

# Minutes of The Cabinet

**23 March 2022 at 3.30pm**  
**in the Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

**Present:** Councillor Crompton (Chair)  
Councillors Ahmed, Hartwell, I Padda, Piper and Simms.

**Also present:** Councillor Shackleton.

**Officers:** Kim Bromley-Derry (Managing Director Commissioner), Ben Grubb (Chief of Staff – Commissioner Team), Rashpal Bishop (Director of Adult Social Care), Neil Cox (Director of Business Strategy and Change), Alice Davey (Director of Borough Economy), Gillian Douglas (Director of Housing), Simone Hines (Director of Finance), Michael Jarrett (Director of Children and Education), Tony McGovern (Director of Regeneration and Growth), Lisa McNally (Director of Public Health), Surjit Tour (Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer), Sue Stanhope (Interim Director of Human Resources), Graham Terry (Interim Assistant Director of Adult Social Care), Elaine Newsome (Service Manager – Democracy), Suky Suthi-Nagra (Democratic Services Manager) and Christine Anne Guest (Divisional Manager – Adult Social Care).

## 56/22 **Chair's Announcement**

The Deputy Leader confirmed that following the Government announcement of intervention on 22 March 2022, the Council's Interim Chief Executive had been appointed as Managing Director Commissioner by the Government, to be joined by Assistant Commissioner as part of a Commissioner Team.

The Deputy Leader welcomed this continuity of leadership, which would provide the continuity needed to carry on with the improvements which had already begun.

It was noted that consecutive external reviews, including the LGA peer challenge team last week, had recognised 'green shoots' of recovery within the Council.

Work was underway to develop a single consolidated improvement plan, which brought together the recommendations from all recent external reviews with Cabinet regularly receiving reports on the progress being made. The main priority of Managing Director Commissioner would be to oversee this process.

To avoid any conflict of interest, the Managing Director Commissioner might need to delegate some of the duties and responsibilities he held as Interim Chief Executive. The details of how this would operate in practice were now being worked out.

The Deputy Leader reassured residents that no disruption to Council services would result from the new arrangements and all services continued to operate as usual.

57/22      **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carmichael (Leader), Bostan, Millard, L Giles and Moore.

58/22      **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

59/22      **Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meetings held on 9 February and 23 February 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

60/22      **Additional Item of Business**

There were no additional items of business to consider.

61/22      **Community Vaccination Champions Programme**

Approval was sought for the Community Vaccination Champions Programme and for a grant of £112,000 to be provided to Sandwell Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) for distribution of the vaccination support grants fund to voluntary and community organisations and for programme co-ordination.

The Chair of Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board raised a question regarding Sandwell preparedness for the new variant of Covid-19 virus.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health stated that while the Council had to end local contact tracing because Government no longer provided the data to deliver this work, in all other respects, the Council had maintained its Covid-19 programme, including outbreak response and support to the NHS vaccination programme.

The Chair of Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board also enquired about whether the council was satisfied with the locations chosen for the vaccination sites and pop-up clinics.

The Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health responded that the Council worked extensively with the voluntary and faith sector to find venues in the heart of the community, including mosques and gurdwaras. The pop-up clinics covered every town in Sandwell and had proved very popular.

The more permanent sites for walk-in and appointments were chosen by NHS England. The council was not always fully satisfied with the choices of location or some decisions to close settings. However, it was acknowledged that NHS colleagues were doing their best to allocate resources in the face of a massive challenge.

### **Reason for Decision**

The Community Vaccination Champions Programme started in January 2021 and had proved highly effective in increasing the number of residents who had been vaccinated. Public Health Team approach had been to work closely with health colleagues and trusted faith and community leaders to provide reassurance and information to residents. Over 200 Vaccine Champions were involved in the programme and SCVO had awarded grants to voluntary sector organisations delivering 33 vaccination uptake projects.

SCVO had a proven track record of delivering this programme by proactively engaging with local community groups across Sandwell and particularly those groups who represented and worked with people more likely to be vaccine hesitant.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

An alternative option was considered to distribute the funding direct to voluntary and community sector groups via an expression of interest process, inviting applications from groups. This would, however, be more costly in terms of public health officer time, compared to SCVO distributing the grants. SCVO's management of the programme had already demonstrated that effectiveness, evidence of delivering value for money and momentum. A different approach would not only cost more but would take time, leading to delay and loss of momentum.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to the Community Vaccination Champions Programme;

- (2) that a further grant of £112,000 to Sandwell Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) be approved for the following:
  - £100,000 vaccination support grants fund for distribution to voluntary and community organisations
  - £12,000 for programme co-ordination;
- (3) that the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, be authorised to award a grant of £112,000 to Sandwell Council for Voluntary Organisations for the vaccination support programme.

62/22

### **Liberty Protection Safeguards**

Approval was sought to introduce Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) at a date to be determined by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and to endorse the implementation plan in preparation for the introduction of LPS.

Approval was sought for the revised structure for social work service to enable the council to prepare for the implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS).

In response to a question by the Chair of Children and Education Scrutiny Board regarding the possibility of introducing a requirement for people with Power of Attorney, over the person to be assessed, to contribute towards the cost of the assessment, the Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health confirmed no such changes were planned at the present time and that there were no charges to be levied in relation to assessments within the Liberty Protection Safeguards.

#### **Reason for Decision**

The Council was required to introduce Liberty Protection Safeguards in line with the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act Bill from a date to be determined by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

The proposed restructure of the social work service that formed part of the Adult Social Care directorate in preparation for the implementation of the new Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) was sought in order to place an emphasis on the delivery of services and the statutory duty the Council had to ensure that people in all types of settings received appropriate care and treatment without unlawful deprivation of their liberty, freedom, or rights.

