

CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of a virtual Meeting of the **Cabinet** held on **Thursday, 15 October 2020 at 10.00 am**

PRESENT:

Mr SF Young (Leader)
Mrs PA Bell
Mrs A Burns
Ms D Earl
Mr KA Little
Mrs S Sanderson
Mr DE Southward
Mr P Thornton
Mrs C Tibble
Mrs J Willis

Officers in attendance:

Chief Executive, Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer), Executive Director - Corporate, Customer and Community Services, Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director - People, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Major Programmes Director, Group Solicitor/Deputy Monitoring Officer, Leadership Support Officer - Labour Group, Leadership Support Officer - Liberal Democrat Group, Communications Manager and Professional Lead - Democratic Services

PART 1 ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

43 ROLL CALL AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

44 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures made on this occasion.

45 MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2020 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

46 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Item No 10 – Development of Carlisle Gateway by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as this report contains exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).

47 STATEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBERS

The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Community Services made a statement about the request for new Covid 19 restrictions in Barrow.

In the light of the new three tier system announced this week, she took the opportunity to highlight the current Cumbrian situation regarding COVID-19, particularly in respect of the Barrow area.

Infections in Cumbria continued to increase, although broadly speaking most areas were below the national average, and certainly below the North-West of England average.

However in Barrow the situation was much more serious, again not quite to North-West levels, but certainly much higher than the national average and the rest of Cumbria. It was for this reason that local leaders in Barrow had asked the Government to impose new COVID-19 restrictions, bringing the area in line with measures taken in the North East and Merseyside.

The request, which covered the Barrow Borough Council area, comes as the Covid 19 infection rate continued to accelerate and hospitalisations mount. Leaders hoped that by acting now the spread of the virus could be slowed, avoiding even stricter local lockdown laws, and saving lives. Cabinet was expecting an announcement to be made on this today by the Government.

In response to this, Cumbria County Council was stepping back up some of the support measures that were in place during lockdown, such as the helplines for anyone vulnerable or worried about support.

The Cabinet Member asked all members to help to spread this message.

48 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no public questions, petitions or statements made on this occasion.

There were no referrals from Scrutiny to this meeting.

There were also no referrals from local committees made on this occasion.

49 CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL EQUALITY OBJECTIVES (2020-24)

Cabinet considered a report from the Executive Director – Corporate, Customer and Community Services which reminded members that every four years Public Bodies were required to set Equality Objectives and informed them how the County Council planned to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Setting four yearly objectives gave the Council an opportunity to restate its commitment to Equality and the approach it planned to take. Outlined in this report was a new set of objectives and the rationale for a change in approach that would enable the Council and partners to address the challenges and opportunities for the Equalities agenda in the 2020s.

Cumbria had one of the oldest population profiles in England, and had a significant number of disabled people of working age. These challenges and opportunities around increasing digital communication and accessibility of physical infrastructure would increase in the coming years.

The Cabinet Member for Customers, Transformation and Fire and Rescue said Cabinet agreement to the Equality Objectives would result in the following key benefits:

- Demonstration that the Council is committed to and is meeting its Equality Duties in the light of COVID-19;
- Improvements in terms of accessibility of services, and developing a partnership approach to tackling the structural discrimination outlined in terms of the national policy discussion;
- Stronger more cohesive society in Cumbria.

She also stated that as Chair of the Member Development Group she would be taking this to the next meeting, to ask them to agree that this be added as a standing agenda item for all the future meetings of the group. Cabinet supported this proposal.

RESOLVED, that Cabinet agree

- (1) The proposed new approach to promoting Equality through continuous improvement, co-production and embedding across partnership working;
- (2) For this approach to be supported through the overarching Equality Objectives outlined in the report;
- (3) To embed these Equality Objectives within the delivery of the Council Plan Delivery Plan and Cumbria's strategic partnerships.

50 PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL PLACES FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) AT SANDGATE SCHOOL, KENDAL

The Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning presented a report which sought a decision on a proposal for Sandgate School in Kendal to increase the number of places available for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) from the current 80 to 120. The proposed implementation date was 1 November 2020.

Both nationally and locally, demand for places at Special schools had grown over the last decade. A developing understanding of conditions such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and a tendency towards greater complexity in the range of individual students' needs, had driven a demand for places which the county council was no longer able to meet.

The school's governors consulted on the proposal to expand the number of places available between Monday 15 June 2020 and Friday 10 July 2020. 21 responses were received and, having considered these, governors decided to publish the formal notices required to bring about the increase in numbers.

