

# Minutes of Cabinet

**Wednesday 17 July 2024 at 6.00pm  
in the Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

**Present:** Councillor Carmichael (Leader of the Council and Chair);  
Councillor K Allcock, S Gill, Hartwell, Hughes, Moore, Smith,  
Taylor and Uddin.

**In attendance:** Councillor Davies, Fenton, W Gill, Hemingway, Jeffcoat and  
Lewis.

**Officer:** Shokat Lal (Chief Executive); James McLaughlin (Assistant  
Chief Executive); Alex Thompson (Executive Director -  
Finance and Transformation); Alan Lunt (Executive Director –  
Place); Mike Jones (Assistant Director – Legal and  
Assurance); Rashpal Bishop (Director – Adult Social Care);  
Liann Brookes Smith (Interim Director – Public Health),  
Matthew More (Communications and Corporate Affairs  
Manager); Saffron OMeara (Graduate); Suky Suthi-Nagra  
(Democratic and Member Services Manager) and Connor  
Robinson (Democratic Services Officer).

## 64/24 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K Allcock  
and E M Giles.

## 65/24 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.



66/24 **Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2024 are approved as a correct record.

67/24 **Additional Items of Business**

There were no additional items of business.

68/24 **Council Plan 2024-2027**

The Cabinet was consulted on the draft Council Plan 2024-2027 prior to its submission to the Full Council.

As the Council emerged from intervention, efforts were being refocussed from being brilliant at the basics to becoming an outstanding council. The three-year Plan would focus on what mattered to Sandwell residents, a clear line of sight to outcomes and an ability to measure how well the Council was performing.

The Leader of the Council reported that the Plan had been brought forward at the first opportunity after the Council exited government intervention, which demonstrated the change in the Council's focus from improvement to performance. The Council was determined to change the lives of residents in Sandwell for the better, and be open and transparent about progress in delivering the actions set out in the Plan. Each action was linked to performance indicators and updates on these would be reported quarterly to the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board.

**Reason for Decision**

The new Council Plan demonstrated the organisation's commitment to excellence and its dedication to the community. The Council Plan outlined new strategic themes, set out the vision for the future, and detailed the actionable steps the Council would take to achieve these goals. Through innovative leadership, collaborative efforts, and a deep understanding of resident's needs, the Council would ensure that it not only met but exceeded the expectations of those



that it supported. The Plan was more than a roadmap; it was a pledge to the community, a promise of transparency, efficiency, and progress in all the Council's endeavours.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

The current Corporate Plan was refreshed in Summer 2023; the Council could maintain the document as the strategic focus for the Council. However, whilst both the Corporate Plan, and the proposed Council Plan, set the strategic direction for the Council and enabled monitoring of performance, should no review or refresh take place, there would not be the recognition or allowance that priorities changed over time, particularly following the Council's significant improvements in recent years. This would result in the Council's resources and services being out of alignment with the needs of residents.

**Resolved** that the Council Plan 2024 to 2027 is submitted to the Full Council with a recommendation of approval

69/24

### **Performance Management Framework – 2023/24 Quarter 4 and Annual Monitoring**

Consideration was given to the Performance Management Framework and approval was sought for the 2023/24 Quarter 4 and Annual Monitoring report. The Council had approved a Corporate Performance Management Framework on 12 April 2022 to address the recommendations of the Governance Value for Money Review by Grant Thornton and as a key element of the Council's Improvement Plan. Since then, the Corporate Performance Management Framework had been further refined and built into business processes.

### **Reason for Decision**

An effective performance management framework facilitated increased accountability, learning and improvement. It also provided early warning signals and facilitated decision-making.

On a quarterly basis, the Council gathered and analysed a wide range of data and information to understand how effectively its



plans were being implemented and whether the strategic outcomes contained in the Corporate Plan were being achieved. The information collected was used to enable the authority to better understand the impact of its work on local people, and where necessary, target actions and resources.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

No alternative option was presented.

**Resolved** that Cabinet receives progress on the further development of the Corporate Performance Management Framework and approves the 2023/24 Quarter 4 and Annual monitoring reports.

70/24

### **Productivity Plan**

Approval was sought to the Council's Productivity Plan. The Government had requested that all local authorities submit a Productivity Plan by mid-July 2024. The Plan set out the Council's approach to driving productivity and service performance across all directorates.

### **Reason for Decision**

On 24 January 2024, to accompany additional funding measures for the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024/25, the Government announced a new efficiency drive for local government as part of the effort to 'return the sector to (financial) sustainability in the future'. Local authorities had been asked to produce Productivity Plans setting out how they would improve service performance and reduce wasteful expenditure.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) had encouraged authorities to take a wide view of productivity. The plans were expected to cover productivity in relation to how the organisation was run, service delivery and place leadership.

The Council's proposed Productivity Plan approach had been to describe the improvement journey the Council had been on in



recent years and the future plans for further transformation and moving towards excellence. Rather than repeat information on service performance, transformation and productivity, the plan provided links to the key documents where this information could be found.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

The proposed Productivity Plan followed the guidance as set out by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

#### **Resolved:-**

- (1) that approval is given to the Productivity Plan attached at Appendix A;
- (2) that the Assistant Chief Executive is authorised to submit the Productivity Plan to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

71/24

### **The Future of Neighbourhood Working in Sandwell**

Approval was sought to new arrangements for neighbourhood working in Sandwell. The Council had stated its ambition to transform and had long signalled the importance of working in neighbourhoods, making people feel valued and connected in their communities. A review had been commissioned to independently examine the current approach of the authority towards neighbourhood working, its effectiveness and any shortcomings and to identify opportunities for transformation and improvement.

The proposed new model for neighbourhood working provided a framework for improved outcomes and accountability. The recommended approach acknowledged the unique circumstances and identities of the six distinct towns that made up the borough and the allegiances that residents had to their towns. Furthermore, it recognised that effective neighbourhood working needed to be delivered at a ward level, where ward councillors could fully respond and prioritise as community leaders.



