

**COUNCIL**  
**9 FEBRUARY 2017****REPORT OF CABINET - SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN**

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**Outcome from the Ofsted Inspection of Services for Children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers**

1. Ofsted carry out inspections of Local Authority services with regard to the help, care and protection of children and young people. The inspections are carried out under the Single Inspection Framework (SIF) which replaced previous children services inspection arrangements. The SIF covers inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after, care leavers and a review of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The inspection outcome has four possible judgements: inadequate, requires improvement to be good, good and outstanding. The judgements of the 116 Authorities where the results have been published to date show that 73% of authorities are inadequate or require improvement.
2. The overall judgement for Worcestershire was 'inadequate' and was published on 24 January 2017. This is a very disappointing judgement for Worcestershire's children and young people, as well as for the committed and hardworking staff within the service. Plans were already in place to deliver service improvement prior to the inspection and this work has continued and been further strengthened to form an improvement plan to cover all recommendations from Ofsted. The Local Children Safeguarding Board judgement was "requires improvement", as was the judgement for adoption. The report contained fourteen recommendations for the Council, with its partners, to implement.
3. The Council had been aware of shortcomings in services, which had led the Chief Executive to invite the Local Government Association to carry out a peer review of children's services in April 2015. Following the peer review report, which confirmed the challenges within the service, an improvement board and 'back to basics' plan for children's social work were implemented. The improvement plan has been refreshed in the light of the final Ofsted judgement.
4. In light of the Ofsted judgement and recognising that the pace of change can be accelerated through the availability of additional funding, Council will be asked to recommend a budget for 2017/18 that adds a further £800,000 per annum on an ongoing basis. In addition, there is a recommendation for a short-term allocation of £1m for 2017/18 and 2018/19 financial years (£2m in total). This would provide an additional £1.5m revenue for children's safeguarding and for services for care leavers on an ongoing basis. It also provides an additional revenue funding of £1m for each of the next two financial years and an addition to the capital programme of £1m to support improvements in social care IT systems to accelerate the pace of change required to ensure that children in Worcestershire in need of help and protection, children in care and care leavers achieve the positive outcomes that they deserve.

5. There are a number of policies and strategies that are currently in need of refreshing and approving in order to ensure that the framework for the delivery of services is clear, effective and follows current best practice guidelines. Work is already underway to prepare these documents for formal approval by Cabinet later in 2017. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families will be asked to approve the following strategies during April 2017: Looked After Children Strategy, including the sufficiency plan, permanency plan, placement action plan, Special Guardianship Order (SGO) and Adoption Policy; Care Leavers' Strategy, including the handbook and action plan, and Proposals to review and co-produce with children and parents a transformation plan for services for Children with Disabilities and Special Educational Needs.

6. The Cabinet has noted the outcome of the Ofsted Inspection Report, noted and approved the improvement plan to tackle the areas of concern identified by Ofsted; and noted the key policy development and authorised the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families to take decisions upon them.

### **Scrutiny Report: Commissioning: Staff Terms and Conditions**

7. The Cabinet has considered a Scrutiny Report on Commissioning: Staff Terms and Conditions. The Terms of Reference for the scrutiny exercise were to examine and make recommendations on: What powers or duties the Council has when commissioning providers in relation to staff terms and conditions; Whether and how the Council monitors contractors' employment conditions; How the Council evaluates tenders and what account is taken of employee conditions; How the Council monitors the quality of services provided by contractors which may be affected by staffing quality or turnover; and How the Council ensures that there is a provider market.

8. The Scrutiny Task Group established to consider the issue has been mindful of what the County Council can and cannot influence and although not socially ideal, there is a clearer understanding that the County Council is the Commissioner and responsible for outcomes, the provider is responsible for delivery and both parties are responsible for monitoring performance. The Task Group had made a number of recommendations relating to domiciliary care providers and provision of the National Minimum Wage (NMW); home care contract rates; a Social Value Policy and Framework; transfer of trade union rights to new employers; a voluntary staff feedback scheme for staff who have been transferred; and sharing quality assurance information with Scrutiny.

9. The Cabinet has received the Scrutiny Report on Commissioning: Staff Terms and Conditions together with the response of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning. It has welcomed the Scrutiny Report and agreed to adopt the response of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility as the way forward.

### **Scrutiny Report: Effectiveness of the Prevention and Recovery Drug and Alcohol Misuse Service**

10. The Cabinet has considered a Scrutiny Report on the Effectiveness of the Prevention and Recovery Drug and Alcohol Misuse Service. The Terms of Reference for the scrutiny exercise were to investigate: how the County Council, with partners (including the Police) is developing a prevention and recovery approach and an effective service to help reduce drug and alcohol misuse; and how effectively the Council is

working with other agencies to improve the help and advice provided to addicts and their families.

11. In drawing up the recommendations, the Task Group established to consider the issue, has been mindful of what the County Council can and cannot influence from a Public Health perspective. The Task Group had made a number of recommendations which were adopted by the OSPB relating to the effectiveness of services to reduce drug and alcohol misuse; commissioning of services; engagement and advice to the public; partnership working; and future funding and support – the bigger picture.

