

Agenda

Council

Thursday, 13 February 2020, 10.00 am
County Hall, Worcester

This document can be provided in alternative formats such as Large Print, an audio recording or Braille; it can also be emailed as a Microsoft Word attachment. Please contact Democratic Services on telephone number 01905 846621 or by emailing democraticservices@worcestershire.gov.uk

DISCLOSING INTERESTS

There are now 2 types of interests:
'Disclosable pecuniary interests' and **'other disclosable interests'**

WHAT IS A 'DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST' (DPI)?

- Any **employment**, office, trade or vocation carried on for profit or gain
- **Sponsorship** by a 3rd party of your member or election expenses
- Any **contract** for goods, services or works between the Council and you, a firm where you are a partner/director, or company in which you hold shares
- Interests in **land** in Worcestershire (including licence to occupy for a month or longer)
- **Shares** etc (with either a total nominal value above £25,000 or 1% of the total issued share capital) in companies with a place of business or land in Worcestershire.

NB Your DPIs include the interests of your spouse/partner as well as you

WHAT MUST I DO WITH A DPI?

- **Register** it within 28 days and
- **Declare** it where you have a DPI in a matter at a particular meeting
 - you must **not participate** and you **must withdraw**.

NB It is a criminal offence to participate in matters in which you have a DPI

WHAT ABOUT 'OTHER DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS'?

- No need to register them but
- You must **declare** them at a particular meeting where:
You/your family/person or body with whom you are associated have a **pecuniary interest** in or **close connection** with the matter under discussion.

WHAT ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF ANOTHER AUTHORITY OR PUBLIC BODY?

You will not normally even need to declare this as an interest. The only exception is where the conflict of interest is so significant it is seen as likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

DO I HAVE TO WITHDRAW IF I HAVE A DISCLOSABLE INTEREST WHICH ISN'T A DPI?

Not normally. You must withdraw only if it:

- affects your **pecuniary interests** **OR** relates to a **planning or regulatory** matter
- **AND** it is seen as likely to **prejudice your judgement** of the public interest.

DON'T FORGET

- If you have a disclosable interest at a meeting you must **disclose both its existence and nature** – 'as noted/recorded' is insufficient
- **Declarations must relate to specific business** on the agenda
 - General scattergun declarations are not needed and achieve little
- Breaches of most of the **DPI provisions** are now **criminal offences** which may be referred to the police which can on conviction by a court lead to fines up to £5,000 and disqualification up to 5 years
- Formal **dispensation** in respect of interests can be sought in appropriate cases.

Thursday, 13 February 2020, 10.00 am, County Hall, Worcester

Agenda and Summons

Councillors: Mr R P Tomlinson (Chairman), Mr A A J Adams, Mr R C Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr A T Amos, Mr T Baker-Price, Mr R W Banks, Mr R M Bennett, Mr G R Brookes, Mrs J A Brunner, Mr B Clayton, Mr K D Daisley, Mr P Denham, Ms R L Dent, Mr N Desmond, Mrs E A Eyre, Mr A Fry, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr P Grove, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr A I Hardman, Mr P B Harrison, Mr M J Hart, Ms P A Hill, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Dr C Hotham, Mr M E Jenkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr R C Lunn, Mr P M McDonald, Mr S J Mackay, Mr L C R Mallett, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Mr J A D O'Donnell, Mrs F M Oborski, Ms T L Onslow, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs J A Potter, Prof J W Raine, Mrs M A Rayner, Mr A C Roberts, Mr C Rogers, Mr J H Smith, Mr A Stafford, Ms C M Stalker, Mr C B Taylor, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall, Mrs R Vale, Ms S A Webb and Mr T A L Wells

1 Apologies and Declaration of Interests

To receive apologies and invite any councillor to declare any interest in any of the items on the agenda.

2 Public Participation

To allow a member of the public to present a petition, or ask a question relating to the functions of the Council, or to make a comment on any matter on the agenda.

Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance in writing or by e-mail indicating both the nature and content of their proposed participation no later than 9.00am on the working day before the meeting (in this case 12 February 2020). Further details are available on the Council's website. Enquiries can also be made through the telephone number/e-mail address listed below.

3 Minutes

To approve as a correct record and authorise the signing of the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2020 (previously circulated electronically).

4 Chairman's Announcements

To receive any announcements to be made by the Chairman.

5 Reports of Cabinet 1 - 12

To consider the reports of the Cabinet and to receive answers to any questions asked on

those reports as follows:

- a) Reports of Cabinet – Matters which require a decision (**Yellow pages**); and
- b) Report of Cabinet – Summary of decisions taken (**White pages**).

6 Notices of Motion 13 - 14

To receive the report of the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance on any Notices of Motion received by him (**Lilac pages**).

Councillors are asked to note that any Notices of Motion must be received by the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance no later than noon on 4 February 2020.

7 Annual Report of the Chief Executive 15 - 24

To receive the report of the Chief Executive and any answers to questions on it (**Cream pages**).

8 Question Time 25 - 26

To receive answers to any questions asked by Councillors (**Orange pages**).

(Members are reminded of the timescale adopted by Council for notice of questions. A Councillor may only ask a question if:

- *It is delivered in writing to the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance by noon on 4 February 2020 or*
- *If it relates to urgent business, the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance is notified at least half an hour before the start of the meeting and the Chairman agrees the matter is urgent'.*)

9 Reports of Committees 27 - 28

To consider the report of the Pensions Committee and to receive answers to any questions asked on it (**White pages**).

NOTES

• Webcasting

Members of the Council are reminded that meetings of the Council are Webcast on the Internet and will be stored electronically and accessible through the Council's Website. Members of the public are informed that if they attend this meeting their images and speech may be captured by the recording equipment used for the Webcast and may also be stored electronically and accessible through the Council's Website.

• Catering Arrangements

Lunch will be available at 1.00pm or thereabouts in the Lakeview Room. This will be provided for all Councillors, without payment, and for pre-notified guests, who must be paid for in advance. An indication of any guests wishing to take lunch should be given to staff in the Business Support Unit at least three days before the Council meeting.

Agenda produced and published by Simon Mallinson, Assistant Director for Legal and Governance, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester WR5 2NP. The above reports and supporting information can be accessed via the Council's website at: www.worcestershire.gov.uk

To obtain further information or a paper copy of this agenda please contact Simon Lewis, Committee Officer by telephone on Worcester (01905) 846621 or slewis@worcestershire.gov.uk

Date of Issue: Wednesday, 5 February 2020

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COUNCIL
13 FEBRUARY 2020**REPORT OF CABINET – MATTERS WHICH REQUIRE A
DECISION BY COUNCIL**

**2020/21 Draft Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan Update
2020-22****Recommendation**

- 1. The Leader and Cabinet recommend that:**
 - (a) the budget requirement for 2020/21 be approved at £346.246 million as set out at Appendix 1B, having regard to the proposed Transformation and Reforms programme set out in Appendix 1C;**
 - (b) the Council Tax Band D equivalent for 2020/21 be set at £1,311.05 which includes £116.04 relating to the ring-fenced Adult Social Care precept, and the Council Tax Requirement be set at £279.130 million, which will increase the Council Tax Precept by 3.99% in relation to two parts:**
 - 1.99% 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**
 - 2.00% Adult Social Care Precept ring-fenced for Adult Social Care services in order to contribute to existing cost pressures due to Worcestershire’s ageing population;**
 - (c) the Capital Strategy 2020-23 and Capital Programme of £338.594 million be approved as set out at Appendix 1D and 1E and section 9 of the report;**
 - (d) the earmarked reserves schedule as set out at Appendix 2 be approved;**
 - (e) the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators set out at Appendix 4 be approved; and**
 - (f) the Council’s Pay Policy Statement set out at Appendix 5 be approved.**

[NB Report and Appendices referred to are those presented to 30 January 2020 Cabinet]

2. All Councillors will have had access to the full report and Appendices considered by the Cabinet on 30 January 2020 via email/internal link and in their Group rooms and the Members’ Lounge, and are referred to the website or those hard copies for the full detail. A very limited number of hard copies will be available at the meeting.

