LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST
MINUTES OF THE CABINET

8 November 2017 at 2.00pm

PRESENT:
Chair: Councillor Clare Coghill Leader of the Council

Cabinet Members:
Councillor Clyde Loakes Deputy Leader
Councillor Liaquat Ali MBE, JP Portfolio Lead Member - Transformation and Commercial Operations
Councillor Naheed Asghar Portfolio Lead Member - Health and Voluntary Sector Partnerships
Councillor Angie Bean Portfolio Lead Member - Adult Services
Councillor Khevyn Limbajee Portfolio Lead Member - Housing
Councillor Simon Miller Portfolio Lead Member - Economic Growth and High Streets
Councillor Sharon Waldron Portfolio Lead Member - Community Safety and Cohesion
Councillor Louise Mitchell Junior Cabinet Member - Social Integration
Councillor Alistair Strathern Junior Cabinet Member - Transport

(Junior Cabinet Members are appointed by the Leader to assist Cabinet in proposing, formulating and advising upon Council policy under the guidance of the appropriate Portfolio Holder. These Councillors are not Members of the Cabinet and do not have any voting rights nor decision-making powers.)

Councillors in Attendance:
Councillor Asim Mahmood
Councillor Anna Mbachu
Councillor Gerry Lyons

Officers in Attendance:
Martin Esom Chief Executive
Linzi Roberts-Egan Deputy Chief Executive
Rhona Cadenhead Strategic Director, Corporate Development
Michele Moloney Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and Commercial
John Turnbull Strategic Director of Finance and Governance
49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

50. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ahsan Khan and Grace Williams.

The Chair congratulated Councillor Khan on the birth of his new baby boy.

51. MINUTES OF CABINET

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2017 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

52. SCRUTINY REPORT: COMMUNITIES - GANG PREVENTION

Councillor Asim Mahmood introduced the item and confirmed that the Council had agreed to continue funding the gang prevention programme.

Councillor Sharon Waldron, Portfolio Lead Member for Community Safety and Cohesion presented the report and recommendations.

Decision

(a) Cabinet noted the content of the report and agreed to adopt recommendation 7 and amend recommendations 1-6, as set out in appendix 2 of the report.

53. SCRUTINY REPORT: HOUSING

Councillor Alistair Strathern, Junior Cabinet Member for Transport, introduced the item which set out the findings and recommendations of the Housing Scrutiny Committee report on the affordability and availability of housing in Waltham Forest. Councillor Strathern said that he was pleased to see positive engagement and
added that the small amendment to the recommendations was welcome. He also thanked officers for their hard work.

Councillor Khevyn Limbajee, Portfolio Lead Member for Housing, thanked officers and referred to strong advice received from the GLA on the Mayor of London's new Affordable Housing SPG and the Affordable Homes Programme. He added that the report emphasised that the London Borough of Waltham Forest was a leading thinker in terms of affordable housing.

**Decision**

(a) Cabinet noted the content of this report and agreed to adopt recommendations 1 - 13, and amend recommendations 14 and 15 as outlined in appendix 2 of the report.

54. **SCRUTINY REPORT: NEIGHBOURHOOD CUSTOMER SERVICES**

Councillor Saima Mahmud introduced the item which focused on how the Council was performing in terms of its approach to customer services, best practice within the customer services sector and how the introduction of the digital agenda would improve standards within the sector.

Councillor Liquat Ali, Portfolio Lead Member for Transformation and Commercial Operations, thanked all Members for their input and explained that it was the intention to prioritise customer services by the introduction of the digital agenda and said that there would be a large amount of information on the subject on the Council’s website.

The Chair stated that 85% of residents had expressed a preference for providing views digitally. She thanked members and officers for their work and leadership.

Cabinet noted the content of the report and agreed to adopt recommendations 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8, and amend recommendation 2 and 4, as set out in appendix 2 to the report.

55. **SCRUTINY REPORT: HEALTH - SUBSTANCE MISUSE**

Councillor Anna Mbachu introduced the item, which referred to the themed review into substance misuse. She explained that actions had been taken by SafetyNet to reduce drug usage. Councillor Mbachu stated that, in Waltham Forest, 9,000 adults drank a high level of alcohol and pointed out that Public Health was under considerable pressure to address the issue. She said that the Council needed to continue to work with residents on the issue.

Councillor Naheed Asghar thanked Members for prioritising the substance misuse issue.
Decision

Cabinet noted the content of the report and agreed to adopt recommendations 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, and amend recommendations 1, 2 and 3 as outlined in appendix 2 of the report.

56. SCRUTINY REPORT: BUDGET & PERFORMANCE

Councillor Strathern, Junior Cabinet Member for Transport, introduced the item which set out the findings and recommendations of the Budget and Performance Scrutiny Committee’s themed review on maximising the benefits of economic growth. He suggested considering whether there was anything more, as a Council, that could be done to bring in more revenue and said that the Council needed to be more ambitious. Councillor Strathern thanked relevant officers from Finance for fully engaging in the process.

Councillor Simon Miller, Portfolio Lead Member for Economic Growth and High Streets, stated that a lot of the content of the report already existed within Council policy and that it was important to prioritise work on this area. He also thanked relevant officers for their work on the review.

Decision

Cabinet noted the content of the report and agreed to adopt all of the recommendations from the Budget and Performance Scrutiny Committee as detailed in appendix 2 of the report.

57. COUNCIL PRIORITIES CONSULTATION

The Chair introduced the item and stated that there had been a largely positive response to the consultation and confirmed that work had begun on the third priority – to improve residents’ life chances. She added that scrutiny, in the most positive sense, was required to help work on the subject progress.

