

MINUTES OF CABINET

2 MARCH 2020

PRESENT:

Councillors Lowe (Chairman), Mrs Crane, Roberts, Ms Robbins and Mrs Simpson-Vince.

Councillors Douglas, Mrs O'Rourke and Sandison were also in attendance.

77. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2020 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

78. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillors Poole and Roodhouse.

79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

80. QUESTION TIME

The following questions were received in accordance with the Council's public question time procedure.

Mr Cresswell and Ms Parry attended the meeting and asked their questions in person.

(a) Mr Sheridan asked the following question of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

"Will the council agree, as a minimum, to de-invest their pension funds from fossil fuel companies to bring them into line with other councils that have taken this step?"

Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, responded as follows:

"This Council contributes to the Warwickshire Pension Fund which approves an Investment Fund Strategy Statement each year and Warwickshire County Council is responsible for this Strategy.

The statement for 2020/21 is due to be approved by the Pension Fund Investment Sub-Committee on 12 March 2020. Part of this is an Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance Policy as it is recognised that ESG factors, including climate change, are financially material to the Fund's investments at all stages of decision-making as they have the

potential to significantly affect long term investment performance and the ability to achieve long term sustainable returns.”

- (b) Mr Cresswell asked the following question of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

“Following up from my previous question I'm delighted with the council's intentions to support the shift towards sustainable transport such as public transport, walking and cycling. Recognising that a key principle of good management is setting clear measurable targets, measurement and monitoring of these targets. What key performance indicators and metrics has the council established to achieve the shift as we wouldn't want this to platitudes with no concrete commitment?”

Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, responded as follows:

“As stated at the February meeting of Cabinet, the Council is committed to supporting initiatives which ensure the provision of safe routes for cycling and walking and will continue to work with partners to this end. As new initiatives are developed, performance indicators and metrics will be developed as appropriate.

In response to the more general point – I can confirm that metrics and performance indicators will be developed to support the Council's work in addressing the climate emergency. It is intended that this will be achieved through the production of a Carbon Neutral Strategy and Delivery Plan.”

- (c) Ms Parry asked the following question of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

“The new road leading to Houlton from Clifton Road is now complete. There is an opportunity to plant many trees along this road as it is quite open and bare. It is noticeable that the verges are susceptible to flooding. Trees have been proven to reduce flash flood risk and help combat soil erosion. Tree planting would also help Rugby's plans to be carbon neutral. How many trees are going to be planted along this new stretch of road and when will this commence?”

Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, responded as follows:

“Urban and Civic, the strategic developer at Houlton, has produced an Implementation Plan which shows their landscaping and tree planting proposals for the whole of the urban extension at Houlton. These proposals include a comprehensive programme of planting adjacent to the link road. This is an obligation set out in one of the planning conditions attached to the planning permission for the site.

The link road itself forms a part of a wider landscape corridor and an important part of the site's Green Infrastructure network. As a result, there are proposals to plant trees and hedges along its entire length. As you may be aware this planting was due to take place in Autumn 2018. However, due to the construction delays and complexity of the construction programme we

expect this planting to commence in Autumn 2020.

I would emphasise that the developer has worked very closely with key partners such as Natural England, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and Warwickshire County Ecology in developing their proposals and the green corridors already planted at Houlton are considered a national exemplar and are being used as a successful case study by Natural England. Houlton is a long-term strategic development and therefore, the Implementation Plan will be delivered over a number of years in partnership with Rugby Borough Council.”

(d) Mrs Sheridan asked the following question of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:

“As many of you are probably aware, Warwick District council are discussing holding a referendum to ask their constituents if they are willing to increase their council tax by about £ 1-2 a week to help tackle climate change and to help the council become climate neutral by 2030 .Would Rugby be willing to hold a similar referendum?”

Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, responded as follows:

“We will wait to see what the climate working party concludes are the necessary measures, and then consider how to finance those measures. This council has made it very clear that achieving our carbon reduction goals is one of its key priorities and there is nothing off the table, however we need to be sure of precisely what we are dealing with before committing to a response.”

Growth and Investment Portfolio

81. AIR QUALITY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) – CONSULTATION

Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Growth and Investment (Part 1 – agenda item 5) concerning proposed consultation on the Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

RESOLVED THAT -

(1) the current draft of the Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), as at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved for a six week public consultation; and

(2) delegated authority be given to the Head of Growth and Investment to make minor amendments following any review.

Communities and Homes Portfolio

82. UK RESETTLEMENT SCHEME 2020 TO 2024

Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Communities and Homes (Part 1 – agenda item 6) concerning this Council’s response to the UK Resettlement Scheme for 2020-2024.

RESOLVED THAT -

(1) this Council supports Warwickshire County Council's participation in the UK resettlement Scheme 2020 to 2024;

(2) the number of families accommodated by Rugby Borough Council be limited to a maximum of three over the course of the project, with no more than one family being accommodated in a given year; and

(3) families be accommodated in social housing, including both Council and housing association stock.

83. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC UNDER SECTION 100(A)(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED THAT - under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of information defined in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Item considered en bloc

84. WRITE OFFS

Cabinet considered the private report of the Head of Corporate Resources and Chief Financial Officer (Part 2 – agenda item 1) concerning write offs.

RESOLVED THAT – the schedule of write offs, as at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

CHAIRMAN