

# COUNCIL

**16 JULY 2019**

J J R Powell (Chairman)

## **PRESENT:**

Ball C. J.  
Baker, D. F.  
Barnett, S. A.  
Binney N. D.  
Birch R. J.  
Brown B. J.  
Checkland J.  
Cox, R. E.  
Eadie, I.M.  
Eagland, J. M.  
Ennis D. M. O.  
Ennis L. J.  
Evans, C. D.  
Grange, J. K.

Greatorex, C.  
Gwilt B. J.  
Ho W.  
Humphreys, K. P.  
Lax, A. C.  
Leytham, D. J.  
Little, A. M.  
Little, E. A.  
Marshall, T.  
Matthews, T. R.  
Norman S. G.  
Parton-Hughes J. A.  
Powell, J. J. R.  
Pullen, D.R.

Ray, P. W. W.  
Robertson D. C.  
Salter, D. F.  
Silvester-Hall J.  
Smith, A. F.  
Spruce, C. J.  
Strachan, R. W.  
Tapper S. J.  
Warburton H. A.  
Warfield, M. A.  
Westwood B.  
White, A. G.  
Yeates, A.  
Yeates, B. W.

## **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anketell, Banevicius, Cross, M Wilcox and S Wilcox.

## **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Checkland declared an interest in Friary Grange Leisure Centre as Chairman of the Governors of The Friary School

Cllr Eagland declared an interest in Friary Grange Leisure Centre as a Member of Staffordshire County Council

Councillor Greatorex declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Friary Grange Leisure Centre as a Member of Staffordshire County Council

Councillor Pullen declared an interest in Friary Grange Leisure Centre as his wife is a Member of Staffordshire County Council

Councillor Norman declared an interest in Friary Grange Leisure Centre as his wife is a Member of Staffordshire County Council

Councillor A Little declared an interest in Friary Grange Leisure Centre as a Member of Staffordshire County Council

Councillor E Little declared an interest in Friary Grange Leisure Centre as her husband is a Member of Staffordshire County Council.

## **4 TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 May were approved as a correct record subject to the final line of Minute 16 (i) being amended to read 'it was seconded *by Councillor Cox*'

## 5 MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE

It was moved by Councillor Pullen, seconded by Councillor Eadie and

**RESOLVED:** that in view of the public interest the order of the Agenda be changed to consider Item 20 (Friary Grange Leisure Centre) at the beginning of the meeting.

The Council's Monitoring Officer advised that due to the public interest and the fact that confidential matters in connection with Friary Grange Leisure Centre had now been discussed with the relevant third parties, the report on Friary Grange Leisure Centre, the Report of the Leader on confidential Cabinet decisions from the meeting held on 9 July 2019 (item 18) and the confidential Minutes of the Leisure, Parks and Waste Management (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee (item 19) would be received in public.

## 6 FRIARY GRANGE LEISURE CENTRE

It was moved by Councillor Strachan and seconded by Councillor Eadie:

'That in recognition of the public response to the closure announcement no further decision be made in relation to the Friary Grange Leisure Centre until the petition has been debated by Cabinet in public.'

Councillor Norman referred to the joint press statement issued by the District Council and County Council on 12 July, which he said made clear that the original plan was to close the Leisure Centre. He said there had not been enough scrutiny and questions needed to be asked about the options. Councillor Norman said the issue should be considered in the light of responses from the public and users, and the impact on Burntwood Leisure Centre needed to be investigated.

Councillor Grange noted that the Petition in connection with the Leisure Centre had already reached over 4,100 signatures and the quickly arranged public meeting had been attended by over 150 people.

She said the closure announcement had been slipped out on a Friday afternoon and referring to subsequent press coverage and social media activity Councillor Grange said Members should not underestimate the strength of public feeling.

Councillor Grange noted that the Staffordshire Health and Community Service had identified four areas of need in the District and two of these, the wards of Chadsmead and Curborough, were in the direct catchment area of the Leisure Centre.

Additionally the Council's Local Plan Review Sustainability Appraisal identified Chadsmead together with Chasetown in Burntwood as being in the 20% most deprived wards nationally. The same document reported that life expectancy was lower in these areas and Chadsmead had a high proportion of children compared to other wards in the District.

