

# Crawley Borough Council

## Minutes of Cabinet

Wednesday 7 October 2015 at 7.30pm

### Present:

Councillor	P K Lamb	(Chair of Cabinet and Leader of the Council)
	S J Joyce	(Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing)
	M G Jones	(Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Community Engagement)
	C C Lloyd	(Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability)
	C J Mullins	(Cabinet Member for Wellbeing)
	A C Skudder	(Cabinet Member for Resources)
	P Smith	(Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development)

### Also in Attendance:

Councillors R D Burrett, D G Crow and K Sudan

### Officers Present:

Ann-Maria Brown	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Peter Browning	Deputy Chief Executive
Lee Harris	Chief Executive
Steve Lappage	Democratic Services Manager
Diana Maughan	Head of Strategic Housing and Planning Services
Nigel Sheehan	Head of Partnership Services

### Apologies for Absence:

There were no apologies for absence.

### 35. Members' Disclosure of Interests

There were no disclosures of interest.

### **36. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on [9 September 2015](#) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **37. Public Question Time**

There were no questions from the public.

### **38. Further Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private and Notifications of any Representations**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services reported that no representations had been received in respect of agenda item *12 Crawley Museum: Appointment of Contractor*.

### **39. Matters Referred to the Cabinet**

It was confirmed that no matters had been referred to the Cabinet for further consideration.

### **40. Affordable Housing Enabling: Langley Green Primary school site (Housing Portfolio)**

The Cabinet considered report [SHAPS/51](#) of the Head of Strategic Housing and Planning Services which requested Cabinet to recommend to Full Council to approve £1.5m funding from the Right-to-Buy 1-4-1 Budget (a reserve) to enable Raven Housing Trust to deliver the 30 residential housing units at Langley Green Primary School all for Affordable Rent, with rents discounted to 65% of open market rent values.

The report explained:

- a) How, working in partnership with the Council, Raven had agreed to remodel the scheme to ensure compliance with the RTB 1-4-1 Funding regulations.
- b) That a contribution of £1.5m would keep RTB 1-4-1 Funding to within 30% of total scheme costs, enabling the Council to achieve nominations for 30 Affordable Rent units with rents discounted to 65% of open market rent levels rather than nominations for 12 Affordable Rent units at 80% rent levels.
- c) As part of the RTB 1-4-1 Funding regulations, the Council was required to commit and spend these receipts within 36-months of having being received, and this scheme presented an opportunity to help ensure that no penalties would be incurred for not meeting this requirement.
- d) If the £1.5m of RTB funds was not allocated to the Langley Green Primary School scheme, there would be no latitude for slippage of other schemes within the Council's own-build programme and would place potential risk of an underspend by June 2016 if any slippage were to occur, which would incur the associated financial penalties.

## RESOLVED

That Full Council be RECOMMENDED:

- a) To approve the allocation of £1.5m from the RTB 1-4-1 Budget for the provision of 30 Discounted Affordable Rent units presently under construction at the Langley Green Primary School site.
- b) To grant delegated authority to the Head of Strategic Housing and Planning Services, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Head of Finance Revenues and Benefits, in consultation with the Portfolio Member for Housing, to conclude a Funding Agreement with Raven to deliver this scheme as proposed.

### Reasons for Decision

1. The Council works with Housing Association partners to enable affordable housing delivery within the Borough as part of a comprehensive development strategy, and in this instance the Council is presented with the enabling opportunity to achieve significant affordable housing gains with increased Nomination Rights over what would otherwise have been achieved.
2. These gains are being achieved both in terms of securing additional housing units for Affordable Rent Tenure, as well as achieving discounted rentals on all of the units offering an improved level of affordability mid-range between Social Rent levels and typical Affordable Rent levels (that are usually set at 80% of market rent).
3. The mix of unit types meets Crawley's housing needs, offering 10 flats and 20 houses, in the form of 6 one-bed flats, 4 two-bed flats, with 8 two-bed houses and 12 three-bed houses, providing a scheme predominantly suited for family accommodation that is in close proximity to all necessary amenities.
4. In addition, the scheme is presently on-site and therefore also offers the Council quick gains and assured delivery without any associated risks.

