

**Council****Thursday, 9 November 2017, County Hall, Worcester - 10.00 am****Present:****Minutes**

Mrs A T Hingley (Chairman), Mr A A J Adams, Mr R C Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr A T Amos, Mr T Baker-Price, Mr R W Banks, Mr R M Bennett, Mr C J Bloore, Mr G R Brookes, Mrs J A Brunner, Mr B Clayton, Mr P Denham, Ms R L Dent, Mr N Desmond, Mrs E A Eyre, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr P Grove, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr A I Hardman, Mr P B Harrison, Mr M J Hart, Ms P A Hill, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Dr C Hotham, Mr M E Jenkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr R C Lunn, Mr P M McDonald, Mr L C R Mallett, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Mrs F M Oborski, Ms T L Onslow, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs J A Potter, Mrs M A Rayner, Mr A C Roberts, Mr C Rogers, Mr J H Smith, Mr A Stafford, Ms C M Stalker, Mr C B Taylor, Mr R P Tomlinson, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall, Ms R Vale and Ms S A Webb

**Available papers**

The members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. 7 questions submitted to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (previously circulated);
- C. The Minutes of the meetings held on 14 September 2017 and 19 October 2017 (previously circulated).

**1937 Apologies and Declaration of Interests (Agenda item 1)**

Apologies were received from Mr A Fry, Mr S M Mackay, Mr J A D O'Donnell, Prof J W Raine, and Mr T A L Wells.

Mr P Grove declared an interest in Agenda item 5 – Fire and Rescue Authority – as a Police and Crime Commissioner Ambassador.

Mrs T L Onslow declared an interest in Agenda item 5 – Fire and Rescue Authority – as the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner.

Dr C Hotham declared an DPI in Agenda item 7 – Notice

		of Motion 1 – as his wife had a private GP practice – and would not participate in that item.
1938	<b>Public Participation (Agenda item 2)</b>	None.
1939	<b>Minutes (Agenda item 3)</b>	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the Minutes of the meetings held on 14 September 2017 and 19 October 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
1940	<b>Chairman's Announcements (Agenda item 4)</b>	The Chairman referred Members to the printed announcements.
1941	<b>Fire and Rescue Authority (Agenda item 5)</b>	The Chairman welcomed Mr Nathan Travis, the Chief Fire Officer, to the meeting. The Vice-Chairman of the Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority, Mr P A Tuthill, presented his report to the Council and he and Mr Travis answered questions asked by members of the Council.
1942	<b>Reports of Cabinet - Matters which require a decision by Council - Additions to the Capital Programme - Phase 3 of the development of in-house Supported Living Accommodation and residential facilities within Children's Services (Agenda item 6 (a))</b>	<p>The Council considered additions to the Capital Programme in respect of Phase 3 of the development of in-house Supported Living Accommodation and residential facilities within Children's Services. The details were set out in the report.</p> <p>In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Leader introduced the report. He commented that Phase 3 of the development of in-house Post-16 Supported Living Accommodation and residential facilities would be funded by revenue savings. The payback period would be short and the project would benefit from capital appreciation from the acquisition of the buildings</li> <li>• The Cabinet Member for Children and Families commented that the provision of in-house facilities would enable services to be close to educational, vocational and social needs of service users and make it easier for family visits. However out-of-county and remote facilities would still be necessary for children with particularly complex needs.</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> that the addition of £4.1 million to the</p>

**1943 Reports of Cabinet - Matters which require a decision by Council - Local Transport Plan 4 (Agenda item 6 (a))**

**Capital Programme be approved for Phase 3 of the development of in-house Post-16 Supported Living Accommodation and residential facilities within Children's Services to be funded by revenue savings from the projects.**

The Council considered Local Transport Plan 4. The details were set out in the report.

In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:

- The Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure introduced the report. He commented that LTP4 was a statutory document which provided the strategic overview of the Council's vision for transport infrastructure in the county up to 2031. The outcome of the extensive consultation exercise had been included in the report. He apologised for the late availability of the Health Impact Assessment
- It was important that LTP4 was embedded in other strategic documents including the Corporate Plan and the Strategic Economic Plan. LTP3 had successfully provided the basis for the development of a number of important transport schemes. Significant revisions to LTP4 had been made following consultation with partners and the views of Scrutiny had been noted. A thriving local economy was dependent on efficient transport infrastructure and it was hoped that LTP4 would be successful in drawing down vital resources from the Government
- The Chairman of OSPB thanked the Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure, officers, scrutiny members and district and parish councils for their contribution to the scrutiny process. The Board had agreed comments on the draft which included suggested changes be made to LTP4 and Council should consider that request. An amendment was being proposed purely as a procedural means of including the recommendations of the Board in the Plan.