Cabinet Report – 30 January 2020

3. The Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Finance which in summary included details of:

- the main updates to the budget proposals since the Cabinet meeting on 20 December 2019
- the current financial position of the Council for 2019/20. The latest position at Period 8 (November 2019) forecasts a year-end overspend without further action of £3.6 million, assuming the use of £3 million of reserves as planned to cover the delay in delivery of the redesign efficiencies. Whilst management action continues to be taken and the aim is to see a balanced budget by 31 March 2020, there may be an additional one-off call on reserves in-year. The School's budget is reported to be balanced at 31 March 2020, but the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) continues to face significant in-year pressures from high needs. Monitoring of capital budgets shows schemes are broadly on target to be within the re-programmed spend profile at year end, with some planned expenditure being carried forward to the next financial year
- funding of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities. The current Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) takes account of the Corporate Plan set alongside the uncertainty of Government funding. The MTFP confirms the commitment to continue to resource the Council's priorities of: Open for Business; Health and Wellbeing; Children and Families and the Environment
- the Council's updated MTFP. The impact of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement has been included in the MTFP. However, the Fair Funding Review of local government funding and settlement allocations has been delayed by 12 months meaning there is still a high degree of uncertainty going into the final year of the Corporate Plan in 2021/22. The assumption at present for 2020/21 to 2022/23 is that there will be a need for efficiencies, reforms and income generation as follows:

Funding Gap Forecast 2020-23 assuming all grant income is retained

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Medium Term Financial Plan	£000	£000	£000
Funding	346,246	355,782	367,281
Transfer (to) Reserves	-1,107	0	0
Total	345,139	355,782	367,281
Projected Budget Requirement	345,139	364,029	383,079
Funding Gap (Retaining current quantum of grants)	0	8,247	15,798

The Council will continue to challenge the way it works, from business processes to the way it uses technology to ensure the organisation is managed effectively within the resources available

- funding. The provisional settlement was delayed due to the General Election and finally published on 20 December 2019. This has therefore necessitated an update to the previous Social Care Grant assumption in the December Draft Budget Report to Cabinet from £12.574 million to £13.503 million. The main sources of the Council's income will be collected and spent locally. The local taxation (Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept) will account in 2020/21 for 81% of all funding income, with 19% coming from the Council's share of the Business Rates. The MTFP forecast is that the Council will experience a positive cash flow for the next two years, subject to the outcome of the Fair Funding Review. However, the scale of cost pressures facing the Council is more than the projected increase in income. The focus of the spending challenges faced in 2020/21 are coming from a continued rise in demand for adult and children's social care, underlying pressures from rescheduled efficiencies from redesign and adult and social care cost pressures, contract and other inflation and pay and National Living Wage inflation. This results in a gross funding requirement in 2020/21 to meet all these challenges of £32.0 million. It is anticipated that the growth and pressures on spend will continue at similar levels however a number of reform programmes are expected to address pressures and as such the planned investment for 2021/22 is £19.8 million. Transformation and change programmes in Adult Social Care and Children's Services and the Commercial Strategy and redesign of services proposals are focused on addressing the projected budget gap. The MTFP is aligned to corporate programmes to deliver efficiencies. A robust MTFP is therefore in place to allocate resources to set and deliver balanced budgets for the remaining years of the Corporate Plan, starting with 2020/21, that supports the delivery of the Council's priorities
- the level of funding available for 2020/21. The Council's latest allocation of the provisional settlement was received on 20 December 2019. Whilst the final settlement is likely to be confirmed around 7 February 2020, a number of grants e.g. Public Health, Better Care Fund and DSG are still to be confirmed. The proposals for the Council Tax are an increase of 1.99% together with a 2% Adult Social Care Precept. Overall it is therefore projected that in 2020/21 these increases will mean £14.7 million more raised in Council Tax. The Council's level of Council Tax remains low when compared to comparative councils. After adjusting for movements in grant, the proposed levels of Council Tax and the new Adult Social Care Precept, the net impact is that the Council projects it will have £346.2 million of funds available which represents a net increase from 2019/20 of £15.8 million (4.8%). The level of demand however exceeds this amount and therefore efficiencies are also required
- the level of investment required for delivering the Corporate Plan in 2020/21. Changes in assumptions on both income and spend have occurred since the MTFP was reported to Council in February 2019 including the gross level of pressures which has changed from the forecast financial plan of £29.2 million to £32.0 million. The first call on the increase in Council Tax and Adult Social Care Precept is to directly fund these pressures. Areas where investment is required include: Adult Social Care; Children's Services/Worcestershire Children First; Strategic Initiatives; Highways, Footways and Cutting Congestion; Public Transport, Flood Mitigation and Street Lighting; Woodland Planting Scheme; Waste Disposal, and pay and related costs