The new model proposed a fresh approach where local priorities could be established and the challenging issues that communities faced in Sandwell could be addressed at a local level.

The Leader, on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community, reported that if the ward/neighbourhood budget remained unspent this would be clearly set out when the proposal for the use of ward budgets was presented as part of the budget setting process in February 2025. The aim would be that funds may be rolled over into future years in a planned way, which was an approach followed by other authorities for projects where more funds were required to deliver a specific large-scale improvement. Ultimately, the Council will need to ensure that funds allocated to wards were used to the benefit of communities in a timely way.

It was also noted that achieving value for money was a key consideration in all spend by the Council, but transparency was also vital. The intention would be that an annual budget summary statement for each ward would be published through the Council's website that would detail all spend of ward budgets for both revenue and capital.

The Leader thanked the graduate Saffron OMeara who had worked on the development of the proposals for the Future of Neighbourhood Working in Sandwell.

### **Reason for Decision**

The Chief Executive had indicated immediately upon taking up post in February 2023 that neighbourhood working was a priority for strategic review. This recognised the ambitions the Council had to be better connected to and engaged with its communities, and crucially to provide a platform for ward councillors to operate effectively as community leaders with greater means to deliver against priorities for their wards and residents.

A review had commenced in October 2023 which sought to examine current practices in respect of neighbourhood working and develop a new, refreshed coherent and cross-council model for neighbourhood working which would see members and communities at the core of delivering outcomes in their localities.



A four-stage process had underpinned the review, which had examined current practice to develop a bespoke model based on input from multiple service areas involved in neighbourhood and locality activity and service delivery, elected members and representatives of authorities that had made significant improvements to their neighbourhood working models in recent years.

The review had also been supported by a Member Steering Group, chaired by the Leader of the Council and comprising Town Leads, who received regular updates on each stage of the review from the project team.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

Doing nothing would retain the current approach, however, this was not considered to serve communities well with members not feeling that services were joined up. The review had identified how the current approach could be improved in respect of efficiency, outcomes and responsiveness, therefore retaining the current approach as it operated presently was not recommended.

Adopting a replica model from another authority would fail to take account of local needs and views and would not have the buy-in of ward members or staff. This option was not recommended.

### **Resolved:-**

- (1) that the review of Neighbourhood Working is endorsed;
- (2) that the Strong and Resilient Neighbourhoods Strategy is approved and adopted;
- (3) that the recommendations for a new model of Neighbourhood Working are approved and adopted, and authority is delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive to implement the new model;



- (4) that Ward Plans are produced for each of the 24 wards, outlining ward priorities and activities aligned to the refreshed Council Plan 2024-2027, to be published on a cyclical basis;
- (5) that Ward Profiles are developed for each of the 24 wards detailing the demographics and community assets of the area;
- (6) that an Annual Report on Neighbourhood Working is produced and submitted to both the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board and Full Council;
- (7) that the establishment of ward budgets for each Member is approved in principle and incorporated into the development of the 2025/26 revenue budget;
- (8) that a report is submitted to the Full Council recommending amendments to the Constitution to reflect the new way of neighbourhood working, as detailed in the Strong and Resilient Neighbourhoods Strategy.

72/24

### **Consultancy for Building Safety Consultancy**

Approval was sought for the award of a contract for Building Safety Consultancy via a Framework Provider.

Consultant selection was run on behalf of the Council to appoint a consultant to provide various elements of consultancy for high rise buildings in the borough. The consultants were considered using the process outlined in the Procure Plus Framework Agreement for the Provision of Various Fire Precaution and Risk Mitigation Works and Consultancy Services.

The the client wished to appoint the consultant that provided the most economically advantageous offer. The direct call-off





procedure utilised the rates tendered in for the original framework and therefore prevented the need for any further competition or tendering process.

### **Reason for Decision**

Having reassessed the requirements, consolidated other required workstreams into one contract and taking a risk-based approach by programming the required workstreams over two financial years, the Council concluded that using Firntec would help to alleviate the budget pressures and timescales pressures that would be experienced with a one year program.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

There were no reasonable alternatives for this specialised work as consultants with this skill set were in demand across the industry to meet these new and demanding requirements as set out in recent legislation, notably the Building Safety Act 22 and the Fire Safety England Regs 22.

The use of a Framework and a direct award to the No 1 supplier had already been through a thorough assessment for quality and Value for Money.

### **Resolved:-**

- (1) that approval is given to the Executive Director - Place to award a contract to Firntec, in the total sum of £1,328,169.57, plus VAT, to:-
  - carry out 2 stages of Intrusive External Wall Surveys to 52 High-Risk Blocks at cost of £283,645.35 at stage 1 and £277,402.40 at stage 2 totalling £561,047.75 (average £10,789.38);
  - carry out Structural Surveys to our 52 High-Risk Blocks at a the cost of £316,458.77 (average £6,085.75);
  - create Fire Strategies for our 52 High-Risk Blocks at a cost of £285,808.15 (average £5,496.31);
  - carry out Flat Entrance Door surveys to our 55 High and Medium rise blocks at a cost of £125,904.90;



- allow for External Wall System Fire Review or EWS1 forms to be created where Leaseholders reside in our High-Rise Blocks at a cost of £38,950.00;
- (2) that the Assistant Director - Asset Management and Improvement and the Assistant Director – Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer are authorised to enter into a formal contract with Firntec and execute under seal any documentation in relation to the award of the contracts detailed in resolution (1) (above).

## 73/24 **Housing Repairs Contracts 2024-2028**

Approval was sought to procure and award a series of contracts in relation to housing repairs for the period 2024-2028.

A review of the live contracts within the Housing Asset Management service had identified 15 revenue contracts related to repairs and maintenance for HRA housing stock that were due to expire within six months.

Approval was also sought to extend specific contracts where appropriate and compliant with Procurement Rules, to provide time to enable a comprehensive procurement process without creating delays or gaps in service delivery which would negatively impact on tenants and the Council's ability to ensure its housing stock remained fit for purpose. The new contracts would be designed to improve delivery and included key elements to provide effective management of the contract performance over its term, as well as ensuring best value for tenants.

