

Cabinet

Thursday, 15 December 2016, County Hall, Worcester - 10.30 am

		Minutes
Present:		Mr S E Geraghty (Chairman), Mr M L Bayliss, Mr A N Blagg, Mr M J Hart, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr K A Pollock, Mr A C Roberts and Mr J H Smith
Also attended:		Mr M E Jenkins, Mr P M McDonald, Mr A P Miller, Mrs E B Tucker and Mr T A L Wells were also in attendance.
Available papers		The Members had before them: A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated); and B. The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 17 November 2016 (previously circulated). A copy of document A will be attached to the signed Minutes.
1763 Apologies and Declarations of Interest (Agenda item 1)		An apology was received from Mrs S L Blagg. Mr M L Bayliss declared an interest as he had a family member employed by the County Council within Children, Families and Communities.
1764 Public Participation (Agenda item 2)		Mr Peter Burgess addressed Cabinet in relation to Item 6 - 'Local Transport Plan 4'. He set out his personal experience as a transport economist. He highlighted the fast changing of transport technology and its impact on the Plan. He outlined two propositions that could proceed in parallel with the LTP consultation, firstly the vision for 2030 needed to be articulated more clearly, and secondly that Worcester should form and lead a group of medium size towns and cities (population c100,000) offering markets to developers of new transport technologies.
1765 Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting (Agenda item 3)		RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
1766 2017-18 Budget		The Cabinet considered the 2017-18 draft Budget and

and Council Tax (Agenda item 4)

Council Tax for consultation including proposals for a number of savings as well as plans for investment to improve roads and pavements and to tackle congestion. The details were set out in the report and its Appendices.

In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were made:

- (a) The Leader of the Council introduced the report and commented that the draft Budget and Council Tax proposals built on the work carried out throughout the year. The financial settlement and strategic grant was awaited from the Government. The Budget would now be the subject of consultation before the final proposals would be brought to Cabinet on 2 February and for determination by Council on 9 February. The proposals had been based on what people said was important in Worcestershire and what needed improving. Vulnerable adults and children and maintaining highways had been identified as their main priorities with roads, pavements and congestion needing improvement. The Budget had been designed around the aspirations set out in the Corporate Plan. It was based on affordability but it was clear that Council Tax needed to be raised by 2% to fund social care and a further 0.94% to invest in priorities identified by the public. There was a balance to be struck between the need to raise Council Tax and make efficiencies. Efficiencies were being made but this Council had one of the lowest County Council precepts in the country. The proposed increase still represented value for money. The Council sought to resource the One Worcestershire approach and reevaluate it approach to collaboration with partners;
- (b) This budget was about development of services not cutting service provision. The Council had managed the budget as well as possible despite a number of constraints. As a result the Council was able to increase income to enable it to be self-sufficient and make additional funds available for adult social care and investment in towns and infrastructure in the County. The Council was doing things better and finding innovative ways of working. The Council had been successful at getting in revenue grants. The Council was open to suggestions for improvement;
- (c) This was a budget for growth that responded to the feedback from the electorate in relation to concerns about the standard of the roads and pavements,

and keeping adults and children safe. The £14m investment in infrastructure, £6m in pavement improvements and additional £1m for road maintenance was welcomed. As the economy grew with more jobs created and more houses built, it was vital to invest in the transport infrastructure to keep people moving. A Council Tax increase was inevitable in the short term albeit kept to a minimum;

- (d) The Learning and Library Service had been able to identify savings without closing any libraries unlike in many areas in the country. Bewdley Library had been reopened in the local doctor's surgery. Job Centre Plus had agreed to move into Redditch and Kidderminster Libraries with their own dedicated space. The investment in a number of areas in Malvern Hills, including the Driving Home initiative, pavement improvements, Malvern Science Park and Malvern Town Centre was welcomed;
- (e) The additional funding of £5m for addressing congestion in the County was particularly significant and responded to the feedback from local residents. However, it was recognised that a lot of work still needed to be done to improve matters;
- (f) A number of achievements had been made in connection with the Council's Open for Business Policy and work was ongoing on a number of projects including the Southern Link Road. It was hoped to increase income to provide investment in the Malvern Hills Science Park expansion, Worcester Six, the Worcester Parkway development, public realm work and the second phase for Tenbury, as well as leveraging more private finance to help the public purse;
- (g) A Member from outside the Cabinet commented that the Council was very selective about what it listened to. There was no reference to concerns expressed about the lack of youth provision, closure of Children's Centres, time spent on Home Care, library hours reductions and the removal of asbestos from schools. The Council will have increased Council Tax by 7% over two years which had not been matched by wage increases. Funds had been wasted on unnecessary journey time signs in Hoobrook, Kidderminster;
- (h) The Leader of the Council commented that the

