

CABINET MEETING – 17 JULY 2013
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

MINUTES, PART I

Author(s):

Head of Law and Governance

Purpose of Report:

Presents the minutes of the last meeting held on 24 June 2013 Part I.

Action Required:

To confirm the minutes as a correct record.

At a meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC CENTRE (COMMITTEE ROOM NO. 1) on Monday 24 June 2013 at 1.00pm.

Present:-

Councillor P. Watson in the Chair

Councillors Blackburn, Gofton, Kelly, Miller, P. Smith, Speding and H. Trueman

Also in attendance:-

Councillors Oliver and P. Walker

Part I

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19 June 2013 Part I (copy circulated) were submitted.

(For copy report - see original minutes).

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Receipt of Declarations of Interest

Councillor Miller declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Item 4, "Creation of a Combined Authority," as his wife was a member of the Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority.

Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

Creation of a Combined Authority

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to inform of the outcome of the extensive area-wide review of governance arrangements undertaken in relation to local authority functions concerning economic growth, skills and transportation across the seven North East Local Authority areas comprising: Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland. The Cabinet was asked to consider and approve the submission to Government of a request to establish a Combined Authority covering the area of the seven local authorities.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chairman, in highlighting the report, remarked that everyone recognised the scale of the economic challenge for the city in the context of national economic policy that was currently failing the country and its people. He advised that the lack of real, solid economic improvement was costing the country and the city dearly in jobs and investment.

The Chairman reported that he was proud of how the city was holding up despite the national circumstances. Sunderland's economy was holding its own because of the policies of the Council, business and investors. He drew attention to the Office of National Statistics figures published recently that demonstrated the underlying strength; a growth in private sector employment of 15.2% in the last 2 years which had put Sunderland at the top of the table in the region.

Cabinet Members were advised that if Sunderland was to continue to succeed and indeed grow then it needed to be successful as a city working in a successful region. The region's success in economic growth, transport and skills would support and add value to what Sunderland was already doing. However, unlike the past, the approach to regional economic policy needed to be determined by the Local Authorities, who had the democratic mandate of their communities, working with the Local Enterprise Partnership, business and other stakeholders to achieve common aims.

The Chairman reported that he, along with the other Leaders in Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland and South Tyneside had considered in detail and through proper process the option of establishing a Combined Authority. He explained that a Combined Authority would not take any of Sunderland's functions away, but would add value in looking strategically across the region covered by the Combined Authority at economic growth, transport and skills. He added that he was satisfied that having considered all the issues and having ensured that the individual interests of Sunderland were protected and supported by a Combined Authority, it was something that should be supported.

Cabinet Members were therefore requested to support the findings of the Governance Review and to agree to the submission of the Scheme to create a Combined Authority to the Secretary of State and to submit this report to Council for its endorsement in accordance with the recommendations in Paragraph 2.1 of the report.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

2. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the findings of the Governance Review document at **Appendix A**, and specifically that establishing a Combined Authority will improve the exercise of statutory functions in relation to economic growth, skills and transport in the Combined Authority's area, leading to an enhancement of the economic conditions and performance in the area, be endorsed,
- (ii) the submission to Government of the Scheme for the establishment of a Combined Authority be agreed on the basis of the Scheme at **Appendix 1 of the Governance Review report**, and the proposed transfer and sharing of the functions contained within the Scheme as detailed in paragraphs 6.3 to 6.10 of this report be noted,
- (iii) the report and appendices be submitted to Council for endorsement of Cabinet's decisions upon the recommendations in this report,
- (iv) the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to agree the terms of any documentation required to enable the Authority to become a constituent authority of the Combined Authority including the constitutional arrangements and operating agreement in so far that this does not place additional financial commitments on the Council, and to authorise the Head of Law and Governance to complete the relevant documentation and take all steps necessary to give effect to the above recommendations, and
- (v) further reports be received by Cabinet, as and when necessary, once the full financial and governance arrangements have been finalised.

Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

At the instance of the Chairman it was: -

3. RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during consideration of the remaining business as it was considered to involve a likely disclosure of information relating to an individual or the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) (Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

(Signed) P. WATSON,
Chairman.

Note:-

The above minutes comprise only those relating to items during which the meeting was open to the public.

Additional minutes in respect of other items are included in Part II.