An amendment was moved by Mr C J Bloore and seconded by Mrs F M Oborski that LTP 4 be amended to include the comments from the Board:

- The County Council lobbies District Councils where appropriate and if necessary for the establishment of low emission zones, and

- Due to the impact on local communities when the M5 and/or M42 are closed, the provision of suitable bypass infrastructure should be included in the Plan.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised that the proposed amendment represented a change to the draft plan and therefore Council, if it so wished, could adopt it as an amendment to the Plan.

Those in favour of the amendment made the following comments:

- When closures occurred on the M5 and M42, motorists should be notified of alternative routes. In the long term it was necessary to provide suitable bypass infrastructure to ease congestion in Bromsgrove
- District councils had an important role in the reduction of air pollution. This Council should consider the introduction of low emission zones for certain areas of the county
- Congestion in certain parts of Worcester was particularly heavy and this had impacted upon the level of air pollution. The local bus company had blatantly responded to the congestion difficulties by producing a contra-flow bus service along Canterbury Road, Worcester. The Council needed to put forward a stronger response to congestion issues
- The Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure had stated that 40,000 people a year were dying from the impact of air pollution and yet LTP4 said very little about how low emission zones would be introduced
- External studies had demonstrated that the dualling of the A38 would only be as effective as at its narrowest point and would move congestion from one part on the A38 to another. Bypasses were not part of the Council's transport strategy and therefore the proposed amendment was legitimate
- To vote against this amendment would be ignoring the views of members of Scrutiny. Members who had voted for the changes to LTP4 at OSPB were now being asked to vote against them
- The need for a bypass for Bromsgrove had been recognised for a number of years and Council now had the opportunity to include it in the Plan
- The Chairman of the OSPB indicated that Board

members had been given the chance to comment on the submission to Council and no comments had been received suggesting the wording of the OSPB comments was inaccurate. It had been made clear that the purpose of the Board meeting had been to make recommendations to Council and the Board's comments had been circulated accordingly.

Those against the amendment made the following comments:

- There were sufficient hooks within LTP4 for each of the points raised in the OSPB recommendation to be addressed in the future therefore the amendment was unnecessary
- Air quality was a matter for district councils in consultation with the relevant authorities. The County Council would only input when required
- The County Council had a bold and ambitious plan for the A38. LTP3 had successfully drawn down £7.5m of funding from the Government and the Council was working with the Birmingham and Solihull LEP to find additional funding therefore there was no need for specific reference to a bypass in LTP4
- Concerns were expressed as to whether the circulated comments were accurate. The Chairman of the Economy and Environment Panel commented that he believed the OSPB had not agreed to the A38 bypass being specifically included in LTP4. The Board had asked for more help from Highways England to resolve the congestion issues associated with the A38 and he had agreed to meet representatives of Highway England accordingly
- The closure of the M5 and M42 also had an impact on residents living to the south of the county
- The Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure suggested that the proposed amendment confused the issues associated with temporary closure of the M5 and M42 and the inadequate and out of date information provided by Highways England with the provision of a permanent solution for the congestion issues by the creation of a bypass for the A38. He refuted the suggestion that he had stated that 40,000 people were dying from air pollution when he had actually stated that the impact of air pollution would result in people on average dying 3 weeks

earlier than expected. The Council had not yet received details of requisite house building and funding proposals to support the inclusion of the Bromsgrove Bypass in the Plan.

On a named vote the amendment was lost.

Those voting in favour were:

Ms P Agar, Mr C J Bloore, Mr P Denham, Ms P A Hill, Dr C Hotham, Mr M E Jenkins, Mr R C Lunn, Mr P M McDonald, Mr L C R Mallett, Mrs F M Oborski, Mrs M A Rayner, Ms C M Stalker, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr R M Udall (14)

Those voting against were:

Mrs A T Hingley, Mr A A J Adams, Mr R C Adams, Mr A T Amos, Mr T Baker-Price, Mr R W Banks, Mr R M Bennett, Mr G R Brookes, Mrs J A Brunner, Mr B Clayton, Ms R L Dent, Mr N Desmond, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr P Grove, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr A I Hardman, Mr P B Harrison, Mr M J Hart, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Mr A D Kent, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Ms T L Onslow, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs J A Potter, Mr A C Roberts, Mr C Rogers, Mr J H Smith, Mr A Stafford, Mr C B Taylor, Mr R P Tomlinson, Mr P A Tuthill, Ms R Vale, Ms S A Webb. (37)