Referring to publications by Public Health England Councillor Grange spoke of the impact of deprivation on health, and the impact of health inequality on life expectancy.

Councillor Grange noted that Councils around the country had sought to address health inequalities in different ways, including the 'Refresh' programme introduced in Blackburn and Darwen which aimed to make leisure services as affordable as possible and resulted in a 50% increase in physical activity.

Councillor Grange said the County Council and District Council should be ashamed if they could not make a clear link between identified needs and the provision of public access leisure centres.

She advised that it was important for the Council to see the bigger picture, rather than focus purely on the financial aspects of the decision; noting that there would be further opportunities to talk about the impact on anti-social behaviour, educational achievement, mental health, the obesity crisis, disability access, cardiac rehabilitation and the environmental impact of travelling to Burntwood Leisure Centre and other oversubscribed alternatives.

Indicating her support for the Motion, Councillor Grange said the decision to leave the City without a public access leisure centre for any period of time, was short-sighted and needed to be overturned following sensible debate and scrutiny.

Councillor Ray noted that he had voted against the recommendation of the Leisure, Parks and Waste Management (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee regarding the closure of the Centre. He thanked Councillors Pullen, Eadie and E Little for attending the public meeting and committing to review the decision in an open and transparent way.

Councillor Ray said there needed to be a genuine search for alternatives and negotiations with the County Council needed to continue. He said the Birmingham Road site offered a potential solution and asked that this be kept on the table. Councillor Ray stated that the Leisure Centre should remain open in the short to medium term with a new facility provided in the future.

Councillor Robertson spoke about the strength of local feeling and stressed that listening was essential because thousands of people in Lichfield would be affected by the decision and those who could not afford to pay for alternative facilities would be worst hit. He thanked the Members who had attended the public meeting and said he hoped there was a will on both sides of the Chamber to reach a solution that ensured no one would miss out.

Councillor Cox referred to the strength of feeling and anxiety of people across the District. He mentioned that a young resident of Armitage with Handsacre who used the swimming pool was now taking part in the National Championships in Glasgow.

Councillor Cox welcomed the opportunity to examine the options, noting that not everyone could afford private leisure facilities and it was important to consider the knock on effects including the impact on rehabilitation, the Healthy Staffordshire initiative etc.

Councillor Birch spoke about deaths by drowning, including two in the Burntwood and Lichfield area in recent weeks. With 263 people losing their lives in accidental drownings in 2018 he said it was incumbent on the Authority to care for the health and safety of young people and ensure they had the skills needed to keep themselves safe near water.

Councillor Birch said he understood there were financial problems but this did not mean the Council shouldn't explore all options to ensure continued provision for Lichfield residents.

Councillor Ball said he welcomed the motion to defer the decision. He advised that he had attended a meeting on the Strategic Plan the previous evening where finding a solution to Friary Grange Leisure Centre was identified as a top priority. He hoped the Cabinet would listen carefully and called for the existing facility to be kept open until a new one was in place.

Councillor Pullen agreed with the benefits of having a swimming pool. He acknowledged that Staffordshire County Council faced huge budget pressures in adult social care but said it was quite right that top tier authorities invested in leisure facilities. He noted that Blackburn and Darwen was a top tier authority and he was unable to speak on their behalf regarding the allocation of budgets.

Councillor Pullen emphasised his commitment to dealing with the issue in an open and transparent way, which he hoped had been demonstrated by his attendance together with other Cabinet Members at the recent community meeting, the decision to bring previously confidential information into the public domain and the decision to allow members of the public to speak at the Cabinet meeting that would be arranged to consider the issue.

Councillor Pullen noted that a report on the issue had already been considered by the relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee. He confirmed that no option was off the table and there would be a genuine search for alternatives with further talks taking place with the County Council and Friary School.

Councillor Eadie said he hoped all Members of the Council recognised that the Cabinet decision had been through all the appropriate channels of the Council and debate had taken place at Overview and Scrutiny.

He advised that the timing of the closure statement was due to the fact that the Council had sought to agree a joint position with the County Council. This had delayed the release and meant it was published later in the day than the Council would have preferred.