### **Reason for Decision**

A long-term strategy was being developed to provide efficiencies and ensure value for money with contracts and potential amalgamation where appropriate. To enable this strategic approach and to not interrupt service delivery, authority was sought to procure, award and appoint contractors to support the Direct Labour



Organisation (DLO) who responsible for maintaining all Council housing stock across the borough.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

Option 1 - not renew the expiring contracts - This would mean that 'ad hoc' arrangements would be required to maintain the Council's housing stock to the required Decent Homes standard. This could lead to dissatisfaction amongst tenants, disrepair, and potential sanction from the Regulator of Social Housing. This option was therefore dismissed.

Option 2 – utilise in-house provision. - The current in-house provision did not have the capacity to maintain the pace of demand for delivering the required repairs to Council properties or manage the peaks and troughs within the service with regards to the electrical services and day to day repairs contracts. Failure to procure the relevant contracts would impact upon this. This option was therefore dismissed.

Option 3 – spot purchasing outside of a contract framework (essential supplies). - For essential supplies only contracts, for example, supply of wallpaper, paint, brushes and sundries, supply of gas spares and door furniture and ironmongery, the alternative of purchasing outside of a contractual arrangement would increase cost and not represent value for money. This option was therefore dismissed.

### **Resolved:-**

- (1) that the Executive Director - Place, in consultation with the Executive Director - Finance and Transformation, is authorised to prepare tender documentation, conduct appropriate procurement processes and to award contracts for the following contracts, in accordance with The Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules, in relation to the Housing Revenue Account Repairs and Maintenance service in respect of the following contracts:-



- UPVC Repairs, Maintenance & Replacement of Windows and Doors including Composite Doors
- Supply of Kitchens
- Day to Day Repairs to Housing
- Electrical Repairs and Maintenance
- Supply of Wallpaper, Paint, Brushes & Sundries
- Emergency Drain Clearance & Associated Underground Drainage Repairs
- Servicing & Repairs to Lifts
- Supply of Gas Spares to Gas Section
- House & Garden Clearance (temporary contract extension)
- House & Garden Clearance
- Roofing Repairs
- Cyclical Maintenance to High Rise
- CCTV Maintenance (temporary contract extension)
- Door furniture & Domestic Ironmongery
- Scaffold and Tower Hire

- (2) that the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer is authorised to enter or execute under seal any documentation in relation to the award of the contract detailed in resolution (1) (above).

74/24

## **Future Use of Smethwick Swimming Centre - Options**

Consideration was given to the future use of Smethwick Swimming Centre.

Smethwick Swimming Centre was located approximately half a mile from Bearwood Town Centre and had originally opened as Thimblemill Baths in 1933 as a two-season facility, with swimming in the spring/summer months and concerts during the winter. It was an exceptionally fine building and a complete example of the 'Moderne' style of architecture. Reflecting this, and the wealth of high-quality Art Deco internal features, the building was statutorily listed as Grade II.



The Corporate Asset Management Strategy approved by Cabinet in 2022 stated that the Council was committed to maintaining an effective and efficient property portfolio that supported the delivery of services to residents, provided value for money, reduced environmental impact, and maximised opportunities to generate value. The Strategy was underpinned by asset savings targets.

At its meeting on 15 March 2023 (Minute No. 39/23 refers), the Cabinet had approved the advertisement on the open market of the site to ascertain commercial interest in purchasing the site. Cabinet also agreed to work with The Peoples Orchestra and West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust to develop proposals and to determine the viability of establishing a base for the Orchestra within the building. This also allowed them to undertake a business planning exercise, to confirm whether they were able to take on the premises under a Community Asset Transfer.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure reported that a Community Asset Transfer wouldn't be viable due to the potential level of ongoing financial liability for the Council and the associated risks. The building had recently been subject to several break-ins resulting in extensive vandalism to the property and there were ongoing risks around antisocial behaviour and health and safety on site. The property currently carried a Grade II listing status so legally required the owner to ensure any heritage features were maintained to an appropriate standard. The Council could insert appropriate restrictive covenants around any future use of the property and a mechanism into any development agreement to ensure the property was brought back into use within a suitable period.

The Chief Executive gave assurance to Cabinet that all due diligence would be undertaken to ensure the future use of Smethwick Swimming Centre and that any proposal would be considered thoroughly and rigorously. A number of community organisations had already shown interest in taking over the premises. The Council would work to ensure the heritage of the premises was protected and any future use would be considered by Cabinet. Any decision on the premises would be open and transparent and in line with governance requirements.



In response to a questions from the Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, the Chief Executive confirmed that community engagement had been and would continue to be undertaken, however, the final decision would be the responsibility of Cabinet.

### **Reason for Decision**

Following the closure of Smethwick Swimming Centre on 14 July 2023, there was currently no identified operational use for the building. The Swimming Centre was also a financial liability to the Council, with security and holding costs being incurred of circa £7,500 per month.

Following the Centre's closure, the property had also recently been subject to several break-ins and vandalism, resulting in extensive damage being caused to the building and further expenditure being incurred. Potentially, parts of the listed building element may had been damaged in the process and the Council's Conservation Officer was considering the required course of action.

Whilst the physical damage and associated costs were an issue, the main concerns were centred around health and safety aspects, predominantly the risk of people injuring themselves, or worse. In addition, the Council had to be aware of the potential of metal thefts, which could have a significant impact.

The Council's Asset Management Strategy set the strategic framework within which the property asset portfolio would be managed. The strategy was intended to guide future decisions concerning the acquisition, use and disposal of property assets. It was also meant to respond to the corporate planning process, providing property solutions that support each of the Council's service areas in the delivery of their service plans.

The recommendations supported the delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, ensuring that moving forward the Council had a balanced budget alongside an efficient operational estate honed to deliver Council services. Should the Council fail to take decisions that declared identified assets surplus to



requirements, it would not be able to achieve the assets savings targets.