- **Capital Investment.** The Capital Programme for 2020/21 proposes a total value of £139.9 million of works which maintains a long-term Programme in the region of £338.6 million. The Programme is largely built up from Government and other grants received or due to be received. This amount is forecast to be £64.9 million in 2020/21. Additional sums in the form of capital receipts from sales of assets and borrowing are able to be added to the Programme. Capital receipts assume a total of £3.7 million in 2020/21 together with a borrowing assumption of £62.9 million which is felt to be affordable within the current provision for financing. One of the major drivers of borrowing increases is to invest in the economy and infrastructure through the Growth Deal support and schemes designed to boost the local economy. The Programme is continually being challenged and treasury management reviews are being carried out to take opportunities to reprioritise, re-profile and better manage cash over borrowing to fund schemes. The focus is to ensure capital financing costs are squeezed downwards wherever possible. As a result of all this work it is anticipated that the Capital Programme can be funded within the current budget for the Council's cost of borrowing
- **School funding (DSG).** The total provisional Schools' Funding Settlement is £441.791 million. Cabinet in December 2019 approved the Local Schools Funding Formula for Worcestershire mainstream schools for 2020-21 to continue as in 2018-19 and 2019-20, to be based as far as is practicable and affordable on the DfE National Funding Formula parameters. The DfE's parameters include a Minimum Funding Guarantee of +1.84% per pupil, no gains cap and mandatory national Minimum Funding Levels for the primary and secondary sectors
- **the level of efficiencies, reform and income proposals required.** The Council's proposed budget for 2020/21 includes the need for £9.6 million of proposals to balance the budget. There are two corporate targets totalling £2.1 million to be allocated to services for contract and procurement and a continuation of the redesign around executive support and centralising financial transactions. The efficiencies proposals have been classified to align to the Corporate Plan and MTF Strategy. Efficiencies by type for 2020-22 are efficiencies including digital and working differently; reforms and redesign including prevention to avoid costs, and income including commercial and trading opportunities. These efficiencies are considered realisable though an element of provision for non-delivery has been provided for in the General Fund Reserves
- **the resultant Council Tax precept calculation.** The Cabinet has recommended that the Council Tax Band D equivalent for 2020/21 be set at £1,311.05 which includes £116.04 relating to the ring-fenced Adult Social Care Precept, and the Council Tax Requirement be set at £279.130 million, which will increase the Council Tax Precept by 3.99% in relation to two parts:

 - 1.99% 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
 - 2.00% Adult Social Care Precept ring-fenced for Adult Social Care services in order to contribute to existing cost pressures due to Worcestershire's ageing population

