

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

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**Children's Social Care Update**

1. On the 19 September 2017, the Secretary of State for Education issued a revised Statutory Direction to the Council alongside the publication of the Children's Commissioner's report of 9 June 2017. The Direction sets out the requirement to consider options for an alternative delivery model and full business case to be produced for the DfE. Essex County Council has been formally appointed as Worcestershire's Improvement Partner, and will develop a programme of work to provide support and challenge to the Council's service improvement.

2. As a result of feedback from Ofsted, as well as initial feedback from our DfE appointed Commissioner, a priority Improvement Plan was established, focusing on four areas:

- **Family Front Door** – Management of Contacts, Referrals and Assessments
- **Early Help** – Remodel the Early Help Offer
- **Culture** – Create a Child-focused and Accountable Culture
- **Quality Assurance** – Understand What 'Good' Looks Like

The revised plan has been endorsed by Ofsted and was agreed at the Service Improvement Board on 28 June 2017.

3. Worcestershire County Council's Children's Social Care Services is working to improve the quality and effectiveness of its services including social work practice. As part of this improvement journey, and in response to both the Ofsted inspection and the Children's Commissioner's report (published 19 September 2017), the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families recommended that the Council voluntarily considers alternative delivery models (ADM) for Children's Social Care Services in order to both accelerate and sustain improvement. The Cabinet has approved the appraisal of a range of options for the different forms of an alternative delivery models for Children's Social Care Services, against the set of key principles, with the outcome of this appraisal being reported to Cabinet in December 2017.

4. The Cabinet has approved the proposal to commission external expertise to support the Council in considering the range of alternative delivery models for Children's Social Care Services.

5. The Cabinet has delegated responsibility to the Director of Children, Families and Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families, to establish a Programme Board to develop the ADM.

## **Resources Report**

6. The County Council's authorised cash limited budget for 2017/18 is £324 million. After the first four months of 2017/18 and forecasting for the remaining eight months of the financial year an overall financial pressure of £7.5 million is anticipated. This represents 2.3% of the County Council's revenue budget for which mitigating action is needed to ensure net expenditure is contained within cash limits.

7. The transformation programme target for 2017/18 is £27.9 million. This includes £6.5 million of projects carried forward from previous financial years (of which £1.7 million has now been delivered). The delivery of the programme is governed by the Corporate Business Board and there are current years saving projects totalling £12.1 million at risk of non-delivery during the current financial year. Services are mitigating much of this through holding back expenditure in other areas or temporarily through use of one off earmarked reserves, and will continue to work on ensuring all savings and reform plans are achieved.

8. In July 2017 the County Council received confirmation of the amounts of the Adult Social Care Revenue Grants 2017/18, which were in line with the budgeted expectations: £0.2m for Social Care in Prisons; £0.1m for War Pensions Scheme Disregard; and £0.3m for Local Reform and Community Voices.

9. The Council received confirmation of the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) revised position for 2017/18. The Schools and High Needs blocks have not changed. However, the Early Years DSG for 2017/18 has been confirmed as £28.42 million, which is £2 million less than the indicative figure notified in December 2016.

10. Based on this revised budget, it is currently forecast that capital expenditure totalling £137 million will be incurred this financial year, with investment in the following significant projects:

- £21.1 million – Worcestershire Parkway Regional Interchange
- £11.8 million – Worcestershire Southern Dualling – Phase 3
- £4.6 million – Highways Flood Mitigation measures
- £4.0 million – Kidderminster Railway Station Enhancement

## **Worcestershire Data Sharing Charter**

11. Arising from the work on public service reform and devolution, in May 2016 KPMG was commissioned to co-produce a roadmap strategy which set out the current state of data sharing across partners, a vision for the future, and a set of practical and costed steps and interventions to improve the delivery of public services in Worcestershire through innovation and process excellence. The roadmap recommended the development of a Worcestershire Office for Data and Analytics (WODA) and the Worcestershire Partnership Executive Group agreed to a 12 month pilot to test the benefits of enhanced data sharing, demonstrated through a number of “use cases”. WODA aims to facilitate enhanced data sharing between partner organisations.

12. In order to demonstrate this Council's commitment to working together with the other partner organisations, the Cabinet has endorsed the Worcestershire Data Sharing Charter. The Charter sets out the underlying principle which is a duty to share data

unless there are legal or ethical reasons that prevent sharing and underpins the work of WODA.

**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 28 September 2017.