Decision

(a) Cabinet agreed to adopt the Council priorities and pledges in Appendix B of the report for the period up to 2020 and agreed the recommendation to include an additional pledge in response to feedback that arose during the consultation.

(b) Cabinet noted that further interrogation and analysis of the feedback would take place over the next few months and a full report on residents’ views would be released in the New Year. This information would help the Council to have an even greater understanding of residents’ views and would help shape the Council’s policy decisions going forward.
58. SENIOR MANAGEMENT UPDATE: CREATION OF A STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

Cabinet agreed to receive the report and agreed to create a new Chief Officer position, Strategic Director for Economic Growth.

59. CONSULTATION ON CLOSURE OF A DEMENTIA SUPPORT SERVICE

Councillor Angie Bean, Portfolio Lead Member for Adult Services, introduced the item and explained how improvements would be achieved by delivering a jointly commissioned dementia offer with the Clinical Commissioning Group to support residents through each stage of the condition. She added that the document would be out for consultation in January 2018 for 6 weeks.

Decision

(a) Cabinet agreed that there be a consultation on the proposal to decommission the current Dementia Support Service and re-invest in a new model of support.

(b) Cabinet agreed to delegate to the Deputy Chief Executive for Families, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, the decision on the future of the existing service provision having due regard to the outcome of the consultation and any representations received.

60. CONTRACT AWARD FOR YOUNG PEOPLE SPECIALIST EARLY RESPONSE SERVICE

Councillor Asghar, Portfolio Lead Member for Health, introduced the item and referred to a contract with the North East London Foundation Trust to provide therapeutic intervention to vulnerable children and young people under the age of 25. He stated that a number of those young people would be made up of care leavers and young offenders.

Cabinet approved the award of a contract to the North East London Foundation Trust to deliver the Young People Specialist Early Response Service on behalf of the London Borough of Waltham Forest, from 1st April 2018, for a period of three years with an option to extend for up to two further years.

61. FIRE SAFETY IN WALTHAM FOREST

Councillor Limabjee, Portfolio Lead Member for Housing, stated that local authorities needed to look closely at fire safety in their respective areas and confirmed that Waltham Forest Council undertake yearly fire safety checks. He confirmed that there were no private blocks with cladding within the London Borough of Waltham
Forest and said that the borough’s high rise blocks and sheltered housing would have sprinklers installed at a cost of approximately £5,000 per year.

The Chair stated that the issue of fire safety in high rise blocks had always been a challenging one and thanked relevant officers for the detailed work that they had undertaken.

Decision

Cabinet noted the Council’s current arrangements in respect of fire safety and agreed that a programme be developed for the installation of sprinklers in high priority blocks.

62. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Councillor Limbajee, Portfolio Lead Member for Housing, introduced the item. He described the Strategy as sound, however explained that there were challenges, including fire safety and universal credit.

Decision

(a) Cabinet noted the forecast for the HRA in Appendix 1 of the report and agreed the revised capital programme shown in appendix 3 of the report.

(b) Cabinet noted the increasing balance of retained RTB capital receipts which were subject to deadlines for spending as set out in appendix 6 of the report.

63. APPROVAL TO CREATE A NEW CHARITABLE COMPANY - RIGHT TO BUY 141 RECEIPTS

Councillor Limbajee, Portfolio Lead Member for Housing, introduced the item and said that the new legislation presented a real challenge for the Council and was very restrictive. He gave thanks to Darren Welch, Director of Housing, and his team for their innovative work.

Decision

(a) Cabinet approved the establishment of a Community Benefits Society (CBS) charitable entity, for the objects and purposes set out in the report.

(b) Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Housing in consultation with the Director of Finance to:

- appoint professional consultants to provide financial, commercial and legal advice as required; and
- take all necessary actions and agree all appropriate documents to establish and incorporate a Community Benefits Society (CBS) charitable entity.
64. **PROVISION OF PENSION SCHEME FOR MEMBERS AND OTHER NON-ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME**

Cabinet received the report and:

(a) approved the creation of a Defined Contribution Scheme for Councillors and Election Staff to join.

(b) noted that whilst not part of the scheme, the Councillors allowances scheme should include a note on the availability of a pension scheme for members.

(c) agreed to delegate the procurement of the Defined Contribution Scheme to the Strategic Director of Finance & Governance.

65. **BUDGET REVIEW FEES & CHARGES 2018/19**

The Chair introduced the item and said she was pleased with the schedule of fees and charges and praised officers for the extensive work undertaken. She referred to the importance of realistic charges and the pressure on the Council to deliver.

**Decision**

Cabinet agreed the schedule of Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix 1(iii) of the report, so far as they relate to fees and charges that were not reserved for Council decision by the provisions of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations 2000 (as amended).

66. **MONTHLY FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

The Chair introduced the item and stated that parks and open spaces were valued by residents and that the space provided was immensely valuable for young people. She added that £500,000 had been allocated from the Priorities Fund to be used on a ward by ward basis.

**Decision**

Cabinet noted the projected revenue expenditure position was break even as at month 6 and approved an allocation of £500,000 from the Priorities Fund for Parks and Open Spaces. This funding would be allocated equally between the 20 wards, to provide a budget of £25,000 per ward, to be spent on planting and landscaping, park buildings and events in parks.
67. VOTE OF THANKS

On behalf of the Cabinet, the Chair thanked James Holden, Policy and Public Affairs Officer, for his hard work and valued contributions. She stated that he would be missed and wished him well for the future.

The meeting closed at 2.40pm

Chair's Signature

Date