Councillor Eadie confirmed that there had been ongoing discussions with Staffordshire County Council. With regard to the Birmingham Road site, a process was underway to commission a master planning exercise. He said the Council was very aware of the Local Plan and the infrastructure delivery obligations including the need to have leisure provision. He said this could be provided in different ways, noting that public access leisure facilities in Tamworth were operated by the private sector.

Councillor Eadie emphasised that the District Council had not asked to be put in the current position and he was grateful that recent press coverage had put more information in the public realm. He noted that the proposed arrangements between the County Council and the School offered a much diminished facility and this was partly behind the thinking to date.

Councillor Eadie said he hoped the County would work with the District going forward, and a short to medium term solution could be found that ensured swimming provision for the people of Lichfield. He said he wanted the Council to deliver more to help the inactive and less active in the District.

Councillor Strachan acknowledged that the Leisure Centre was a much loved and needed facility and it was necessary to remedy any loss or at least mitigate it as much as possible.

He said it was a challenging position between a school that wanted to become an academy and make the most of its facilities; a county council that wanted to support this in the context of its own financial difficulties and the District Council's difficulty in maintaining the asset given the amount of investment needed and its own funding gap.

Councillor Strachan spoke of the scale of the public response and said the time available should be used wisely to explore options and allow everyone affected by the decision to have their say.

It was then

**RESOLVED:** In recognition of the public response to the closure announcement no further decision be made in relation to the Friary Grange Leisure Centre until the petition has been debated by Cabinet in public.

(COUNCILLORS EAGLAND AND GREATORREX HAVING DECLARED INTERESTS LEFT THE CHAMBER AND WERE NOT PRESENT DURING THE CONSIDERATION OF THIS ITEM)

(COUNCILLOR CHECKLAND HAVING DECLARED AN INTEREST LEFT THE CHAMBER DURING CONSIDERATION OF THIS ITEM)

(COUNCILLOR WHITE ARRIVED FOLLOWING CONSIDERATION OF THIS ITEM)

## **7 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **1. Chaplain**

The Chairman said he was pleased to announce that the Reverend Bateman would be the Council's Chaplain for his term of office.

### **2. Civic Service**

The Chairman advised that the Civic Service would take place in the Cathedral on 29 September 2019 and invited all Members to attend.

## **8 REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL ON CABINET DECISIONS FROM THE MEETINGS HELD ON 13 JUNE AND 9 JULY 2019 AND CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS**

The report of the Leader of the Council was received.

## **9 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE, PARKS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT (OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE**

Councillor Matthews submitted the Minutes of the Leisure, Parks and Waste Management (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee held on 12 June 2019.

## **10 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE**

Councillor Cox submitted the Minutes of the Economic Growth, Environment and Development (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee held on 20 June 2019 and answered questions about issues discussed by the Committee.

In response to a question from Councillor Ball, Councillor Cox confirmed he would be putting the possible establishment of a 'S106 and Affordable Housing Task Group' on the work programme.

## **11 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC (OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE**

Councillor A Little submitted the Minutes of the Strategic (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee held on 24 June 2019.

## **12 MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY, HOUSING AND HEALTH (OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE**

Councillor Gwilt submitted the Minutes of the Community, Housing and Health (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee held on 26 June 2019 and answered Members questions about issues considered by the Committee.

## **7 - Engagement Plans for George Byran Centre**

Councillor Ball called for the NHS to write to people who had used the Centre in the past to seek permission to use their data. He said this needed to be recorded in the Minutes and followed up. Councillor Cox highlighted the role of families and carers and said he was concerned that GDPR was sometimes used as an excuse.

Councillor Evans said it was essential that the NHS came back to tell the Overview and Scrutiny about its plans.

## **8 – Jigsaw Funding Agreement**

Councillor Robertson said the Jigsaw project had been positive and the Council should look to see what else could be done to help organisations that benefited local communities.

(COUNCILLORS BALL, NORMAN AND ROBERTSON DECLARED PERSONAL INTERESTS IN FUSION CREDIT UNION)

## **9 – Update on the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Delivery Plan 2018 – 2020**

The importance of engaging with GPs was emphasised.