Those in favour of the substantive motion made the following comments:

- It was hoped that the South Worcestershire Transport Strategy would include proposals for a replacement bridge at Eckington
- LTP4 was an aspirational document rather than an action plan. It was anticipated that the Plan would evolve over time and therefore it needed to be flexible to be able to adapt to changes in circumstances and address the huge transport challenges facing the county. The Council was investing in highways infrastructure to address this challenge, including investment in other modes of transport
- The Plan would benefit other parts of Worcestershire and therefore it was unjustifiable to reject the Plan on the basis of unresolved issues in Bromsgrove
- The Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure commented that the Council would be supporting district councils with the production

**1944 Reports of Cabinet - Matters which require a decision by Council - Pershore Infrastructure Improvements (Agenda item 6**

of their local plans (which were different from the strategies listed in Appendix B of LTP4). The Council was already funding projects to tackle congestion and thereby improve air pollution. It was not possible to provide a timescale for the Strategies at this stage. The key driver was the provision of housing at district level. The Council would then respond by providing the appropriate transport infrastructure.

Those against the substantive motion made the following comments:

- Bromsgrove District Council had previously agreed that it had no confidence in LTP4 and had called upon the County Council to reopen the consultation process. The data underlying the Plan was flawed and all the assumptions were wrong. It was said that certain members were voting in contradiction to views expressed at the Bromsgrove District Council
- There were some excellent aspects to the Plan but the views of the public and Bromsgrove District Council had been ignored in relation to the Bromsgrove Bypass. There were no credible plans for addressing traffic congestion issues in Bromsgrove
- It was queried what support would be given to district councils to develop local area-based strategies, whether these strategies would include measures to tackle congestion, reduce air pollution and increase public transport use and details of the timescale for these strategies.

**RESOLVED that the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) 2018 – 2031 for Worcestershire be adopted as part of the Council's Policy Framework.**

The Council considered Pershore Infrastructure Improvements. The details were set out in the report.

In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:

- The Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure introduced the report and commented that there were three elements to the scheme: the Northern Link Road, Pinvin Junction, and Station Road/Wyre Road Junction. The scheme would cost £11.6m, some of which had already been received from the LEP however the

(a))

Council would be required to raise a further £5.6m. He acknowledged there was a dispute locally about the nature of the junction at Station Road/Wyre Road and a solution was being sought

- The Leader commented that this project was an example of the County Council putting in the necessary transport infrastructure to support economic and housing growth. He paid tribute to the contribution of the local councillor in bringing the project to fruition
- The local councillor welcomed the proposal which provided value for money and would solve the congestion issues at Pinvin Crossroads.

**RESOLVED** that the addition of £11.6 million to the Capital Programme be agreed with £6 million being provisionally secured through Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership and local district council and developer contribution for the purpose of completing the Pershore Infrastructure Improvement scheme.

**1945 Reports of Cabinet - Matters which require a decision by Council - New Capital Investment - A4440 Worcester Southern Link Road Phase 4 Carrington Bridge to Powick (Agenda item 6 (a))**

The Council considered new capital investment for A4440 Worcester Southern Link Road Phase 4 Carrington Bridge to Powick. The details were set out in the report.

In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:

- The Leader introduced the report. He commented that this was one of the largest transport infrastructure investments in the county for many decades. It would result in the dualling of the carriageway from Junction 7 of the M5 to Powick roundabout. It would relieve congestion in and around Worcester. It showed the benefits of having a clear economic strategy linked to the Development Plan in attracting funding to the county
- The scheme would have clear benefits for residents living to the west of Worcester
- A local member commented that the scheme would not solve existing or projected traffic congestion issues. The Council needed to commit to the completion of the Worcester ring road to the north of the city
- In order to ease disruption caused by the construction works, improve traffic flows and ease safety concerns in the area, the Bluebell Farm Scheme at Upton-upon-Severn should receive



**1946 Reports of  
Cabinet -  
Matters which  
require a  
decision by  
Council - 100%  
Business Rates  
Retention - Pilot  
(Agenda item 6  
(a))**

- urgent attention as part of LTP4
- The scheme would help journey times from Malvern to the motorway and to the Worcestershire Royal Hospital
- The Council needed to look at alternative approaches other than road building to solve congestion issues
- The Leader commented that an evidence based application had been submitted to the DfT with traffic modelling that indicated that the scheme would meet housing and employment growth, speed up traffic and increase capacity. The traffic scheme in Worcester City centre was being upgraded to improve traffic flow and ease congestion. The Council was taking a balanced approach to improving transport in the county utilising all modes of transport.