The LPS was sought to ensure that restricted care for a person in any care setting from the age of 16 years old and over would only be arranged if this was assessed as 'necessary and proportionate' and within a legal framework, and that this was only done when it was in the best interests of the person and where all other less restrictive options had been considered.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

The alternative option was to continue with the current staffing structure. However, this was not deemed feasible or legally viable option for the council because:

- this would reduce the ability of the Authority to successfully implement the forthcoming legislation and meet its statutory obligations around safeguarding Adults who were being deprived of their liberty;
- this would reduce the Authority's capacity to respond in a timely way to concerns raised around safeguarding Adults who were being deprived of their liberty leading to waiting lists for statutory assessments. It would also not allow the Council to respond to the wider remit of the LPS legislation and projected increased demand.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given:
  - (a) to note the requirement to introduce Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) from a date to be determined by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) following their

announcement that this will be delayed from the original date of 1 April 2022;

- (b) to endorse the implementation plan in preparation for the introduction of the new Liberty Protection Safeguards;
- (c) to the revised structure for social work service as set out below, to enable the council to prepare for the implementation of LPS, and to recruit to the required posts:-

### Deprivation of Liberty Team

Roles to be converted -

Current Role	Grade	No of New Posts
Social Care Lead Officer x 2FTE	G	** x2 FTE Social Worker (AMCP)

### New Liberty Protection Safeguards Team

Roles to be created -

New Role	Grade	No of New Posts
Social Care Team Manager (with AMCP)	H	X 1 FTE
Social Worker (AMCP)	G	X 5 FTE ** (This includes the 2 FTE current SCLO Converted posts). (To respond to the 25% LPS Challenge cases / complex assessments)

### Community Social Work Teams

Roles to be created –

Role	Grade	No of New Posts
Social Worker	F	X 8 FTE (to support the current social work structure to respond to the LPS and outstanding C- DOL cases)

The staffing and commissioned resources in the current DoLS team have been repurposed as in the table below in line with the proposed staffing model and requirements to support implementation of the LPS.

Role	Grade	Annual Cost (Bottom of Grade (£))	Annual Cost (Top of Grade (£))	Number of FTE Posts	Comments
Team Manager (with AMCP Status)	H	55,439	62,167	1	Creation of one New post.
Social Workers (with AMCP Status)	G	235,610	270,385	5	Creation of new posts.
Social Workers (not an AMCP)	F	319,560	365,944	8	Creation of new posts. To be based in the CSWT, Safeguarding and Hospital Team. Additional capacity to respond to LPS Demand and current C-DOL requests.
Co-ordinator (Administrator Role)	E	32,532	38,760	1	Currently funded by existing Business Support Budget
Business Support Officer Post	D	27,003	31,867	1	Currently funded by existing Business Support Budget
<b>Total Cost</b>		<b>670,144</b>	<b>769,129</b>		
Conversion of SCLO posts	G	(108,154)	(108,154)	2	Conversion of posts
DOLS Budget		(358,600)	(358,600)		Existing Funding
Existing Business Support funded posts.		(70,660)	(70,660)		Existing Funded posts.
<b>Total Redirection</b>		<b>(537,414)</b>	<b>(537,414)</b>		
<b>Net Cost / (Saving)</b>		<b>£132,730</b>	<b>£231,709</b>		

- (d) to the commencement of the required consultation with the affected workforce and Trade Unions;

- (e) to authorise the Director of Adult Social Care, to implement the new structure and make any minor modifications required following the guidance from the code of practice on the Mental Capacity Act and LPS;
  - (f) to note that additional funding for Advocacy Support (Independent Mental Capacity Advocates) for the implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards is likely to be required;
  - (g) to agree to provide a further report on progress and financial implications before October 2022 and to confirm any new timescales for the introduction of LPS and its implementation once agreed by DHSC;
- (2) that the Director of Adult Social Care, be authorised to implement the new structure in preparation for Liberty Protection Safeguards.

63/22

**Temporary Accommodation – Elm Tree Primary Academy at Connor Education Centre, West Bromwich**

Approval was sought to authorise the Director of Children and Education to award a contract for the refurbishment of part of the Connor Education Centre, Connor Road, West Bromwich to provide temporary accommodation for the new Elm Tree Primary Academy Special School.

The Chair of Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board queried whether there was space for extra provision to cover the 6 Sandwell Towns more equably, thereby reducing SEND transport costs and travelling time for children, and whether the Council anticipated a reduction in having to place children out-of-borough through this new provision.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Children and Education stated that the temporary provision at Connor Education Centre was for 12 months and for 18 pupils.

In September 2023, the school would move to its permanent site in Friar Park where it would provide 126 places from Reception to Year 6. SEN and Inclusion Services were already in discussions with Elm Tree Primary Academy to increase its pupil admission number due to the expected numbers of SEN pupils. Elm Tree Primary Academy was to offer places across the borough, thereby reducing the number for Sandwell children who needed to travel outside of the borough.

### **Reason for Decision**

The scheduled opening of the Elm Tree Primary Academy Special School by the Department of Education (DfE) had been delayed until September 2023. It was therefore proposed to procure and award a contract for the refurbishment of part of the Connor Education Centre to be used as a two-form entry Primary Special School for Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder alongside other associated learning needs for one school year.

The temporary accommodation would enable the school to open 12 months ahead of its formal opening and admit up to 18 children to the Reception year. Capital funding of £375,000 for the refurbishment of the Connor Education Centre was to be provided by the Department for Education (DfE). Agreement with DfE necessitated the council to sign a Work Funding Agreement to confirm it would accept all programme and costs risks.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

Feasibility survey was undertaken for the parcel of land adjacent to the existing Victoria Academy Trust shared site of Devonshire Infant and Junior Academies off Auckland Road, known as the former 'Devonshire Gym site'. This option was deemed cost prohibitive for a short-term location.

Feasibility surveys were also completed at the former nursery/children's centre at Ferndale Primary School. Ferndale Primary's site was deemed unfeasible. Connor Education Centre's proposed business plan for the site was more beneficial to the pupils of the school.

Doing nothing was not an option as the council would be in breach of statutory regulations to ensure every child has access to a good school place.