The Council had commissioned Savills via a procured framework to undertake a full options appraisal of the site. This also included an indicative range, for valuation, of £100,000 to £400,000, based on comparable evidence for properties with similar characteristics. Should the Council proceed with a freehold disposal, upon completion, all maintenance and associated financial liability would be transferred to the successful bidder.

The recommendations aligned with the responses received from the public budget consultation, held in 2022, which supported the disposal or development of Council assets.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

Option 1 – Retain the asset. This would not be considered viable due to no identified operational use, and the inability to support delivery of the Asset Management Budgets Savings targets 2023-2026, due to ongoing repairs and maintenance, security and other holding costs, alongside the current anti-social behaviour now being demonstrated on site.

Should the asset be placed in auction for disposal, this would not afford the Council the same level of control over offers received, or to ensure that the building was repurposed in an appropriate manner and timeframe.

Option 2 – Invest in the asset prior to disposal. Based on indicative valuations and comparable evidence, this would not be a viable option due to the level of investment required which would not be recoverable, resulting in a negative return on investment.

Option 3 – Progress a Community Asset Transfer with TPO / WMHBT. Based on the information provided this would not be a viable option due to the potential level of ongoing financial liability for the Council, timeframes involved, and associated risks with project delivery.



The option to removed the listed building status had been explored, in order to enable a wider range of development proposals to be considered. However, under guidance provided by Historic England, the property still met the statutory criteria and general principles that the Secretary of State applied when deciding whether a building was of special architectural or historic interest. It was therefore advised that any such application would be unsuccessful and therefore does not provide a viable option.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) that Smethwick Swimming Centre, Smethwick, B67 5QT is declared surplus to all Council use;
- (2) that the Executive Director – Place is authorised to undertake an open market disposal of Smethwick Swimming Centre following a marketing exercise to be undertaken by the Council’s appointed agent;
- (3) that subject to resolutions (1) and (2) (above):
  - (a) approval is given to negotiate and agree a disposal of the freehold interest in Smethwick Swimming Centre to the preferred bidder from those bids received;
  - (b) the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer is authorised to dispose of the property, on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Executive Director - Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure;
  - (c) that authority is given to the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer to enter into or execute under seal, if necessary, any other related documentation in connection with the freehold disposal of the site;





- (4) that in the event that no suitable bids are received following the marketing exercise as detailed at resolution (2) (above), approval is granted for the freehold disposal of Smethwick Swimming Centre by way of auction;
- (5) that subject to resolution (4) (above):
  - (a) authority is given to the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer to dispose of the property, on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Executive Director - Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure;
  - (b) authority is given to the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer to enter into or execute under seal, if necessary, any other related documentation in connection with the freehold disposal of the site.

75/24

### **Hurst Road Community Centre Proposed Community Asset Transfer and Alternative Disposal Options**

Consideration was given to the disposal of Hurst Road Community Centre through a Community Asset Transfer.

The Corporate Asset Management Strategy approved by Cabinet in 2022 stated that the Council was committed to maintaining an effective and efficient property portfolio that supported the delivery of services to residents, provided value for money, reduced environmental impact, and maximised opportunities to generate value.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure reported that any disposal of the site, whether that be via Community Asset Transfer or open market was in line with the responses received from the public budget consultation, which supported the disposal or development of Council assets. Any proposal would be considered



prior to the transaction being completed to ensure any future use of the property met the needs of the community and the Council would include ward members in this.

If four Community Trusts took on the premises via a Community Asset Transfer, they would continue to support the groups currently using the centre to continue their activities. If the property went to open market for disposal, the Council would discuss with all the groups to understand their needs and support a transition to delivering activities from neighbouring facilities including Dorothy Parkes Centre and Thimblemill Library where viable.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure reported that local community groups would continue to be consulted in the process and in the event of an open market disposal the Council would work to support community groups in a transition into a new venue if that was required. Additionally, any community asset transfer would need to be accompanied by a detailed business management plan. The assets would be dealt with in a way that provided the best value for the Council and communities in Sandwell.

### **Reason for Decision**

The Council managed 22 community centres in partnership with a range of community organisations. As part of a review of neighbourhood services, three centres, including Hurst Road Community Centre, were previously identified as community buildings which could benefit from new management arrangements.

The proposed asset transfer accorded with the Council's principle of proactively advertising community properties for potential Community Asset Transfers as a priority. Transfers would be undertaken in accordance with the Council's policy on Community Asset Transfers and would only happen if officers were satisfied that a clear, sustainable plan was in place to maintain the asset and that further calls on the Council for support were unlikely. The recommendations supported the delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and assisted in ensuring that the Council had a balanced budget moving forward alongside an efficiently operating estate to deliver Council services.



## Alternative Options Considered

The Council could choose to retain the asset. However, this would not be considered viable, as no operational use had been identified, and because it would not support delivery of the Asset Management Budgets Savings targets 2023-2026, due to ongoing liability of repairs and maintenance, security, and other holding costs.

Additional revenue budgets would also have to be identified for the Council to manage the site operationally, as budgets previously held for this purpose were removed in 2023.

### Resolved:-

- (1) that authority is given to the Executive Director – Place to undertake the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of Hurst Road Community Centre, Oldbury, B67 6ND to 4 Community Trust for a term of 99 years based on a full repairing lease with a rental of £1 per annum subject to receipt and evaluation of a suitable business plan;
- (2) that subject to resolution (1) (above), and upon receipt of a suitable business plan:
  - (a) authority is given to the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer to dispose of Hurst Road Community Centre on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Executive Director - Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure;
  - (b) that authority is given to the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer to enter into or execute under seal, if necessary, any other related documentation in connection with the leasehold disposal of the site;
- (3) that in the event that no suitable expression of interest or business plan is received from 4 Community Trust by



31 July 2024 approval is given to the open market disposal (leasehold or freehold) of Hurst Road Community Centre, Oldbury, B67 6ND via the most appropriate mechanism;

- (4) that subject to resolution (3) (above):
- (a) approval is given to negotiate and agree a disposal of the leasehold or freehold to the preferred bidder from those bids received;
  - (b) authority is given to the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer to dispose of the property, on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Executive Director - Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure;
  - (c) that authority is given to the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer to enter into or execute under seal, if necessary, any other related documentation in connection with the leasehold or freehold disposal of the site.