**RESOLVED that the addition of £62 million to the Capital Programme be approved for A4440 Worcester Southern Link Phase 4 Carrington Bridge to Powick and that the cash limits are updated accordingly.**

The Council considered the 100% Business Rates Retention - Pilot. The details were set out in the report.

In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:

- The Leader introduced the report. He commented that if the bid to the Government was successful it would enable the county to retain business rates of £5.7m of which £3.5m would be a gain for the County Council. This bid was supported by district councils and was a major step towards self-sufficiency for the Council
- £3.5m was nowhere near enough to make the Council self-sufficient and it was misleading to suggest so. The Council should make representations to the Government to increase the Revenue Support Grant for the Council
- Towards the end of the consultation period, the County Council had put forward an alternative proposal to district councils which suggested that the County Council should receive a 59% share of business rates. How had this approach been decided and by whom? The Leader commented that the Council had had a limited timeframe to submit a bid to the Government and therefore discussions with district colleagues had had to be

**1947 Reports of  
Cabinet -  
Summary of  
decisions taken  
(Agenda item 6  
(b))**

held late in the process. The proposed share ratio would be on a one year basis for the pilot scheme and did not reflect future settlements. All parties had signed up to the final submission. This was a step forward towards self-sufficiency but it did not represent the amount the Council would receive when it became 100% self-funded

- In response to a query, the Leader explained that the additional £5.7m referred to the growth in business rates and not the base line total of £60m

**RESOLVED that the submission to participate in the pilot for 100% Business Rates Retention be endorsed.**

The Leader of the Council reported the following topics and questions were answered on them:

- Children's Social Care Update
- Resources Report
- Worcestershire Data Sharing Charter
- Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) Annual Report 2016/17
- Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy Update (JMWMS)
- Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy
- Kidderminster Railway Station
- Infrastructure Engineering Term Contract
- Updated Policy on Delayed and Accelerated Transfer - Placement of Pupils out of their Chronological Age Group including Summer Born Children starting school
- Adoption Regionalisation
- Proposed Engagement on Options for Future Delivery - Connect Short-Term Service and Council-Provided Day Services for Adults with a Learning Disability.

In response to queries regarding the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy, the Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure explained that the train service from Kidderminster to London was in addition to the two trains per hour from Worcester. In order to increase the frequency and speed of trains from London to Worcester, the Henwick turn-back would be created. He acknowledged that the proposals would have an impact on service provision to the west of Worcester.

**1948 Notices of  
Motion - Notice**

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion as set out in the agenda papers standing in the names of Ms P Agar,

**of Motion 1 -  
Privatised  
health care  
provision  
(Agenda item 7)**

Mr P M McDonald, Mr R M Udall, Mr P Denham, Mr C J Bloore and Ms C M Stalker.

The motion was moved by Ms P Agar and seconded by Mr P M McDonald.

The Council agreed to deal with the motion on the day.

Those in favour of the motion made the following comments:

- The Chief Executive of the NHS would wish to see NHS sustainability and transformation plans to take the shape of Accountable Care Organisations. ACOs were a mechanism for limiting the care that the NHS offered. Patients who were deemed poor value for money would be denied care. Providers would be allowed to keep the profits and carry the risks of any overspending. ACOs would effectively privatise the NHS. Demand management techniques would drive patients into the private sector. There was no evidence that ACOs benefit the NHS or patients. Privatisation was not the way forward for the NHS
- The introduction of an American-style ACO approach would see millions of pounds wasted on the development an internal market. STPs would lead to the withdrawal and restriction of treatments particularly of over the counter products. STPs were forcing cuts under the guise of efficiency savings. Doctors would be dictated as to what care they would be allowed to provide
- Under the Capped Expenditure Process, the Government was informing NHS Trusts that if they failed to meet targets then funds would be withdrawn at a time when most Trusts were struggling. It was right to be concerned about the potential privatisation of the NHS especially in circumstances where private sector companies had withdrawn and the NHS did not have the capacity to pick the service up.

