

CABINET

10 September 2018

Present: Mayor (Chair)

Councillors K Collett, S Bolton, S Johnson, I Sharpe, M Watkin
and T Williams

Also present: Councillors R Martins

Officers: Managing Director
Deputy Managing Director and Director of Place Shaping and
Corporate Performance
Shared Director of Finance
Head of Service Transformation
Head of Community and Environmental Services
Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications
Leisure and Environmental Services Section Head
Legal and Democratic Section Head
Democratic Services Manager

17 **Apologies for absence**

No apologies were received.

18 **Disclosure of interests (if any)**

There were no disclosures of interest.

19 **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2018 were submitted and signed.

20 **Conduct of meeting**

No changes were made to the agenda.

21

Award of Unified Communications, WAN and Personal IT Contracts

Cabinet received a report of the Head of Service Transformation. Councillor Watkin introduced the report and explained that Cabinet was requested to allow delegated authority for himself as Portfolio Holder and the Head of Service Transformation to award contracts for the three projects: Unified Communications, Wide Area Network (WAN) and Personal IT. Delegated authority was requested as the contracts were not ready to come to Cabinet presently but would be awarded prior to the next Cabinet meeting.

Councillor Watkin continued that there were a number of benefits to Unified Communications listed in the report which would improve the authority's productivity and better management of services. Unified Communications was key to being able to achieve Watford 2020 and would be transformational. The Personal IT contract would ensure that officers had the right equipment for their role and four different work needs had been identified along with appropriate hardware for these roles. WAN would improve connectivity between council sites.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet agrees to delegate responsibility for the award of contracts for the WAN, Unified Communications and Personal IT equipment to the Head of Service Transformation in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Customer Service.

22

Opportunity to increase the provision of social rented housing

A report of the Deputy Managing Director was circulated. The Mayor had agreed the report could be received as an urgent item and the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee had also agreed the urgent decision. There was an appendix to the report which was Part B as it contained information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council. A Part B Equalities Impact Assessment was also presented at the meeting by the Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications and considered by Cabinet.

The Mayor introduced the item and explained that it was part of his manifesto commitment to build social housing and it was good that, working together with Watford Community Housing, Hart Homes was now starting to see some tangible projects coming forward. The Mayor explained that the report had come as an urgent item to Cabinet as funding from Central Government had become available.

Councillor Johnson introduced the report and explained that Homes England had given an opportunity to bid for a grant for social housing. There were certain projects which the council wanted to bring forward and there could be a grant of up to £60,000 per unit. It would mean that the council could provide a commitment to 50+ social housing units. It was a very positive opportunity to contribute in conjunction with Watford Community Housing.

The Deputy Managing Director explained that responses had been given to questions from Homes England and that Watford Community Housing was also considering the report today.

The Managing Director commented that there may be a possibility of grant funding from the Local Enterprise Partnership towards social housing which would also add value to future social housing projects. Also, that following staff consultation, there would be joint communications with Watford Community Housing on the project.

The Head of Corporate Strategy and Communication drew members' attention to the tabled Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and asked Cabinet to be mindful of the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. The EIA set out the positives and negatives of the decision and highlighted ways to mitigate any negative impacts.

Councillor Johnson confirmed that he had read and understood the EIA and the Mayor thanked the Head of Corporate Strategy and Communication for her work.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Approves a joint proposal by Watford Borough Council (WBC) and Watford Community Housing (WCH) to provide 50+ socially rented properties in the Borough to be delivered over a 3 year period by WCH subject to agreeable nomination rights and subsidy being received from WCH on an equal basis with WBC and,
2. Subject to the approval of (5) below confirmation from an independent valuer that the Council is achieving best consideration the transfer of land as identified in 4.6 in the report from WBC to WCH at nil consideration and,
3. Approves the commencement of consultation on redevelopment of the WBC sites where required (as identified in the Part B appendix to the

report) followed by the submission of a planning application this financial year and,

4. Agrees that any amendments on the sites to be brought forward for socially rented homes including the scheme design (relating to overall numbers and mix of units) is delegated to the Deputy Managing Director in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Property and Housing.

And to recommend to Council:

5. That £2.65 million from the funds currently earmarked for the provision of new temporary accommodation are reallocated to support this project, the money being split between 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years.

23 **Exclusion of press & public**

During discussion of minute number 22 it was agreed to move into Part B.

RESOLVED –

that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during consideration of the item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Section 100(1) Schedule 12A of the Act for the reasons stated in the reports.

24 **Market Procurement Exemptions**

A report of the Head of Community and Environmental Services was received. Councillor Williams introduced the report.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet notes the two procurement exemptions.

Mayor

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm
and finished at 7.15 pm