**Agreed:-**

- (1) that subject to a satisfactory financial appraisal being completed by Strategic Finance, the Director of Children and Education be authorised to award a contract for the refurbishment of part of the Connor Education Centre, Connor Road, West Bromwich to provide temporary accommodation for the new Elm Tree Primary Academy Special School, following a compliant procurement exercise, in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer, and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Education;
- (2) that, subject to Resolution (1) above, the Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer be authorised to enter into any legal agreements on terms agreed by the Director of Children and Education, as required, to allow building works to be completed.

64/22      **Domestic Abuse Strategy**

Approval was sought for the 2021-2024 Domestic Abuse Strategy and for allocation of New Burdens funding for 2022-2024.

**Reason for Decision**

There was a new statutory duty for the provision of specialist support for victims of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation from April 2021. This duty formed part of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and required that a safe accommodation needs assessment was undertaken which would inform a safe accommodation strategy.

The proposed programme of investment included allocation of New Burdens Funding to: -

- the provision of refuge accommodation and community-based support for victims of domestic abuse that was currently funded by the council and would therefore support the financial savings to be achieved by the budget strategy;
- interventions that commenced in 2021-22 funded by the first year of New Burdens funding;
- new interventions as identified by the domestic abuse needs assessment.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

The alternative option was to not approve the Domestic Strategy 2021-2024 and proposed allocation of New Burdens funding for 2022-2024. However, this would jeopardise efforts to meet the Council's statutory duty for the provision of specialist support for victims of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation outlined in Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

#### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the 2021-24 Domestic Abuse Strategy as now submitted be approved;
- (2) that approval be given to carry forward the projected underspend of £150,000 Domestic Abuse New Burdens Funding for 2021-22 as a reserve and that it be used to partly fund the interventions in 2022-23 (£62,500) and 2023-24 (£87,500);
- (3) that approval be given to allocate New Burdens funding outlined in Table 1 below of £907,042 in 2022-23 and £932,042 in 2023-24 to support the delivery of the strategy, ensuring that Sandwell fully complies with the new statutory duty for the delivery of specialist support to domestic abuse victims and children in safe accommodation, subject to the confirmation of the funding allocation for 2023-24 from central government:

<b>Table 1. Services and Interventions</b>	<b>2022-23 proposed allocation</b> (Total funding available, including c/f of £62,500 from 2021-22: £907,042)	<b>2023-24 proposed allocation</b> (Total funding available, including c/f of £87,500 from 2021-22: £932,042)
<b>Existing Services and Interventions:</b>		
Provision of refuge accommodation	£305K	£305K
Community-based support for victims of Domestic Abuse	£236K	£236K
4 additional places in refuge accommodation, including Refuge Complex Needs Worker	£60K	£60k
Family Support Worker and Empowerment & Engagement Co-Ordinator posts to support victims in specialist domestic abuse safe accommodation	£70K	£70K
Co-Ordinator within SMBC Domestic Abuse Team to support implementation and programme management of NBF programme and Domestic Abuse plan	£60K	£60K
<b>New Interventions</b>		
Sanctuary Scheme – specialist support to victims referred for sanctuary provision	£17,872	£17,872
Floating support/resettlement support for victims' transition from refuge to community	£35,000	£35,000
Psychologically-informed therapeutic interventions for adults and children in safe accommodation	£120,440	£120,440
DA needs assessment / strategy update required under Domestic Abuse Act 2021	0	£25,000
Contingency	£2,730	£2,730
<b>Total</b>	<b>£907,042</b>	<b>£932,042</b>

- (4) that approval be given to award grant funding totalling up to £223,609 (£205,737 in 2022-23 and £17,872 in 2023-24) to Black Country Women's Aid (BCWA) as detailed in Table 2 below from New Burdens funding for a range of interventions which will assist in delivering the Domestic Abuse Strategy and the statutory duty for domestic abuse:

<b>TABLE 2. Proposed grants to be awarded to Black Country Women's Aid</b>	<b>Grant Period</b>	<b>Total Grant</b>
Family Support Worker and Empowerment & Engagement Co-Ordinator posts to support victims in specialist domestic abuse safe accommodation	10 months funding 1/04/22 - 31/1/23	£58,333
Sanctuary Scheme – specialist support to victims referred for sanctuary provision	24 months 1/04/22 – 31/03/24	£35,744 (£17,872 pa)
Floating support/resettlement support for victims' transition from refuge to community	10 months funding 1/04/22 - 31/1/23	£29,166
Psychologically-informed therapeutic interventions for adults and children in safe accommodation	10 months funding 1/04/22 - 31/1/23	£100,366
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£223,609</b>

## 65/22 Sandwell Community Safety Strategy 2022-26

Consideration was given to the implementation of the Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board's Community Safety Strategy 2022-26 across Sandwell.

Whilst the Cabinet Member for Community Safety was satisfied with the strategy, he expressed a reservation about the relative lack of data in the proposed strategy that would allow to benchmark Sandwell in terms of community safety and how it was going to improve through this strategy.

### **Reason for Decision**

Sandwell's Community Safety Strategy had been overseen by the multi-agency Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board (SSPPCB) who oversaw the Borough's approach to community safety. The existing strategy covered 2019-21 and was now due for renewal.

The priorities in the 2022-26 strategy reinforced the commitment to protecting and supporting vulnerable victims. The priorities would be delivered through adopting a public health approach and through the adoption of 4 P Plans which aimed to: prevent violence, abuse and exploitation; protect those affected; reduce harm and pursue those who perpetrate.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board had a statutory requirement under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, and subsequent legislative amendments, to develop and deliver a Partnership Plan which contained community safety priorities based on the current evidence base across the Borough of Sandwell. This strategy brought together this evidence base and set the strategic direction for community safety across the Borough for the next five years subject to annual review.

**Agreed** that Cabinet support and endorse the implementation of the Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board's Community Safety Strategy 2022-26, as now submitted, which outlined the partnership's key priorities and direction of travel over the next five years.

