

12 February 2015

5. REPORTS OF CABINET

(b) SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN

Implementation of the Care Act 2014

1. The Cabinet has considered the implementation of the Care Act 2014 including the new duties required under it and accompanying Regulations and Statutory Guidance. The new duties and powers for local authorities fall into two categories: 'reform of duties in respect of adult social care and support' which comes into force from April 2015 and 'reform of adult social care funding' which is about changes in the eligibility for social care funding and reforming the way in which people pay for care, which comes into force from April 2016.
2. The Cabinet has authorised the Director of Adult Services and Health to consolidate existing policies and practice in respect of prevention into an appropriate single policy and action plan by 31 March 2015. The Cabinet has also agreed that the Council will apply the new national criteria and threshold to determine adults' eligibility for local authority funded care and support, and will continue to charge for care and support for service users in line with its powers under the Care Act and existing policy. It has authorised the Director of Adult Services and Health to finalise and update the relevant policies and procedures accordingly. Additionally, the Cabinet has agreed the approach to charging carers and will not charge for support to carers where this involves services that they receive directly. The Director of Adult Services and Health will reflect this position in the relevant policies and procedures. The Cabinet has noted the requirement to update the Council's Deferred Payments Agreement scheme in line with the Care Act. Again, the Director will update the relevant policies and procedures accordingly and will also implement the requirements of the Care Act in respect of advocacy through revision of the existing contract and re-commissioning of new services.
3. The Cabinet has received an assurance of the Council's state of readiness for implementation of the Care Act. The Council has had a grant of £125,000 in 2014/15 to assist with the Act's implementation. Additional costs will be incurred in 2015/16 and are currently estimated to be £5.3m. It will be difficult to estimate costs in subsequent years as the additional demand arising from the Care Act is difficult to predict. The Government has not confirmed any additional

Superfast Extension Programme - Appointing a Preferred Supplier for a County-wide Broadband Infrastructure Partner

funding beyond 2015/16 and this therefore, creates a cost pressure for the Council. A communications and engagement campaign is being run by the Council to raise awareness of the Care Act.

4. The Cabinet has considered the significant progress to date of the Broadband programme, in particular the Superfast Extension Programme. There are both economic and social benefits of faster broadband for Worcestershire's residents and businesses. The current Superfast Worcestershire programme has extended broadband coverage significantly and is 3 months ahead of schedule. The Broadband Community Pathfinder project is now available to residents and business premises in three projects areas covering approximately 2,200 premises. The ambition for the Superfast Extension Programme contract is that 95% of all premises will have access to superfast broadband speeds (residential and business). The Invitation to Tender for the Superfast Extension Programme was released in December 2014.

5. The Cabinet has authorised the Director of Commercial and Change, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Skills and Infrastructure and the Director of Business, Environment and Community, to complete the evaluation of tenders, undertake contract finalisation and to execute the contract. Subject to satisfactory completion of this finalisation process the Director of Commercial and Change, in consultation with the Director of Business, Environment and Community, has been authorised to award a contract to a preferred partner and supplier for the delivery of Worcestershire's Superfast Extension Programme. The Director of Commercial and Change, in consultation with the Cabinet Member and Director of Business, Environment and Community, has been given authority to approve future change controls to both the Superfast Worcestershire Contract (signed 5 August 2013) and the Superfast Extension Programme to ensure programme pace is maintained following contract award of the latter which is projected for April 2015.

6. The total amount of funding available for the Superfast Extension Programme is £4.78m, comprising £2.39m grant funding each from the Broadband Delivery UK Fund and the Local Growth Fund. There is no financial commitment for the Council other than the revenue costs of managing the contract and stimulating demand.

Increasing the Number of School Places available in Malvern

7. The Cabinet has considered proposals to increase the number of school places available within Malvern to cover the 2015 and 2016 Reception intakes. Latest data had identified a need for additional places by September 2016. Trends supported the provision of such places in or near to the town. A public consultation document had set out the

options and, in light of the analysis, the recommendations in relation to Callow End C.E., Leigh and Bransford, Northleigh C.E. Primary Schools and Somers Park School. A number of alternative options were also put forward during the consultation process.

8. The Cabinet has noted the results of the consultation. It has, as a result, approved the increase in Published Admission Numbers for Callow End C.E. Primary School from 12 to 15, subject to the necessary capital funding being approved under the 2015/16 Capital Programme, and for Leigh and Bransford Primary School from 15 to 30, subject to notice, planning and the necessary capital funding being approved under the 2015/16 Capital Programme. It has however, agreed not to pursue the option to expand Northleigh C.E. Primary School on its existing site.

9. Further discussions will take place with both Northleigh C.E. Primary and Somers Park Schools, local county councillors and Malvern Hills District Council to explore the viability and costs of an option to develop the Malvern Vale site. However, without prejudice to the future, the Directors of Somers Park School will be requested to take a 'bulge' year for the academic year September 2016 should the Director of Children's Services believe this is required.

10. The Cabinet has considered the Scrutiny Report on Digital Inclusion which examined how the Council could make sure that all Worcestershire residents benefited from the opportunities offered by its Digital Strategy and aimed to identify possible risks and how these could be mitigated.

11. The Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board agreed that members should monitor implementation of the Digital Strategy going forward, and, as part of this, review the quality, availability and take up of adult education courses on IT literacy. Additionally, the Adult Care and Well-being Overview and Scrutiny Panel should be given the opportunity to view and comment on the e-market place before it went live.

12. The Cabinet has noted the conclusions of the Scrutiny Report on Digital Inclusion and agreed to adopt the response of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Change and the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care as the way forward.

Mr A I Hardman
Chairman

County Council Contact Points

Worcester (01905) 763763 or Minicom: Worcester (01905)

Scrutiny Report: Digital Inclusion

Contact Points

766399

Specific Contact Points for this report

Nichola Garner, Committee & Appellate Officer
Tel: 01905 766626
Email: ngarner2@worcestershire.gov.uk

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 item:

Agenda and background papers for the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5 February 2015.