Council would listen to any suggestions for improving services - but it had to balance its books. The Council had to take a prudent approach to balancing its finances. If additional funds were required in a particular service area, they had to be matched by a reduction elsewhere. It was unrealistic for the Council not to make savings, not to use the private sector, not to make efficiencies or reform, and not to increase income or Council Tax; and

- (i) The Council's approach was sensible and prudent and allowed it, amongst other things, to improve the safeguarding of children by reducing the case loads of social workers.

RESOLVED: that

- a) **the draft budget be approved for consultation as set out at Appendix 3, which includes proposed changes for income generation and expenditure budgets that are currently being consulted upon arising from the FutureFit programme set out in Appendix 5, a number of which have already been subject to detailed Cabinet and Scrutiny reports;**
- b) **the plan to address a forecast savings requirement of £2.9 million as a result of updating the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) taking account of Central Government's Autumn Statement be endorsed and presented for approval within the February 2017 Cabinet and Full Council reports;**
- c) **an investment of £1 million in the Road Maintenance budget, £6 million over two years for Pavement Improvements, £5 million for Cutting Congestion and a £2 million extension to the existing Town Centre Improvements programme be endorsed following residents feedback on the importance of improving roads, pavements and tackling congestion in support of the Council's Open for Business priority;**
- d) **whilst the full detail of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement is expected to be released in late December 2016 which will include the multi-year financial settlement deal**

agreed with Central Government, it is noted that the County Council is still likely to be awaiting confirmation of around £90 million of specific grant income and any significant updates will be presented at the February 2017 Cabinet meeting;

- e) the view that the County Council will continue to address financial challenges in future years be endorsed; and
- f) the Cabinet agrees that it is minded to recommend to Full Council in February 2017 an increase in Council Tax Precept by 2.94% in relation to two parts:
 - 0.94% 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
 - 2% Adult Social Care Precept ring-fenced for Adult Social Care services in order to contribute to existing cost pressures in 2016/17 due to Worcestershire's ageing population.

1767 Disbanding of South Worcestershire Shared Service Joint Committee Arrangements (Agenda item 5)

The Cabinet considered proposals to dissolve the South Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee by 31 March 2017. The details were set out in the report.

In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were made:

- (a) The Cabinet Member for Transformation and Commissioning introduced the report and commented that the South Worcestershire Shared Service Joint Committee had been a successful joint arrangement between the Council and district councils to oversee South Worcestershire Revenues and Benefits, Worcestershire Hub, South Worcestershire Building control and South Worcestershire ICT. However, it was now recognised that responsibilities had changed and a joint Committee was no longer required. The Council would continue to monitor service provision;
- (b) As a result of commissioning of services, the role of the Joint Committee had reduced to the point where

its decision-making and monitoring powers were no longer needed; and

- (c) The Leader of the Council emphasised that the Council would still have an oversight of the management and accountability of the services which were previously the responsibility of the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED: that

- (a) **the recommendation from the South Worcestershire Joint Committee to dissolve the South Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee ("Joint Committee") by 31 March 2017 be endorsed;**
- (b) **authority be delegated to the Director of Commercial and Change, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning, to conclude arrangements relating to services currently delegated to the Joint Committee;**
- (c) **authority be delegated to the Director of Commercial and Change, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning, to finalise the detail of future governance arrangements with partners of the Worcestershire Hub Shared Service (WHSS) whilst maintaining member engagement as set out in the report; and**
- (d) **authority be delegated to the Director of Commercial and Change, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning, to conclude a revised legal agreement with the partners of the WHSS and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to execute this agreement as necessary.**

1768 Local Transport Plan 4 (Agenda item 6)

The Cabinet considered proposals for public consultation on the draft Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). The details were set out in the report and its Appendices.