- an assessment of reserves. The Council's General Fund estimated reserve at 31 March 2020 based on the forecast outturn is circa £12.2 million. This means the General Fund Reserve is in line with the revised recommended level. Future use of these funds is a matter of last recourse given the levels
- engagement on the proposals. The proposals have been subject to review and scrutiny by a range of stakeholders. They have also been presented to individual Scrutiny panels who received additional finance briefings in preparation for the scrutiny of the budget. The key messages from Scrutiny have been reported through the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board
- the Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 including Prudential Indicators. The Treasury Management Strategy has been updated to include how the current forecast for interest rates will affect borrowing and lending transactions
- a Pay Policy Statement for 2020/21 which clarifies the strategic stance on pay to provide direction for members and officers making detailed decisions on pay and to provide the citizens of Worcestershire with a clear statement of the principles underpinning decisions on the use of public funds
- consideration of other factors including professional legal and HR advice, an equalities assessment, risk, privacy and public health assessments and the Council's statutory duties when setting the budget and precept.

Mr S E Geraghty
Chairman

Note – members are reminded that all votes on the budget and any amendments will be recorded in accordance with legislation

The Constitution requires alternative budget or proposed amendments to be lodged with the Chief Executive by noon on Thursday 6 February 2020

Supporting Information – Available with the report to Cabinet 30 January 2020 at <https://worcestershire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=131&MId=3165&Ver=4>

Appendix 1A	Financial Plan Update 2020/21 to 2022/23
Appendix 1B	Service Budget summary
Appendix 1C	Summary of efficiencies, reforms and income proposals
Appendix 1D	Capital Strategy
Appendix 1E	Capital Programme
Appendix 2	Earmarked Reserves
Appendix 3	General Fund Reserve's assessment
Appendix 4	Treasury Management Strategy including Prudence Indicators
Appendix 5	Pay Policy Statement

Appendix 6	Equalities Duty Assessment
Appendix 7	Public Health Ring Fenced Grant proposed spending
Appendix 8	Commentary from Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board and other groups
Appendix 9	Glossary of terms

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

Worcestershire Hub: 01905 765765

Specific Contact Points for this report

Nichola Garner, Committee & Appellate Officer

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and background papers for the meeting of the Cabinet held on 30 January 2020.

COUNCIL
13 FEBRUARY 2020**REPORT OF CABINET - SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN**

Scrutiny Report: Quality Assurance of Care and Nursing Homes

1. The Cabinet has considered a Scrutiny Report on Quality Assurance of Care and Nursing Homes. The scrutiny review was proposed by the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB) to seek reassurance about the effectiveness of the Council's quality assurance systems of residential care and nursing homes. In planning its approach to the scrutiny, the Task Group established to consider the scrutiny learned that there were a number of different organisations involved in inspecting providers of care and nursing homes. Therefore, whilst the remit of the scrutiny was on the role of the Council's Quality Assurance Team, the Task Group also met with other organisations involved and visited a number of care and nursing homes across Worcestershire. The terms of reference of the scrutiny were *"to investigate how the Council carries out and monitors quality assurance of care homes in Worcestershire."*

2. The OSPB fully endorsed the recommendations in the Scrutiny Report at its meeting on 10 December 2019. The Cabinet has received the Scrutiny Report on quality assurance of care and nursing homes together with the response of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care. It has noted the Scrutiny Report's findings and recommendations and agreed to adopt the response of the Cabinet Member as the way forward.

Annual Update to the School Organisation Plan 2019

3. In December 2018 the Cabinet approved the five-year strategic School Organisation Plan "Good education places for all Worcestershire children". The Plan is a static one designed to provide an overview of school place planning from 2019 to 2024. The Plan is revised annually by updating the four sufficiency reports that provide the operational direction for the overall strategy. The forecasts from the reports are used to plan for education provision requirements, shared with schools and other education settings, and form the basis of the School Capacity Report to the DfE that is used to allocate basic need grant. The 2019 updates for mainstream and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) sufficiency show that there is a sufficiency of places to meet the Council's statutory responsibilities. However, there is pressure on SEND provision and in terms of early years a need for more flexible childcare to support working parents. The post-16 update recognises a sufficiency of provision at this time but that provision will come under pressure as numbers in secondary schools rise.