66/22

### **City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement and Local Transport Capital Programme 2022/23**

Approval was sought for a programme of minor works, highways, bridges and street lighting maintenance for 2022/23 to be funded through the Local Network Improvement Plan and Maintenance Block allocations approved at West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Board on 14 January 2022 as part of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Programme

Details of individual schemes would be reported back to the appropriate Cabinet Member(s) for approval in due course.

#### **Reason for Decision**

Details were submitted of specific allocations to the Authority for 2022/23 for local network improvements and highway maintenance subject to final Government confirmation and WMCA Board approval.

The block allocations included in the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme would comprise the majority of the Council's capital programme of minor works, highway and bridge maintenance for financial year

2022/23 and the following four years of the settlement period.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

With regards to the Local Network Improvement Plan, the proportion allocated to each of the individual block headings was broadly in line with previous years' ITB allocations. However, more of the 21% uplift on the 2021/22 figure had been allocated to the road safety and traffic calming categories to reflect member priorities.

The option existed to allocate more funding to some headings and less to others. It was also possible to alter the allocations 'in year' should circumstances necessitate. However, the use of this funding would be reported to, and monitored by, WMCA and should reflect the priorities outlined by Government through the CRSTS guidance and by WMCA through the Local Transport Plan.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the current position in relation to the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) for the period April 2022 to March 2027 as submitted to Government by the West Midlands Combined Authority following its approval at West Midlands Combined Authority Board on 14 January 2022, be noted;
- (2) that details of the resourcing, monitoring and financial implications relating to the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement programme be received;
- (3) that subject to confirmation by Government of the overall City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement allocation to the West Midlands Combined Authority and its subsequent approval by West Midlands Combined Authority, Cabinet approves the following programme of minor works, highways, bridges and street lighting maintenance for 2022/23 to be funded through the Local Network Improvement Plan and

Maintenance Block allocations as set out in the reports to West Midlands Combined Authority Board on 14th January 2022 and 18th March 2022:

<b>Minor Works Programme</b>	<b>Funds 2022/23 £</b>
Major Schemes Development	220,000
Road Safety	540,000
Decarbonising Transport	300,000
Demand Management	120,000
Traffic Calming	200,000
Major Route Signing	70,000
Named Schemes Over £250k.	347,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,797,900</b>

<b>Maintenance Programme</b>	<b>Funds 2022/23 £</b>
Carriageway Maintenance	3,986,300
Bridges	603,000
Street Lighting	152,000

- (5) that once confirmation of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement was received from Government and approved by West Midlands Combined Authority Board, a further report be submitted to Cabinet setting out the details of the Sandwell projects included within the settlement.

## 67/22 **Corporate Climate Change Action Plan**

Approval was sought for the Corporate Climate Change Action Plan and for the Cabinet to recommend to Council that a cross-party Member Committee on Climate Change be formally established to monitor the implementation of the Climate Change Action Plan.

A member committee was planned to include representatives from the Trade Unions. It was noted that the action plan had not been costed yet and this would be addressed by the new Committee, subject to approval by Cabinet and Council.

### **Reason for Decision**

The Action Plan was designed to embed climate change across the council's corporate agenda and service areas to enable us to deliver the actions set out in the Climate Change Strategy and become a net zero organisation by 2030 and net zero borough by 2041.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

The alternative was to not produce the climate change action plan which would, however, be detrimental to Sandwell's efforts to achieve 2030 and 2041 targets on tackling climate change as there would be no deliverables set against the strategy.

### **Agreed:-**

(1) that the Climate Change Action Plan, as now submitted, be approved;

(2) that the Council be recommended to appoint cross-party membership onto the Climate Change Committee as part of the Governance Arrangements to monitor the implementation of the draft Climate Change Action Plan.

68/22

### **Contract for Tyres and Tyre Related Services**

Approval was sought to access the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) Framework 001009 Tyres for Motor Vehicles, Plant and Related Services, to undertake a further competition and put in place a call off contract for 4 years, starting 1 July 2022 and ending on 30 June 2026, at a cost of approximately £345,000 over the next 4 years, to be funded from the annual transport budget of £1.2 million.

### **Reason for Decision**

Accessing the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) Framework 001009 Tyres for Motor Vehicles, Plant and Related Services offered numerous benefits. Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) would conduct a further competition on behalf of the Council, offering a quick route to market and reducing the amount of resources required when compared to conducting a full internal procurement exercise, whilst maintaining compliance with procurement regulations. This would allow resources to be deployed elsewhere as the council continued its recovery from Covid-19.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

The Council could undertake an internal procurement exercise. This would require the allocation of resources from Procurement Services and would be time consuming due to current workloads.

Fleet Services could undertake the replacement of tyres and tyre related services internally. This would require purchase of equipment and specialised vehicles, the procurement of a tyre supplier, the creation of new posts, recruitment for the new posts as well as training for current employees.

The Council could make use of the direct award option available within the frameworks. This would not ensure best value for money, however, nor a consistent level of service.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to access the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) Framework 001009 Tyres for Motor Vehicles, Plant and Related Services to conduct a further competition and put in place a call off contract for 4 years, starting 1 July 2022 and ending on 30 June 2026, at a cost of approximately £345,000 over the next 4 years funded from the annual transport budget of £1.2m;

- (2) that in connection with Resolution (1) above, the Director of Borough Economy be authorised to award contracts for the provision of Tyres and tyre related services;
- (3) that the Director Law and Governance – Monitoring Officer be authorised to execute any documentation necessary to enable the course of action referred to in Resolution (1) above to proceed;
- (4) that any necessary exemptions be made to the Council’s Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to enable the course of action referred to in Resolution (1) above to proceed.

69/22

### **Vehicle and Grounds Maintenance Equipment, Spare Parts, and Workshop Consumables**

Approval was sought to award contracts for the provision of Vehicle & Grounds Maintenance Equipment Spare Parts & Workshop Consumables at a cost of approximately £4,080,000 over the next 4 years, to be funded from the annual transport budget of £1.2m.