In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were made:

- (a) The Cabinet Member for Economy, Skills and Infrastructure introduced the report and commented that highways had been a particular concern highlighted by the public therefore it was important to inform them of the Council's plans for the future and hear their views on these plans. The Council had decided, within the legal framework, to review the LTP although the legal requirement to review every five years had gone. It was time to replace the current plan for the period up to 2030. The Plan would be followed by a series of policies. There were a number of broad principals set out in the Plan particularly encouraging active travel through supporting walking and cycling, making segregated passageways, Multi Modal transport and encouraging use of public transport. There was a policy on motorcycling which would address motorcyclists' particular concerns about diesel spillages on the road. In relation to air quality and climate change, it was planned to reduce toxic emissions from vehicles;
- (b) The LTP would be out for public consultation from 22 December to 17 March 2017 and it was anticipated that the final version would be adopted by Council in the summer of 2017. The £5m proposed investment to address congestion in the draft Budget would be important to help keep the county on the move;
- (c) The investment in the Southern Link Road was significant and it was hoped that the Government would approve the second phase of the scheme including the replacement of the Carrington Bridge in the near future. It was vital to use all forms of modern communication to inform the public of the Council's investment in key infrastructure projects; and
- (d) The Leader of the Council stressed the importance of the LTP to ensure that the Council had an ambitious vision for the next 5 years to shape the future of the county. The Council also had a Strategic Economic Plan. Worcestershire was one of the fastest growing economies in the country with an ambitious agenda for housing and jobs and it needed to be supported by a network that could manage and mitigate the impact of congestion. The Council was committed to measures to avoid car usage and technological advancement to manage

the constrained network. The Council had committed additional funds to this area and any matched funding from the Government would be welcomed.

RESOLVED: that

- (a) **it be agreed that a public consultation of 12 weeks be undertaken on the draft Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) 2017-2030 for Worcestershire; and**
- (b) **a further report be received for consideration having regard to the outcomes of that consultation.**

1769 Balanced Scorecard - FutureFit Performance and Corporate Risk Update (Agenda item 7)

The Cabinet considered a range of indicators linked to key priorities and themes and the approach to managing risk. The details were set out in the report and its Appendix.

In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were made:

- (a) The Cabinet Member for Transformation and Commissioning introduced the report and commented that of the 45 indicators in the Corporate Balance Scorecard, 20 had been rated as green and 9 as red. The following risks had been rated as red:
 - Looked After Children – this service was currently being revived and would change significantly in the next 12 months
 - Older people funded in permanent Care Home placements – capital was being invested to help old people maintain their well-being longer
 - Condition of the roads – Low levels of public satisfaction remained despite the good work undertaken by the Council to improve the condition of roads
 - Household Waste collected per head
 - Local areas as a place to live – All methods of communication were being revised to improve satisfaction levels
 - Staff Appraisals completed – All staff appraisals should be completed by the end of December
 - Sickness rates – This indicator should be looked at as a whole rather than in isolation.

Sickness absence was not seen as an HR issue but more as a matter for the relevant department.

The Corporate risks remained unchanged.

- (b) The Leader of the Council commented that the Balanced Scorecard needed refreshing to ensure that the performance management mechanism tracked the indicators that were important in the new Corporate Plan. Some of the targets were challenging therefore the gap between actual performance and where the Council wanted to perform was not decreasing. The number of Looked After Children was increasing and the Council was required to step in regardless of numbers which was the right thing to do yet this had a negative impact on the indicator;
- (c) It was recognised that many businesses failed within the first 3 years from set up. The Council would wish to encourage new business set ups and provide support for them; and
- (d) It was encouraging that 82.2% of local residents were satisfied with the local area as a place to live. However congestion was an issue for residents and impacted on their level of satisfaction and the Council needed to respond. Household waste tonnages were going up as more houses were being built in the County. However recycling rates per head had dropped perhaps due to a lack of understanding and the Council was looking at ways to educate the public to improve recycling rates. The Council continued to subsidise and encourage the take up of compost bins because the type of waste that was compostable was heavy and therefore expensive to landfill.

RESOLVED: that

- (a) **the latest update of the Corporate Balanced Scorecard for Quarter Two 2016/17 be received, the 20 indicators rated as 'green' noted and the actions being taken to improve performance for the 7 indicators rated 'red', where there has been an update in Quarter Two 2016/17, considered;**
- (b) **the latest refresh of the Corporate Risk Register including actions to mitigate the two risks that are rated 'red' be noted; and**

- (c) **the Chief Executive be authorised in consultation with the Leader of the Council to refresh the indicators that sit on the Corporate level Balanced Scorecard to reflect the new 2017-2022 Corporate Plan with effect from 1 April 2017.**

The meeting ended at 11.30am.

Chairman