

The Cabinet

**20th March 2019 at 3.30pm
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

Present: Councillor Trow (Leader of the Council);
Councillor Khatun (Deputy Leader of the Council);
Councillors Carmichael, Costigan, Gavan,
Hackett, D Hosell, Moore and Shackleton.

In attendance: Councillors E M Giles, P Hughes, Singh and
Underhill.

29/19 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor P Hughes also declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Minute No. 31/10 (Sandwell Leisure Trust Business Plan 2018-21) on the basis that he was a Sandwell Leisure Trust board member and subsequently left the room during consideration of this matter.

Councillor Carmichael declared a personal interest in Minute No. 31/10 (Sandwell Leisure Trust Business Plan 2018-21).

Councillor P Hughes and the Chief Executive both declared disclosable pecuniary interests in Minute Nos. 34/19 (Construction of 10 New Affordable Homes and Demolition and Clearance of former Science Block at Britannia Road School, Rowley Regis) on the basis that they were Directors of the Sandwell Asset and Land Company that held leases on schools. They subsequently left the room during consideration of the item.

30/19 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th February 2019 be approved as a correct record.

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31/19

Sandwell Leisure Trust Business Plan 2018-21

The Cabinet received the Sandwell Leisure Trust Business Plan for 2018-21.

The Plan set out how leisure services would be delivered in Sandwell, providing local people with local opportunities to be active. This would contribute to ambitions 2 and 5 of Sandwell's Vision 2030.

At its meeting on 8 February 2017 (Minute No. 24/17 refers), the Cabinet had approved the Sandwell Leisure Trust Business Plan 2017-20. This had included agreement of unitary payments for 2017-18 (£2,990,000), 2018-19 (£2,742,000) and 2019-20 (£2,885,000). In line with the Management and Funding Agreement ('the contract') the business plan negotiation process had been extended until 1st September 2019 to allow further time to negotiate the unitary payment for 2020/21.

This was due to changes in timescales relating to the development of the new Sandwell Aquatics Centre in Smethwick, which impacted on the timing of related potential planned closures of other facilities operated by Sandwell Leisure Trust. Business planning meetings had affirmed the shared outcome of both parties to work towards a significantly reduced management fee via a long-term business planning approach.

Council representatives, including the Executive Director - Neighbourhoods, the Director - Housing and Communities and the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Commonwealth Games had been consulted on the content of the draft Business Plan. The Executive Director - Resources and the principal accountant had also been consulted and had confirmed that the proposed Plan was accounted for within the Council's budget for the next three financial years, 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the extension of the negotiation period to agree the Sandwell Leisure Trust Business Plan 2018-21 to 1st September 2019, by the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods, in line with contract terms, be approved;

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- (2) that the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods be authorised to approve the Sandwell Leisure Trust Business Plan for 2018-21 and the unitary payment for 2020-21.

32/19

Provision of Security Guarding and Key Holding Services

Approval was sought to award a two-year contract for the provision of security guarding and key holding services for the principal areas of Facilities Management, the One Stop Shop, Markets and Libraries with effect from 1st April 2019.

The current contract arrangements were due to expire on 31st March 2019. In accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 a further competition exercise had been undertaken using Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) Agreement 347 which had come into effect on 1st September 2018.

Six submissions had been received and, following evaluations, Profile Security Guarding Services Ltd had scored the highest, at a total annual cost of £274,000 based on current requirements. Performance Management had been incorporated into the contract to ensure that the services provided met the Council's required standards.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the contract for the Provision of Security Guarding and Key Holding Services for the principal areas of Facilities Management, One Stop Shop, Markets and Libraries, be awarded to Profile Security Guarding Services Ltd for a two-year period commencing 1st April 2019;
- (2) that the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to execute any documents necessary to give effect to the course of action set out in Resolution (1) (above).

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33/19

Inform 360 Self-Serve Service Contract for Contact Centres

Approval was sought to make a direct award for the contract for the delivery of the hosting and management of the Council's self-service telephony system for a period of two years, with an option to extend for a further year, covering the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2022.

The Council had been using the Inform 360 Integrated Voice Response (IVR) and texting (SMS) service in Revenues and Benefits since 2011. From 2016, the service had been extended to cover environmental; housing; registrars and waste customer contacts via the Contact Centre. As a combined service, since 2011, 1.75m calls had been answered, 24 hours, 365 days a year. The system provided by Inform Communications Plc had proved to be easy to use, robust and reliable with 99% uptime. It had supported the reduction in abandoned rates and call waiting times across both contact centres.