#### **Reason for Decision**

Procurement was required because the current contract for the supply of Vehicle & Grounds Maintenance Equipment Spare Parts & Workshop Consumables was due to expire on the 3 July 2022.

The purchase of Vehicle & Grounds Maintenance Equipment Spare Parts & Workshop Consumables was essential in enabling Fleet Services to maintain and repair both internal and external fleet in line with contracts and service level agreements.

As a Fleet Operator, the Council had a statutory duty to ensure all of its vehicles and equipment were safe to use and did not pose a danger to the operator, service user or members of the public.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

There were no feasible alternatives. Without a contract in place, Fleet Services would have to treat each order as an individual tender and follow the relevant procurement rules dependent on order value.

#### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to undertake a full internal procurement exercise and put in place a call off contract for Vehicle & Grounds Maintenance Equipment Spare Parts & Workshop Consumables;
- (2) that the Director of Borough Economy be authorised to award contracts for the provision of Vehicle & Grounds Maintenance Equipment Spare Parts & Workshop Consumables following a compliant tendering process and evaluation at a cost of approximately £4,080,000 over the next 4 years funded from the annual transport budget of £1,200,000;
- (3) that the Director Law and Governance – Monitoring Officer be authorised to execute any documentation necessary to enable the course of action referred to in Resolution (1) above to proceed;
- (4) that any necessary exemptions be made to the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to enable the course of action referred to in Resolution (1) and (2) above to proceed.

70/22

### **Purchase of Grounds Maintenance Plant and Machinery**

Approval was sought to award contracts to replace the council's grounds maintenance equipment using the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) Framework 274 and North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) Framework Agreement.

### **Reason for Decision**

Consultation had taken place with Procurement Services, Grounds, Fleet Services and Bereavement Services to determine the new course of action. Following a re-appraisal of all options, it was decided that the recommended options represented best value for the Council.

Following the analysis of the pricing provided within the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) and North Eastern Purchasing Organisation (NEPO) Frameworks, and consultation with client officers within Fleet Management, it was deemed that the ESPO and NEPO frameworks offer the most expedient, compliant and value for money procurement route for the Council, in preference to carrying out its own tendering process.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

An alternative option was for the Council to conduct a full tendering process. Research that was undertaken indicated that, as this was a very limited market, it was highly unlikely a full OJEU procurement process would produce a result that would differ from what was available under the ESPO and NEPO frameworks. Another option existed for the Council to outsource the grounds maintenance operation, therefore disbanding the need to procure new equipment.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the Director of Borough Economy be authorised to award contracts to replace the council's grounds maintenance equipment at the end of its projected life expectancy at a cost of approximately £1.8m for the next 4 years;
- (2) that approval be given to access the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) Framework 274 and North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) Framework Agreement to place 'call off' orders as and when required to purchase Grounds Maintenance Plant and Machinery with the call off contract from 01/10/2022 – 30/09/2026;

- (3) that the Director Law and Governance – Monitoring Officer be authorised to execute any documentation necessary to enable the course of action referred to in Resolution (1) above to proceed;
- (4) that any necessary exemptions be made to the Council’s Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to enable the course of action referred to in Resolution (1) and (2) above to proceed.

## 71/22      **Revenues and Benefits Operating Model**

Approval was sought for the proposed Revenues and Benefits Operating Model.

### **Reason for Decision**

The majority of service requests dealt with by the Revenues and Benefits Service were now available online through MySandwell, which enabled customers to self-serve rather than use the costly face-to-face and telephone methods of contact.

The introduction of payment kiosks at Oldbury and Smethwick further increased the number of self-serve transactions. There were 13 different payment methods available to customer and these were: Cash, Cheque/Postal Order, Debit Card, Credit Card, Bank Giro, Online, Telephone Payment, Automated Telephone, Paypoint, Post Office, Kiosks, Direct Debit, Standing Order.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

An alternative was the continuation of face-to-face Revenues and Benefits customer service at Kings Square, West Bromwich and continuation of face-to-face Cashiers service at Kings Square, West Bromwich and Smethwick Council House.

Based on the reduction in demand at Oldbury Council House for cashiers since this reopened in June 2021, and the change in how residents were now accessing Revenues and Benefits' services, it was deemed that there was no need or demand from residents to reopen these offices, nor would it be cost-effective to do so as recruitment of additional staff would be required.

**Agreed:-**

- (1) that the Revenues and Benefits Operating Model, as now submitted, be approved;
- (2) that the face to face Cashiers service at Kings Square, West Bromwich, and Smethwick Council House not be reopened;
- (3) that the Revenues and Benefits customer service at Kings Square, West Bromwich not be reopened;
- (4) that. subject to the above, the Kings Square office in West Bromwich be closed.

72/22

**Revenues and Benefits Policy Framework 2022/23**

Approval was sought for the Revenues and Benefits Policy Framework 2022/23.

**Reason for Decision**

The Council was required to set out its revenues and benefits policy framework. The existing Revenues and Benefits Policy Framework included:

- Corporate Debt Recovery Policy
- Council Tax Award of Discount Policy
- Council Tax Discretionary Reduction Policy
- Flood Relief Policy
- Discretionary Housing Payments Policy
- Local Welfare Provision Policy
- Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery Policy
- Non-Domestic Rate Hardship Relief Policy

- Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Rate Relief Policy
- The Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme Policy.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

The council was required to set out its application of areas of the legislation which allowed local application of rules. The policy framework achieved this.

**Agreed** that approval be given to the Revenues and Benefits policy framework for 2022-2023, as now submitted.

73/22

### **Refurbishment of Thorn Close, Wednesbury**

Approval was sought for the procurement and contract award for a contractor to deliver the Refurbishment of Thorn Close, Wednesbury to continue the substantial investment in the Council's Housing Stock. The contracted works were to deliver an upgrade to the 3 x 3 storey blocks of flats and maisonettes, consisting of 28 units. 4 new units of social housing will also be created on the ground floor by converting the existing rear access links and bin rooms/tenant storage areas.

