



worcestershire
countycouncil

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Appointment of Chairmen and Vice-chairmen

	Chairman	Vice-Chairman
Committees		
Audit & Governance	Mr W P Gretton	Mr L C R Mallett
Pensions	Mr R W Banks	<i>tbc</i>
Planning & Regulatory	Mr R C Adams	Mr P Denham
Standards & Ethics	Mrs A T Hingley	Mr S R Peters
Waste Credit Governance	Mr W P Gretton	Mr L C R Mallett
Scrutiny		
OSPB	Mr R M Udall*	Mrs E A Eyre*
HOSC	Mr A C Roberts*	<i>To be referred to July meeting</i>
Adult Care and Well-being	Mr T A L Wells*	Mrs J M L A Griffiths
Children & Families	Mrs L R Duffy*	Mrs F M Oborski
Corporate & Communities	Mr C B Taylor*	Mr S R Peters
Environment & Economy	Dr K A Pollock*	Mr G J Vickery

Lead Scrutiny Members are as asterisked* Mr C J Bloore* to be the OSPB lead scrutiny member without portfolio.

For information

The Fire & Rescue Authority Chairman is Mr D W Prodger

The Chairman of SACRE is the Venerable Tenzin Choesang (Buddhist)

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14 May 2015

11. REPORTS OF CABINET MEMBERS WITH RESPONSIBILITY - CONTINUED

(a) REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR ECONOMY, SKILLS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Previously circulated

(b) REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRANSFORMATION AND COMMISSIONING

37. It is my pleasure to present an update report to Council on pertinent successes and challenges relating to the area of Transformation and Commissioning. My Cabinet remit has broad influence across the Council's activity and I will draw out some of those salient points in my report.

38. Following changes to the Council's operating model we have established the Commercial & Change directorate (COaCH), with an aim to ensure that the Council moves from being a good to becoming an excellent commissioning Council, and gets most value from those commissioned services.

39. Earlier this year the Council successfully recruited a new Director, Sander Kristel. Sander has brought a wealth of commercial experience with him, and is an excellent addition to the Strategic Leadership Team. Sander has restructured the COaCH Directorate Senior Leadership Team making the team more streamlined and effective, as well as delivering savings of over £100,000 per annum. We are proud of our achievements in this time of great change and financial challenge. We have started to develop our commercial team and more sophisticated commercial skills in the organisation ensuring that we do not only deliver the outcomes for our customers but also build stronger beneficial relationships with our providers and suppliers.

40. I would like to share with you the key parts of our accomplishments.

Market Development

41. To ensure the Council has a wide variety of quality providers available to commission its services from, it is key that there are buoyant markets for Worcestershire. The recent launch of the "Your Life, Your Choice" website particularly gives self-funders and, increasingly people with personal budgets, easy access to that market place, a simplified assessment of their needs and gives providers (large and small) a low-cost and quick way to provide their services. In the first week more than 2,000 users accessed the system to get information and advice.

42. To support and encourage such significant market development the council ran a large number of market engagement events, alongside some 120 individual meetings liaising with over 600 providers. The ['Your Life Your Choice Provider Event'](#) was attended by 250 providers. Further networking and information sharing events were attended by well more than 400 people. Our efforts have not gone unnoticed by providers and we have received a very positive response to this new approach. They welcome the opportunity to start this open dialogue early to build positive relationships going forward.

43. In the meantime we believe that there is a wide variety of provider models that could be adopted. This could be a great opportunity for the Voluntary Community Sector in Worcestershire and we are also actively encouraging, for instance, staff to look at innovative models such as Social Enterprises and mutuals.

Digital Council and Customers

44. As the world becomes increasingly online and customers expect to have more choice and influence, the Council is leading an innovative programme to promote the use of digital access for our communities. This has been centred on ensuring the right method of access is available for our communities including self-service, while also ensuring we still have the appropriate resources to support those that can't self-serve.

45. We have seen a number of successes including 52% of all Highways enquiries now being received online thanks to simple 'Report It' access for customers. The Council continues to develop its online services as part of the Digital Council commitment. We have refocused the web presence including the Council's main website, Business Central and Act Local. The total number of pages was reduced from nearly 8,000 to 800 significantly simplifying website use based on user evidence and feedback. A plain English approach is being used and radical improvements in user experience via mobile devices have been achieved. The Council invested further in its communications systems and 68,000 calls are now automatically directed delivering cash savings. Front-line services continue to be supported via the innovative use of technology, examples include smart phones for children's social care workers resulting in more front-line face-to-face time with the people that really need it.

46. A contract was signed for the commissioning of the (customer) Hub with the aim to improve customer experience further and provide more services end-to-end regardless of what organisation actually delivers those services. The Council has successfully commissioned the information and technology business for schools to Capita Children's Services, which returned over £1m to the Council and provided a springboard for Capita to provide improved and more coordinated services to the County's schools. The council has also successfully commissioned ICT Managed Services to Hewlett Packard which will achieve further savings and will enable significant investment in the council's technology.

47. To enable customers to access our digital services and support their lives through online services they will need to have access to quality, high-speed Broadband. The Superfast Worcestershire broadband programme remains ahead of schedule to enable 55,000 premises by 2016. To date more than 24,000 business and residential premises are already now able to connect to fibre broadband through the programme. The Council has secured a deal for a 'Superfast Extension Programme' with BT that will see a further £6.2m invested into

broadband infrastructure in the county, enabling more than 8,000 additional homes and businesses access to high-speed fibre broadband by 2018. The additional investment was made possible through further investment of £2.39m from the Worcestershire LEP, secured from the Government's Growth Deal, a further £2.39m from BDUK and £1.42m from BT.

48. When the extension programme is complete it will increase the percentage of homes and businesses able to access fibre-based broadband in Worcestershire to more than 95%; with 94% of all premises across the county able to access superfast speeds of 24 megabits per second (Mbps) and above.

49. Use of social media and other innovative strategies to engage with young people has supported the drive to bringing the unknown NEET figure down to 8.6% compared with 26% at the same time last year. Through the GoOn Worcestershire partnership model the Council is actively encouraging and supporting customers having the right skills to go online and make use of the digital world including the Council's services. We continuously assess in what areas or groups the use of Digital has not yet been adopted to ensure that those people are not excluded.

Modernising Human Resources

50. The Council continues to recognise the staff who commission or provide our services have to be at the centre of our improvement journey. The Council continues to shift towards a self-service model for managers and staff. One example is the expanded recruitment self-service, which has speeded up the recruitment process from an average 41 to 27 days, releasing capacity, enabling savings and achieving better results from the process.

51. Within such a changing environment it is key that we invest in the Council's leadership. New Management Leadership Competencies were launched including eight course programme supporting Transformational Leadership in Worcestershire and 45 courses delivered to over 400 managers covering core training including Managing Beyond the Basics; Proactive Performance Management and Commercial Approach to Commissioning. The council has targeted training and specific tailored workshops for commissioners to ensure we move towards being an excellent commissioning organisation.

52. We also re-launched new behaviours related to the corporate values; outlining our organisation's expectations for Customer Focus; Freedom within Boundaries and Can Do Attitude which will now be included in all Job Descriptions. The Learning & Development team continues to support front-line Social Care Development including training on changes to legislation such as the Care Act. The team delivered training to nearly 2,000 social workers ensuring our combined workforce were fully prepared for introduction of Care Act on 1 April. Maximising talent within our workforce is one of our key priorities and our development and apprenticeship programme is already more aligned to the new operating model.

Property and Estates

53. The Council has managed more than £60m worth of construction related investment under design or on site during the past year. As the Council continues to drive down the 'back-office costs' of the organisation, Heads of Terms have been agreed with HMRC and DEFRA for relocation to County Hall in 2016 which will bring £1m revenue to the Council. Over £6 million in capital receipts have been

received from the sale of redundant properties, whilst supporting economic regeneration, as obsolete buildings come back into use.

54. Since 2011 130 buildings have been released from the council's control. Property services have been a vital support to enable the Library Service to support local groups/Town Councils to run their libraries. There are projects nearing successful completion in Broadway, Wythall and Upton. Stourport Civic facility opened in March this year, which has already received pleasing feedback from customers. This project that has seen a number of public sector partners co-locating and integrating how they work on a site chosen by local people. The Council has commissioned its Construction Design Unit to a private international consultancy, ensuring greater service resilience and transferring risk from the Council.

55. The most significant achievement however was the agreement between six public sector partners on the first of its kind single wholly public sector owned property company Place Partnership Ltd, which was fully supported by the Cabinet Office. Staff consultation and the recruitment of the Managing Director has commenced and the formal launch of the company will be in Autumn 2015. Place Partnership will be looking to achieve at least £75m worth of savings for partners over 10 years.

Legal & Democratic Services

56. The service supported the Directorate of Adult Social Services & Health in ensuring vulnerable people are safe, saving £2m through successful legal action and ensuring tax money is spend on those who really need it. The service also delivered £100,000 pa saving on the public notice contract through a more innovative approach.

57. The service has seen the doubling of care proceedings since 2010 whilst hugely reducing the average time to complete them (from 71 weeks in 2012 to 34 weeks in 2013 and to 26 weeks in 2015). The service has achieved successful outcomes in a large number of complex Children's Services cases, and a significant new legal area of intervention led to a custodial sentence for persistent Breach of Injunctions around use of social media.

58. Democratic services continues to support a wide range of democratic functions within the council whilst streamlining and modernising the service. The service continues to support the council's main priorities such as Open for Business including securing confirmation of the Compulsory Purchase Order for Hoobrook Link Road (major BEC project) and the transfer of Hartlebury Castle to Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust

Communication and Branding

59. Worcestershire's reputation is key to inward investment, jobs, tourism, keeping talented young people in the county, the way people feel and are proud of the place they live and our relationship with Government. There has therefore been a renewed focus on our reputation and, in partnership with the LEP, the Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, councils and other organisations, significant efforts are being made to make World Class Worcestershire a strong and recognisable brand.