The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 permitted direct award of a contract where the supplies of services had to be purchased from a particular economic operator for reasons connected with exclusive rights including intellectual property rights. In this case the system was already in place and the service charge payable was only available from this supplier. The work on the telephony strategy and unified communications was a much larger piece of work than first anticipated. Following a review of the work required and the need to align requirements with the Digital Strategy, the timescale for this project had extended to 24-36 months to allow sufficient time for pre-market engagement, procurement and implementation of a new system. This had resulted in the need for continuation of current self-service telephony provision.

In response to a question by the Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, the Executive Director – Resources welcomed input from scrutiny on the project.

The value of the new contract was £367,824 (£122,608 per annum) for a period of up to potentially three years. The supplier had reflected previous custom and reduced the annual service charges for April 2019 – March 2021 by £4,741 with no increase in annual charges for a further 12 months.

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If the work on the strategic telephony strategy was completed earlier, there would be an opportunity to reduce the contract length and cost. It was therefore proposed to award the contract on a two year plus one basis, which also provided assurance that if there was any delay in the telephony implementation there was continuation of service.

Resolved

- (1) that the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods award the contract for self-service telephony provision to Inform Communications Ltd for a period of two years, with an option to extend for a further one year, covering the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2022;
- (2) that any necessary exemption be made to the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules 2018-2019 to enable the Executive Director - Neighbourhoods to directly award the contract for self-service telephony provision to Inform Communications Ltd, as outlined in Resolution (1) (above);
- (3) that, subject to Resolution (1) and (2) (above), the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer enter into the appropriate contracts for self-service telephony provision with Inform Communications Ltd.

34/19

Construction of 10 new Affordable Homes and Demolition and Clearance of former Science Block at Britannia Road School, Rowley Regis

Approval was sought for the development of Council land with approximately 10 two and four-bedroom Council properties on the site of the science block building at the former Britannia High School site, Britannia Road, Rowley Regis.

The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan included a requirement for provision of a number of high quality Council-owned housing units to replace stock lost by the Right to Buy. Data in relation to bidding activity showed that there was demand for the proposed property types in this area.

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The proposed site was currently vacant and had not been used for education purposes for eight years. The Council was managing the maintenance and security of the building. The freehold was currently held by Sandwell Land and Property Ltd, subject to a long lease granted to the Council, appropriated to the education directorate's portfolio.

Accord Housing Association would manage and monitor grant funding from Homes England at a cost of £417 per unit. The cost to the Council of £4,170 would be funded through the Housing Revenue Account.

The Strategic Investment Unit had carried out an appraisal of the proposal and identified a number of risks, with proposed mitigation.

It was anticipated that the properties would be completed by October 2020, subject to a phased delivery agreed with the selected developer.

The Cabinet Member for Housing noted the views of the Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board in relation to the use of properties constructed off site and reported that the Council was looking at other sites that may be suitable for this type of property.

Resolved:-

- (1) that 1962.0 square metres (0.2 hectares) of land off Britannia Road, Rowley Regis, shown for identification purposes only at Appendix 1, be declared surplus to the requirements of Education Skills and Employment;
- (2) that, subject to Resolution (1) (above) the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer enter into or execute under seal any documentation necessary to complete the transfer of the freehold land and the buildings at Britannia Road, Rowley Regis, (shown at Appendix 1) from Sandwell Land and Property Ltd, to the Council (including the surrender of the long lease currently held by the Council and appropriated to the Education portfolio);

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- (3) that, upon the transfer of the freehold from Sandwell Land and Property Ltd, to the Council as detailed in Resolution (2) above, appropriation of the land and buildings at Britannia Road, Rowley Regis (shown at Appendix 1) to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) be approved and the Executive Director – Resources adjust the accounts accordingly;
- (4) that, subject to Resolution (1) to (3) (above), the demolition and clearance of the two storey science block that was part of the former Britannia High School site, Britannia Road, Rowley Regis, (shown at Appendix 1) be approved;
- (5) that, subject to Resolution 1 to 4 (above), the development of approximately 1962.0 square metres (0.2 hectares) of land off Britannia Road, Rowley Regis, (shown at Appendix 1), with a new- build council housing scheme circa 10 units as outlined in Appendix 2, be approved subject to planning consent;
- (6) that, subject to Resolution (1) to (5) (above), the Executive Director – Resources allocate adequate resources to fund the proposed project;
- (7) that, subject to Resolution (1) to (6) (above) the Director – Regeneration and Growth, in consultation with the Executive Director - Resources, the Director - Housing and Communities prepare tendering documentation and thereafter, to procure, in accordance with the public procurement rules and the Council's procurement and financial regulations, a contractor/contractors to demolish and develop, on behalf of the Council, the proposed housing scheme (referred to in (5) (above)); and to enter into or execute under seal any financial agreement in relation to the Homes England grant on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Executive Director - Resources;

