borough Executive Director Children's Services advised that the report set out a summary of the Children and Families Act which came into effect from September 2014.

- 4.2 Councillor Danny Chalkley drew attention to the list of the Tri-borough special schools attached to the report. He thanked the officers for the work in seeing the implementation of the Act through to this stage.

**RESOLVED:**

That the initial eligibility guidelines, for formal implementation during the academic year 2014/15 be approved.

**5 HOUSING INVESTMENT STRATEGY (SEE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GROWTH, PLANNING AND HOUSING)**

- 5.1 Ben Denton, Executive Director of Growth, Planning and Housing introduced the report. The report presented the Housing Investment Strategy and thirty-year Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan beginning 2015/16. The City Council's investment plans are ambitious and will deliver a range of lasting benefits for the City, its residents and the City Council. They will allow the City Council to realise much of its Better Lives ambition; leveraging the value of our land assets to bring forward investment and ladders of opportunity for residents and business in Westminster's poorest neighbourhoods.
- 5.2 Councillor Daniel Astaire advised that the report reflected part of a basket of regeneration projects not just physical, currently programmed. The Leader also spoke in favour of the programme.

**Resolved:**

- (i) That approval be given to the indicative HRA major works capital programme budgets for 2015/16 to 2019/20 (paragraph 6.1 and Appendix C of the report).
- (ii) That approval be given to the indicative Housing Renewal Investment Programme budgets for 2015/16 to 2019/20 (Appendix C of the report).
- (iii) That approval be given to the indicative housing non-delegated programme budgets for 2015/16 to 2019/20 (Appendix C of the report).
- (iv) That approval be given to the creation of an earmarked reserve of £10m towards the development of small scale infill schemes on council housing estates to be funded from HRA reserves (paragraph 8.3 of the report).
- (v) That approval be given to the creation of an earmarked reserve of £5.1m plus any underspend from 2014/15 to fund existing and proposed business transformation investment funded from underspends on the allocated business transformation budget (paragraph 8.4 of the report).

- (vi) That approval be given to the application of a DCLG Growth Bid funding towards the Tollgate Regeneration Scheme in line with requirements of the bid (paragraph 7.5 of the report).
- (vii) That the wide-ranging benefits to be delivered through the proposed HRA investment programmes be noted.

### **Reasons for Decision**

Adoption of the Business Plan and Investment Strategy will enable the council to invest in maintaining and improving the existing stock of homes and neighbourhoods, while also delivering wider benefits to the city's residents and businesses. The financial plan will ensure the housing stock continues to meet the housing needs with which we are faced; and ensure the HRA is sustainable and viable over the long term.

## **6 COUNCIL TAX BASE 2015 - 2016 (SEE REPORT OF THE CITY TREASURER)**

6.1 Steven Mair, City Treasurer, introduced the report. He explained that the report set out the tax base calculation together with the Council Tax discounts and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. These were as last year.

### **6.2 Resolved:**

- (a) That the Council be recommended to approve the following recommendations for the financial year 2015/16:-
  - (i) that the Council Tax discount for second homes, remains at 0%;
  - (ii) the Council Tax discounts for empty properties, including the discounts that replaced the previous Class A and C Council Tax exemptions, remain at 0%;
  - (iii) that a Long Term Empty Property Premium is not introduced;
  - (iv) that no new "local" discounts be introduced at this stage;
  - (v) that the Head of the Shared Service Centre determines any individual local discount applications from vulnerable Council Taxpayers received during the course of the 2015/16 financial year under Section 13A (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (b) That the Cabinet recommend the Council to approve the same Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2015/16 as operated in 2013/14 and 2014/15, which is based on the Default Scheme Regulations but that War Disabled Pensions, War Widow Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation scheme payments are disregarded in full when calculating a claimant's income.
- (c) That Full Council be recommended to resolve that the Council Tax Base for 2015/16 for the Whole City is 121,890.83 equivalent Band D properties for Montpelier Square alone 94.16 equivalent Band D properties and for Queens Park 3156.38 equivalent Band D properties.

- (d) That the Council be recommended to resolve that the figures set out above for the Council Tax Base for 2015/16 be used by the Council to make a determination pursuant to the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 when setting the 2015/16 Council Tax.

**Reason for Decision:**

To comply with statutory requirement.

**7 ADULTS SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT (SEE REPORT OF THE TRI-BOROUGH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR)**

- 7.1 Liz Bruce, Tri-borough Executive Director, Adult Social Care, advised that Cabinet endorsement was requested to the approach set out in the report.

**Resolved:**

That the approach the SAEB is taking to fulfilling its purpose outlined above, and lend support to its priorities for 2014/15 be endorsed.

**Reasons for Decision**

The risk to individuals, to communities and to the reputations of organisations of adult safeguarding not being properly lead and managed, as evidenced in recent national enquiries, is such, that the work of the SAEB needs to be scrutinised, understood, supported and challenged. This will ensure that arrangements remain sound and that real and potential risks, particularly to those people with care and support needs, are identified and mitigated.

**8 CLOSE OF MEETING**

The Meeting ended at 7.13pm.

**CHAIRMAN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_