## 76/24 Long-Term Plan for Smethwick

Consideration was given to the Long-Term Plan for Smethwick, which set out a 10-year strategic vision for the town, supported by insights gained through engagement with local people. The plan was to comprise a vision statement, a strategic case for the future of the town, priority outcomes for 2034, planned interventions across the three investment themes, evidence that the plan was community led, how the board would attract additional investment, and high-level milestones.

Government had provided a list of interventions which had already been assessed as having a strong case for investment, value for money and benefit-to-cost ratio by Government. Should the Council



pursue these interventions, a business case would not be required as part of the assessment process. However, should the Council wish to pursue bespoke or 'off-menu' interventions an outline business case would be required. Interventions for Smethwick would now be considered and developed within the 1st Year of the 3 Year Investment Plan to ensure they were aligned to local priorities.

### **Reason for Decision**

In October 2023 the Government Department for Local Communities and Housing (DLUHC) announced their 'Long-Term Plan for Towns', which was an investment programme of £1.1 billion into 55 towns for local people's priorities such as regenerating local high streets and town centres or securing public safety.

Each of the 55 towns selected was to receive £20m 'endowment-style' funding to invest over the next 10 years. Town selection for funding allocation was undertaken by Government according to the Levelling Up Needs Index which considered metrics covering skills, pay, productivity, and health, as well as the Index of Multiple Deprivation. For Sandwell, Government had selected Smethwick. Other Black Country towns allocated funding were Darlaston, Dudley, and Bilston.

The Government intention was for the £20m endowment style funding (25% revenue / 75% capital) over a 10-year period to provide long-term certainty to deliver a range of interventions within three broad investment themes to be driven by the needs and wishes of local communities. The view of Government was that this flexibility meant that Towns such as Smethwick were more able to capitalise on private and philanthropic investment, aligning timings with businesses and investors to maximise the benefits for local people.

The funding would be devolved directly to the Council and would be able to roll over into future years. As the Local Authority, the Council would be the accountable body and would remain responsible for ensuring good use of public funds through the existing duties of the Section 151 officer.



To access the £20m endowment-style funding the Council needed to produce a Long-Term Plan for Smethwick, based on the priorities of local people, and put to local people for consultation. The Plan was to comprise the 10-year vision for Smethwick and a 3-year investment plan, setting out how the funding would be allocated and spent, with the local authority as the body ultimately accountable for funding. The endowment approach meant that funding was released over a 7-year period and local authorities had the flexibility to spend it over 10-years, with 'light touch' assurance from DLUHC.

On the 18 December 2023 DLUHC had released further guidance confirming that £250k capacity funding was to be issued to Local Authorities to cover the costs of establishing the Town Deal Board and preparing the Long-Term Plan for submission. The capacity funding would comprise £50k, which had been received by the Council, to establish the Town Deal Board. Once established the remaining £200k of capacity funding would be released to develop the plan which was to be submitted by the 1 August 2024. Government expected this funding to be utilised for convening a Town Deal Board, community engagement, support to the Town Deal Board to develop the Long-Term Plan, and technical expertise for project development including feasibility studies and business cases.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

No alternative options were presented.

#### **Resolved:-**

- (1) that Cabinet receives the progress made on the development of the Long-Term Plan for Smethwick, to be submitted to the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities by the 1 August 2024;
- (2) that Cabinet receives the approach and outline content of the Long-Term Plan for Smethwick.



## Regeneration Programme Performance

The Cabinet received an update on the performance of the Regeneration Programme. The Regeneration Project Pipeline set out the major investment projects that the Council, its partners, and the private sector intended to deliver 2022-2027. It identified the infrastructure priorities for the Council and established where resources would be focused. The pipeline comprised 69 live projects, in addition to the 14 projects that were now complete, bringing the estimated total investment value to £3bn by 2027 and total number of projects to 83.

Three projects had been now completed since the last update in December 2023 - Wednesbury High Street Heritage Action Zone; the Pivot Power Grid Scale Battery Storage facility in West Bromwich; and the Urban Greening project on Princess Parade, West Bromwich.

### Reason for Decision

On the 23 March 2022, Cabinet approved the Regeneration Strategy, and the Regeneration Project Pipeline, setting out the corporate regeneration priorities for the period 2022 to 2027. The pipeline was a live document, and Cabinet resolved for it to be monitored via a report submitted to Cabinet every 6 months. The last report was submitted in December 2023.

On 15 November 2023 Cabinet approved the Sandwell Business Growth Plan and resolved that the performance of the Sandwell Business Growth Plan be reported to Cabinet every 6 months. This was the first report to Cabinet.

### Alternative Options Considered

No alternative options were presented.



## Resolved:-

- (1) that Cabinet notes the Performance of the Regeneration Programme;
- (2) that Cabinet notes the Performance of the Sandwell Business Growth Plan outturn report for financial year 2023/24.

78/24

## Renewal of Property Repairs and Maintenance Contract to the Council's Public Estate

Approval was sought for the Renewal of Property Repairs and Maintenance contract to the Council's Public Estate. The current 'Repair and Maintenance' call off contract for the provision of planned and reactive Repairs and Maintenance services covering Building Fabric and Mechanical and Electrical components which, formed part of Constructing West Midlands Framework CWM2, was due to end, after a term of 4 years on 31 December 2024.

Authority was sought to extend the current contracts for a further three 3 months until March 31, 2025, along with authority to award a new Repair and Maintenance contract. An extension to current call-off contracts until March 31, 2025, would allow the alignment of the service with the Council's financial year, going forward. This would bring benefits associated with reduced administration and improved budget management.