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- (8) that, subject to Resolution (1) to (7) (above) the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer enter into or execute under seal any documentation in relation to the award of the contract and/or development/partnership agreement, Homes England developer status, licence, undertaking, framework joining agreement and any other agreements with the procured contractor/s and with Homes England, as may be deemed necessary to facilitate development of the site with a housing scheme on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director - Regeneration and Growth;
- (9) that, subject to (1) to (8) (above) and, following practical completion of each property, the Director - Housing and Communities manage and let the premises in accordance with the Council's Housing Allocation Policy;
- (10) that the following action points, identified within the Strategic Investment Unit Appraisal Report, be implemented to reduce any risk to the Council:-
 - (a) the long-term requirements of the Council for the site, including the need for school places within the area, are fully evaluated prior to reallocating the site for housing development;
 - (b) the ownership of the site be determined to enable the appropriation/purchase of the land and identify any legal restrictions that may impact on site redevelopment;
 - (c) a detailed project plan be produced to assist in ensuring that the project can be delivered in a timely manner, in accordance with Homes England's timescales and to minimise the risk of repayment of grant funding;
 - (d) a detailed governance structure be produced for the project and determine roles and responsibilities for monitoring the contract with Accord Housing Association;

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- (e) the method by which proposed outcomes will be measured and reported be determined;
- (f) the use of Right to Buy receipts are kept under review to ensure that the use of funding sources available to the Council are maximised.

35/19 **Supply of Domestic Electrical Items, Fans, Fires and Heaters**

Approval was sought to award a contract for the supply of domestic electrical items for a period of four years, at a total cost of £1.6m.

The current contract was due to expire on 30th April 2019. Six tenders had been received and evaluated and Collins Electrical Wholesale Ltd had been selected. The award of this contract would enable Sandwell MBC to quickly repair its properties and keep the residents safe.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the contract for the supply of domestic electrical items be awarded to Collins Electrical Wholesale Ltd, for the period 1st May 2019 to 30th April 2023;
- (2) that, in connection with Resolution (1) (above) the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer enters into an appropriate contract with Collins Electrical Wholesale Ltd.

36/19 **Blackheath Library - Partnership Working with Black Country Housing Group – Recommendation of the Land and Asset Management Committee**

The Cabinet was informed that, at its meeting on 7th March 2019, the Land and Asset Management Committee had considered a proposal for the Council to work in partnership with Black Country Housing Group (BCHG) to create a Local Service Centre for Rowley Regis and facilitate the development of approximately 68 new houses.

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Blackheath Library was owned by Black Country Housing Group and the Council had a sixty-year lease (from 2011) of the ground floor at a nominal rent to run the Blackheath Library service. BCHG had decided to cease activities from the building and sell it and the Council had been given the first option to purchase the building.

As part of the Transforming Local Services Project the Council had assessed the options around Blackheath Library and developed a business case for its purchase and the creation of a Local Service Centre for the Rowley Regis area. Staff in Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing; currently located at Payne Street, Blackheath and Harvest Road, Rowley Regis; would relocate to the Blackheath Library building, to create a fully co-located office accommodation environment for Rowley Regis, including housing management services, adult social care services, welfare rights services and the Children's Trust community operating groups. This would also support the delivery of the Council's Digital Strategy and its key transformation themes (digital by default workforce, access to services and digital inclusion) and would use the principles of community-led support in support of our Vision 2030 aspirations.

Initial discussions had also taken place with a small number of voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations on delivering services from the Library.

To assist the Council with the development of the model for Blackheath Library and how the VCS activity would be supported, Black Country Housing Group had agreed to lease the second floor of the Library from the Council for a minimum period of three years with an option for a further two years. The lease would be based on market rent/service charge terms.

Black Country Housing Group had agreed to the principle of the Council selling land to it, for at least the value of the Blackheath Library, for the purposes of housing development. Four sites had been identified:-

- Council offices at Payne Street, Blackheath;
- Site of the former Shaftesbury House, 402 High Street, West Bromwich;
- Meredith Street / Upper High Street, Cradley Heath;
- 106a Birmingham Road, Rowley Regis.