Those against the motion made the following comments:

- The Cabinet Member for Adult Services indicated that the STPs were already in place in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. ACOs aimed to build on the efforts to integrate health systems. NHS England expected STPs to emerge into ACOs and this would take a number of years. An

		<p>ACO would provide a variety of contracts for delivery of the service, free at the point of delivery. The NHS had always commissioned services from outside the state sector to balance the financial constraints with the best outcomes. The Council was committed to providing the best ways of integrating care by working in partnership across the whole system. Structural change would not be implemented for the sake of it without a suitable business case. ACOs did not necessarily mean privatisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most CCGs were effectively operating as small businesses and needed to operate in an effective and efficient manner</li> <li>• There was no evidence that the STP for Worcestershire would lead to privatisation therefore the Notice of Motion was irrelevant</li> </ul> <p><b>On being put to the vote, the motion was lost.</b></p>
<b>1949</b>	<b>Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 2 - Mercury School Finance System (Agenda item 7)</b>	<p>The Council had before it a Notice of Motion as set out in the agenda papers standing in the names of Mr R C Lunn, Mr R M Udall, Mr P M McDonald, Mr P Denham, Mr C J Bloore and Ms C M Stalker.</p> <p>The motion was moved by Mr R C Lunn and seconded by Mr P M McDonald who both spoke in favour of it.</p> <p>The Council agreed to deal with the motion on the day.</p> <p>A number of members also spoke in favour of the motion and the general tenor of the debate was in favour.</p> <p><b>Council RESOLVED: "Council calls upon the CMR to consider providing a report to a future Cabinet, providing a full explanation behind the ongoing issues with the Mercury School Finance System, which will include what is being done to resolve the issues of concern and who is responsible for the process. Council seeks information regarding the cost incurred by the Council in trying to rectify the ongoing problems and challenges."</b></p>
<b>1950</b>	<b>Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 3 - Diagnosis of Children with autism (Agenda</b>	<p>The Council had before it a Notice of Motion as set out in the agenda papers standing in the names of Mr R M Udall, Mr R C Lunn, Mr P M McDonald, Mr P Denham, and Ms C M Stalker.</p> <p>The motion was moved by Mr R M Udall and seconded by Mr P Denham who both spoke in favour of it.</p>

	<p>item 7)</p> <p>The Council agreed to deal with the motion on the day.</p> <p>The following amendment was moved by Mr M J Hart and seconded by Mr J H Smith:</p> <p><i>"Council notes the length of time it can take in Worcestershire from point of referral to diagnosis for a child to be diagnosed with autism. Council notes the Umbrella Pathway is experiencing high demand. Council notes that a group of education and health commissioners and providers are currently looking at the reasons for the huge increase in referrals and how the pathway can be made as efficient and timely as possible for children. The review is scheduled to conclude by the end of January 2018.</i></p> <p><i>Council therefore requests OSPB to consider looking at the outcome of the review and liaising with the Children and Families Panel for any input they may wish to have and to make any recommendations accordingly."</i></p> <p>The mover and seconder accepted the amendment which became the substantive motion as altered.</p> <p>A number of members also spoke in favour of the motion and the general tenor of the debate was in favour.</p> <p><b>On being put to the meeting the substantive motion as altered was agreed.</b></p>
<p><b>1951 Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 4 - Transport Hierachy (Agenda item 7)</b></p>	<p>The Council had before it a Notice of Motion as set out in the agenda papers standing in the names of Mrs E B Tucker, Prof J W Raine, Mr M E Jenkins and Mrs F M Oborski.</p> <p>The motion was moved by Mr M E Jenkins and seconded by Mrs E B Tucker who both spoke in favour of it.</p> <p>The Chairman also invited Group Leaders or their nominees to contribute before the Motion stood referred to Cabinet.</p> <p><b>As the Motion was in relation to the exercise of an executive function it then stood referred to the Cabinet for a decision.</b></p>
<p><b>1952 Annual State of the County report of the Leader of the</b></p>	<p>The Leader of the Council presented her report which concerned a number of overarching issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open for Business</li> <li>• Children and Families</li> </ul>

**Council  
(Agenda item 8)**

- Environment
- Health and Wellbeing
- Addressing or financial challenge
- An Enabling Council
- The way we work
- Pension Fund

The Leader answered questions about his report which included:

- The number of jobs created in the county that were full-time equivalent
- Was he satisfied that the generation of new homes and business growth was providing the expected financial return for the county?
- The plans to secure additional funds post Brexit
- The purpose and regularity of meetings of the North Cotswold Line Task Force Board
- Improvement of the working relationship between the Council and developers
- The Leader and the Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure to liaise with the local councillor regarding the involvement of Natural England's Natural Flood Mechanism Team in flooding issues associated with a number of brooks in the Broadway division
- An assurance be provided that the flood scheme at Upton-upon-Severn would not be further delayed
- Would the timescale for the introduction of the Alternative Delivery Model for Children's Services allow enough time for an adequate consultation period?
- Whether there would be a review of the Council's approach to public transport
- Did the faster and more proportionate response from social care result from greater use of the telephone rather than staff visits under the Three Conversations Model?

