

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE RESOURCES AND GOVERNANCE O&S**

**COMMITTEE – CALL-IN MEETING**

**1030 hours on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2017, Committee Room 2 – Action Notes**

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**Present:**

Councillor Waseem Zaffar (Chair)

Councillors Mohammed Afzal, Randal Brew, David Barrie, Yvonne Mosquito, Paul Tilsley, Rob Pocock, Sybil Spence,

**Also Present:**

Cllr Peter Griffiths, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homes

Cllr Ansar Ali Khan, Assistant Leader

Cllr Marge Bridle, Assistant Leader

Cllr Narinder Kooner, Assistant Leader

Iram Choudry, Research & Policy Officer, Scrutiny Office

Chris Jordon, Assistant Director

Jacqui Kennedy, Corporate Director

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services

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**1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST**

The Chairman advised the meeting to note that this meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site ([www.birminghamnewsroom.com](http://www.birminghamnewsroom.com)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mohammed Aikhlaq, Cllr Changese Khan, Cllr Ewan Mackey and Cllr Valerie Seabright.

### **3. CORPORATE RESOURCES & GOVERNANCE – ACTION NOTES**

#### **RESOLVED**

(See document No 1)

To note the action notes from July 2017

### **4. REQUEST FOR CALL-IN: TAKING FORWARD LOCAL LEADERSHIP**

(See document No 2)

Cllr Waseem Zaffar outlined the process for the call-in and noted that, following legal advice, Cllr Randal Brew would not be able to vote in the call-in as he had participated in the decision being made (as a substitute for Cllr R Alden at the Cabinet Committee Local Leadership).

Cllr Randal Brew set out his reasons for requesting the call-in:

- The decision was a novel one as it was requesting a change to the constitution mid-way through the year.
- Concerns were raised about the lack of consultation on the proposals within the report. He acknowledged there had been consultation at the start of the process but there had been no consultation on the current proposals included within the report.
- There was a lack of clarity and detail on a number of different areas within the report including : insufficient financial information relating to the cost of establishing the Ward Action Co-ordinator (WACs) and Relationship Manager posts, confusion on whether Ward plans were to be produced on the existing or new boundaries, the impact of moving to one and two member wards.
- The abolition of District Committees part way through the municipal year was particularly concerning for a number of reasons: a number of Districts had produced work programmes that continue through to the end of year, what would happen to these? There was no clarity or detail on the replacement governance model and there were questions around the remuneration of District Chairs.
- In the light of the ward boundary changes and introduction of single/double member wards in 2018, the September deadline for Ward plans was wholly unrealistic.
- The role of the Assistant Leaders in relation to the geographical areas had not been set out.
- Cllr Brew stressed he was in favour of devolution but he wanted to see it done correctly and the Assistant leaders should consider introducing these changes in 2018, following the all-out elections.

Cllr Wood added the following points:

- He felt the whole process had been rushed and there was danger this would raise expectation within local communities. The proposals listed within the report would have very little influence or authority without any devolved spending powers attached to the model.
- There were no details within the report as to which partners had signed up to these proposals

The Cabinet Member Cllr Peter Griffiths and the Assistant Leaders responded with the following points

- The proposals within the report were consistent with the Leaders vision for devolution across the city.
- Consultation on these proposals has been widespread and the Assistant Leaders had met with the Leaders of the opposition, over 70 councillors and had been engaging with District Committees since last year.
- Ward planning for this year would be a high level planning process, using existing information; ward plans would then be rolled out via a “bottom up process” next year. The neighbourhoods at the heart of ward plans will not change.
- This model would empower local councillors to come up with solutions to localised issues as there was an acceptance that “one size” would not fit all areas across the city. Councillors would be provided with a basket of tools to help shape services based on the needs of individual areas.
- There was no budgetary information included within this report as this was more about setting out a direction of travel, a further report containing more detailed information would be presented to the Cabinet Committee for Local leadership in September and a report approving the constitutional changes would be presented to CBM and Full Council in September.

Members of the Committee raised the following points

- The abolition of District Committees in September would create both confusion and a power vacuum across the city especially as there was no mechanism in place to replace them.
- How would this affect partners, especially those who have aligned their services in line with existing District structures?
- Members were not consulted on the contents of the current report. There was an acknowledgment that members were part of discussions very early on in the development of this model but there was strong consensus that members should have been consulted on the contents of the current report prior to discussion at the Cabinet Committee for Local Leadership
- The Assistant Leaders were scheduled to attend the next Corporate Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee on September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The members wanted to see the following information presented:

- Timeline and budget implications for appointing the Ward Actions Coordinators (WAC) and Relationship Managers;
- The numbers to be appointed and when that will happen;
- Further clarity on the job description for these posts both in terms of role capacity as well as the engagement and consultation element of the job;
- Ward Plans – guidelines and timescales;
- The number ward clusters and how they will be designed;
- Information on the transition plan as District Committees are abolished;
- Ward responsibilities for the individual Assistant Leaders.

The Cabinet Member, Assistant Leaders, Cllrs Brew and Wood then left the room.

**Resolved:**

That the decision taken by the Cabinet Committee Local Leadership should NOT be “called in” (five votes to two)

**5. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

None

**6. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None

**7. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

Agreed

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The meeting finished at 1225 hours.