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BCHG was proposing to build around 68 new houses across the four sites, for which the Council would have 100% nomination rights.

The proposals would have a number of benefits for Sandwell and residents of Rowley Regis:-

- improving accessibility to services through co-location;
- ensuring the sustainability of the library by increasing footfall through the co-location of services;
- strengthening relationships with and increasing access to voluntary sector organisations and their activities;
- increasing footfall to Blackheath Town Centre;
- efficiencies through co-location;
- bringing vacant land into use for housing;
- contributing to the development of the digital strategy.

Both the Council and Black Country Housing Group had sought independent valuations of the buildings involved in the proposals, which needed to be agreed by both parties. The sale of the four buildings referred to would generate a capital receipt in excess of the purchase price of the library, taking into account the contribution the Council had made to its development in 2011. A review of future costs indicated that the proposals would be self-financing within current Council resources.

A further report would be submitted to the Land and Asset Management Committee confirming valuations and timelines for the project.

Resolved

- (1) that, the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods and the Executive Director - Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Communities, the Leader of the Council and the Chair of Land and Asset Management Committee, evaluate land valuations, necessary building surveys and a capital appraisal report in connection with proposals for the future use of Blackheath Library as a Local Service Centre for Rowley Regis;

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- (2) that, subject to the satisfactory evaluation of land valuations, necessary building surveys and a capital appraisal report by the Executive Director – Neighbourhoods and the Executive Director - Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Communities, the Leader and the Chair of Land and Asset Management Committee, as referred to in Resolution (1) approval is given to:-
- (a) the acquisition of the freehold interest in land at 145 High Street, Rowley Regis, B65 OEA (Blackheath Library), as shown on Plan SAM-24200-001 from Black Country Housing Group on terms to be agreed by the Director - Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer and the Director - Regeneration and Growth;
 - (b) the declaration of land at 402 High Street, West Bromwich (the site of former Shaftesbury House), identified on Plan SAM-24140-041 as surplus to requirements;
 - (c) the declaration of land and premises at Payne Street, Rowley Regis, identified on Plan SAM-37260-003 as surplus to requirements;
 - (d) the declaration of land at the junction of Meredith Street and Upper High Street, Cradley Heath, identified on Plan SAM-49700-002 surplus to requirements;
 - (e) the declaration of the land and premises at 106a Birmingham Road, Rowley Regis, identified on Plan SAM-05340-007 surplus to requirements;
 - (f) subject to (b), (c), (d) and (e) (above), the disposal of the freehold interest in the land shown in Plans SAM-24140-041, SAM-37260-003, SAM-49700-002 and SAM-05340-007 to Black Country Housing Group by the Director - Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director - Regeneration and Growth;

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- (g) the creation of a Local Services Centre at 145 High Street, Blackheath (Blackheath Library) as part of the Transforming Local Services project;
 - (h) subject to (a) and (g) (above), the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer entering into a lease with Black Country Housing Group for the second floor of 145 High Street, Blackheath (Blackheath Library), on terms and conditions to be agreed by Director - Regeneration and Growth;
 - (i) subject to (a) to (h) (above), the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer entering into a partnership agreement with Black Country Housing Group which will outline the timescale for the purchase of land at 145 High Street, Rowley Regis, B65 OEA (Blackheath Library), as shown on Plan SAM- 24200-001 and the development of the sites referred to in (b), (c),(d), and (e) (above), shown in Plans SAM-24140-041, SAM-37260-003, SAM-49700-002 and SAM-05340-007;
 - (j) subject to (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (i) (above), the Director - Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, entering into or executing under seal if necessary, any other relevant documentation in relation to the execution of the above recommendations, on terms to be agreed by the Director - Regeneration and Growth;
 - (k) that the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Communities maintain oversight of the project;
- (3) that a further report be submitted to the Land and Asset Management Committee in respect of valuations and timelines for the project.

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37/19

West Bromwich Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order

The Cabinet noted an update on the operation of the West Bromwich Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), which had been in place since 1st August 2018 and was for a period of three years.

During August and September 2018, considerable work had been put into raising awareness of the PSPO across the area concerned, including:-

- holding a breakfast meeting with members of the West Bromwich Business Improvement District;
- ensuring that members of the public, both visiting and living within the designated area, were aware of the restrictions and the sanctions for non-compliance;
- meeting with other agencies and services within the area including the establishment of a regular meeting led by the BID at Sandwell College;
- the positioning of signage across key entrance points and locations within the defined area;
- ensuring that PSPO updates were provided at Town Tasking and members' briefing meetings.