The Chairman thanked the Leader for his report.

**1953 Question Time  
(Agenda item 9)**

Seven questions had been received by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The answers are attached in the Appendix.

**1954 Reports of  
Committees -**

The Committee received the report of the Audit and Governance Committee containing a summary of the decisions taken.

**Audit and  
Governance  
Committee  
(Agenda item 10  
(a))**

In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:

- The difficulties associated with the signing off of the Accounts had resulted from finance staff being transferred to address issues associated with the Mercury payroll system. The staff who replaced them were less experienced and their work had not received an adequate level of quality assurance. Previously the Council had a very good record of publishing the Accounts ahead of the statutory deadline. It was important that this year's experience was not repeated. The Chairman of the Committee responded that the Committee would be analysing the lessons learned and ensure that the difficulties experienced this year were not repeated. He was convinced that this was a one-off event and not a systematic problem
- Concern was expressed about the cost implications of the transfer of staff to address issues raised by the performance of the Mercury payroll system and that the Council was subsidising Liberata. The Chairman of the Committee commented that the additional costs would be reported to the Committee accordingly
- Concern was expressed about the impact of the tighter statutory timescale for publishing the Accounts in 2018. The Chairman of the Committee commented that the Committee was aware of the timeframe for the 2017/18 Accounts and would be monitoring performance closely.

**1955 Reports of  
Committees -  
Pensions  
Committee  
(Agenda item 10  
(b))**

The Committee received the report of the Pensions Committee containing a summary of the decisions taken.

In the ensuing debate, concern was expressed about investment of pension funds in fossil fuels and whether there were any plans to diversify investment on ethical grounds. The Vice-Chairman of the Committee indicated that investment was reviewed on a regular basis but the Council had a fiduciary duty to act on behalf of its members.

**1956 Reports of  
Committees -  
Standards and  
Ethics  
Committee**

The Committee received the report of the Standards and Ethics Committee containing a summary of the decisions taken.

**(Agenda item 10  
(c))**

The meeting ended at 4.00pm

Chairman .....



## COUNCIL 9 NOVEMBER 2017 - AGENDA ITEM 9 – QUESTION TIME

Questions and written responses provided below.

**QUESTION 1** – Mr P M McDonald will ask Andy Roberts:

*"Would the Cabinet Member for Children and Families please inform me the number of children taken into care each year over the last four years?"*

### Draft Answer

In response to Mr McDonald's question regarding the number of children taken into care each year over the last four years I can confirm the following, which also includes the first two quarters of the current year 2017/18:

Looked after Children	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18 Apr-Sep
Children starting to be looked after in the year	272	312	240	329	144

### Supplementary Question

In response to supplementary question, the Cabinet Member for Children and Families would provide a more detailed breakdown of the number of children in care for Mr McDonald.

**QUESTION 2** – Mr M E Jenkins will ask Alan Amos:

*"Would the Cabinet Member for Highways inform me of the amount of money that is spent per person per year on highways for each year over the past 5 years, with a breakdown of the proportion that is spent on walking and cycling."*

### Draft Answer

The table below provides Highways Maintenance spend / budget for the last 5 years (budget for 2017/18). The figures relate to Highways maintenance and as well as core maintenance spend, includes some projects such as flood risk projects, Driving Home etc).

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Notes
Highways core spend (£m)	21.90	24.20	23.70	31.20	38.70	Figures for 2016/18 and 2018/19 include Driving Home Programme 2017/18 increase also due to Flood Risk Schemes and NPIF
Footways (£m)	1.66	1.76	2.49	3.51	4.00	Figure for 2017/18 is an estimate
PROW (£m)	0.40	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.38	Public Rights of Way
Walking & Cycling (£m)	0.59	0.47	0.33	0.22	0.67	Estimates for walking and cycling only projects
<i>Sub Total - Walking &amp; Cycling (£m)</i>	<i>2.65</i>	<i>2.62</i>	<i>3.20</i>	<i>4.12</i>	<i>5.05</i>	<i>Sub Total for Walking &amp; Cycling includes Footways, PROW and other Walking / Cycling spend.</i>
<b>TOTAL (£m)</b>	<b>24.55</b>	<b>26.82</b>	<b>26.90</b>	<b>35.32</b>	<b>43.75</b>	
<b>TOTAL (£k)</b>	<b>24,553</b>	<b>26,820</b>	<b>26,902</b>	<b>35,320</b>	<b>43,747</b>	
Population	566,169	566,169	566,169	566,169	566,169	Based on 2011 Census data for Worcestershire
<b>Spend per head (£)</b>	<b>43.37</b>	<b>47.37</b>	<b>47.52</b>	<b>62.38</b>	<b>77.27</b>	

The trend is positive showing:

- an increased investment per head of population; and
- an increase in the investment in walking and cycling.;
- investment in walking in cycling is over 11% of the total. An amount that has nearly doubled in the past 5 years to over £5m this year
- The number of cycling/walking schemes delivered were as follows 18 in 2012/13, 21 in 2013/14, 23 in 2014/15, 20 in 2015/16, 15 in 2016/17 and 20 schemes underway this year

The figures do not include spend on major infrastructure projects or public realm schemes, e.g. Hoobrook Link Road, Southern Link Road.

The Council has launched a programme of footway improvements totalling £6m which will give 50 extra miles of pavement. An additional £3.4m of funding had been received from the Government specifically for cycling and walking in Bromsgrove.

### **QUESTION 3** – Mr P M McDonald will ask Ken Pollock:

*"Would the Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure agree with me that the actions of Network Rail in reneging on the promise to install a lift at Barnt Green Railway Station is a discriminative act and thus a slap in the face for the less able?"*

### **Draft Answer**

My understanding is that Network Rail are no longer proposing to install a lift due to funding constraints. However, they remain committed to completing the electrification project which will facilitate improved services from Barnt Green and Bromsgrove. Nevertheless, I too would like to see improved access at the station and I have asked Network Rail to provide me with a briefing on what might be possible.

### **Supplementary Question**

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure would write to Network Rail to get a more precise date for the installation of a lift at Barnt Green Railway Station.

**QUESTION 4** – Mr R C Lunn will ask Alan Amos:

*"Can the Cabinet Member for Highways confirm if he will consider 20MPH speed limits in certain built up residential areas. If so, would he consider the Smallwood area in Redditch for such a trial?"*

**Draft Answer**

This is a current issue, and I am pleased to say that a trial in Rubery has recently been concluded that will inform potential revisions to the Councils position with regard to pursuing reduced speed limits such as 20mph speed limits.

The analysis of the Rubery trial has been completed and a draft report on our position is almost complete and the conclusion would be studied. I understand that Smallwood consists of primarily Victorian terraced properties with lots of parking limiting the carriageway width and deterring speeding. Before considering the area further I need to investigate the level of accidents to understand the extent of any issues requiring the implementation of a 20mph speed limit.

Another factor is the role of the Police in enforcement. My understanding is that the Police will not enforce 20mph speed limits. However if they have changed their position or considering changing their position then I would certainly take that into account as well.

The issue of 20mph speed limits is a question of practicality not principal. It is a question of whether 20mph speed limits in any area make a difference to road safety or not.

**Supplementary Question**

The Cabinet Member for Highways undertook to check whether police will enforce 20 mph speed limits.

**QUESTION 5** – Mr R M Udall will ask Alan Amos:

*"Can the Cabinet Member for Highways outline his priorities for the year ahead?"*

**Draft Answer**

I thank Cllr Udall for his question. I'll be delighted to.

1. Firstly, there was an internal issue of the communications system between Highways and Members and Highways and the general public not being fit for purpose. So, Members will have received my e-mail yesterday outlining a brand new system in which we have taken back Highways enquiries/casework from the Hub to a dedicated team of experienced and knowledgeable highways officers who will speak to people and deal with any complex or routine issue. No more do-not-reply e-mails; no more calls/e-mails not being answered; and no more matters not being actioned to resolution.
2. To develop and reinforce one of our most valuable and valued assets, namely our team of Liaison Engineers by providing one for every District. We now have a full complement of 6 helping Members to get things done.
3. To keep traffic and people moving and businesses open by attacking the problem of congestion on our roads, using the extra £5m Congestion Fund we have put in the budget which has now also levered in an additional extra £6.6m for schemes in Bromsgrove and Worcester.

