

Cabinet**Thursday, 13 December 2018, County Hall, Worcester,
10.30 am****Minutes****Present:**

Mr S E Geraghty (Chairman), Mr A T Amos,
Mr A I Hardman, Mr M J Hart, Mrs L C Hodgson,
Ms K J May, Mr A P Miller, Dr K A Pollock,
Mr A C Roberts and Mr J H Smith

Also attended:

Mr C J Bloore, Dr C Hotham, Mr R C Lunn,
Mr P Middlebrough, Mrs F M Oborski, Mrs E B Tucker,
Mr P A Tuthill and Dr A J Hopkins

Available Papers

The members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated); and
- B. The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2018 (previously circulated).

**1886 Apologies and
Declarations of
Interest
(Agenda item 1)**

None

**1887 Public
Participation
(Agenda item 2)**

There were three public participants who all spoke regarding Item 4 – 2019/20 Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan Update 2019/20.

1. Mr Nathan Oswin from the Stroke Association. Mr Oswin acknowledged the financial pressure the Council were under but urged the Council not to stop funding the stroke recovery service. To stop the funding was contrary to the Council's strategy to 'help people to live longer and in better health through prevention and to support them to live in their own homes'. The stroke recovery service helped the Council with its focus on re-ablement and its concerns about the continued rise in demand for social care. He explained that stroke survivors could attest to the benefits of the service, which could only continue with funding from the County Council.

2. Mrs Anne Duddington on behalf of The Right Support for Carers, a sub-group of the Learning Disability Partnership Board.

She wished to make the point that co-production and listening to service users and carers were very important.

3. Mrs Sandra Rohan Kickham – a parent of an adult who has profound and multiple learning and physical disabilities and a member of The Right Support for Carers. She was concerned about the loss of the Quality Checkers team and the Peer Reviewers and that experience and perspective from a Learning Disability view point would be lost.

The Chairman thanked the speakers for their contributions.

1888 Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting (Agenda item 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

1889 2019/20 Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan Update 2019-20 (Agenda item 4)

The Cabinet considered the 2019/20 draft Budget and medium Term Financial Plan and the proposal to consult on the draft recommendation that the Council tax precept should be increased by 3.99%.

The Cabinet Member for Finance (also the Leader of the Council) introduced the draft budget, explaining that they wished to hear people's views before the final decision was taken at Council on 14 February 2019. The budget addressed the demand-led pressures in social care which accounted for 70% of the Council's resources. Investing in the economy was also a priority for the Council which would increase Business Rates and allow the Council to support the most vulnerable people in society. Although the Council's income had increased, social care demand meant that costs were increasing at a faster rate. The demand for social care was a national issue and one the Government needed to address. There was likely to be £6.5 million given by the Government to help with Winter Pressures and Social Care and £6.6 million for highways but they were one off payments.

The proposed Budget suggested:

- an extra £14 million be put into adult services after savings and efficiencies
- An additional £7.7 million was being put into children's services which was on top of the £10.5

million extra put in last year,

- An increase of £50 million was being put into capital projects with £26 million into infrastructure and the rest to ensure the Council can be redesigned to make it sustainable in the future
- It was proposed that Council tax should increase by 3.99%; 2.99% for general pressures and 1% for adult social care. Council Tax in Worcestershire would still be one of the lowest county precepts in the country.

In the ensuing discussion the following comments were made:

- The Cabinet member for Adult Services stated that the budget was boosting funds to help deal with the demand pressures of Adult and Children's Social Care, especially those with Learning disabilities. He mentioned the proposed increase to Council Tax, which may only be 97p per week for most people but he acknowledged the increase was likely to be more than most older people's pension increases. He thanked the three public speakers for giving their views at the meeting and agreed to consider their comments
- The Cabinet Member for Children and Families wished to confirm that the Council was investing for progress with £7 million being invested in Children's services. Improvements had been made and hopefully that would continue
- The members of the public who took part in the public participation were thanked for their contribution. Their clear message about engagement was noted
- It was noted that it was positive that the Worcestershire economy was expanding more than elsewhere and there was low unemployment. It was encouraging that an extra £3 million would be invested in 'Open for Business' and The Council had capable officers assisting with various projects such as the 5G, Malvern Hills Science Park, Worcester 6, the Redditch Eastern gateway, the Southern link road and the new Worcestershire Parkway
- Highways were a concern for residents because they were essential for jobs and consequently quality of life. Worcestershire road and rail network was almost in the top quartile with the County having a good record for pothole repair

and congestion being tackled. £12.2million would be invested next year and an additional £6.6 million would come from Government