(COUNCILLOR WHITE DECLARED AN INTEREST IN THIS ITEM AS CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE STAFFORDSHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD)

## **10 – Delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants**

Councillor Norman said people were being told by social workers that there was no money available and were being blocked from accessing the system.

Councillor Evans said there had been high hopes for improved performance and the problems needed to be resolved since vulnerable people wanted to remain in their own houses.

Councillor A Yeats advised that he was working on the issues raised and asked Members to inform him of any problems they were aware of.

Councillor Pullen noted that there had been an improvement since Millbrook took over the contract and he was grateful that Councillor Yeats was working to ensure further improvements.

(COUNCILLOR PULLEN DECLARED AN INTEREST IN THIS ITEM AS A DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT APPLICATION HAD BEEN MADE FOR A MEMBER OF HIS FAMILY)

(COUNCILLOR LEYTHAM DECLARED AN INTEREST IN THIS ITEM AS HIS WIFE WAS A RECIPIENT OF A WARMER HOMES GRANT)

(COUNCILLOR WHITE DECLARED AN INTEREST IN THIS ITEM AS STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH, CARE AND WELLBEING)

**13 THE CHAIRMEN INDICATED BELOW TO MOVE THAT THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES (VOLUME 47 PART 1 MINUTE BOOK) BE RECEIVED AND, WHERE NECESSARY, APPROVED AND ADOPTED.**

**(a) Planning Committee – 3 June 2019**

It was proposed by Councillor Marshall “that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 3 June 2019 be approved and adopted.”

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 3 June 2019 be approved and adopted.

**(b) Strategic Asset Management Committee – 11 June 2019**

It was proposed by Councillor Eadie “that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Strategic Asset Management Committee held on 11 June 2019 be approved and adopted.”

In response to questions about the property investment strategy Councillor Eadie advised that no investments had been made to date and training had been arranged which would provide an opportunity for further discussion. With regard to housing, he advised that the property company and had recently been formed.

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Strategic Asset Management Committee held on 11 June 2019 be approved and adopted.

**(c) Planning Committee – 1 July 2019**

It was proposed by Councillor Marshall “that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 1 July 2019 be approved and adopted.”

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 1 July 2019 be approved and adopted.

**(d) Employment Committee – 2 July 2019**

It was proposed by Councillor Humphreys “that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Employment Committee held on 2 July 2019 be approved and adopted.”

Councillor Ball emphasised the importance of training and said attendance should be monitored.

Councillor Robertson highlighted the importance of the buddy system, noting that peer to peer training was an excellent way of building professional capacity.

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Employment Committee held on 2 July 2019 be approved and adopted.

**(e) Regulatory and Licensing Committee – 4 July 2019**

It was proposed by Councillor B Yeates “that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Regulatory and Licensing Committee held on 4 July 2019 be approved and adopted” subject to his name being added to the list of those present.

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Regulatory and Licensing Committee held on 4 July 2019 be approved and adopted subject to the addition of Cllr B Yeates to the list of those present.

#### **14 MONEY MATTERS: 2018/19 - PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND INVESTMENT LIMIT**

It was moved by Councillor Strachan, seconded by Councillor Eadie and

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the actual 2018/19 Prudential Indicators as set out in the Council report be approved.

(2) The Investment Limit, for any group of pooled funds under the same management, be increased from £4m per manager to £9m per manager.

#### **15 CHARITABLE COLLECTIONS LICENSING POLICY**

Consideration was given to the Charitable Collections Licensing Policy 2019.

Councillor Ball asked about the consultation responses and Councillor B Yeates said a copy would be provided.

It was then proposed by Councillor B Yeates, duly seconded and

**RESOLVED:** That the new charitable collections policy be approved for adoption to commence on 17 July 2019.

#### **16 LOCAL PLAN ALLOCATIONS ADOPTION**

Members were advised that the Council was in receipt of the Inspector's final report in respect of the Local Plan Allocations. The Council now needed to determine whether it wished to adopt the Local Plan Allocations, which would require the Council to accept the Inspector's Main Modifications.

The Council would then have a complete Local Plan in place consisting of the Local Plan Strategy (2015) and the Local Plan Allocations (2019). The Council's saved policies from the 1998 Local Plan would be deleted.