### **Reasons for Decision**

This contract would enable a complete transformation of the existing buildings at Thorn Close, Wednesbury, creating dwellings that will meet people's needs, in addition to providing 4 new affordable homes. The external walls of the blocks would receive insulated cladding that would conform with all relevant regulations.

On 18 October 2017, Cabinet approved the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Housing Investment Programme report. The report set out a refreshed 10-year HRA investment plan to enable the delivery of new build projects and continued investment into existing stock and communal spaces in our neighbourhoods. One of the key aspects to the report was the ambition to maintain and where necessary upgrade the Council housing stock.

## **Alternative Options Considered**

Option 1 - To not invest in the Council Housing Stock which might lead to dissatisfaction from existing and potential new tenants as well as disrepair and additional burden on the Housing Revenue Account.

Option 2 – To undertake refurbishment works to the existing 28 units, in addition to providing an additional 4 units, all as detailed within 4.6 in the Cabinet report.

Option 3 – To demolish the existing 28 units and construct 7 x 2 bedroomed semi-detached houses and 8 x 4 bedroomed semi-detached houses. This option has been estimated to cost approximately £5.285m and equates to an approximate expenditure of £0.352m per dwelling.

The 3 Options were explored and Option 2 was recommended as the most viable option as this contributed towards the Council's aspirations of increasing Council owned affordable rented stock.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Director of Finance, be authorised to prepare tendering documentation and to procure a contractor, in accordance with The Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules, working on behalf of the Council, to deliver the refurbishment works to Thorn Close, Wednesbury;
- (2) that the Director of Housing be authorised to award the contract for the Refurbishment of Thorn Close, Wednesbury, as referred to in Resolution (1) above, to the successful contractor;

- (3) that the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to enter into or execute under seal any documentation in relation to the award of the contract.

74/22

### **Acquisition of Land at Harvest Road, Rowley Regis for Council New Build**

Approval was sought to purchase the site at Harvest Road, Rowley Regis for the development of new affordable rent council housing.

#### **Reasons for Decision**

Following the introduction of greater flexibilities for local authorities the Council was able to develop this site with circa 8 homes (subject to planning consent), as part of the new strategic approach to provide more and better housing in the borough.

The opportunity to acquire this windfall site had arisen through partnership with the NHS Trust and an agreement that the site would be valued for affordable housing and disposed of to the Council as another public sector organisation.

#### **Alternative Options Considered**

Alternative option was for the Council not to pursue the acquisition of the property. If the Council did not acquire the site, the NHS would dispose of the site on the open market via auction. If this was the case it would be likely that the site would be purchased for market sale property and the size of the site would not trigger the requirement for affordable housing. This option would also not increase the Council owned housing stock or replace properties lost through Right to Buy (RTB) and would result in the lost opportunity of acquiring land that could be used for this purpose.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to the Director of Regeneration and Growth to agree heads of terms to acquire the site at Harvest Road, Rowley Regis from NHS Property Services;
- (2) that subject to Resolution (1) above, the Director of Finance be authorised to allocate the sum of £292,500 from the Council's Housing Revenue Account to purchase the site;
- (3) that the Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to enter into or execute under seal, if necessary, contract to complete the acquisition of the site;
- (4) that approval to be given to allocate the site at Harvest Road, Rowley Regis for the development of new affordable rent council housing, subject to planning permission being obtained;
- (5) that approval to be given to allocate funding from the Council's Housing Revenue Account to demolish the existing buildings/ structures at Harvest Road, Rowley Regis as a pre-requisite for site investigation to facilitate compliance with the Homes England funding timescales;
- (6) that the Director of Finance be authorised to allocate adequate resources from the Council's Housing Revenue Account, subject to being satisfied that the proposal provides value for money, to deliver the scheme and to utilise grant funding offered by Homes England, under the extended Homes England Strategic Partnership 1 Programme 2016 to 2021, to assist with the delivery of the project;

- (7) that subject to receiving the necessary Strategic Investment Unit appraisal approval mark of 65 or above, the Director of Regeneration and Growth, in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Director of Housing, be authorised to prepare tendering documentation and subsequently procure, in accordance with any statutory regulations and the Council's Procurement and Financial Regulations, a contractor/contractors to develop, on behalf of the Council, the proposed housing scheme; to enter into or execute under seal any financial agreement in relation to the Homes England grant on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Finance;
- (8) that subject to Resolution (6) and (7) above, the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to enter into or execute under seal any documentation in relation to award of the contract and/or development/partnership agreement, Homes England developer status, licence, undertaking, framework joining agreement, any consents or applications required for Planning or Highways appertaining to the delivery of the scheme and any other agreements with the procured contractor(s) and with the Homes England, as may be deemed necessary to facilitate development of the site with a housing scheme on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Regeneration and Growth;
- (9) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Director of Finance and subject to confirmation of the funding rules applicable, to submit an application for funding to the WMCA/LEP and, in the event the funding bid is successful, the Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Director of Housing be authorised to accept the funding and execute under seal any financial agreement in relation to

the WMCA/LEP grant on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Finance;

- (10) that following practical completion of each property at the site of Harvest Road, Rowley Regis, the Director of Housing be authorised to manage and let the properties built in accordance with the Council's housing allocation policy;
- (11) that the Director Finance be authorised to make any necessary adjustment required to appropriate the property for housing purposes.

75/22

### **Social Work Workforce – Market Supplement**

Approval was sought for the Sandwell Children's Trust to adopt the market supplement policy of £2,500 per annum for all 168 case-holding social workers and to fund the corresponding increase in the Contract Sum by a maximum of £432,000.