4. Using traffic light management to address our congestion hotspots and there'll be an announcement shortly about that for Worcester City.
5. To increase our road capacity by building more roads and making better use of existing capacity
6. To adopt a much more vigorous approach to utility roadwork overruns and delays by imposing the maximum fines possible and naming and shaming the offenders, and by extending the permit system to unclassified roads and using the extra income to employ more inspectors.
7. Get the condition of our roads and footways up into the top quarter best in the country, and we're virtually there.
8. To implement a public realm scheme in St John's Neighbourhood Shopping Centre to make it more attractive to business via improvements to the pavements and other public areas.
9. Encourage greater bus use by e.g. introducing a proper real-time bus information system so passengers can have more reliable services.

#### Supplementary Question

The Cabinet Member for Highways undertook to consider including cycleways in his list of priorities in particular issues surrounding the interaction between cyclists and pedestrians.

#### **QUESTION 6** – Mrs J A Brunner will ask Adrian Hardman:

*"Could the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care please inform this council how the pilot work undertaken by Social Workers entitled 'The Three Conversation model' has progressed in Redditch?"*

#### **Draft Answer**

The 3 conversation model looks to work with individuals to help them achieve greater independence by focussing on their strengths, networks and services in their neighbourhoods. They achieve this by having better, more in-depth conversations with more people that request our support. Redditch Central was one of the two initial innovation sites and has been using this approach since the 24 April 2017. The emerging evidence to date from this approach has demonstrated a very positive impact with positive feedback from members of the public, partner agencies and the social work staff. It has shown that people are being contacted by the right person quickly and they are able to discuss their needs with one person and then have continued support until it is the right time to disengage. They are receiving timely support in a crisis and then we are able to talk to people to try and avoid these things happening again in the future. People are being given advice and support regarding things in their local communities and we are able to focus more time on conversations with people than completing assessments and recording on computers. This approach also results in less requirements for ongoing long-term support.

#### Supplementary Question

Adult Services are committed to rolling out the Three Conversation Model throughout Worcestershire following a period of innovation in Redditch Central, Pershore and Upton. Redditch South have just completed a 4 week preparatory piece of work and have gone live on the 6th November 2017. We are delighted that more adults will receive support delivered in the same way really focussing on their strengths. A number of other teams have now started or will start soon including the additional social workers in the acute hospitals that will help deal with winter pressures. It is important that the staff receive sufficient support to

roll-out this new way of working in a robust and careful way. We expect all of Worcestershire to benefit from this new approach in the Spring of 2018.

**QUESTION 7** – Mr P Denham will ask Andy Roberts:

*"Is the Cabinet Member for Children and Families aware that all the special needs and looked after children who attend The Riversides School building at Spring Gardens, Worcester, in my division, were denied access to their school on 9 October? The reason these children missed their education on that date was because an internal wall was in a dangerous condition, close to collapse.*

*I made the Cabinet Member aware of the total unsuitability of this building at our Council meeting in a motion on 13 July, which requested you to check for yourself whether the premises were fit for their purpose. All Conservative councillors inexplicably voted against the motion.*

*Now that we know that this building is not only unsuitable to continue as a school, but it is also dangerous to health and safety, what assurances can he give us that urgent action will be taken to permanently rehouse these students?"*

**Draft Answer**

Officers in the Council were made aware of the issue at Riverside by the Academy Trust. The school was closed for one day. Council staff confirmed that Place Partnership Ltd were working with the school to rectify the issue in the short-term and to identify a long-term solution. The priority is ensuring the safeguarding of all users of the site and that the children and young people continue to achieve their full potential in education. Matt Greenhalgh, SEND Group Manager carried out a visit to Riverside to ensure that children's educational needs were being met. The Virtual Head Teacher Gwen Fennell has advised me that she is satisfied that the Looked After Children at Riversides are having all their educational needs met. Any individual concerns would be highlighted through the Personal Education plan (PEP) and Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process and escalated and resolved accordingly.

Place Partnership has provided advice to the school that there is no immediate risk to the building but further remedial works should be undertaken quickly. Some of the works may impact on the operation of the school and they were advised that they may wish to consider such works during the holiday. No further instruction has been received from the school for Place Partnership to arrange for any works to be undertaken.

Riverside School in Worcester is an academy and part of a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). As such, the school is not under our control. Funding for the maintenance of the condition of the building goes direct to the Advance Academy Trust from the Education Funding Agency.

The Council receives no grant funding that could be used to support Riverside to move into a new building. As is the case with all academies, should the Academy Trust feel Riverside School needs new accommodation they would need to make a business case direct to the Education Funding Agency, who manage the funding for academies.

**Supplementary Question**

The Cabinet Member for Children and Families would liaise with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to see if any alternative premises could be found for the Riversides School.

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