It was advised that there would be a six week period for legal challenge following the adoption of the Local Plan Allocations.

Councillors Marshall and Norman thanks officers for their work. It was proposed by Councillor Eadie, seconded by Councillor Marshall and

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the content of the Lichfield Local Plan Allocations Inspector's Report and Schedule of Main Modifications be noted.

(2) That the content of the Lichfield Local Plan Allocations Inspector's Report and Schedule of Main Modifications be noted.

(3) That the Local Plan Allocations as submitted and subsequently amended by the main and minor modifications be adopted.



(4) That the Council adopt the Local Plan policy map which was submitted alongside the submission version of the Local Plan Allocations and subsequently amended by the main and minor modifications.

(5) That the final versions of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) / Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitat Regulations Assessments (HRA) which accompany the final version of the Local Plan Allocations be noted.

(6) That the accompanying Local Plan adoption statement and Sustainability Appraisal adoption statement be noted.

(7) That the list of policies being deleted from the 1998 Local Plan be noted.

## **17 HS2 DRAFT PLANNING MEMORANDUM - DECISION ON QUALIFYING AUTHORITY STATUS**

Consideration was given to a proposal to change the Council's Constitution to ensure the appropriate delegated authority and procedures were in place to deal with requests for the approval of detailed design and external appearance of buildings and structures along the route of Phase 2a of HS2.

It was proposed by Councillor Lax, seconded by Councillor Marshall and

**RESOLVED:** That approval be given for the Constitution to be amended to include the determination of all planning matters submitted under Schedule 17 (the Planning Conditions Schedule) of the Bill, in line with the current provisions that already exist for Phase 1 of HS2 matters under Schedule 17 of the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Act 2017 as set out in the Appendix attached to the report.

## **18 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES**

It was proposed by Councillor Pullen, duly seconded and

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Eagland be appointed Chairman of Community, Housing and Health (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee.

## **19 QUESTIONS**

### **Q1. Question from Councillor Westwood to the Leader of the Council**

‘What practical plans does the Leader have to honour the commitment that he made in the Lichfield Mercury some weeks ago about seeing the need for extra investment in Burntwood and the District's rural areas?’

### **Response from Leader of the Council**

‘Parity across the District was discussed in my very first meetings with senior officers and Cabinet - and it is a principle which we are all aligned on.

So far, we have accelerated meetings with developers to bring forward undeveloped sites, increased support for a BID feasibility study should the local Burntwood Business

Community have the appetite for one and given a strong steer to ensure that the Local Plan review proactively addresses key challenges faced by Burntwood.

Whilst appreciating that these are small steps, I hope that our immediacy in addressing these challenges gives Councillor Westwood some hope that our efforts will continue to ensure parity across our great District.'

**Q2 Question from Councillor Ball to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement**

'What percentage of District Council procurement goes to genuinely local businesses and what plans has he to maximise this to help support local businesses and our community, along the lines of Labour controlled Oldham and Preston Councils?'

**Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement**

'Previously, we have not analysed procurement spend by location, although the information is being compiled and can be made available following completion of the Statement of Accounts. Once I have it I shall ensure that it is shared with all Members of the Council.

On the subject of future procurement, the Council has recently entered into an arrangement with Wolverhampton City Council to provide support and advice to the Council in relation to its procurement activity. In this arrangement the Council will retain responsibility for setting procurement policy including the criteria we use for assessing procurement bids. To date these criteria have centred around quality, capability and value for money. Nevertheless, I would be prepared to consider local economic benefit to be one of these criteria, where it is appropriate to do so. I would expect this to be on a project-by-project basis.

The Public Services (Local Value) Act of 2012 places a duty on Local Authorities to consider "how what is proposed to be procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area, and how, in conducting the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement". Councillor Ball is right that this has been extended by Preston Council, along with a number of other Councils across the political spectrum, into the concept of community wealth building.

As we develop and improve our approach to procurement with Wolverhampton City Council we will consider best procurement practice, and therefore I will be seeking routes to incorporate community wealth building into this process, subject to compliance with European Union procurement rules.'

