

# Cabinet

Tuesday 13 December 2011

## PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs Pengelly, in the Chair.

Councillor Fry, Vice Chair.

Councillors Ball, Bowyer, Jordan, Michael Leaves, Monahan and Wigans.

Also in attendance: Barry Keel (Chief Executive), Adam Broome (Director for Corporate Support), Carole Burgoyne (Director for Community Services), David Northey (Head of Finance), Stuart Palmer (Assistant Director for Strategic Housing) and Anthony Payne (Director for Development and Regeneration).

Apologies for absence: Councillors Sam Leaves and Ricketts.

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.35 pm.

*Note: At a future meeting, the Cabinet will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.*

## 89. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in accordance with the code of conduct from councillors in relation to items under consideration at this meeting.

## 90. **MINUTES**

Agreed that the minutes of the meetings held on 15 and 29 November 2011 are confirmed as a correct record.

## 91. **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from the public for this meeting.

## 92. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

## 93. **SITES PROPOSAL TO SUPPORT DELIVERY OF NEW AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The Director for Development and Regeneration submitted a written report on a proposal to dispose of the following sites following a fully compliant EU procurement process to support the delivery of new and affordable housing -

- Package 1
  - Former Ernesettle Community Centre
  - Maidstone Place garage site
- Package 2
  - Former West Park Primary School
  - Former Southway Primary School
- Package 3
  - Former Woodlands and Hillside School
  - Former Whitleigh Youth Centre
  - Former Whitleigh Care Home
- Package 4
  - Former Tamerton Vale School
  - Former Astor Centre
- Package 5
  - PLUSS

The report stated that -

- (a) minute 130 of Cabinet (29 March 2011) gave approval to the use of all of the Local Housing Company allocated sites in support of Registered Providers' bids for the new affordable housing funding framework, to be delegated to the Assistant Director for Strategic Housing in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Planning, Strategic Housing and Economic Development, and Finance, Property, People and Governance;
- (b) the Head of Legal Services had identified a legal risk to the proposed process following recent EU court decisions;
- (c) as a result the Council was required to undertake an EU compliant tender process for these sites;
- (d) the funding environment and delivery mechanisms set out in the Government's Affordable Housing Framework required a more responsive and flexible approach from the City Council to secure investment to deliver new homes.

Councillor Fry (Cabinet Member for Planning, Strategic Housing and Economic Development) introduced the proposals and the Assistant Director for Strategic Housing also reported.

Cabinet Members were advised that as part of the package in relation to the former Southway Primary School land, adult playing pitches would be delivered to meet a specific need in the area.

Agreed that authority is delegated to the Assistant Director for Strategic Housing in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Planning, Strategic Housing and Economic Development, and Finance, Property, People and Governance to dispose of the sites following a fully compliant EU procurement process to support the delivery of new and affordable housing.

94. **HOUSING PLAN 2012 - 2017**

The Director for Development and Regeneration submitted a written report on the draft Housing Plan 2012 -17 which had been developed through multi-agency, cross sector task and finish groups, to ensure that it links with other plans and priorities in the city. The plan would be published for consultation and then brought back to Cabinet in the new year, for adoption.

The Assistant Director for Strategic Housing introduced the draft plan and indicated that four delivery plans would be put in place to implement the proposals.

Agreed that –

- (1) the draft Housing Plan 2012 – 17 is approved for consultation until 23 February 2012;
- (2) the officers, together with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Strategic Housing and Economic Development, are instructed to make appropriate amendments and responses to consultation findings, prior to bringing the revised plan to Cabinet and Council for adoption in March 2012.

95. **COUNCIL TAX BASE SETTING**

The Director for Corporate Support submitted a written report on the Council tax base for tax setting purposes in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 as amended by Statutory Instrument 2003/3181.

Councillor Bowyer (Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and People) presented the report.

Cabinet Members were advised that –

- (a) the Council expected to achieve a 98.5% collection rate for Council tax, over time, with an in year anticipated collection rate of 96.5%;
- (b) in the difficult economic climate, there were a variety of ways that payment could be made and people were advised to make contact with the Council as soon as possible if they had difficulty making payments.

Agreed the Council tax base for 2012/13 tax setting as 77,271 Band D equivalents, which is the tax base after allowing for an estimated collection rate of 98.5%.

96. **2012/13 INDICATIVE BUDGET (REVENUE AND CAPITAL) ALLOCATED TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

The Director for Corporate Support submitted a written report setting out the Council's 2012/13 Indicative Revenue and Capital Budget.

The report stated -

- (a) that the indicative budget -
  - built on the income assumptions in the latest Medium Term Financial Strategy and its impact on the Council tax;
  - brought together the elements of the Council's income and expenditure strategy, summarised by each existing department, together with its capital strategy;
  - reviewed the impact on future revenue and capital plans;
- (b) that Local Government funding was changing, with continued reductions expected, the publication of the White Paper on Growth and a review of public sector pension provision;
- (c) the method of setting the 2012/13 budget;
- (d) how the three year budget delivery plans had been addressed.

Councillor Bowyer (Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and People) presented the report and indicated that following the recent government announcement on the local settlement, the assumptions made by the officers to produce the indicative budget had been confirmed, although further information was expected on specific grants in due course.

Cabinet Members were advised that –

- (e) there had been over 1,000 responses to the survey conducted by the Council as part of its budget consultation and that the outcome would be taken into account when producing the final budget recommendations;
- (f) from the survey, the top three service priorities were –
  - creating and protecting jobs across the city;
  - support for vulnerable children, children in care or in need of protection;
  - tackling criminal damage and anti-social behaviour;
- (g) up to 30 November 2011, 687 staff had left the Council, with the loss of 356 full time equivalent posts and 66 compulsory redundancies.

Agreed that –

- (1) the Leader is authorised to agree the draft Corporate Plan, for the purposes of consultation and scrutiny, in accordance with the budget and policy framework procedure rules;

- (2) the proposed revenue target budget requirement of £201.1m for 2012/13 and four year Capital Programme of £160.6m is recommended for consultation;
- (3) Cabinet consider findings from consultation, feedback from budget scrutiny and any material changes announced in the final settlement for Plymouth City Council in early February 2012 and recommend the final revenue budget for 2012/13 to Full Council on 27 February 2012.