12. The Cabinet has received the Scrutiny Report on the Effectiveness of the Prevention and Recovery Drug and Alcohol Misuse Service together with the response of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Health in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Transformation and Commissioning. It has welcomed the Scrutiny Report and agreed to adopt the response of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility as the way forward.

### **Update Report of the Footways Overview and Scrutiny Task Group**

13. The Cabinet has received the Update Report of the Footways Scrutiny Task Group produced following a Notice of Motion to Council in which Council recognised the importance of walking as part of a healthy lifestyle and that in addition, safe footways were especially important for the elderly to access local shops and services. At the time there were concerns that the county's footways revenue budget of £800,000 in 2014/15 and beyond would be inadequate to maintain footways and that the inspection criteria was insufficiently rigorous to identify where the surface was unsafe for less able walkers. Unfortunately, due to matters arising, the review had failed to reach a consensus over the content of the final report from the Task Group. It was therefore agreed that the Task Group would present an update report.

14. The Task Group established to consider the issue had made a number of recommendations which were adopted by OSPB relating to the level of funding; the Department for Transport Guidance on Well Managed Highways Infrastructure; an annual indicative programme of footways to be treated; budget spends around category 3 'Quiet Urban' footways; fining utility companies; and the inclusion of Footways on OSPB 2017/18 work programme.

15. The Cabinet has noted the Report's findings and recommendations and adopted them as the way forward.

### **Pilot Intergenerational Project (Homeshare)**

16. The County Council is committed to reduce loneliness within the county and has driven this agenda through the development of a Social Impact Bond (SIB) working with CCG partners, the Big Lottery Fund and Cabinet Office. The SIB is an innovative outcomes-based payment driven project aimed at supporting the loneliest people within the county and using focussed interventions to reduce loneliness through the use of community organisations and volunteer support. This SIB model puts a large emphasis on provider performance/throughput and generating referrals to ensure that the maximum outcomes (and thus payments) are achieved. The intergenerational project aims to replicate this model through a similar outcomes-based payment mechanism.

17. The University of Worcester and Vestia Community Trust commenced discussions about the possibilities of a scheme like this some time ago. Partnership working was already in place between the Council and the University and tackling loneliness had already been identified as a priority of the Council. The proposal put forward is based on a European model called 'Homeshare' which matches older people (and couples) who have a spare room in their house and students who require accommodation whilst studying at University.

18. The Cabinet has approved the adoption of new policy decision to invest in the 'innovation concept' of the pilot Intergenerational Project Homeshare to reduce loneliness in older people. The Cabinet has supported the Council investing in the partnership with the University of Worcester to enable the development of the above innovation concept. The Cabinet has approved the maximum funding of £167,000 from Public Health Ring Fenced Grant for a period over 4 years in support of it. The Cabinet has authorised the Director of Public Health to take all appropriate steps to put the above decisions into effect.

#### **A4440 Worcester Southern Link Road Dualling (SLR Dualling) – Final Phases**

19. The Council has deployed the resources available to it, some c£17 million, to make as much progress as it can with Phase 3 of SLR Dualling. The Final Phases require the project team to maintain momentum with the securing of funding, necessary consents, securing possessions (Network Rail) and implementing works. Many of these issues will require the project team to be able to react quickly to a series of intense activities and events in the first 6 months of 2017.

20. The Cabinet has noted the physical progress made on the SLR Dualling to date and the continuing exploratory and preparatory work which is necessary to bring Phase 3c (Whittington to Norton – new railway bridge and new footbridge) and Phase 4 (Ketch to Powick including new bridge parallel to Carrington Bridge) (the Final Phases) of SLR Dualling to implementation. The Cabinet has noted the financial position in the February 2017 Cabinet Budget Report regarding the Final Phases. The Cabinet has approved subject to the receipt of all necessary consents and approvals the implementation of the Final Phases of SLR Dualling and subject to the approval of funding. The Cabinet has granted delegated authority to award contracts for the Final Phases of SLR Dualling to the Director of Economy and Infrastructure in consultation with Chief Financial Officer and the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economy, Skills and Infrastructure.

21. The Cabinet has approved the submission of a planning application for Phase 4 of SLR Dualling and applications for other relevant consents, including those relating to environment, utilities and rail, by the Council or by the relevant successful contractor as agent for the Council as Highway Authority. The Cabinet has authorised the acquisition of the land required for Phase 4 and the rights over the land including the making of Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) in case it is not possible to acquire the land by negotiation. The Cabinet has authorised the submission of an Outline Business Case (OBC) to the Department for Transport in relation to SLR Phase 4, pursuant to the WEBTAG process for the approval of major highways infrastructure schemes. The Cabinet has authorised any public engagement necessary to inform residents about the proposals for the Final Phases and to respond to any concerns raised.

**Mr S E Geraghty**  
**Chairman**

### **Contact Points**

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### **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and background papers for the meetings of the Cabinet held on 2 February 2017.