**Q3 Question from Councillor Ball for the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Investment, Economic Growth & Tourism**

'Given the opportunity, would the Cabinet member recommend borrowing £50m for the Council to fund BRS development?'

**Response from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Investment, Economic Growth & Tourism**

'The Council's Property Investment Strategy was approved by Cabinet in December 2017, which then led to Council approving the 'Delivering the Property Investment Strategy Report' in October 2018.

This strategy, as represented in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy makes provision for the Council to borrow £45m over the coming 4 years for investment in strategic assets (property) to deliver additional income, address local needs, and support broader place shaping agendas.

The principles on which any decision will be taken to invest, based on borrowing, are defined in the Property Investment Strategy as;

- Local – property will be within the District of Lichfield, or within the economic geography (i.e. Local Enterprise Partnership, or LEP, Boundaries). It should be close enough to allow it to be effectively managed and maintained, as well as being appealing to tenants or purchasers now and in the future.
- Diversified – property investment will be diversified to broaden the portfolio and so reduce the risk, with a focus given to particular groups, such as housing and offices, when justification is clear and evidenced
- Strategic – property investment should be for the long-term and be regularly rebalanced to support our strategic priorities as well as being acceptable to our community
- Prudent – property investment will be appropriately risk assessed. Where acquisition is being considered, the current tenancy should offer some security in relation to the length of tenure, strength of the covenant and ongoing viability of the tenant. Where development is being considered, likely tenancies and pre-lets would need to be leveraged to support any financial assessment.
- Profitable – property investment will provide a return on investment, either through lettings or sales. The yield on the property should exceed the ongoing costs for management, maintenance and borrowing, while considering the full costs of acquisition or development (e.g. Stamp Duty, legal fees, external valuations and structural surveys).

Any decision to invest using borrowed funds will therefore be made based upon these principles.'

**Councillor Ball asked the following Supplementary Question:**

'Would investing in Friary Grange Leisure Centre meet the strategic principles set out in the answer?'

**The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Investment, Economic Growth & Tourism responded:**

'I would refer Councillor Ball to the criteria set. If it meets the criteria we will look at it'.

**Q4 Question from Councillor Robertson for the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing**

'What progress has the Cabinet Member made in convincing his cabinet colleagues that the new housing company should build new genuinely affordable homes for those in need, rather than housing for sale, as he indicated to Members at a previous meeting of the Community, Housing and Health (O&S) Committee?'

**Response from the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing**

'One of the long term ambitions of the Property Investment Strategy is to be in a position to provide additional affordable housing. That was the decision of the previous Cabinet and that is still the thinking of this Cabinet.'

**Councillor Robertson asked the following supplementary question**

‘A lot of money is spent on housing support; has modelling taken place and is that modelling on affordable housing for rent, its impact on housing support and how it would affect profitability?’

**The Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing responded**

‘I will refer the question to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Investment, Economic Growth & Tourism but note that 235 affordable homes were built last year’

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Investment, Economic Growth & Tourism noted that a training session had been arranged in connection with the Investment Company and suggested the matter be discussed further then.

**Q5 Question from Councillor Grange to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement**

‘In response to Question 2 at the meeting of 16 April 2019 in which Councillor Woodward asked about the term ‘opportunity costs’ the answer that was given was that this is not a term that was recognised or used. Whilst recognising that there has been a change in the cabinet member I think it is important to revisit this point because opportunity costs (e.g. revenue lost when one course of action is chosen over another) are frequently key to investment and financial decisions.

Can assurance be provided that opportunity costs are considered and factored into (e.g.) investment decisions where relevant?’

**Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement**

‘I can reassure Councillor Grange that although it may not be a term that is used, the concept is familiar to this Authority and we are acutely aware that we have a finite amount of money to use either for investment or to fund capital projects. It is simply common sense to recognise that to spend on one item reduces the power to spend on others, unless that spend is covered by an immediate return. The countermeasure to this is to form a comprehensive Medium Term Financial Strategy, accompanied by a capital programme and Treasury Management Plan, delivering on the Council's priorities while making best use of the public money that we are entrusted with.’

(The Meeting closed at 7.20 pm)

CHAIRMAN