

THE CABINET (EXTRACT)

MEETING, 9TH SEPTEMBER, 2019

Councillor Greenhalgh	Leader's Portfolio
Councillor Cox	Deputy Leader's Portfolio
Councillor Muslim	Stronger Communities
Councillor C. Wild	Children's Services
Councillor Morgan	Adult Social Care
Councillor Warren	Environmental Service Delivery
Councillor Hewitt	Strategic Housing and Planning
Councillor Haslam	Highways and Transport
Councillor Galloway	Environmental Regulatory Services

Other Members in Attendance

Councillor Allen
Councillor Walsh
Councillor P. Wild
Councillor Mrs. Thomas
Councillor Peel
Councillor Haworth (as
deputy for Councillor
Zaman)
Councillor Hayes
Councillor Hornby
Councillor Sanders

Officers

Mr. T. Oakman	Chief Executive
Ms. S. Johnson	Director of Corporate Resources
Ms. D. Ball	Deputy Director of Place
Ms. H. Gorman	Borough Solicitor

Mr. J. Kelly	Assistant Director Highways and Engineering
Mr. J. Morrissy	Assistant Director Policy, Projects and Public Sector Reform
Mr. J. Hundal	Interim Assistant Director Economic Development and Regeneration
Mr. J. Sharrock	Head of Service, Neighbourhood Services
Mrs. V. Ridge	Democratic Services Manager

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Adia, Baines, Dean and Zaman.

Councillor Greenhalgh in the Chair.

17. MINUTES

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 29th July, 2019 were submitted and signed as a correct record.

21. ARRANGEMENTS FOR AREA WORKING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT

The Executive Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities and the Director of Place submitted a report which outlined options for developing a review of Area Working and Neighbourhood Management.

Members were advised that area working and neighbourhood management arrangements were well-established in Bolton and they had undergone significant changes over the past eight years, largely in response to the need for efficiency savings across the Council. It was also stated that the ways in which local authorities and communities engaged with each other had changed significantly in that time and, therefore, it was felt appropriate to review the existing arrangements and consider alternative future mechanisms for engaging local communities. Furthermore, it had also become clear that there

was a significant difference of views in relation to how existing funding for area forums and neighbourhood management areas should be allocated.

In view of the above, a range of options had been identified with regard to the funding of Area Working and Neighbourhood Management in the current 2019/2020 financial year and future local engagement mechanisms, as follows:-

- Option 1 – continue to use the existing mechanism for allocating funding in 2019/2020, updated to reflect the most up-to-date deprivation data, and subsequently undertake a future review of funding allocations, funding distribution rules and local engagement mechanisms to inform allocations for 2020/2021 onwards. Appendix A to the report summarised the overall 2019/2020 allocations to forums based on this option, taking into account all three funding streams;
- Option 2 – Cabinet to allocate funding on a flat rate basis, so that every ward received the same amount of funding; this would be followed at some point by a review of existing area working and neighbourhood management arrangements, and how it could align with and further complement emerging local engagement and neighbourhood delivery requirements. Appendix A to the report showed the £300,000 budget allocated on a flat rate basis, based on discussions with the Executive Cabinet Member. This allocation would be available as a single pot to be spent by ward members, without the pot A/pot B/pot C classifications; or
- Option 3 – freeze the distribution of 2019/2020 area working and neighbourhood management funds to forums, whilst the basis for determining future funding allocations, funding distribution rules and local engagement mechanisms was reviewed. This would mean that local forums would be unable to allocate any new funding to local priorities until the review had taken place.

With regard to the options, members were advised that the Executive Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities

recommended Option 2 and the reasons for this were outlined in the report.

In terms of the financial implications, it was stated that the proposals related to the £300,000 available funding for Neighbourhood Management and Area Working for 2019/2020. It was also stated that by removing the pot A/pot B/pot C classifications this would mean that all monies allocated to a forum could be disbursed according to ward members decisions, and would not require them to spend on specific types of work or projects subject to a number of conditions as detailed in the report.

Resolved – (i) That with regard to arrangements for Area Working and Neighbourhood Management, Option 2, as detailed in the report be agreed as the preferred option for implementation.

(ii) That a full review process be initiated to determine the basis for area management and the allocation of associated funding across the Borough and to issue clear rules and guidance governing the subsequent distribution of this funding.

(iii) That the nature of the review process be agreed with the relevant Executive Cabinet Member and the outcome of the review be used as the basis for seeking Cabinet approval for future Area Management arrangements.

(iv) That the Director of Corporate Resources be authorised to carry out all the necessary financial formalities.

(v) That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to carry out all the necessary legal formalities.

(In accordance with Article 5 of the Council's Constitution this decision was called in by Councillor Mrs. Thomas for consideration by the Place Scrutiny Committee)