Notices were published on Thursday 13 August 2020, triggering a 4-week representation period which offered a further opportunity for interested parties to express their view on the expansion proposals. No representations were received.

The proposal increased the number of places available within the county, providing greater opportunities for children and young people with SEND, and would facilitate improved teaching and learning at Sandgate School through more age-appropriate cohort groupings.

RESOLVED, that Cabinet approves the proposal to increase the number of places available at Sandgate School from 80 to 120 with effect from 1 November 2020.

51 PROPOSED CHANGE OF AGE RANGE AT ARMATHWAITE SCHOOL

Cabinet considered a report from the Executive Director – People which dealt with the outcome of public consultation on a proposed change of age range at Armathwaite School to allow the creation of a maintained nursery.

Armathwaite Nursery Group had been operating from the school site for a number of years. This popular facility ceased to operate at the end of the Summer Term 2020. Since the start of the Autumn term in September, the governors of Armathwaite School had been offering a continuation of the provision through 'governor-led' childcare, but wished to formalise the establishment of maintained nursery provision through a change of the age range catered for by the school, from the current 4 to 11 to 3 to 11.

A consultation was undertaken between 7 September and 2 October 2020 with 220 letters sent to parents, staff, governors and other stakeholders, all of which were in favour of the proposal.

Eden Local Committee had been made aware of the consultation, and a report was presented to the committee on Monday 28 September 2020. Members supported the proposal.

Cabinet supported the recommendation as the proposal would provide a sustainable and well subscribed maintained nursery facility for children in the local area.

RESOLVED, that Cabinet agree to pursue a change the school's age-range to allow for the establishment of maintained nursery provision in the village.

PART II - ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

52 DEVELOPMENT OF THE CARLISLE STATION GATEWAY

Members had before them a report from the Executive Director – Economy and Infrastructure which informed them that Carlisle Station Gateway project was a strategic regeneration project to revitalise Carlisle

Station and to improve the gateway to the City Centre. The aim of the project was to improve access and connectivity to Carlisle and the wider Borderlands region as well as contribute to decarbonisation by encouraging more journeys to be taken by rail.

The Heads of Terms for the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal (July 2019) confirmed in principle support for the project with £15m allocated, subject to a satisfactory Outline Business Case (OBC). The final draft OBC was submitted to Government in July 2020. Subsequent financial modelling work was undertaken to reflect scheme cost increases and the impact of COVID-19 on anticipated rail demand and car park revenue. This resulted in a revised proposal for an additional £5m of Borderlands funding which was currently being considered by Government.

The 'Maple' site to the south of Carlisle Station formed part of the site necessary for delivery of the preferred scheme in the OBC. Heads of Terms had been agreed with the owner of the 'Maple' site for purchase of the site, conditional upon the Council completing this strategic acquisition in early November 2020. As Borderlands funding may not be confirmed by this date, it was proposed that the Council utilised the Strategic Acquisition and Investment Fund and a short-term re-allocation of other capital budgets to facilitate this purchase.

Submission of the OBC to Government provided the opportunity to secure funding to deliver transformational improvements to Carlisle Station which would benefit Carlisle and the wider Borderlands region. The key benefits to be realised from this project were:

- Carlisle would be easier to access by rail and would increase the regional role of the station through intercepting end-to-end car trips, turning them into mostly rail journeys, and in turn benefitting the environment.
- Passenger growth would be supported and encouraged through creating a better offer at the station, more car parking and more accessible platforms, and encouraging more visitors. The forecast increase of passenger numbers as a result of this scheme is from 2.44m (in 2018/19) to 2.71m by 2039.
- Carlisle was an excellent location for HS2 to stop at in the future and this scheme not only future-proofed for it but created the conditions to encourage use of the HS2 stop at Carlisle.
- Improvements to the public realm would encourage and benefit sustainable travel and accessibility – particularly active travel by cycling and walking
- Increased parking provision for customers (including electric charge points and disabled bays) and enhanced

pedestrian access and cycle facilities in and around the Station.

RESOLVED, that Cabinet

- (1) Authorises the Executive Director for Economy and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Property, S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to finalise the terms of the purchase of the 'Maple site' for the price agreed in the Heads of Terms dated 2nd March 2020, in advance of the receipt of funding from the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.
- (2) Recommends to Full Council the temporary re-profiling and virement of Capital Programme budgets to facilitate the purchase of the 'Maple site' in November 2020, in advance of the receipt of funding from the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

The meeting ended at 10.45 am