### Reason for Decision

The Replacement/new Repair and Maintenance contract would support the provision of planned and reactive Repairs and Maintenance services covering building fabric, mechanical and electrical components. The contract would include statutory / planned maintenance and inspections, emergency/reactive maintenance, a provision for minor construction and refurbishment works, along with capital works across both the Property Maintenance Capital Programme and Schools Life Cycle programme.





The term of the new Repairs and Maintenance contract would be 4 years with an option to extend for a further 1 year to commence on 1st April 2025, and would consist of 2 lots. The anticipated value of these proposals would be above the relevant public procurement thresholds, however, the proposals would comply fully with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and would be assessed in accordance with the social value tool kit and community wealth building principles.

Delegated authority would be awarded to the Executive Director - Place and the Executive Director – Finance and Transformation in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Infrastructure to award these contracts upon completion of tender evaluation during November 2024. They would ensure that the mandatory standstill requirements were observed, and that sufficient time was available for contractors to comply with any potential TUPE requirements (between private contractors, not of council employees). This would allow for an appropriate mobilisation period to be implemented ahead of the new arrangements commencing.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

If a new contract was not procured the Council would not have the ability to carry out its statutory duties regarding on-going property related statutory compliance works, including day to day reactive maintenance requirements.

Whilst a 3-month extension to the current arrangements was sought, a new contract was now required to support the Council's repairs and maintenance requirements over a new term.

### **Resolved:-**

- (1) that approval is given to the extension of the current Property Repairs and Maintenance contract(s) until March 31, 2025, and the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer is authorised to enter into and execute under seal any documentation to effect the extension;



- (2) that approval is given to commence a procurement exercise for new Property Repairs and Maintenance contract for works to the Council's Public Estate to commence on April 1, 2025;
- (3) that subject to the successful completion of the procurement exercise as set out in (2) (above), the Executive Director – Place and the Executive Director – Finance and Transformation, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Infrastructure, are authorised to accept tenders following the completion of the procurement exercise and award a contract to the successful tender(s) for the term of 4 years with an option to extend for a further 1 year to commence on 1 April 2025;
- (4) that subject to (3) (above) the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer is authorised to enter into or execute under seal any documentation in relation to the award of the Property Repairs and Maintenance contracts and/or other agreements, in consultation with the Executive Director – Place and the Executive Director - Finance and Transformation as may be deemed necessary, to give effect to the proposals.

79/24

## **Renewal of Water Hygiene Services Contract**

Approval was sought to extend the current contract for water hygiene services until 31 March 2025 and undertake a procurement exercise for a new contract to commence on 1 April 2025.

The Council had a statutory health and safety responsibility to manage the risks to employees and service users, associated with Legionella bacteria in water systems of Council buildings. This required that both water systems and the use of buildings were regularly reviewed and monitored, and that any identified remedial actions implemented to reduce the risk of Legionella bacteria proliferation.



## Reason for Decision

The Council's current Water Hygiene contracts were due to end on the December 31, 2024, and there was a requirement for the continuity of this service, regardless of contractual arrangements. The operational management of Water Hygiene services was aligned with the Council's financial year. An extension to current arrangements until March 31, 2025, would allow the alignment of the service with the Council's financial year, going forward. This would bring benefits associated with reduced administration and improved budget management.

## Alternative Options Considered

If a new contract was not procured then the Council would not have the ability to carry out its statutory duties with regards to on-going property related statutory compliance works, including day to day reactive maintenance requirements.

The current arrangements had been reviewed, and this included consideration of a direct call off from an existing national framework. However, it was considered that a bespoke procurement in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, aligned with current requirements would be the most economically advantageous solution.

### Resolved:-

- (1) that approval is given to extend the current Water Hygiene Services contract until March 31, 2025, and the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer is authorised to enter into or execute any documentation to effect the extension;
- (2) that approval is given to commence a procurement exercise for new Water Hygiene Services arrangements to commence from April 1, 2025;
- (3) that subject to the successful completion of the procurement exercise described in (2) (above), the Executive Director – Place and the Executive Director – Finance and transformation, are authorised, in



consultation with the Cabinet Member Regeneration and Infrastructure, to award a contract to the successful tenderer(s) for the term set out below:-

The term of the new Water Hygiene contract will be 4 years with an option to extend for a further 1 year to commence on 1st April 2025. The estimated value of services, required by the Council for the new Water Hygiene contracts and will consist of 2 lots, is as follows:

- a. Water Hygiene Consultancy (Lot 1) - £300k over 4-year contract period.
  - b. Water Hygiene Monitoring (Lot 2) - £2.5m over 4-year contract period.
- (4) that subject to (3) above, the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer is authorised to enter or execute under seal any documentation in relation to the award of the Water Hygiene Services contracts and/or other agreements, in consultation with the Executive Director – Place and the Executive Director - Finance and Transformation as may be deemed necessary, to give effect to the proposals.

80/24 **Sons of Rest Building, Victoria Park – Proposed Community Asset Transfer**

Consideration was given to the disposal of the Sons of Rest Building, Victoria Park through a Community Asset Transfer.

The proposed asset transfer accorded with the Council’s principle of proactively advertising community properties for potential Community Asset Transfers as a priority. Transfers would be undertaken in accordance with the Council’s policy on Community Asset Transfers and would only happen if officers were satisfied that a clear, sustainable plan was in place to maintain the asset and that further calls on the Council for support were unlikely.



The recommendations supported the delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and assisted in ensuring that the Council had a balanced budget moving forward alongside an efficiently operating estate to deliver Council services.

### **Reason for Decision**

The Corporate Asset Management Strategy approved by Cabinet in 2022 stated that the Council was committed to maintaining an effective and efficient property portfolio that supported the delivery of services to residents, provided value for money, reduced environmental impact and maximised opportunities to generate value.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

Option 1 - The Council could retain the asset. This however would not be considered viable due to no identified operational use and the inability to support delivery of the Asset Management Budgets Savings targets 2023-2026 due to ongoing repairs and maintenance, security and other holding costs. This option was dismissed.

Option 2 – freehold disposal. The freehold disposal of the asset was not a viable option due to its central location with the wider Council owned asset, Victoria Park. This option was dismissed.

### **Resolved:-**

- (1) that approval is given to the marketing the Sons of Rest Building, Victoria Park, Smethwick to accept expressions of interest in relation to the potential for Community Asset Transfer (CAT);
- (2) that subject to suitable expressions of interest being received and receipt of a suitable business plan:
  - (a) the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer is authorised to dispose of the property, on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Executive Director - Place in consultation with



the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure;

- (b) the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer is authorised to enter into or execute under seal, if necessary, any other related documentation in connection with the leasehold disposal of the site;
- (3) that in the event that no suitable expression of interest or business plan is received following a defined advertising period, authority is granted for the open market disposal (leasehold) of the Sons of Rest Building, Victoria Park, Smethwick via the most appropriate mechanism;
- (4) that subject to resolution (3) (above):
- (a) approval is given to negotiate and agree a disposal of the leasehold to the preferred bidder from those bids received;
  - (b) that the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer is authorised to dispose of the property, on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Executive Director - Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure;
  - (c) that the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer is authorised to enter into or execute under seal, if necessary, any other related documentation in connection with the leasehold disposal of the site.



## Surplus Assets and Phase 1 Disposals

Approval was sought to the disposal of a number of surplus sites in line with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Council had 137 property assets on its land register that had been declared surplus to requirements, with many having been surplus for several years. Holding this number of surplus assets placed a resource demand on the Council and missed opportunities to realise capital receipts or generate revenue as well as missed opportunities to re-purpose the assets for housing or community use. The sites included small areas of land, open space and potential development sites. In order to review assets appropriately and maximise their potential value, the Council had commissioned specialist advice from property agents with a comprehensive understanding of the local property market, values, and the likely level of interest in the properties. The initial part of the commission was to provide a comprehensive report on the 137 surplus assets within the ownership of the Council to:

- optimise the asset portfolio;
- determine a strategy for the surplus assets;
- ensure alignment with the Council's strategic objectives;
- maximise capital receipts and enhance operational efficiencies.

Following receipt of the report, Property Services, in conjunction with Planning and Regeneration Officers, had scrutinised the 15 sites highlighted as the most significant development opportunities and identified four sites for disposal, three of which that were recommended as best suited to industrial development with the fourth recommended being suitable either for industrial or residential development:-

- Land at Woden Road West / Black Country New Road
- Mounts Road Play Area
- Land Managed at Old Park Lane
- Old Park Lane Cluster



The detail of the full appraisal for each of the sites was noted. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure reported that as part of the initial review of the surplus asset list, the Council had worked with appointed specialists to consider how to achieve best value alongside the best strategic outcomes.

Review of the remaining surplus assets was continuing and would be the subject of future reports. It was anticipated that opportunities may be identified for future affordable housing developments.

### **Reason for Decision**

The Council's Asset Management Strategy set the strategic framework within which the property asset portfolio would be managed. It was intended to guide future decisions concerning the acquisition, use and disposal of property assets. It was intended to respond to the corporate planning process, providing property solutions that support each of the Council's service areas in the delivery of their service plans.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

Option 1 - retain the assets. This would not be considered viable as no operational use had been identified for them, and this would neither support delivery of the Asset Management Budgets savings targets nor realise the required capital receipts to support the MTFS. This option was dismissed.

Option 2 - invest in the assets with a view to subsequently marketing for disposal. However, based on the indicative valuations and comparable evidence provided, this would not be a viable option due to the level of investment required (which would not be recoverable) resulting in a potential negative return on investment. This option was dismissed.

### **Resolved:-**

- (1) that authority is given to the Executive Director – Place for the disposal of the following four surplus sites identified, through the most appropriate method (Informal Tender or Auction) via the Council's appointed agent:





- (a) Land at Woden Road West / Black Country New Road
  - (b) Mounts Road Play Area
  - (c) Land Managed at Old Park Lane
  - (d) Old Park Lane Cluster
- (2) that subject to (1) (above), authority is given to:
- (a) the Executive Director – Place to dispose of the freehold to the most appropriate bidder from those bids received and subject to meeting the reserve if via auction;
  - (b) the Assistant Director of Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer to dispose of the property, on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Executive Director - Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure;
  - (c) the Assistant Director of Legal and Assurance and Monitoring to enter into or execute under seal, if necessary, any other related documentation in connection with the freehold disposal of the site.

82/24

## Wednesbury Town Centre Masterplan

Approval was sought for the Wednesbury Town Centre Masterplan.

The Masterplan had been prepared following a series of engagement activities including discussions with the Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership Board, Ward Members, members of the public, stakeholders and council officers. Consultation on the Draft was undertaken between 7 May 2024 and 11 June 2024. From the consultation process 50 survey responses, along with additional comments from workshops, and in-person events, had been received. In addition, the findings from consultation and engagement conducted through the Safer Six campaign in 2023



and consultation on public realm improvements in early 2024 had been taken into account in drafting the Masterplan.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure updated Cabinet on the Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership Board, which had met on 16 July 2024 and considered the public consultation findings and endorsed the Masterplan prior to Cabinet making a decision. The purpose of the Masterplan was to create a space placed vision and strategy which would enable focused development in the town centre over the next 10-15 years and attract investment into Wednesbury. The consultation with communities across Sandwell and had resulted in positive feedback to the Masterplan.

In response to a question from the Leader of the Opposition the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure stated, that the consultation could not be extended due to the project deadlines set by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities which prevented any viable extension.

### **Reason for Decision**

Levelling Up Partnerships were targeted interventions designed to identify practical, tangible actions to support priority places to 'level up' and to help government develop a more holistic understanding place. Sandwell and Hull were the first of 20 areas selected to form a Levelling Up Partnership.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

Cabinet could determine not to approve the Masterplan for Wednesbury Town Centre. Development proposals would then come forward on an ad-hoc basis, however this may not meet the aspirations of local communities. The Council would not have a framework to promote development opportunities or provide a strong base to bid for further funding. The continued regeneration envisioned for the town centre was unlikely to be achieved.