60. A number of successful inward investment events were run which included our attendance at the London MIPIM (**the world's leading property market**) and our

own recent event at Worcestershire County Cricket Club, which was attended by over 100 investors and interested parties. The County Council was also nominated in two most highly-recognised and respected annual Local Government sector awards run by the Municipal Journal and Local Government Chronicle publications. This past year has seen a record number of enquiries from the media. A total of 1,141 requests for information were received and more than 800 media releases issued to ensure businesses and residents remain informed on the services and change being delivered by the County Council. Positive and balanced press coverage has significantly improved on last year, ensuring the Councils activities are accurately reported to our tax payers.

61. The Council now has more than 11,000 followers on Twitter and 1,072 'likes' on Facebook and Social Media is continuing to become a more important tool to communicate for our staff as well as customers. Successful Social Media training was therefore run to assist Leaders in the organisation to get the most from there Digital profiles.

Supporting the Business with Intelligence and Performance monitoring

62. As an excellent Commissioning Council we base our decisions and quality assurance on evidence. The services are focusing on horizon scanning, forecasting and scenario planning, as well as supporting the business to understand customer need through market research and analysis. This has been evidenced through the collaborative work with Children's Services and Public Health to support the Early Help Needs Assessment (EHNA).

63. Performance Management of the Corporate Plan through the Balanced Scorecard has enabled the Council to focus on its core priorities and improve outcomes for residents of Worcestershire. Identifying where things are going well and where the drive for improvement are essential to success. Within an environment that is changing at pace it is even more important that risks are robustly managed. A recent audit of risk management gave an overall audit opinion of 'significant assurance' giving the leadership the confidence that it requires.

In summary

64. I would like to thank the Chief Executive, Sander Kristel, the other directors and their teams for their drive and support. Local Government has seen much change in recent years, and the leadership and innovation the officers that work for this Council continue to show is truly humbling.

65. Commissioning is at the heart of our Council's operating model, and is the stark difference to the 'salami slicing cuts' that other councils have chosen to adopt. The Council has used innovation and the very best of the commercial sector to ensure we continue to deliver the quality services our communities demand. We are well on our way to becoming the leading commissioning Council in the country.

John Campion

Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning

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14 May 2015

12. QUESTION TIME - CONTINUED

Question 3 – Early Education

3. Mr R M Udall will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families:

"Can the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families confirm what funding, help and support is provided for parents by the County Council for childcare and early education for two year old children?"

Question 4 – Bed blocking

4. Mr J W Parish will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Health and Well-being:

"Given the serious situation being caused by bed blocking at NHS Worcestershire hospitals would the Cabinet Member with the Responsibility for Health and Well-being please inform me of how many 'step-down' and rehabilitation beds are available in the county?"

Question 5 – Street lighting

5. Mrs F M Oborski will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways:

"Many members of the public in Kidderminster, whilst supporting the idea of switching off two out of three street lights at midnight, are appalled at the way this policy has been carried out. Specifically they are angry that there was no consultation with local County Councillors or residents about which individual lights are either on or off!

In some streets in my Division it means that lights which poke out through street trees are left on, giving very restricted light, whilst unobstructed lights are switched off. Similarly it means that the tree-lined foot way "Offmore Lane" which is used by shift workers walking into town and people leaving events at Kidderminster Cricket Club is in total darkness whilst nearby Wordsworth Crescent is brilliantly illuminated!

Can the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways assure me that a review will be held into the selection of lights to be switched off and that the detailed local knowledge of local Members will be utilised to ensure that public safety is not compromised?"

Question 6 – Content of school lessons

6. Mrs F M Oborski will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families:

"School pupils, especially those in the primary phase, are extremely trusting of members of the teaching profession and really do believe everything their teacher tells them. This puts a very great responsibility upon teachers; especially at election time, to maintain "professional standards" and not to seek to impose their personal political beliefs upon vulnerable, trusting young children.

During the recent election campaign: my 10-year old god daughter's homework consisted of Labour Party campaign literature on which she was asked to comment as to why her family should Vote Labour!

Her 8-year old brother came home, from the same school, and told his parents that "You must Vote Labour, they are the only Party that wants us to live!" The same child was also taught the "anti-Nick Clegg" "*I'm sorry*" song by his teacher!

Does he agree with me that these are examples of completely unacceptable, unprofessional actions by the teachers concerned?

What steps can he and senior officers of this Council take to ensure that appropriate action is taken to prevent this sort of behaviour by teachers in Council schools who are our employees?"

Question 7 – Infrastructure proposals

7. Mrs E B Tucker will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Skills & Infrastructure:

"Infrastructure proposals for Pershore within the SWDP are very limited and planning guidance appears to tie the hands of Highway Development in what they can require of developers. How will the County Council work to prevent worsening of congestion and highways safety?"

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

Worcester (01905) 763763, Kidderminster (01562) 822511
or Minicom: Worcester (01905) 766399

Specific Contact Point for this Report

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Worcester (01905) 766621 Email:
jhigginbotham@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.