#### **Reason for Decision**

In line with many other Councils and Trusts across the country, Sandwell Children's Trust faced workforce challenges regarding the recruitment and retention of social workers. Discussions with the Department for Education and regional colleagues showed that the demand for talented and experienced social workers outweighed the supply. Within the West Midlands, these pressures were particularly acute, with a number of neighbouring authorities experiencing the same challenges.

Whilst pay was not the sole factor in attracting and retaining social workers, it had always been important. Recent detailed market analysis confirmed that the salary band for Children Social Workers and Children Senior Social Workers in Sandwell was not competitive within the region.

#### **Alternative Options Considered**

A number of options had been considered as follows:

- i. Maintain the current position for those Social Workers who are currently in receipt of the market supplement;
- ii. Remove the market supplement from all Social Workers that were currently in receipt of the market supplement;
- iii. Re-align the existing £150k budget to all 'case holding' social workers across the operational service;
- iv. Introduce a market supplement of £2,500.

Option iv was chosen as the most advantageous. It would achieve pay parity across the social worker establishment, and whilst social workers would still not be the highest paid across the region, the Trust would become more attractive, when considering pay alongside other benefits of working in Sandwell.

**Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to Sandwell Children's Trust adopting the market supplement policy of £2,500 per annum for all 168 case holding social workers and funding the corresponding increase in the Contract Sum by a maximum of £432,000;
- (2) that in connection with Resolution (1) above, the additional cost of £432,000 be funded from the Council's Social Care earmarked reserve.

76/22

**Sandwell Regeneration Strategy, Pipeline and Economic Recovery Plan for Businesses**

Approval was sought for the Regeneration Strategy for Sandwell and the associated appendices, the Regeneration Pipeline and the Inclusive Recovery Action Plan for Business, which set out the corporate regeneration priorities for the period 2022 to 2027.

Approval was also sought to rescind the Inclusive Economy Deal (March), and replacing it with the Regeneration Strategy, the Regeneration Pipeline and the Inclusive Recovery Plan for Business as the up-to-date, strategic

documents outlining corporate regeneration priorities for 2022-2027.

### **Reason for Decision**

Sandwell's Regeneration Strategy (the strategy) set out local requirements (evidence of need), constraints on activity (barriers) and opportunities (via a site pipeline) outlining the direction of travel for the Council to prioritise its resources to deliver transformational change for the Borough.

Following discussions with officers involved in the delivery of infrastructure from across the organisation, horizon scanning, and discussions with our partner organisations, the strategy set out practical actions for regeneration which would support Sandwell's wider economic goals.

Alongside the Inclusive Recovery Action Plan for Business, the Regeneration Strategy presented a clear view of the Sandwell economy and its infrastructure requirements. It would enable Sandwell to shape regeneration plans to meet the needs of local people and business, setting a path towards a higher quality of life for Sandwell residents and more well-paid and fulfilling jobs.

The Inclusive Economic Deal (IED) was approved by Cabinet on 26 February 2020. The Regeneration Strategy and its two appendices built on the IED, reflecting new (post covid-19) economic challenges and opportunities. Therefore, it was intended to rescind the IED and replace it with the Regeneration Strategy and its appendices as the Council's most up to date strategic regeneration document.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

Do nothing – this would result in a lack of overarching coordination and prioritisation of our regeneration opportunities. There would be no clear pipeline for potential funders, investors, and our communities providing a lack of clarity and potentially missed investment opportunities.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the Regeneration Strategy for Sandwell and the associated appendices, the Regeneration Pipeline and the Inclusive Recovery Action Plan for Business, as now submitted, be approved, which taken together set out the corporate regeneration priorities for the period 2022 to 2027;
- (2) that the Inclusive Economy Deal (March 2020) be rescinded and the Regeneration Strategy for Sandwell, the Regeneration Pipeline and Inclusive Recovery Action Plan for Business, taken together become the up to date, strategic documents outlining the corporate Regeneration priorities for the period 2022 to 2027;
- (3) that the Director of Regeneration and Growth be authorised to make any non-material amendments to the Regeneration Strategy, the Regeneration Pipeline and the Inclusive Recovery Action Plan;
- (4) that approval be given to create a reserve for the projected underspend of £85,000 for 2021/22 of New Burdens funding and that it be used in 2022/23 to support the delivery of the Regeneration Strategy and its appendices, particularly focusing on initiatives to support business recovery.

77/22

### **Extension of Free Swimming Programme 2022-23**

Approval was sought for the continuation and expansion of the free swimming programme in Sandwell for the financial year 2022/23.

#### **Reason for Decision**

Participating in 30 minutes of physical activity or sport per week provided residents with significant health benefits.

Both leisure providers (SLT and Places Leisure) had reported a positive correlation between increased usage of swimming facilities by young and older people at the same time, i.e. young people were often accompanied by parents, grandparents or older carers, suggesting that free swimming for young people encouraged family visits and family interaction.

The current programme allowed for children and young people, who were Sandwell residents aged 16 years and under to swim without charge during public swimming sessions, for seven days per week, throughout school holiday periods only. It was now proposed to extend the age to include free swimming for all under 18's.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

The free swimming programme could be discontinued. However, if the Council did not continue the programme, this would have an adverse impact on the opportunities available to Sandwell residents. It would also affect the opportunity for some of our most vulnerable residents to participate in some form of physical activity.

The resources could be invested into other sport and physical activity programmes. However, swimming had the ability to engage and provide health benefits on a wider scale than many other activities, as demonstrated during the consultation exercise. It engaged a wide range of ages and abilities and was an essential life skill.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to the Service Manager – Tourism, Culture & Leisure to enter into an agreement with Sandwell Leisure Trust and Places Leisure to offer free swimming to:
  - a) Children and young people aged 18 years and under (exclusively Sandwell residents only) during public swimming sessions, for seven days per week, throughout school holidays only

- b) adults aged 60 years and over (exclusively Sandwell residents only) during public swimming sessions, for seven days per week before 1pm all year round;
- c) allocate a proportion of free swimming funding to primary care settings to be distributed through a social prescribing pathway for adults

for the financial year 2022/23;

- (2) that approval be given to the Service Manager – Tourism, Culture & Leisure to enter into an agreement with Sandwell Leisure Trust and Places Leisure to offer free swimming lessons to:

- a) Children and young people aged 16 years and under (exclusively Sandwell residents only) via a voucher scheme distributed through schools (identified as in receipt of benefits/low income and unable to afford lessons plus poor swimming ability in school swimming lessons), and
- b) primary care settings (to be distributed through a social prescribing pathway)

for the financial year 2022/23.

