

Cabinet**Thursday, 5 September 2019, County Hall, Worcester,
10.00 am****Minutes****Present:**

Mr S E Geraghty (Chairman), Mr A T Amos,
Mr A I Hardman, Mr M J Hart, Mrs L C Hodgson,
Ms K J May, Dr K A Pollock, Mr A C Roberts and
Mr J H Smith

Also attended:

Mr P Grove, Mr A D Kent, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr R J
Morris, Mrs F M Oborski and Mrs E B Tucker.

**1923 Apologies and
Declarations of
Interest**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A P Miller.

**1924 Public
Participation**

None

**1925 Chairman's
Announcements**

The Chairman gave a brief update on the spending review which had been announced the day before. Overall the statement was upbeat in terms of resources for local government; with an improved Better Care Fund; Social Care receiving an additional £1 billion nationally which would equate to around £10 million for Worcestershire; the ability to vary Council Tax; £700 million for SEND, meaning £6 or 7 million for Worcestershire; the continuation of the Troubled Families Programme; more money for the Public Health ring-fenced grant and business rates being increased in line with inflation. Overall the change in direction was welcomed with significant additional resources coming to Worcestershire.

**1926 Confirmation of
the Minutes of
the previous
meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 July 2019 were agreed to be a correct record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

**1927 Organisational
Redesign
Programme**

Cabinet considered the first report on the Organisational Redesign which dealt with the restructuring of Chief Officer-related top 3 Tier posts and the next steps in the re-design process, with a view to making recommendations to Council. The Leader explained that the Council needed to ensure that services were

delivered in the most effective and efficient way by completing its reform journey and achieve the £6 million savings while delivering the Council's priorities and statutory obligations.

The redesign re-examined how the Council should work for the next 3-5 years so that medium term stability could be achieved. Staff volunteers had been working hard and had produced tangible ideas to be implemented. Cabinet wished for the Strategic Leadership Team to own the changes that were being made as it was their responsibility to deliver the objectives, but external expertise had been brought in to provide challenge and look at best practice.

This was just the first phase – to set the Directorate Structure. The structure looked similar to the old structure but the ethos was changing. The Directors would work together as a Corporate Team and provide the Strategic direction for the Council, while the Assistant Director level would be responsible for ensuring the various functions were delivered. This would remove the current system of silo working. There would be three directorate blocks; one for Economy and Infrastructure, one for People and one for Commercial and Change. HR and the Chief Financial Officer would sit directly under the Chief Executive. The role of Director of Children's Services will sit with the Chief Executive of Worcestershire Children First. A comparatively modest £223,000 would be saved by the re-design of the top 3 tiers, but that was only the start.

The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Services agreed it was right to carry out a review of the Council to ensure the sustainability of services and to align officer's efforts with the corporate plan. He endorsed the design principles and felt consistency would be produced across the Council. There would be a culture change which would see a system set out to allocate resources across the Council. It may prove necessary for an updated paper in February 2020 but negotiations with the Unions would take place to ensure HR policies were adhered to. There would be a cost to carrying out the re-design but that would lead to long term savings.

Cabinet Members thanked the staff volunteers for the time and work they had put into the re-design.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND THAT

COUNCIL:

- (i) approves the Chief Executive's proposed revised Directorate structure and designation of statutory posts as set out in the report and at Appendix 3 to the report;**
- (ii) supports his proposals for the Chief Officer structure for Tiers 2 and 3 (as defined in paragraph 7) as set out in the report and Appendix 3 to the report, subject to (v);**
- (iii) authorises the Chief Executive to carry out all necessary staff consultations in relation to the proposed changes;**
- (iv) authorises the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to finalise the detail of the management structure for Tier 2 and Tier 3 officers including the job and person specifications in accordance with the above Directorate structure;**
- (v) authorises the Appointments Etc Panel to take all appropriate decisions in relation to the proposals for Tier 2 and 3 posts to support the new Directorate structure (including any deletion of existing posts, creation of new posts and appointments to them, and designation of statutory posts), and reviewing them in the future as appropriate;**
- (vi) agrees that the current Directorate of Children, Families and Communities will cease to exist on 1 October 2019, and authorises the Chief Executive to make interim arrangements for any functions of that Directorate not transferring to Worcestershire Children First; and**
- (vii) notes the indicative timescale in Appendix 4 to the report and agrees that the remaining Directorate restructure will take effect from 1 January 2020 or such other date as the Chief Executive may determine having regard to the above processes.**

Worcestershire Children First

Member with Responsibility for Children and Families introduced the report and explained that although the Council had been directed by the DfE to create a Wholly Owned Company for Children's Social Care, it was felt that an integrated service should be created to include education services.

Children's Services had been working on two strands, firstly to improve services for children's social care and secondly to form the Wholly Owned Company. The two strands would converge on 1 October. Children Social Care had already made a 'substantial step forward' according to the Children's Minister and the Ofsted Director, in improving services and a lot of hard work had been put into creating the new Company. The Cabinet member wished to pay tribute to Catherine Driscoll, Tina Russell and Hannah Needham for their hard work on improving the service and developing the new Company.

It was underlined that Worcestershire Children First would belong to the Council and the Council would retain responsibility, meaning that every Councillor would remain a Corporate Parent. The additional money for social care and special needs, and the continuation of Troubled Families that had been detailed in the Spending Review, was very welcome.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills explained that he would be a Non-Executive Director on the Worcestershire Children First Board, along with the Cabinet Member for Transformation and Commissioning. As such he believed two things were important, firstly improving outcomes for children in a stable and sustained way and secondly, that services were effective and efficient and value for money. He welcomed the additional money from Government, which should include around £7 million for special educational needs and thanked the Senior Team for their hard work in the lead up to the go live date.

Cabinet was pleased that children's services had improved but noted that there was more work to be done. The work of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families was recognised and it was hoped that he would continue in his role. The Leader clarified that the CMR's role remained outside the Company so that he could provide the necessary challenge. The input of other Councillors, such as Scrutiny members was also noted. The Leader was pleased that the new Company was wholly owned by the Council and that the fact that services for vulnerable children had been turned around

had been recognised by Ofsted.

RESOLVED THAT CABINET:

- (a) noted the progress made in developing Worcestershire Children First, and workstream update;**
- (b) approved the Company Board appointments and location of Worcestershire Children First;**
- (c) approved Worcestershire Children First's Interim Business Plan;**
- (d) authorised the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Department for Education appointed Children's Commissioner, Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills and Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families, to take all appropriate steps on behalf of the Council in relation to the development of Worcestershire Children First and the commencement of its operation, including agreeing the Service Delivery Contract, Articles of Association Service Support Agreement, and Governance Side Agreement; and**
- (e) approved the proposed contract sum for 2019/20 to Worcestershire Children First as set out in paragraph 28 of the report and authorised the Chief Finance Officer to make the budget transfer to Worcestershire Children First accordingly, and noted the indicative contract sum for 2020/21 and 2021/22.**

The meeting ended at 10:40am

Chairman