Following this awareness raising, enforcement had started in October 2018.

The PSPO was being used as part of a strategy that included use of wardens and other Council teams to tackle the range of issues in the town centre as effectively as possible. The first four months had shown that it was not being used in isolation but as part of a toolkit to address differing forms of unacceptable behaviour through the most appropriate and effective means available.

The Cabinet noted performance figures in the following areas:-

Total Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) issued	26
FPNs issued for begging	5
FPN's fully paid	22
Total hours spent on foot patrols	723
Identified homeless people	10
Identified homeless people who accepted help	2
Police record for anti-social behaviour reports before PSPO (Oct – Dec 17)	121

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Police record for anti-social behaviour reports after PSPO (Oct – Dec 18)	68
Total percentage reduction for anti-social behaviour reports	44%
Police record for reported disorder incidents before PSPO (Oct – Dec 17)	55
Police record for reported disorder incidents after PSPO (Oct – Dec 18)	26
Total percentage reduction for disorder incidents	52%

Regular multi agency meetings were now taking place at Sandwell College which had increased collaboration. The college had installed PSPO signage and included information about the PSPO in its assemblies regarding student conduct and expected standards of behaviour. This was also going to be rolled out to students at Central Sixth and the Principal was also looking at introducing staggered finishing times from September 2019 to reduce the concentration of students in the town centre at the same time each day.

A new multi-agency group had been established to focus on homelessness boroughwide to ensure that responses were joined up and effective.

This would also significantly support the implementation of Housing First. A bid was also being submitted to the Rough Sleepers Fund for additional outreach support work.

The Council, Police and other agencies were working together to implement the PSPO and making joint decisions around appropriate interventions around specific issues as they arose. West Bromwich Town BID had worked very closely with the Council and the Police on the implementation of the PSPO and already felt that the focus it had given was having an impact on the town centre through enhanced visibility of environmental protection officers, Police and BID ambassadors.

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In response to a question from the Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Protection reported that there was some sign of displacement of issues to other town centres, specifically rough sleeping to Smethwick. However, this had also supported the development of new ways of tackling issues and developing a partnership approach. The success of the West Bromwich PSPO had given confidence that the model could be replicated elsewhere in the Borough and any considerations for new PSPOs would be in conjunction with the Police and local councillors.

38/19

Alcohol Licensing Policy Consultation

Approval was sought to commence consultation on a revised draft statement of policy in line with the requirements of the Licensing Act 2003. The Act required the Council to determine and publish its policy outlining how it intended to exercise its licensing functions, and to publish an updated statement of that policy every five years. The Council's current Statement of Licensing Policy was approved by the Council in March 2014.

The updated Policy had been drafted in conjunction with health partners via the Cooperative Working Board, in recognition of the impact the sale and supply of alcohol had on the health of the borough's population. The revised Policy therefore now contained far more health-related information outlining the potential harm the misuse of alcohol was having on the residents of the borough.

In addition to this, the revised policy also included more information on modern day slavery, child sexual exploitation and Public Health related information.

The Act specifically required the Licensing Authority to consult the following:-

- the Chief Officer of Police;
- the Fire and Rescue Authority for the area;
- representatives of persons holding premises licences, personal licenses or club premises certificates;
- representatives of businesses and residents.

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To accompany the policy document, it was also proposed to provide a guidance document for applicants and license holders to support them to understand the practical steps they could take to manage their responsibilities as a License Holder effectively and support the long-term health and well-being of the borough's residents.

In response to a question from the Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Protection welcomed the suggestion of scrutiny reviewing and providing input into the proposed Policy.

Resolved that formal consultation commence with relevant stakeholders on the revised draft Statement of Licensing Policy for Sandwell.

39/19

Designation of Weddel Wynd as a 'Site of Importance for Nature Conservation' (SINC)

Approval was sought to designate Weddell Wynd, Tipton as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCs) were designations identified in the Sandwell Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document (SAD DPD) and formed part of the Borough's environmental infrastructure. Environmental infrastructure also included green space and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs).

Such spaces were of importance as they had the potential to increase levels of physical activity, improve mental health, contribute to environmental benefits, reduce the urban heat island effect and benefit high quality residential development. The environmental infrastructure of the borough also provided an important ecological and educational resource.

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SINCs and SLINCs were not subject to statutory protection. The Government envisaged that sites were protected from development through the Local Plan process. The identification and allocation of SINCs and SLINCs within the SAD DPD was therefore crucial in maintaining and enhancing the Borough's environmental infrastructure and would help meet the Black Country Core Strategy's Vision for environmental transformation.

Following ecological surveys by Council officers and Dudley Countryside Services Weddell Wynd had been recommended as a SINC. This recommendation had been endorsed by the Local Sites Partnership, which consisted of the four Black Country authorities, Birmingham City Council, the Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country, EcoRecord, Black Country Geodiversity Partnership, Black Country Biodiversity Partnership, Natural England, the Environment Agency and botanists and was responsible for approving new sites put forward and ensuring adoption of those sites by their own organisations.

There were now 33 SINC designations in Sandwell and 71 SLINC designations. 11 sites had been identified as potential nature conservation sites. The locations of these sites were identified in the Site Allocations and Delivery Development Planning Document (SAD DPD).

In response to a question from the Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, the Cabinet Member reported that officers would liaise with local primary schools to organise litter picks to build interest in the site and explore the possibility of setting up a Friends group.

Resolved that Weddell Wynd, Tipton, as shown on the attached Appendix 3, be designated as a 'Site of Importance for Nature Conservation' (SINC).

40/19

Care Home Fees 2019-20

Approval was sought to the rates for residential care home fees for 2019-20.

The proposed fees had been calculated using the costing model adopted by the Cabinet at its meeting on 19th April 2017 (Minute No. 87/17 refers).

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The 2019-20 rates for Funded Nursing Care (FNC) were yet to be agreed so the rates presented were based on 2018-19. Any change to FNC fees would be passported on to nursing home providers and costs would be re-claimed from Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group.

The West Midlands Care Association (WMCA) and all 36 care homes in the borough affected had been given the opportunity to comment on the proposed fees. The WMCA had expressed concern that the base figure did not reflect the true cost of providing care in Sandwell and care homes were therefore adding larger top ups each year. Only one response was received directly from a service provider and this was from a large national provider with six homes in the borough. They felt that the fees paid by Sandwell were 35% to 54% behind the level required to provide the same categories of care and invest in the fabric of the services.

The financial impact of the proposed increase in weekly rates would be dependent upon the volume and mix of commissioned care during 2019-20. It was estimated that the proposed rates would increase the annual cost of care by £1 million. The additional costs would be met from the 2019-20 budgets earmarked for this purpose within the Adult Social Care budget strategy. These resources were funded from corporate allocations for inflation, redirection from planned budget savings and from the 2019-20 council tax precept ring-fenced for adult social care.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the undermentioned fees for residential care homes for 2019-20, be approved, with effect from 1st April 2019;

	Residential	Dementia Residential	Nursing	Dementia Nursing
	£ /week	£ /week	£ /week	£ /week
2018-19 Fees	421.15	474.02	578.41	585.84
Increase in SMBC Fees	15.13	17.02	13.25	13.50
Change in 2019/20 NHS RNC	N/A	N/A	Not announced based on 2018/19 rates*	
Notional 2019/20 fee including RNC	436.28	491.04	591.66	599.34

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	Residential	Dementia Residential	Nursing	Dementia Nursing
contribution*				
Movement in SMBC Element of the Fee	3.59%	3.59%	3.15%	3.16%

- (2) that the Executive Director - Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing communicate the revised fees to the relevant providers and implement the fee increase with effect from 1st April 2019.

41/19 **Appointment of External Auditors for the Sandwell Children's Trust**

Approval was sought to the appointment of external auditors for Sandwell Children's Trust. In accordance with its Articles of Association, the Trust was required to seek Cabinet approval for the appointment or removal of auditors.

The Trust was seeking to appoint Grant Thornton for one year in order to audit its accounts for 2018-19. The cost of the appointment, to be met by the Trust, was £23,000. As Grant Thornton was also the Council's external auditor, its appointment would provide a degree of synergy between the Council and the Trust.

The Trust was unable to the sign off its accounts and submit them to the Council, as owner of the Trust, without the services of an external auditor.

The appointment of an auditor was in addition to the Council's audits.

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It was also proposed to amend the Scheme of Delegation to Officers to authorise the Council's Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) to approve the appointment of the external auditor for Sandwell Children's Trust for future years.

Resolved:-

- (1) that Grant Thornton be appointed external auditor for Sandwell Children's Trust for one year, in order to audit the accounts for 2018-19;
- (2) that the Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer amend the Scheme of Delegation to Officers, set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution (Responsibility for Functions), to incorporate the following delegation to the Council's Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer):

Appointment of External Auditor for Sandwell Children's Trust

To approve the appointment of the external auditor for Sandwell Children's Trust.

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42/19

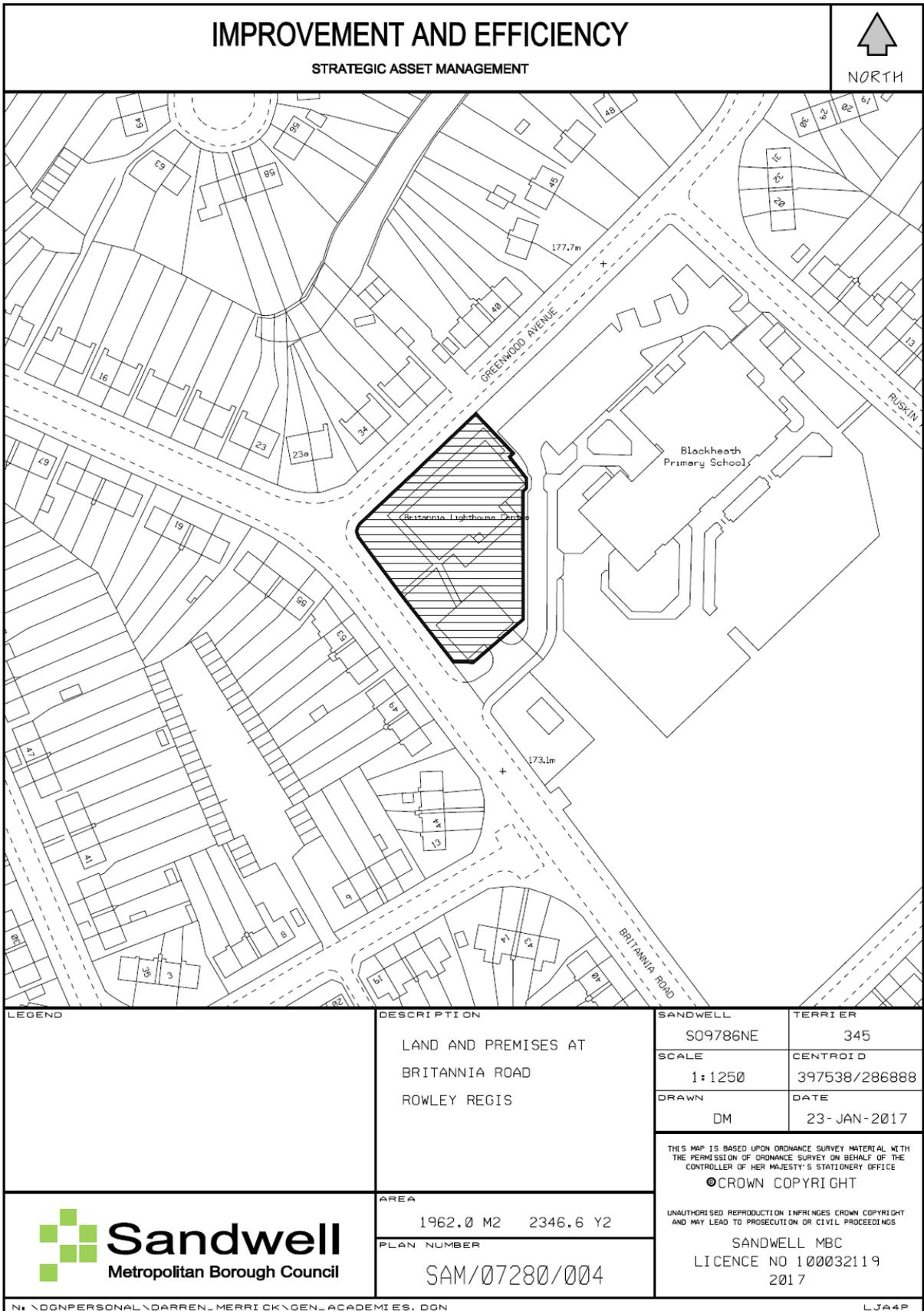
Decisions of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Environment 1st November 2018

The Cabinet noted the decisions of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Environment, taken on 1st November 2018.