- (3) that the Director for Finance be authorised to allocate a revenue budget of £275,000 for the free swimming offer and £150,000 for the free swimming lessons offer, at a total of £425,000 for the financial year 2022/23;
- (4) that any necessary exemptions be made to the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to enable the course of action referred to in Resolution (1) and (2) above to proceed.

## **Co-operative Working for the Provision of Services from the Integrated Social Care and Health Centre**

Approval was sought to develop a Co-Operative Working Agreement with Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust for the purpose of achieving shared objectives for social care and health through the delivery of integrated social care and health services from the Integrated Social Care and Health Centre at the Knowle Site, Rowley Regis.

The primary purpose of the Integrated Social Care and Health Centre was to provide bed-based reablement and therapy services to people who had either been discharged from hospital or for whom the Centre would provide an opportunity to avoid admission to hospital.

### **Reason for Decision**

Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust was the key provider trust for acute and community health services in Sandwell. It also currently provided public health services commissioned by the Council, which included services jointly delivered through an existing Co-operative Working Agreement.

Under regulation 12(7) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, the local authority might enter into a contract without competition where the contract was with another contracting authority (public body) and establishes or implements co-operation with the aim of ensuring that the public services the authorities had to perform were provided with a view to achieving objectives they had in common and were governed solely by considerations relating to the public interest. The opportunity to use this exemption allowed the flexibility to include services other than those delivering prescribed health related functions and provided an approach that would support future developments and the integration of social care and health services.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

The only alternative option would be to defer to a tendering process which would not be the most financially viable option or in the best interest of the services.

**Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to develop a Co-operative Working Agreement with Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust for the purpose of achieving shared objectives for social care and health through the delivery of integrated social care and health services;
- (2) that subject to Resolution (1) above and further consultations and detailed negotiations between the Council and Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust, the Director of Adult Social Care be authorised to award and enter into a contract with Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust for health-related services under the Co-operative Working Agreement on terms to be agreed with the Director of Adult Social Care;
- (3) that subject to Resolution (2) above, any contract should include a five-year review of the partnership framework with an annual review of services;
- (4) that the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to execute any documents necessary and within reasonable time to give effect to the proposals in recommendation (1) for the provision under the Co-operative Working Agreement with Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust;
- (5) that any necessary exemptions be made to the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules to enable the course of action referred to in Resolution (2) and (3) above to proceed.

## **Corporate Plan Achievements 2021**

Consideration was given to the progress made in delivering the Corporate Plan in 2021 and to the proposed delivery vehicle for the strategic outcomes contained in the plan going forward.

It was commented that there were considerable achievements made in 2021 such as the work of the Public Health Team during Covid-19 and the delivery of the Aquatics Centre and that the Authority wanted feedback from residents to be at the centre of its strategy.

### **Reason for Decision**

Sandwell Council's refreshed Corporate Plan – Big Plans for a Great Place - set out what the Council planned to do to deliver Vision 2030, and Sandwell's 10 ambitions, over the period 2021 to 2025. The Corporate Plan Refresh was approved by Council on 21 October 2021.

The refreshed plan was based on analysis of the impact that the pandemic had had on our community, the local economy and our own organisation.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

Cabinet was asked to consider progress made, and successes, in achieving the aims of the Corporate Plan. As such there were no alternative options.

### **Agreed:-**

- (1) that the progress made in delivering the Corporate Plan during 2021 be noted;
- (2) that details of the directorate actions, as now submitted, that would support delivery of the Corporate Plan on our journey ahead, be received.

80/22

## **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

**Resolved** that the public and press be excluded from the rest of the meeting to avoid the possible disclosure of exempt information under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972, as amended, by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, relating to the financial and business affairs of any person, including the authority holding that information.

81/22

## **Care Home Fees – Standard Rate 2022/23**

Consideration was given to the proposals in relation to revising Care Home Fees for 2022/23.

Approval was now sought to communicate the resultant fees to the relevant providers and implement the revised fees from 1 April 2022.

### **Reason for Decision**

On 19 April 2017, Adult Social Care presented a report to Cabinet (Residential Care Home Fees model and rates 2017-18 seeking approval for the use of a proposed costing model to form the basis of discussion and fee setting for Care Home Fees for Older People in future years (see Minute No. 87/17).

The model had been used since 2017 to calculate the increase of Care Home Fees and had been used to calculate the proposed Care Homes Fees for 2022-23.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

The alternative was not to approve the Care Home Fees, however, this carried a risk that care home providers, and therefore the supply chain, might become less resilient, particularly at a critical time for the sector with the additional burden of the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Agreed:-**

- (1) that approval be given to the revised Care Home Fees for 2022/23, as now submitted, to be effective from 1 April 2022, and that the Director of Adult Social Care be authorised to communicate this to the relevant providers and implement the fee increase accordingly;
- (2) that approval be given to a deviation to the model that was agreed by Cabinet in April 2017 which was used to calculate standard rate care home fees, to also take account of the mandatory increase to National Insurance contributions from April 2022 and the use of October data for gas, electricity, water and food;
- (3) that the Director of Adult Social Care review the proposed care home fees rates in 6 months once the position on whether there will be any additional government funding from April 2022 has been established, and if necessary, submit a further report recommending revisions to the rates in year should they be necessitated.

Meeting ended at 4.27pm.

Contact: [democratic\\_services@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk)