

**Council****Thursday, 14 February 2019, County Hall, Worcester - 10.00 am****Present:****Minutes**

Mr B Clayton (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 P Denham, Ms R L Dent, Mr N Desmond, Mrs E A Eyre, Mr A Fry, 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 A T Hingley, 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 S J Mackay, Mr L C R Mallett, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Mr J A D O'Donnell, Mrs F M Oborski, Ms T L Onslow, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs J A Potter, Prof J W Raine, Mrs M A Rayner, Mr A C Roberts, Mr C Rogers, Mr J H Smith, Mr A Stafford, Ms C M Stalker, Mr R P Tomlinson, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall, Ms R Vale, Ms S A Webb and Mr T A L Wells

**Available papers**

The members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. 6 questions submitted to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (previously circulated); and
- C. The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2019 (previously circulated).

**2073 Apologies and Declaration of Interests (Agenda item 1)**

An apology was received from Mr C B Taylor.

Mr L C R Mallett declared an interest in Agenda item 6 - Notice of Motion 3 as his employer had campaigned against hospital car parking charges.

Dr C Hotham declared a DPI in Agenda item 6 - Notice of Motion 3 as his wife was a GP and could gain financially from hospital car parking charges and did not participate in this item.

**2074 Public**

Mr M E Jenkins presented a petition on behalf of Ms

**Participation  
(Agenda item 2)**

Marjory Bisset in relation to the improved safety for road users at the junction of Astwood Road and Bilford Road, Worcester by installing a pedestrian crossing and redesigning the junction.

Mr M Regan commented on the proposal to establish an Archives and Archaeology Working Group.

The Chairman thanked all the public participants for their contribution and said they would receive a written reply from the relevant Cabinet Member.

**2075 Minutes  
(Agenda item 3)**

**RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2019 be confirmed as correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**2076 Chairman's  
Announcements  
(Agenda item 4)**

Noted.

**2077 Reports of  
Cabinet -  
Matters which  
require a  
decision by  
Council -  
2019/20 Budget  
and Medium  
Term Financial  
Plan Update  
2019-22  
(Agenda item 5)**

The Council had before it a detailed report on the 2019/20 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan Update 2019-22, which the Cabinet had considered on 31 January 2019 and which the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet were recommending for adoption by the Council.

All Councillors had received or had access to the full report and Appendices considered by the Cabinet on 31 January 2019.

The Leader introduced the report and moved the recommendation as set out in paragraph 1 of the report; this was seconded by Mr A I Hardman. The Leader explained that the key themes of the budget included: protection of the most vulnerable children and adults in society; maintaining a highways network; supporting economic growth through projects that improved infrastructure, tackled congestion and enhanced connectivity; and creating the Council for the future through re-examining contracts and reforming the way the Council worked to ensure that it was fit and effective for the future. All these themes underpinned the Council's Corporate Plan "Shaping Worcestershire for the Future" and reflected the priorities of the public.

The backdrop to the budget was a county that continued to thrive with a strong economy, high levels of employment and a great environment that provided a good quality of life and a high satisfaction rating for

Worcestershire as a place to live. This helped the Council's budget as income continued to grow with the net budget growing from £324m to £330m in the next financial year as a result of increased Council Tax and business rates from new homes and businesses. The new 75% business rates pilot would mean that a further £4.8m of resources would remain in the county.

However income was not keeping pace with demand-led services as a result of the cost of Adult Social Care increasing as more adults and children needed support and an aging population living longer.

The budget delivered a £14.1m increase for Adult Social Care for existing pressures and future demand. It continued to develop the Three Conversations Model. Children's Services would receive £7.8m which was on top of the £5m received last year for safeguarding placements for the most vulnerable in society. 70% of the total budget would be spent on the most vulnerable members of society.

To reflect the views of the public, the planned reduction to the highways budget had been removed from the budget. £3m had been set aside for open for business initiatives, £2.8 to deliver the next set of transport schemes, £2.8m for the evolving infrastructure fund, £23m for capital investment/regional infrastructure across the county. These schemes supported housing developments and economic growth that increased prosperity and income for residents in the county. Schemes included: £5m towards talking congestion; £5m towards rail station upgrades/parking; £4m towards the next range of economic game changer sites: £4m towards walking/cycling; £2.5 towards the next phase of town centre improvements; and £2.5 towards highways capital issues.

The key element of the budget was the redesign of the Council, including an examination of the £200m contract spend to ensure better value for money. The redesign would involve rethinking and reforming the organisation and the Council's services to ensure that the Council was working in the most productive way possible, embracing new technology, ensuring the Council's buildings were fit-for-purpose and that the Council was ready for future challenges. £24m of capital resources together with revenue resources had been allocated to support this programme including a Communities Solutions Fund of £145k (dropping to £45k in future years) to enable communities to do more to meet the challenge. It was

vital that that these reforms took place to protect front-line services

He thanked everyone who had contributed to the formulation of the budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan. The budget would secure a prosperous future for the county whilst delivering much needed resources for vital public services and he commended it to Council.

The seconder stated that the Council would be raising Council Tax to the maximum permitted to enable the Council to operate within its own budget i.e. that local taxpayers should fund local public services. Spend on Adult Social Care would increase by £14.1 which would correct the overspend from the previous year and put the service on a sound footing. The Council had entered into a unique and innovative business rates project with district councils which would enable the Council to retain an extra 25% of business rates which allowed the Council to spend an extra £4.9m on reducing future demand for social care by working collaboratively with district councils.

The Government had responded to the Council's vigorous lobbying by providing a £6.2m grant for Adult Social Care and £6m for road funding. The new Government formula was expected to be announced next year which should lead to a fairer system of funding based on demand. He urged all members to lobby local MPs over the issue of fairer funding because the urban metropolitan boroughs were likely to lobby against the proposed changes to the formula. The key aspect for the future of the Council was not to continue relying on Government funding.

An amendment was moved by Mr R C Lunn and seconded by Mr L C R Mallett proposing:

|  |  | <i>Amendment 1</i> |   |
|--|--|--------------------|---|
| <i>Labour Group Budget<br/>Amendment Proposals<br/>2019/20</i> |  | £                  | £ |
| <i>Remove monies from the following areas:</i>                 |  |                    |   |
| <i>Reduce investment to Property Services.</i>                 |  | 150,000            |   |
| <i>Savings from IT Service Transformation.</i>                 |  | 29,500             |   |
| <i>Reduce Cabinet budget to the equivalent of 9 members</i>    |  | 18,000             |   |
| <i>Reintroduce part of Highways</i>                            |  | 275,000            |   |

saving originally proposed by the Administration to enable a risk based approach to be taken to services such as white lining and replacing iron and metal work on streets.

Non acceptance of part of the Community Solutions Fund, 2,500

---

**Total** **475,000**

---

**Redirect monies to the following areas:**

Increase the Library Service budget to replace current savings to be made and recruit to some of the frozen posts 325,000

Increase spending on Homelessness Service 100,000

Reduce the Administration's savings to be found target for the Archives by a further £50k 50,000

---

**Total** **475,000**

---

The mover and seconder of the amendment then spoke in favour of its adoption; the key points being:

- The Government's austerity measures had reduced the Council's funding year-on-year despite ever increasing pressures on the budgets for Adult Social Care and Looked After Children services. Spending on these two vital services had increased from 50% to 70% of the total budget over 10 years which had detrimentally impacted on other services. The Green Paper on Adult Social Care was still awaited. The Council was left in a position where it had to increase Council Tax. The Council could do things differently without impacting on other services by protecting key service areas such as the library service. The amendment would remove the proposed cut of £145k to the library service and provide additional funding of £180k to make the service more viable, provide more books and allow the review of the service to take place uninhibited
- The problem of homelessness was far greater than ten years ago and therefore £100k was proposed to be added to the budget to tackle this issue in liaison with district councils

- These amendments would be funded by a reduction in the increase in the property services budget and £275m from the highways budget for lining work and the replacement of iron and metal works. No reductions were proposed for Adult Social Care, Looked After Children or front-line highway services. A further saving was proposed from a reduction in the number of a Cabinet Member posts. The amendment was realistic, sensible and protected key services
- The Archives service had a track record of attracting funding to the county, most notably approximately £360k to commemorate WW1. The amendment would ensure that the service was still viable and able to attract funding
- The extra commitment of £100k to homelessness in the amendment was welcomed. The public were worried and horrified at the increase in rough sleepers across the county. Homeless people needed a tremendous amount of support and a joined-up approach with district councils was vital
- No library was safe from the proposed budget reductions. Staff numbers were being reduced as they were replaced by volunteers. Volunteers had a role but were no substitute for trained professional library staff
- It was not necessary maintain the maximum number of Cabinet member posts. The reduction of a single post would allow money to be spent on front-line services
- Protection of library services and tackling homelessness were higher priorities than property maintenance
- In 2009/10, the Audit Commission had expressed concern about the impact of the Conservative administration's proposed reductions to the highways budget
- The budget reductions to the library service had a disproportionate impact on poorer families and reduced social mobility.

Members also spoke against the amendment:

- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways commented that highways maintenance was highlighted as a top concern by the public. To reduce this budget was dangerous in the short term and costly in the long term. To reduce the lining and iron work budget would create delays, increase beaurocracy and result in less lining being renewed. Not only was there a risk of legal

challenge when accidents occurred but there would be a greater cost in subsequent years

- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning commented that, in relation to the proposed £150k reduction to the property budget, there remained uncertainty about who would replace HMRC as tenants at County Hall. The proposed reduction represented 20% of the reactive property maintenance budget and impacted on a valuable asset for the Council. The reduction to IT would adversely impact on the Council's vital customer service delivery
- There was no indication as to how the additional funds for homelessness would be spent and this issue was best left with district councils to resolve
- Reductions to the transformation budget would take away the ability of the Council to improve the efficiency of service delivery
- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Health commented that the Government had announced new funding to enable this Council to address homelessness although the details were unknown at this stage. The Council was working with district councils using the existing funding available through the public health ring-fenced grant to address this issue
- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities commented that libraries were not being closed. Investment was being made in IT, particularly the way IT was used in libraries. The book fund was not being reduced. The Council was reforming the library service and talking to partners about its future
- The Leader commented that the amendment proposed a cut to front-line highways work which was a top priority identified by the public. The proposed cuts to ICT/property investment were a false economy and would make the Council less efficient. In relation to libraries and the archive service, the Council had listened to the concerns of the public and modified its budget proposals accordingly.

At the conclusion of the debate and on a named vote this amendment was lost.

Those voting in favour of the amendment were Ms P Agar, Mr C J Bloore, Mr P Denham, Mr A Fry, 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, Prof J W

Raine, Mrs M A Rayner, Ms C M Stalker, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr R M Udall, Mr T A L Wells (17)

Those voting against the amendment were Mr B Clayton, 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, 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, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr S M Mackay, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Mr J A D O'Donnell, 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 R P Tomlinson, Mr P A Tuthill, Ms R Vale, Ms S A Webb. (39)

An amendment was then moved by Mr R C Lunn and seconded by Mr L C R Mallett proposing:

|   |  | <b>Amendment 2</b> |                |
|---|--|--------------------|----------------|
| <b>Labour Group Budget</b>  |  |                    |                |
| <b>Amendment Proposals</b>  |  | £                  | £              |
| <b>2019/20</b>  |  |                    |                |
| <b>Remove monies from following areas.</b>  |  |                    |                |
| <i>Non acceptance of part of the Community Solutions Fund, having assumed £2,500 in Amendment 1, and replacement with alternative proposal below.</i> |  | 142,500            |                |
| <b>Total</b>  |  |                    | <b>142,500</b> |
| <b>Redirect monies to following areas.</b>  |  |                    |                |
| <i>Increase Councillors Divisional discretionary monies by £2,500 each to £12,500 per annum</i>   |  | 142,500            |                |
| <b>Total</b>  |  |                    | <b>142,500</b> |

The mover and seconder of the amendment then spoke in favour of its adoption; the key points being:

- The Community Solutions Fund created an unnecessary additional beaurocratic process which established a separate pot of money for

community services. Adding these funds to the Divisional Fund would create a fairer, more effective and efficient mechanism for distributing these funds to the community and provide greater accountability to the public.

- The proposed amendment provided an efficient and cost-effective way of responding to the needs of the local community in an equitable way across the county through the Divisional Fund, using existing resources and the knowledge-base of local councillors
- Not all councillor divisions had parish councils within them to help develop community-based schemes
- Councillors were in the best position to make a small amount of money go a long way.

Members also spoke against the amendment:

- This amendment would deny community groups the opportunity to develop community projects for themselves. In addition, this community funding would allow bigger projects to be developed than would be possible under the Divisional Fund. It should also be noted that as part of the budget proposals, members would also be able to distribute a further £2.5m through the Member Highways Fund
- The proposal to increase the Divisional Fund contradicted the Labour Party's opposition to the establishment of such funds in some district councils
- Parish councils were more than capable of developing projects suitable for community funding
- The Community Solutions Fund would provide the capacity to pump-prime capital projects that were outside the financial scope of the Divisional Fund albeit in consultation with local councillors
- The Leader commented that the Community Solutions Fund was concerned with working alongside community groups, partners and shareholders to deliver the reform programme hence more funds being available next year. The Fund did not necessarily align with divisional boundaries. Individual members would receive a further boost to their divisional funding through the highways fund. The amendment sent the wrong message that the views of councillors were more important than those of local communities.

At the conclusion of the debate and on a named vote this amendment was lost.

Those voting in favour of the amendment were Ms P Agar, Mr C J Bloore, Mr P Denham, Mr A Fry, Ms P A Hill, Mr R C Lunn, Mr P M McDonald, Mr L C R Mallett, Ms C M Stalker, Mr R M Udall. (10)

Those voting against the amendment were Mr B Clayton, 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, 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, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Mr M E Jenkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr S M Mackay, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Mr J A D O'Donnell, Mrs F M Oborski, Ms T L Onslow, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs J A Potter, Prof J W Raine, Mr A C Roberts, Mr C Rogers, Mr J H Smith, Mr A Stafford, Mr R P Tomlinson, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr P A Tuthill, Ms R Vale, Ms S A Webb, Mr T A L Wells. (44)

Those abstaining were Dr C Hotham, Mrs M A Rayner (2)

The following three amendments were then moved by Mrs E B Tucker and seconded by Prof J W Raine proposing:

| <i>Amendment 1</i>  |              |                         |
|---|--------------|-------------------------|
| <i>2017 Group Budget Amendment Proposals 2019/20 - Revenue</i>  | <i>19/20</i> | <i>Full Year Impact</i> |
|   | <i>£</i>     | <i>£</i>                |
| <b>Remove monies from the following areas:</b>  |              |                         |
| <i>Remove the allowance for one cabinet post with effect from October 2019 (note £18,000 Full Year Effect)</i>  | 9,000        | 18,000                  |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>9,000</b> | <b>18,000</b>           |
| <b>Redirect monies to the following areas:</b>  |              |                         |
| <i>To strengthen in-depth Scrutiny Task Groups, enabling members to visit examples and best practice elsewhere, to bring in expert advisors or to commission small pieces of research</i> | 9,000        | 9,000                   |

To strengthen internal and external training opportunities as identified by members 9,000

---

**Total 9,000 18,000**

---

**Amendment 2**

**2017 Group Budget  
Amendment Proposals 2019/20  
- Capital** **19/20**

**£ £**

**Remove monies from the following areas:**

To reduce from £5 million to £4 million the new proposed capital investment included in the Medium Term Financial Plan (January 2019 - 2019/20 BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN UPDATE 2019-22 Report - paragraph 9.4) for future Railway station upgrades and extra parking facilities 1,000,000

---

**Total 1,000,000**

---

**Redirect monies to the following areas:**

Create a capital fund of £300k available for local community transport groups to bid into for the purchase of vehicles to increase their capacity to transport residents who are unable to access public or private transport to get to work, college, medical appointments or shopping and social interaction 300,000

Allocate an additional £350k of capital spend on improving the standard of footways for pedestrians, focusing on areas with a significant backlog and/or elderly population 350,000

Allocate an additional £350k of capital spend on improving infrastructure for safer everyday cycling 350,000

|              |          |                  |
|--------------|----------|------------------|
| <b>Total</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>1,000,000</b> |
|--------------|----------|------------------|

|  |  |                    |
|--|--|--------------------|
|  |  | <b>Amendment 3</b> |
| <b>2017 Group Budget<br/>Amendment Proposals<br/>2019/20 - Capital</b> |  | <b>19/20</b>       |
| £  |  | £                  |

**Remove monies from the following areas:**  
*To reduce from £998k to £948k the Investment Initiatives to Support Business and/or Green Technology capital budget*

50,000

|              |  |               |
|--------------|--|---------------|
| <b>Total</b> |  | <b>50,000</b> |
|--------------|--|---------------|

**Redirect monies to the following areas:**

*Create a small capital fund of £50k to help speed up the change-over of steel post street lamps to LED. It will be available for local members who chose to match fund from their individual highways capital allocations*

50,000

|              |  |               |
|--------------|--|---------------|
| <b>Total</b> |  | <b>50,000</b> |
|--------------|--|---------------|

[The 3 amendments were debated together but voted upon separately]. The mover and seconder of the amendments then spoke in favour of their adoption; the key points being:

- It was proposed to use the £1m capital investment from the MTP Future railway stations upgrade and extra car park facilities to fund £300k for community transport, an additional £350k for footway maintenance and £350k for safer everyday cycling. £50k would be taken from an investment initiative to speed up the change-over of steel post street lamps to LED. It was proposed to remove one Cabinet post from October 2019 to

provide funding to support scrutiny which did not have a budget at present, and in the second year to put more money into member development. This Council had deliberately kept Council Tax lower than the possible available spending power and consequently the Council had missed out on large amounts of funding. The Council needed to change to meet the needs of the community and establish a better informed and respected scrutiny function

- The Council needed a better balance between investment in highways and public transport including the better provision of alternative modes of transport. The Council needed to increase investment in footways, safer cycleways and community transport (to provide community buses and adaptations to vehicles) The upgrade of LED lighting produced savings so why delay the programme. Overview and Scrutiny was a great way of developing policy ideas but did not receive enough resources at present
- Amendment 2 – There was a lack of infrastructure to support a cycle network in Worcester
- Amendment 1 – The decision to move education into the ADM meant that there was no longer a need for two Cabinet Members to cover education and safeguarding
- Amendment 2 - The reduction to the budget for railway investment was for one year only and reflected the fact that the additional parking for Kidderminster and Blakedown Railway Stations would not be made implemented until 2022. This funding could instead be used to establish community transport projects
- Amendment 2 was an attempt to shift the focus of the Council's transport strategy away from cars to buses, cycling and walking to tackle pollution, congestion, climate change and social injustice
- The guidelines for the use of the budget for scrutiny and member development had not been made clear. It was not essential to have the legal maximum of number of Cabinet Members and other councils coped with less. The LED lamp replacement proposal would speed up the process for achieving savings.

Members also spoke against the amendment:

- Amendment 1 – The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning commented that whilst there was

no specific budget head for member development and scrutiny, there was a miscellaneous budget of £28k available to cover external support for overview and scrutiny and member development as required. This budget was not under strain as to date only £844 had been spent

- Amendment 2 – The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy and Infrastructure commented that the amendment would take funding away from greatly needed improvements to the rail network. There were other ways of providing funding for the proposals in this amendment
- In response to a point of order that the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy and Infrastructure had exceeded the permitted length of time for speaking on the amendments, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised that the Cabinet Member was the nominated spokesperson for the Group on this amendment and was therefore permitted to speak for 5 minutes. The Leader undertook to make it clear to Council who would be the nominated speaker on behalf of the Group in the future
- A greater impact on footway improvements could be achieved by working closely with developers
- Given the outcome of the external auditor's review of the Council's commissioning arrangements and the important role of commissioning in the future of the Council, it would be inappropriate at this stage to reduce the level of accountability by the removal of a Cabinet Member post
- Amendment 3 – The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Environment indicated that £4m was being invested in LED lighting and it was important that the structured programme to introduce LED lights was not impeded. Although LED lights would reduce CO2 emissions and save electricity, there was a negative CO2 impact of replacing the old concrete columns
- The Leader of the Council stated that it was clear that the 2017 Group were committed to continued increases in Council Tax. Members had not taken up the opportunity to use the available training budget. The existing number of Cabinet member posts allowed the Council to benefit from the maximum possible level of skills and experience across the Council at a time of massive change especially in Education and Skills. The reduction of the £5m investment in rail services would impact on the ability to draw down DfT and LEP

investment and negatively impact on plans to discourage travel by car. The proposed funding for LED lighting would have a very minimal impact and members could better use the members highway or Divisional Fund for any priority issues.

#### 2017 Group Amendment 1

At the conclusion of the debate and on a named vote the 2017 Group amendment 1 was lost.

Those voting in favour of the amendment were Ms P Agar, Mr C J Bloore, Mr P Denham, Mr A Fry, 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, Prof J W Raine, Mrs M A Rayner, Ms C M Stalker, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr R M Udall, Mr T A L Wells (17)

Those voting against the amendment were Mr B Clayton, 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, 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, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr S M Mackay, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Mr J A D O'Donnell, 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 R P Tomlinson, Mr P A Tuthill, Ms R Vale, Ms S A Webb. (39)

#### 2017 Group Amendment 2

At the conclusion of the debate and on a named vote the 2017 Group amendment 2 was lost.

Those voting in favour of the amendment were Mr M E Jenkins, Mrs F M Oborski, Prof J W Raine, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr T A L Wells (5)

Those voting against the amendment were Mr B Clayton, 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, 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, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Dr C Hotham, Mr A D Kent, Mr S M Mackay, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Mr J A D O'Donnell, 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 R P Tomlinson, Mr P A Tuthill, Ms R Vale,



**Redirect monies to the following areas:**

*To defer for one year £50k of Archive service's 2019/20 savings target in order to provide the service with more time to reshape and develop its future viability.*

50,000

*This would reduce the target from £250k to £200k in 2019/20.*

---

**Total**

**50,000**

---

The mover and seconder of the amendment then spoke in favour of its adoption; the key points being:

- The amendment proposed to take £50k from the transformation/change reserve for one year only to reduce the cuts to the archive service and to provide more time to work through the proposed changes to see if they were feasible or not and keep the service running effectively in the meantime
- It was right to examine other sources of income for the Archives Service and to consider inviting outside agencies to be involved in the Member Advisory Group as suggested by the public participant. £50k was a small amount but would make a big difference to smooth the transition arrangements of this award-winning service.

Members also spoke against the amendment:

- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities commented that the administration had responded to the consultation responses and amended the budget to lessen the amount of savings being proposed for the Archives and Archaeology Service. The savings would be made through a reduction in staff costs and an increase in income generation to ensure value for money. Going forward the Archive service would remain largely the same as present and the service would not be closing, records would not be transferred elsewhere and opening hours would not be

reduced. New archives would be accepted but there might be a charge

- The Leader of the Council emphasised that the proposals for the Archives service represented a net subsidy reduction and the subsidy could be reduced by income growth. It was not possible to moderate the budget to facilitate this proposed amendment as the Council needed to deliver these changes within the allocated timescale, given the budget pressures facing the Council

At the conclusion of the debate and on a named vote this amendment was lost.

Those voting in favour of the amendment were Ms P Agar, Mr C J Bloore, Mr P Denham, Mr A Fry, 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, Prof J W Raine, Mrs M A Rayner, Ms C M Stalker, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr R M Udall, Mr T A L Wells (17)

Those voting against the amendment were Mr B Clayton, 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, 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, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr S M Mackay, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Mr J A D O'Donnell, 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 R P Tomlinson, Mr P A Tuthill, Ms R Vale, Ms S A Webb. (39)

In debating the budget as originally moved and seconded the following main points were made:

Comments made in support of the proposed budget included:

- This budget provided vital funds for highways infrastructure, congestion, railway stations, the public realm and SEND and benefited all residents in the county
- The budget not only balanced the books but was compassionate, strategic, principled, and delivered the wishes of the public. The congestion fund would have a particularly positive impact to the welfare of local residents
- The investment in capital, growth and income

creation was particularly important for the future prosperity of the county

- The inclusion of the A38/A104 junction in the capital programme was welcomed to ease congestion and benefit the local economy
- The capital investments at Malvern Science Park particularly in relation to the 5G initiative, the Worcester 6 project and walking/cycling bridges including the proposed Kepax bridge and refurbishment of the Sabrina Bridge, Worcester were welcomed
- The Leader of the Council commented that the future aim of the Council was to become self-sufficient and grow the economy. This was particularly important with the forthcoming 75% business rates retention project. The Council should lobby the Government to ensure that budget pressures in the NHS were linked to Adult Social Care and adequately funded by the Government. The two-tier system worked well for the county. There was a risk that creating a unitary authority would diminish the provision of discretionary services at a local level as well as the cost of change. The Council had the balance right in terms of the level of Council Tax as one of the lowest in the country and the increases suggested by opposition groups would impact greatly on local residents. The budget was concerned with investment for the future, reforming services and making best use of technologies to ensure that the Council was fit for the future.

Comments made against the proposal included:

- The strain on the Adult Social Care budget and the fact that the Government had failed to provide a national long-term solution had led to the budgetary problems facing the Council. This would continue to be an issue until the Government recognised the cost to the Council of people living longer and needing more help,
- The administration had chosen to be a Council Tax champion rather than take advantage of the available funding necessary for service provision
- The potential for savings from the creation of a unitary authority was being ignored
- There was little point in the Government putting extra funding into the NHS without providing appropriate support for Adult Social Care. The Government should be lobbied to introduce the

Adult Social Care Green Paper at the earliest opportunity.

On a named vote **RESOLVED** that:

- a) the budget requirement for 2019/20 be approved at £330.390 million as set out at Appendix 1b having regard to the proposed Transformation and Reforms programme set out in Appendix 1c;
- b) the Council Tax Band D equivalent for 2019/20 be set at £1,260.75 which includes £90.83 relating to the ring-fenced Adult Social Care precept, and the Council Tax Requirement be set at £264.428 million, which will increase the 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
  - 1% Adult Social Care Precept ring-fenced for Adult Social Care services in order to contribute to existing cost pressures due to increases in demand-led Social Care;
- c) the Capital Strategy 2019-22 and Capital Programme of £397.510 million be approved as set out at Appendix 1D and 1E respectively;
- d) the earmarked reserves schedule as set out at Appendix 2 be approved;
- e) the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators set out at Appendix 5 be approved; and
- f) the Council's Pay Policy Statement set out in Appendix 6 be approved.

[NB Appendices referred to are those presented to 31 January 2019 Cabinet]

Those voting in favour were Mr B Clayton, 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, 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, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Dr C Hotham, Mr A D

Kent, Mr S M Mackay, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Mr J A D O'Donnell, 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 R P Tomlinson, Mr P A Tuthill, Ms R Vale, Ms S A Webb. (40)

Those voting against were Ms P Agar, Mr C J Bloore, Mr P Denham, Mr A Fry, Ms P A Hill, Mr M E Jenkins, Mr R C Lunn, Mr P M McDonald, Mr L C R Mallett, Mrs F M Oborski, Prof J W Raine, Mrs M A Rayner, Ms C M Stalker, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr R M Udall. (15)

**2078 Reports of Committee - Summary of decisions taken (Agenda item 5)**

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

- School Admissions Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, Academic Year 2020/21
- Worcestershire Passenger Transport Review and Strategy Development.

**2079 Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 1 - Works carried out under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (Agenda item 6)**

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion set out in the agenda papers standing in the names of Mr M J Hart, Mr A D Kent, Mrs J A Brunner, Mr G R Brookes Mrs E A Eyre, Mr A Stafford, Mr P A Tuthill.

The motion was moved by Mr A D Kent and seconded by Mr P A Tuthill who both spoke in favour of it, and Council agreed to deal with it on the day.

In the ensuing debate, the following points were made:

- Statutory companies gave only a cursory consideration to the needs of local residents and the Council. Statutory companies (or their subcontractors) were digging up newly laid pavement before patching it to a lesser standard and leaving the Council to pay for repairs and failing to keep local residents informed. Health and safety breaches were a regular occurrence. Section 74 notices should be issued where works overrun. There should be supervision during the work and an inspection after completion and any corrections made at the contractor's expense
- Examples of poor work by statutory companies included fire hydrants and cable access points being covered by tramac, delays in work being carried out, damage to verges, mud on the road, bus lanes rerouted, pipes dug in the wrong place, holes left in the highway, difficulty in contacting them, unhelpful responses to complaints,

unnecessary road closures, and signs and bollards left on site

- Local businesses were being unnecessarily affected by delays and the poor standard of work being carried out
- The problems experienced with statutory companies was impacting on the Council's strategy for investment in growth
- There was an incorrect assumption that delays were caused by County Council contractors and this had a negative impact on the Council's reputation
- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways commented that the Council had the power to ensure that statutory companies made good any or all damage to the highways and leave them in a condition to the standard before the work began. The Council also had the power to do the work itself and recharge them. Statutory companies were liable for the damage they caused and repair work to the required standard. They were also responsible in law for the work of their contractors and sub-contractors. The Council received 300 applications a day for work undertaken by statutory companies. So far, all works had been carried out without the need for the use of remedial powers, although it was a constant battle to get to that point. From 1 April, resources would be available to employ an additional enforcement officer and two extra inspectors
- The complete lack of planning by developers added to the problem. The Government should be encouraged to increase the fines for poor quality work by statutory companies
- Parish councils and possibly lengthsmen had an important role in pointing out transgressions by statutory consultees to the Council
- Given the number of applications for work received from statutory consultees, it was not surprising that the Council was not always able and did not have the resources to respond to issues promptly.

On being put to the vote, the motion was agreed unanimously.

**RESOLVED "This Council is concerned at the increasing number of complaints with regards to works carried out under the New Roads and Street**

**Works Act 1991.**

**Recent examples seen have produced a flood of complaints regarding temporary traffic lights installed with inadequate signage, poor response to complaints when said lights fail, lights installed without permits, third party contractors employed by statutory companies with inadequate training and supervision, poor quality and dangerous works that have resulted in emergency additional road closure orders for safety reasons, blocking of highways with plant, mud and rubble left on the highway and inadequate signage and lighting for pedestrians. In one recent case a large section of the highway was destroyed and will need replacing due to the poor quality works carried out.**

**The works carried out often require Worcestershire County Council's highways officers to respond at Worcestershire County Council's expense to cover for the inadequate service, works and supervision from the statutory companies. This Council agrees that it is completely unacceptable that Worcestershire tax payers' money should be used to pay for this.**

**As a Council we are proud of the excellent reputation and performance of our highways and repairs and this Council resolves to request the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways bring a report to a future meeting of Cabinet setting out how Worcestershire County Council can ensure that those statutory undertakers, utility companies and third parties not meeting our excellent standards when undertaking works on the highway are held to financial account and scrutiny."**

**2080 Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 2 - Care Workers (Agenda item 6)**

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion set out in the agenda papers standing in the names of Mr R M Udall, Mr R C Lunn, Ms C M Stalker, Ms P A Hill, Mr C J Bloore, and Mr L C R Mallett.

The motion was moved by Mr R M Udall and seconded by Mr R C Lunn who both spoke in favour of it, and Council agreed to deal with it on the day.

In the ensuing debate, the following points were made:

- The Council needed to break down the negative perception of care workers as being low paid, unskilled with limited career opportunities and

promote care work as a career with justifiable rewards. A recent survey of care workers indicated that they were proud of their work and found it rewarding but expressed concerns about a lack of support from employers and heavy workloads. The Council should only use agencies that treated their employees well, paid the living wage and provided career opportunities. Other councils had introduced successful initiatives including positive promotion through Facebook and Twitter and the creation of homecare co-operatives

- It was important to boost the self-worth of care workers and emphasise the importance of their role
- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care commented that it was important for the Council to have the best quality and trained care staff possible. The Council needed to find a way to develop a career pathway for carers i.e into social work or management and not just accepting care work as a role for life. He suggested the establishment of an Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group to look at the development of a career pathway, use of apprenticeships, the establishment of a social work/carers academy, liaison with the University of Worcester and the Council's role as an employer. The Council did not have a workforce strategy that looked at the skills of the job and recruitment and retention. Value-based recruitment and saturation marketing had proved successful elsewhere in the country. The celebrating carers week in November had mainly focused on unpaid carers but next year this should be expanded to include professional carers
- Historically, care workers have been female, poorly paid and non-unionised despite the qualifications and learning required to undertake the job. Qualification issues often acted as a block to carers furthering their ambitions
- It was important to also recognise the role of unpaid volunteer carers.

On being put to the vote, the motion was agreed unanimously.

**RESOLVED "Council acknowledges and respects the 15,000 Worcestershire residents who work in the care industry. Many more residents are dependent upon their care. Council asks the Cabinet Member Responsible to consider ways in which their work**

**2081 Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 3 - The impact of NHS car parking charges on on-street parking near hospital sites in Worcestershire (Agenda item 6)**

**can be celebrated and encouraged and how more people can consider care work as a viable career option."**

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion set out in the agenda papers standing in the names of Mr C J Bloore, Mr R M Udall, Mr L C R Mallett, Ms C M Stalker, Ms P A Hill and Mr R C Lunn.

The motion was moved by Mr C J Bloore and seconded by Ms P A Hill who both spoke in favour of it, and Council agreed to deal with it on the day.

Those in favour of the motion made the following comments:

- To put a stop to car parking charging would provide an opportunity to save money, improve the lives of local residents living near hospital sites and put money back in the pockets of key workers. Car parking charges were a barrier to people parking at hospitals. The Council did not have the resources to address the issues associated with the resultant displaced parking on neighbouring streets. The motion merely requested that the Leader start a dialogue with the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust and the Government Minister to address this issue. It was clear that hospital car parks were not built large enough for future need
- Displaced hospital parking was impacting on the lives of residents in Warndon and Ronkswood, Worcester. Hospital car parking charges were disproportionately impacting on the less well off. Government funding policies had led to Acute hospitals relying on car parking charges as a base funding mechanism
- It was morally wrong to charge people with chronic health conditions for car parking at hospitals
- Even if car parking charges were not removed, a voucher scheme could be introduced for those most in need
- Bus services to the Worcestershire Royal Hospital were inadequate. Car parking was not free for long term patients. It was subsidised and only one permit could be requested and paid for.

Those against the motion made the following comments:

- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for

Health commented that there were costs associated with car parks including the purchase of the land, providing adequate surfacing, maintenance and lighting and security. If all car parking charges were removed from the hospitals in the county, the loss of income to the Trust would be approximately £2.6 - 2.7m. In addition, the Trust would still be responsible for the running costs of the car parks which amounted to approximately £2m associated with

- The Worcestershire Royal Hospital car park was already full and impacted on access to the hospital by public transport. Free car parking would make the situation worse and allow non-hospital users to access the site, which would be difficult to police. Increasing demand without increasing supply was a recipe for disaster. People should be encouraged to make use of public transport
- People with severe illnesses were able to park for free and patients could request parking concessions at the Worcestershire Royal Hospital. The problem with the car parking at hospital sites was not the charge but the lack of capacity.

**On being put to the vote, the motion was lost.**

**2082 Report of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care (Agenda item 7)**

The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care presented his report to Council which covered various topics.

The Cabinet Member then answered a broad range of questions from members.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member for his report.

**2083 Question Time (Agenda item 8)**

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

**2084 Reports of Committees - Pensions Committee (Agenda item 9)**

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

The meeting was adjourned from 1.25pm to 2.00pm and ended at 4.33pm.

Chairman .....

This page is intentionally left blank

### COUNCIL 14 FEBRUARY 2019 - AGENDA ITEM 8 – QUESTION TIME

Questions and written responses provided below.

**QUESTION 1** – Mr R J Morris will ask Alan Amos:

*"I would like to ask the Cabinet Member for Highways if there is any additional support to help with the pathways on the Westlands Estate, Droitwich? He will be aware that little has been done to improve pathways on the estate since the 1970s when the estate was built. We have managed to complete resurfacing along the Farmers neighbourhood however there are several neighbourhoods on the estate where the pavements are in severe disrepair."*

#### **Draft Answer**

I thank Cllr Morris for his question and commend him for his attention to the needs of his constituents.

Over the last four years, we have completed work on 10 footways on the Westlands Estate in Droitwich including those in the Farmers neighbourhood. Alongside this, we have also completed work on 6 smaller stretches of footway. The total expenditure on these footways amounts to over £160,000 which equates to nearly 2,300 linear metres of footway being repaired, this meterage being based on a cost of £70 per metre of footway completed. As Members will be aware, we manage our footways using our core footways budget based around the asset condition, which we have to prioritise across the whole County and within the available budget which, for our core asset based work, is £2.53m, spent to reflect the asset based nature of the work. However, I can confirm that we are currently reviewing the Westlands Estate which incorporates a large number of footways including some divorced footways which we are surveying over the next few months. We will be focussing on those areas where we know we have reports of pothole defects historically. Nonetheless, I do anticipate that some sections of footway are likely to be included in 2019/20 and beyond. Once we have completed this review I will be able to give Cllr Morris the hopefully good news.

#### **Supplementary question**

In response to request, Alan Amos undertook to provide feedback to Richard Morris following the completion of the review of footways in relation to the Westlands Estate, Droitwich.

**QUESTION 2** – Mrs F M Oborski will ask Alan Amos:

*"Town and Parish Councils have previously been able to purchase Green Grit Bins to be placed to serve Highways areas which did not qualify for the Yellow WCC Grit Bins. I have now been made aware that this facility has apparently been withdrawn and such Grit Bins can only be placed at sites which meet WCC Highways Criteria. Can the Cabinet Member inform me:*

- a) if this is true, When this change in Policy took place?;*
- b) What Member involvement took place in making this decision?; and*
- c) When were Elected Members and Town and Parish Councils informed?"*

## Draft Answer

I thank Cllr Oborski for her question.

I am pleased to confirm that there has been no change in the policy regarding Grit Bins and the Council has not removed the "facility" of Green Grit Bins. There has been a review and some operational changes have taken place in relation to the criteria associated with the Green Grit Bins. There have been some small changes to the assessment criteria for Green Grit bins, including a question about whether the bin can be located on private land. Where the bin is to be located on the public highway an agreement is required to clarify ownership and ongoing maintenance and refilling responsibilities. This recognises that in the past there have been instances of Green Grit Bins on the public highway with no mechanism to refill and where they may stand empty.

This was detailed in the Winter Service update issued to all members in December. Parish Councils have also been informed along with a reminder about the need to place any orders for 1 tonne grit bags. I will ask officers to re-circulate the guidance information. I asked for the Review because I know how important both the Yellow and Green Grit bins are to residents and I wanted to make the system as flexible as possible within the necessary legal obligations to which the Council must adhere. Consequently, I am always open to suggestions from anybody as to how we can make the system as customer - friendly as possible. I strongly support the Green Grit Bin scheme as a good example of residents helping themselves and I believe it is the duty of the County Council to assist those people who want to do so.

### Supplementary question

On receipt of the details from Fran Oborski, Alan Amos undertook to investigate whether the correct decision was made over the refusal to provide a Green Grit Bin in Eastwood Drive, Kidderminster to Kidderminster Town Council.

### **QUESTION 3** – Mr R C Lunn will ask Lucy Hodgson:

*"Can the Cabinet Member inform Council as to how many people were prosecuted across the county in 2018 as a result of enforcement carried out by Worcestershire Regulatory Services?"*

## Draft Answer

I thank Mr Lunn for his question. He needs to be aware that Worcestershire Regulatory Services is the shared service delivering Environmental Health and Licensing services for the six district councils. The County Council stopped being a member of this partnership on 1st June 2016, although our Trading Standards team remains based at Wyre Forest House with their WRS colleagues and we continue to buy a range of services from the partnership to support our team in their work, as much of what they do has links to the wider regulatory agenda. Hence, the Cabinet Member has no formal role in WRS and therefore should really not comment on the work undertaken by this service for the districts. Mr Lunn should either contact WRS directly or go through his local district council and I am sure that WRS colleagues will be more than happy to help him with his question

The Cabinet member can tell Mr Lunn that the County Council's Trading Standards Service completed the prosecution of 5 defendants during the calendar year 2018. Three of these related to bogus builder type activity and two related to mis-described motor vehicles. Of the 5 cases, 4 resulted in individuals being sentenced to either actual custodial or suspended custodial sentences, the longest of which was 2 years. The 5th case was of a limited company, which received a fine. All of these cases were the subject of local press coverage. The level of sentencing shows the serious nature of the offending that our team are tackling, which is again backed up by the recent press coverage of the animal health

and welfare case against a Throckmorton-based farming enterprise where the owner was subject to a suspended prison sentence. The focus of the team is not on minor technical breaches of regulatory controls, it is very much on serious breaches of the law.

#### Supplementary question

In response to a query, Lucy Hodgson confirmed that the Trading Standards service did earn income from some of its roles as well as undertaking its regulatory role.

#### **QUESTION 4** – Mr R M Udall will ask Adrian Hardman:

*"Can the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care explain to Council what he has done to reduce the risks of social isolation for elderly Worcestershire residents?"*

#### **Draft Answer**

Social isolation is recognised as having a significant impact on someone's mental and physical health – at its most severe, it is estimated to be the equivalent of smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Consequently, the Council commissions, in partnership with the Big Lottery and CCGs, the Reconnections service. This is the first social impact bond of its kind, where payment is made where there is a measurable reduction in social isolation. Reconnections has worked with over 215 agencies who have made referrals, triaged 3000 referrals since 2015 and reduced the social isolation of 1300 older people. Referrals to Reconnections can be made by anyone or any professional including where someone is eligible under the Care Act. Discussions are taking place between the Council and CCGs to extend the contract until July 2020. All Council funding comes from the Public Health Ring Fenced Grant.

#### Supplementary question

In response to a request to lobby the Government about the impact on the elderly, particularly for those with a visual impairment, of its plans to stop the funding of tv licences for the over 75s, the Adrian Hardman emphasised that this was a matter for the BBC not the Government.

#### **QUESTION 5** – Mr R J Morris will ask Alan Amos:

*"Can I please ask the Cabinet Member for Highways what protection is planned for Businesses on the far end of Berry Hill industrial Estate, Droitwich, to protect and safeguard them from the frequent traveller encampments they experience? We need to support the ongoing businesses which are regularly adversely affected."*

#### **Draft Answer**

I thank Cllr Morris for his question.

I am aware that there have been a number of traveller encampments on the Berry Hill Estate in the past and we are committed to try and stop this from occurring again. The intention is to create a new ditch and bund system along the area affected by the historic traveller encampments to prevent their renewed access, subject to utility services checks. The extent of the ditch and bund is still to be decided with our partners referred to below and the nature and number of the services which may impact on the construction of the ditch. We hope to have these works completed during the spring/summer of this year. An alternative element such as a low tongue-and-groove fence may also be considered and/or added dependent upon design and the outcome of the utility searches. Most of the cost of this will likely be met by taxpayers. I understand that County Highways are currently working closely with Cllr Morris, Wychavon District Council, the police and affected

businesses to put a solution in place. There is a clear need to resolve this on-going matter once and for all so local businesses are not again adversely affected by this disruption. There is of course another aspect to resolving this matter which, unfortunately, is beyond my power, but I am delighted to update Council that a joint statement was issued last week by the Home Sec. and the Sec of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. I do hope that reassures Cllr Morris and everybody else that further help is on the way.

#### Supplementary question

Alan Amos undertook to examine what more can be done within the existing funding envelope to protect and safeguard businesses on the far end of Berry Hill industrial Estate, Droitwich from the frequent traveller encampments.

#### **QUESTION 6** – Mrs F M Oborski will ask Marcus Hart:

*"Staff working at the Primary PRU and the MET Education Centres based at Lea Street School Kidderminster tell me that they believe that their use of these premises may be due to cease at the end of the Summer Term 2019. Could the Cabinet Member tell me:*

- a) If this Timetable is true?; and*
- b) Where it is intended to provide replacement facilities?"*

#### **Draft Answer**

Commissioners have been working with the Head Teacher since the Autumn because they do feel that the property in Lea Street is in scope for disposal due to significant costs of refurbishment and dilapidation. But in terms of both the PRU and MET provision, no formal timeline has been given so no-one has said the centres will be out by the summer of 2019. The review the feasibility study was still being undertaken and therefore in respect of the replacement facilities, until I and the CMR for Transformation and Commissioning see the report that is due to be completed at the end of March/beginning of April then we don't know as yet exactly where the replacement provision will be. However we are working hard and closely with the school.

#### Supplementary question

In response to a query, Marcus Hart indicated that there was no information that the PRU would be moving to the Grange, Kidderminster.