#### **41. Fairness Commission Scrutiny Panel Final Report (Public Protection and Community Engagement and Planning and Economic Development Portfolios)**

The Cabinet considered report [OSC/242](#) of the Chair of the Fairness Commission Scrutiny Panel on the work and findings arising from its scrutiny review.

The Chair of the Panel outlined the conclusions and recommendations from the scrutiny review and the main comments expressed at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on 5 October 2015. These included:

- a) That the establishment of a full Fairness Commission model was considered to reside better with '1<sup>st</sup> tier' authorities.
- b) That any new structure should not be too onerous or resource intensive nor replicate the Local Strategic Partnership (Crawley Together) as the town had evolved and this may not prove advantageous.
- c) Recognition that a lot of positive work was undertaken in Crawley particularly through the voluntary sector.

- d) The Panel's preference for a hybrid option which would add value at little cost and be more effective at drawing information together from voluntary organisations and communicating it in a more structured way amongst Members and other stakeholders.
- e) That the Commission had agreed to support the recommendations to Cabinet, whilst noting some concerns expressed that the structure of the proposed Community Needs Panel lacked robustness and needed to be refined.

The Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Community Engagement welcomed the report and expressed support, in principle, for the recommendations but raised several queries, including the areas outlined below, which needed to be confirmed before the Cabinet could be in a position to reach a decision to proceed:

- (a) The establishment and operation of the proposed Community Needs Panel including:
  - the number and composition of Members of the Panel
  - the number of meetings;
  - which service department would resource it;
  - how the involvement, when appropriate, of other service areas, officers, Cabinet Members and organisations would be facilitated;
  - the structure and reporting arrangements within the Council.
- (b) How the Members should be allocated to the respective Crawley Community and Voluntary Services' (CCVS) Panels and how the interaction between those members sitting on the Community Needs Panel and CCVS forums would be facilitated.
- (c) Further clarity on the purpose, objectives, actions, priorities, outcomes, monitoring & review arrangements and responsibility for delivering and communicating these to Members, officers and other stakeholders.

Although the Cabinet Member acknowledged that some of the queries could be covered at this Cabinet meeting, it was preferred that clarification on all of the matters he had raised, including those above, be incorporated in a written response from the Fairness Commission Scrutiny Panel to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1) The report be welcomed in principle.
- 2) The Fairness Commission Scrutiny Panel be requested to further consider all of the matters raised and provide clarification in a written response to the next meeting of the Cabinet to enable the Cabinet to be fully appraised of how the proposed Community Needs Panel was intended to work in practice in order to deliver the best outcomes and, therefore, be in a position to reach a decision to proceed.

## **42. Exempt Information – Exclusion of the Public (subject to agenda item 5)**

### **RESOLVED**

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraphs specified against the items.

**43. Crawley Museum: Appointment of Contractor (Wellbeing Portfolio)**

***(Exempt Paragraphs 3 (information relating to financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information))).***

The Cabinet considered report HPS/02 of the Head of Partnership Services which sought approval for the most advantageous tender for the construction of Crawley Museum at The Tree at the junction of the High Street and The Boulevard.

**RESOLVED**

That the appointment of Stoneham Construction Ltd for the construction of Crawley Museum (at "The Tree") for the sum of £1,157,738 be approved.

**Reason for Decision**

Under the Council's Procurement Code, appointments to works contracts over a value of £500,000 are approved by Cabinet. Following a two stage design and build competitive tender process, Stoneham Construction Ltd were recommended as the contractor for the construction of the Museum. The value of this contract is £1,157,738.

**44. Closure of Meeting**

With the business of the Cabinet concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.07p.m.

P K LAMB  
Chair