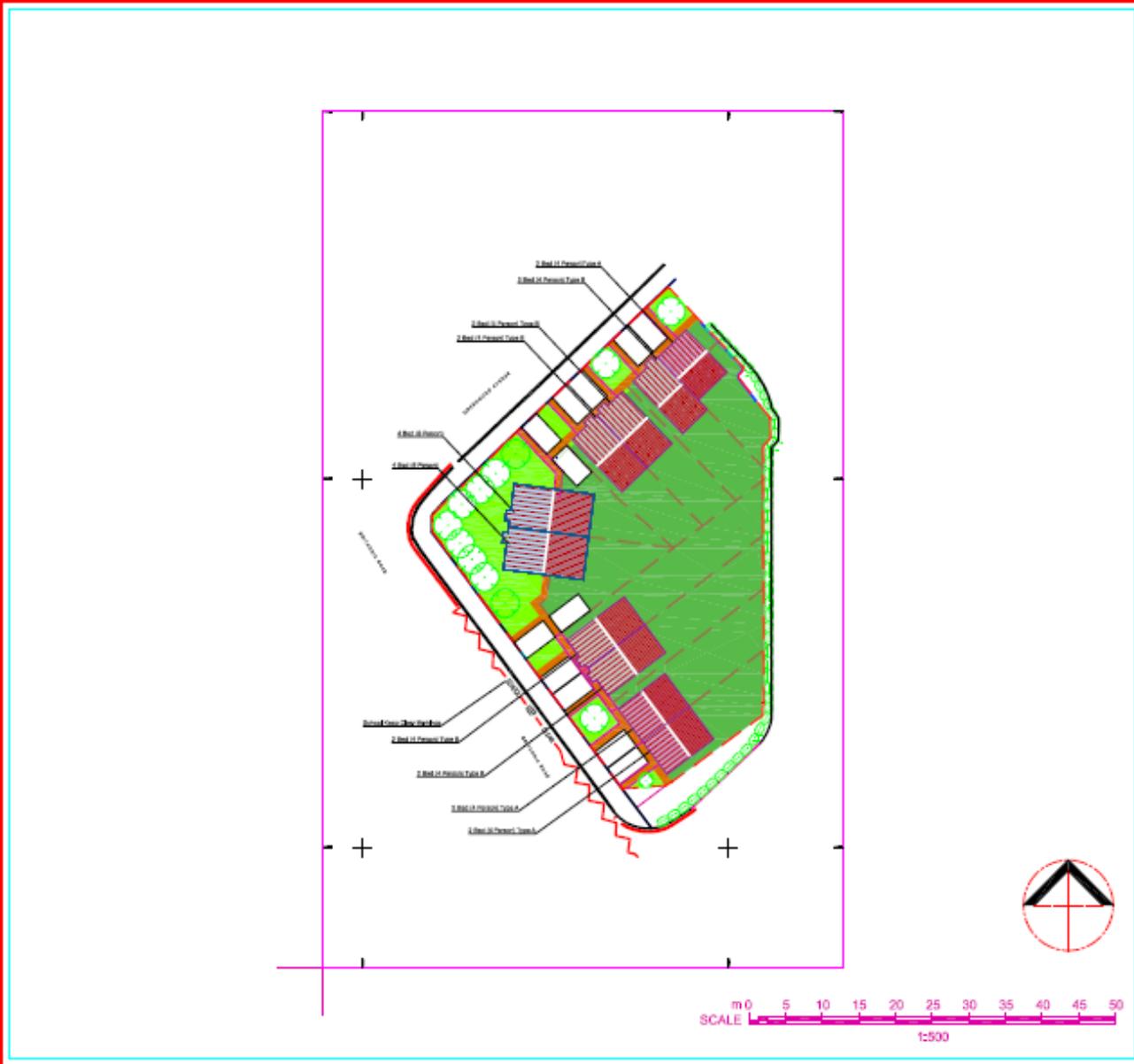
(Meeting ended at 4.07pm.)

This meeting was webcast live and is available to view on the Council's website (<http://sandwell.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>).

Contact Officer: Stephnie Hancock Democratic Services Unit 0121 569 3189
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The Cabinet – 20th March 2019



Notes
 The Contractor shall be responsible for setting out the work.
 All dimensions must be obtained or checked on the site.
 Please refer to the drawings to be used in preference to words.

Rev	Date	Revision Note	By	Check



Project: Britania Road Residential
Location: Britania Road, Rowley Regis

Sheet #: Site Layout

Phase: Preliminary

Drawn by	Date	Checked
JKA	18/04/2018	Steve Sedgwick
Scale: 1:500	1:500	1:500

Code	Level	Classification	Draw No.	Subs No.	Sheet No.
XX	XX	A-G(0-)	03	S0	

Job No.: Q17023
 Construction Drawing No. 1 of 1

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