The Masterplan would assist in providing investors and developers with more clarity and certainty with regards to the type of development the Council considered most appropriate. Having a



Masterplan in place would assist in the decision-making process for future proposals.

Following approval minor amendments to the Masterplan document would be made to expand the 'Delivery Strategy' section to include project priorities and phasing, a delivery strategy, delivery mechanisms and next steps and minor amendments to texts, illustrations and layout to ensure accessibility for all audiences.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) that the results of the public consultation on the Draft Wednesbury Town Centre Masterplan as set out in the Consultation Report is received;
- (2) that approval is given to the Wednesbury Town Centre Masterplan;
- (3) that the Assistant Director – Spatial Planning and Growth is authorised to make amendments to the final Masterplan document plus any additional non-material amendments in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Infrastructure.

83/24

**Re-commissioning Sandwell Smoking Cessation Services**

Approval was sought for the Re-commissioning of the Sandwell Smoking Cessation Services.

The Government's new plan '*Stopping the Start: our new plan to create a Smokefree Generation*', published in October 2023, highlighted that tobacco use remained one of the most significant public health challenges and that smoking was the single biggest cause of inequalities in death rates between the richest and poorest in our communities.



## Reason for Decision

The re-commissioning of the service would ensure that support for Sandwell smokers continued to be available beyond the currently commissioned service which was due to end 31 March 2025.

## Alternative Options Considered

Not approving the re-commissioning of the service would impact on health outcomes of both smokers themselves others through secondary harms, and further exacerbate health inequalities for our most disadvantaged groups within the borough. This would be inadvisable given the impact across the wider health and care system due to smoking.

### Resolved:-

- (1) that approval is given to re-commission local smoking cessation services ensuring future delivery of support for Sandwell residents;
- (2) that the Director of Public Health is authorised to commence a procurement process for the provision of a local smoking cessation service to commence 1 April 2025 for a period of 2 years, with the option to extend for up to a further 2 years at a budget of £450,000 per annum, with a maximum total of £1,800,000 funded from the Council's annual Public Health Grant over the entire permissible contract term;
- (3) that in connection with (2) above, the Director of Public Health is authorised to include any future Local Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant monies awarded from central government into the contract value to enable delivery of the national Smokefree Generation ambitions and that should the current level of Local Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant be maintained, the total possible maximum annual contract value would be £998,413 (£548,413 Local Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant plus £450,000 Public Health Grant funded). Over the course of the contract (should all 4 years of Local Stop Smoking Services and Support



Grant monies be confirmed) that would mean a total maximum contract value of £3,993,652 over the entire permissible 4-year contract term;

- (4) that the Director of Public Health is authorised to have final sign off of distribution of the Local Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant (LSSSSG) monies as required by Office for Health Improvement & Disparities (OHID) in line with OHID grant conditions over the grant period covering the following financial years: 2025/26, 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29;
- (5) that the Director of Public Health is authorised to enter into a contract with the successful bidder, on terms to be agreed by the Director of Public Health, for the provision of a local smoking cessation service to commence on 1 April 2025 for a period of 2 years to 31 March 2027 with the option to extend up to a further 2 years until 31 March 2029;
- (6) that approval is given to make an exemption to the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules 2024 to allow a contract to be awarded to a successful tenderer in the event that the required minimum number of tenders are not received;
- (7) that the Director Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health and Wellbeing, is authorised to make variations to the contract up to a maximum of 10% of the Contract value, should they be necessitated;
- (8) that the Assistant Director – Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer I authorised execute any documentation necessary to give effect to the proposals in these recommendations for the provision of a local smoking cessation service.



84/24

## Exclusion of the Public and Press

**Resolved** that the public and press are excluded from the rest of the meeting. This is to avoid the possible disclosure of exempt information under 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.

85/24

## Procurement of School Health Nursing Services

Approval was sought for the Procurement of School Health Nursing Services. On the 24 May 2021 Cabinet approved the decision to procure a School Health Nursing Service. Following a competitive process, a contract was awarded to Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospital Trust for 3 +2 Years. The option to extend period would not be utilised and this contract was due to end on the 31 March 2025. A procurement exercise was now required to ensure that there is no gap in service beyond this date.

### Reason for Decision

The procurement exercise would provide an opportunity to review the current specification for the School Health Nursing Service in response to increasing demands upon the service and consultation feedback.

### Alternative Options Considered

The option of removing the 0-5 Services from the Co-operative Working Agreement in order to conduct a large, single 0-19 procurement was considered, however there was a risk that this would disrupt the high-performing Health Visiting Service which was still recovering from the pandemic, due to stability and continuity being even more important.

The School Nursing Service was a key Public Health priority any change to the delivery of this would have a detrimental impact on the school population. Therefore, due to the high value and nature



of the service the only realistic option was to competitively procure it.

The Council was also looking at bringing the health promotion element of the school nursing contract in house, to achieve better value for money, increase health promotion outreach and ensure that the school nursing focus was on key health and safeguarding priorities.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) that the Interim Director of Public Health is authorised to commence a procurement exercise for the provision of School Health Nursing Services in Sandwell;
- (2) that the Interim Director of Public Health is authorised to award and enter into a contract and licence agreement with the successful bidder, on terms to be agreed with the Interim Director of Public Health for the provision of School Health Nursing Services, for a period of three years with an option for the Council to extend for a further period of up to two years (total) in increments of up to one year each;
- (3) that approval is given to make variations to the Contract up to a maximum of 10% of the Contract value, should they be necessitated, and that authority to approve such variations is delegated to the Interim Director of Public Health in consultation with the relevant Cabinet member;
- (4) that the Assistant Director - Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer is authorised to execute any documents necessary to give effect to resolutions (1), (2) and (3) for the provision of School Health Nursing Services;
- (5) that approval is given to make an exemption under rule 8.10 of the Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules 2024 to allow a contract to be awarded to the successful



tenderer in the event that the required number of tenders are not received.

Meeting ended at 7.20pm

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