- Consultation would take place with Parish and Town Councils. The Consultation about the Library Service was already underway
- The Public Health Ring Fenced Grant was an amount of £28 million but had reduced over the last few years. The grant was mainly for prevention and to narrow health inequalities with 75% of the grant spent on statutory responsibilities. The rest of the grant was spent on services such as advice in libraries and working with planners for health provision
- Parish Councils were sympathetic to the work that needed to be done with the existing financial restraints
- There was a query about street lighting due to concerns about crime. It was clarified that older concrete columns and some high usage areas were being replaced with new LED lights. It was requested that liaison officers inform local members when replacement programmes were happening in their area.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- (a) approved for consultation the draft budget set out at Appendix 1b of £330.4 million which included the proposed Transformation and Reforms programme set out in Appendix 1c;**
- (b) approved for consultation the capital programme 2019-22 of £229.0 million;**
- (c) approved for consultation an earmarked reserves schedule as set out at appendix 2; and**
- (d) agreed that it was minded to recommend to Council in February 2019 an increase in Council Tax Precept by 3.99% in relation to two parts:**
 - **2.99% to provide financial support for the delivery of outcomes in line with the Corporate Plan Shaping Worcestershire's Future and the priorities identified by the public and business community**

1890 Commissioning a Prevention and Early Intervention Service for Children and Young People (Agenda item 5)

- **1% Adult Social Care Precept ring-fenced for Adult Social Care services in order to contribute to existing cost pressures due to Worcestershire's ageing population.**

The Cabinet considered the proposed development and procurement of an integrated prevention and early intervention service for Children and Young People.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Well-being introduced the report and explained that the previous contracts for the service had started in October 2016 and would run to March 2019. Various circumstances had affected this area of work such as the set-up of Worcestershire Children First, the SEND Improvement Plan and revised Early Years Strategies and Local Maternity Plan; and these needed to be taken into account along with the new prevention and early intervention service.

The contract value would be up to £9.3 million from the Public Health Ring Fenced Grant and procurement should start by March 2019. Discussions had been held with providers about extensions to current arrangements to ensure stability through the transition to new arrangements.

It was emphasised that there was a lot of change in the area of prevention and early intervention but it was important that Learning Disabilities and special educational needs were identified at an early age. Public health Nursing Services were statutorily required and included health visiting and school nursing. A thorough exercise to identify the services required was necessary for the long term delivery of the service.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- (a) considered progress regarding the development, transformation and procurement of an integrated prevention and early intervention service for children and young people;**
- (b) approved a revised procurement timetable (including arrangements to ensure interim**

service provision) to enable a full assessment of the impact of the current environment, and completion of a needs assessment to inform service design, prior to commencing procurement by March 2019 with a view to awarding the contract by January 2020; and

- (c) delegated authority to approve the final specification, tendering and contractual decisions including award to the Director of Public Health in consultation with the Director of Children, Families and Communities and the Cabinet Members with Responsibility for Health and Wellbeing and Children and Families.

**1891 Waste Contract
(Agenda item 6)**

The Cabinet considered the proposals to vary the existing Waste Management Services Contract. The Cabinet member for the Environment gave a brief introduction and explained that the Energy from Waste plant, EnviRecover became operational in March 2017. The plant was operating more efficiently than anticipated and Cabinet was being asked to give permission for the Director of Economy and Infrastructure to negotiate a change to the contract under certain parameters, and return to Cabinet for any final decision.

The Leader confirmed that this was a long term contract working with partners to deal with Herefordshire and Worcestershire's waste. The original contract anticipated an extension, so it was sensible to assess the possibilities to ensure the Council got value for money and any savings.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- (a) noted the progress since the reports to Cabinet in December 2013;
- (b) subject to paragraph 2 of the report, authorised the Director of Economy and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Herefordshire Council to negotiate the form of a Variation to the existing Waste Management Services Contract (WMSC) with Mercia Waste Management Limited (Mercia) to put into effect Mercia's proposals:

- i. to increase the capacity of the EnviRecover facility at Hartlebury, subject to satisfactory planning permission;
- ii. relating to such other ancillary issues as are appropriate in relation to the WMSC;
- iii. to extend the duration of the WMSC by a period of up to 5 years

(collectively the "Contractor's Proposals") provided such a Variation was in compliance with:

- The Planning Parameters
 - The Financial Parameters
 - The Contractual Parameters, and
 - The Technical Parameters
- all as set out in the report and collectively the "Parameters"; and

(c) receive a report back from the Director of Economy and Infrastructure to seek formal authority to execute such a Variation when he considers, having regard to any advice from advisors, that the Parameters have been materially satisfied.

1892 Scrutiny Report: Bus and Community Transport Provision (Agenda item 7)

Cabinet considered the Scrutiny Report on Bus and Community Transport provision. The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board introduced the report and highlighted some findings from the Scrutiny Task Group:

- The headlines coming out of the Scrutiny were for the next twenty years rather than the next two years
- People's concerns were about unreliability and bus stops not being covered, lack of information and long waits. Some people had said they did not bother complaining any more as the service was so bad
- Bus usage was actually higher than in 1991 but the network was 25% smaller
- The budget had highlighted links between growth of the economy and efficient transport so public

- transport and congestion were important issues
- It was not possible to meet everyone's travel needs with bus times so community transport was important but that suffered from a lack of centralisation and money
 - The Task Group was clear that plans should be considered for the next 20 years to enable a sustainable transport network. The County Council needed to take action to incentivise bus operators to increase the numbers of users and the size of the network which would help to support growth of the economy.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways thanked the Task Group for a constructive and sensible report and agreed a long term review of sustainable transport was needed. He accepted most of the comments. The Council could not allow bus companies to continually cut services and expect the Council to fill the gap. He felt that buses were the alternative to cars and would help with easing congestion
- The Cabinet Member agreed that the network and usage needed to be increased and more people would use the service if it was punctual and reliable. A solid, reliable service was required eg for workers and also the elderly as a way to fight against isolation. Ideas were required and invited about how to increase bus usage
- The Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure agreed the Task Group had done a first class job. He mentioned that some Councillors had been generous and had used their divisional funds to help subsidise bus routes but that could only be a short term measure. He felt that real time information boards and improved bus stops were a good idea but they were expensive measures that Parish Councils could be expected to help with. He suggested that congestion problems and late buses could be helped by revising the parking arrangements along certain main routes. Out of the £20 million transport budget a large proportion was spent on necessary school and SEND transport
- The Cabinet member for Adult Services felt that more should be done to consider people with

Learning Disabilities; as the Learning Disability Partnership Board Members commented during Public Participation, they did not get much say when services were cut. He felt the Task Group had backed away from the idea of dealing with concessionary fares but had not offered alternative solutions, apart from to lobby MPs. The cost of the Government contribution for bus passes did not cover the cost of the fare and from speaking to older people in his division the feeling was that they would pay an extra £1 on top of the fare to protect routes. He believed that updating bus shelters would lead to increased usage

- The Scrutiny Chairman responded that other areas had real time information and it was necessary to improve services and ensure they were reliable in order to increase bus usage. Investment by the Council and its Partners was necessary. The issue of concessionary fares not covering the cost of the journey was a national issue and cross-party support was needed to approach MPs
- In Malvern the use of Divisional Funds had led to a successful Community transport bus
- It was suggested that Section 106 monies from developers should be used for buses, and planning departments should be encouraged to request it
- Urban and rural transport was very different. If only 1 or 2 people needed to use a bus in a particular village the bus would not be sustainable. Community transport was vital and was not just an add-on to the bus system. It was also pointed out that public buses used for the school run were not a practical or attractive option for other users. It was proposed that the Council could be more helpful in bringing together bus information from the different companies
- The Cabinet Member was urged to ask the bus companies what they were prepared to do to address some of the suggestions made in the report
- One member from outside the Cabinet had a query about an area which had used Section 106 money for a bus service and was then told the service may still be cut. Any money put aside needed to be managed properly
- A good bus service was a way of improving economic prosperity, as well as helping with

health and well-being

- The Cabinet Chairman agreed the Council was committed to sustainable transport; investment was happening and he looked forward to the full review.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- (a) received the Scrutiny Report on Bus and Community Transport Provision, together with the response from the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways; and**
- (b) noted the Scrutiny Report's findings and recommendation and adopts the response of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility as the way forward.**

1893 'Good Education Places for all Worcestershire Children' - School Organisation Plan 2019-24 (Agenda item 8)

Cabinet considered the Worcestershire Schools education plan. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills explained that the plan had ceased to be a strategic duty in 2010 but it remained a strategic duty to have sufficient school places and the Council had recognised the need for this strategic document. Education provision was diverse within Worcestershire with 16 pyramids and rising demand due to the rate of house building within the County. In 2017 Jo Davidson had been commissioned to carry out a review of Education and Skills and it was recommended that Cabinet owned the provision planning process. The plan covered 2019-2024 and would be reviewed annually.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- (a) approved the publication of "Good education places for all Worcestershire children" – Worcestershire County Council's School Organisation Plan 2019-24 (the Plan) as the strategic plan for education place planning;**
- (b) noted that the Plan would be revised annually to include the updated sufficiency reports and to take into account any implications for the Plan; and**
- (c) noted that the Plan would return to Cabinet in 2019 to seek approval to the updated sufficiency reports and any other changes.**

1894 Review of Education Planning Obligations required under S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (Agenda item 9)

The Cabinet considered the proposed Planning Obligations Policy for Education. The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills explained that the proposed changes would be open for consultation with the intent that they would take effect from April 2019. Changes were proposed for calculating pupil yield from new housing and also the education contributions made under Section 106. Section 106 contributions were important to ensure that new developments were sustainable and there were enough school places.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- It was pointed out that Parishes were concerned about new houses and the impact they had on local services. It was a reassurance that Section 106 money could be used for schools
- It was suggested that the new policy would not give the Council more power to gain land in lieu of money, but the Cabinet Member agreed to look at the issue before the draft policy went out for consultation.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- (a) noted the details of key changes to the proposed Planning Obligations Policy for Education;**
- (b) authorised the publication of the proposed revised Education Planning Obligations Policy (the Policy) including key changes following formal public consultation;**
- (c) authorised the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills, in consultation with the Director of Children, Families and Communities, to approve the Policy having regard to any representations and formally approve it for adoption (intended to take place on 1 April 2019);**
- (d) authorised the Director of Children, Families and Communities to review the adopted Policy from time to time in order to update the 'cost per pupil place'; and**

Chairman's Announcement

1895 Balanced Scorecard Performance and Corporate Risk Update (Agenda item 10)

- (e) authorised the Director of Children, Families and Communities to review the adopted Policy following the publication of data from 2021 Census to update the 'pupil yield' figure.**

The Chairman revealed the good news that it had just been announced that Worcestershire was one of the few Councils to have secured the 75% business rate pilot. Agreement had already been reached with the District Councils that all additional money would be used for Social Care.

The Cabinet considered the Council's Balanced Scorecard report for Quarter Two 2018/19 and the latest refresh of the Corporate Risk Register. The Cabinet Member explained that of 59 indicators, 22 were green, 8 were amber and 8 were red. 187 risks were logged in the register; 18 were rated as high, 87 as medium and 82 as low. Mitigation was in place to address the risks. Social Care recruitment had previously been red but had now moved to amber. The next update would be for quarter Four 2018/19.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Services commented that the numbers of Older People in Permanent Care Home placements had historically been high in Worcestershire but the numbers were not increasing and it was hoped that it would begin to reduce. The increase in business rates could help in that area.

The Chairman confirmed that the report would be brought to Cabinet twice a year in future.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- (a) received the latest update of the Corporate Balanced Scorecard for Quarter Two 2018/19, noting the 22 indicators rated as 'green', including the two indicators that have been highlighted as demonstrating positive progress in performance, and considered actions being taken to improve performance for the 5 indicators rated 'red' where there has been an update in Quarter Two 2018/19; and**
- (b) noted the latest update of the Corporate Risk Register including actions to mitigate the risk areas that are rated 'red'.**

The meeting ended at 12.30pm.

Chairman