4. The Cabinet has noted the updated annual sufficiency information for all areas of education, added to the five-year School Organisation Plan 2019-24. It has also noted the pressure on mainstream and SEND places, the need for more flexible childcare and the work being undertaken to support post-16 provision, highlighted in the reports. The Cabinet has approved the 2019 update of place sufficiency information as part of the

School Organisation Plan. The Cabinet will receive an annual report to approve further iterations of the School Organisation Plan including place sufficiency information.

School Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2021/22, Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes 2021/22 and Fair Access Protocol for Worcestershire Schools

5. The Cabinet has approved the Admissions Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2021/22 and the scheme for Co-ordinated Admissions for Primary/Middle and Secondary Schools for 2021/22. It has also approved the PANs for Community and Voluntary Controlled primary/middle and secondary schools for the academic year 2021/22. This includes PAN reductions for the Grove Primary School and Nursery, Feckenham CE First School and St Anne's Primary School.

6. The Fair Access Protocol currently in place within Worcestershire has been under discussion with schools over the last year. Overwhelming feedback has been that it needed to be reviewed to provide a clearer, transparent system. A revised Protocol has therefore been prepared based on feedback from schools and with regard to best practice from neighbouring local authority areas. Following consultation on the new Protocol responses showed that it had been well received. The Cabinet has approved the Fair Access Protocol for Worcestershire schools. The Protocol will come into effect with In-Year co-ordination of applications. The Council will also be conducting a separate piece of work in relation to creating a Managed Move Protocol for Worcestershire schools.

7. The Cabinet has also confirmed the authorisation to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills to approve the Council's annual Admission Arrangements, in consultation with the Director of Children's Services. This includes the annual Schools Admissions Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, Schemes for Co-ordinated Admissions and the Fair Access Protocol where no significant changes are proposed to them and approving school PANs (other than for prescribed alterations to maintained schools through increase in physical capacity and without prejudice to their separate delegation).

Responding to Change of Age Range requests from Maintained Community Schools or Change of Age Range Consultations from other types of Schools

8. The Council has a set of criteria which should be considered if a maintained community school makes a request to publish a statutory public notice on proposals for the school to change its age range or when responding to consultations on change of age range from other types of school. Guidance issued by the DfE in 2018 has now created greater leniency for academies in terms of change of age range requests. This has meant that maintained schools are subject to comparably more stringent criteria. In order to ensure fairness and allow maintained schools to remain flexible and adapt to changing environments on par with academy schools, revision of the Council's policy had been proposed. A non-statutory consultation on proposals to amend the change of age range policy for maintained community schools was carried out. All the proposed changes received support from nearly two thirds of the respondents. The policy was further refined to address some of the issues raised in the consultation where there was less support.

9. The Cabinet has noted the results of the consultation and that further amendments have been made to it in the light of responses to the consultation. It has approved the revised Council policy on responding to change of age requests or consultations. The Cabinet has authorised the Director of Children's Services to both respond to change of age range consultations where the Local Authority is not the decision-making body, in line with the revised policy, and to continue to respond to change of age range consultations from all other types of schools where the Local Authority is not the decision-making body, in line with the revised Council policy, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills. Where the Local Authority is the decision-making body, delegated decision-making will continue to be exercised in accordance with current procedures.

New Primary School Alternative Provision for Kidderminster

10. Alternative Provision is used by local authorities to fulfil their specific duty to make arrangements for children who by reason of permanent exclusion, illness or other circumstances would not receive a suitable education. As part of the process for the Council's expression of interest in a new Alternative Provision (AP) free school, a bid was prepared to identify the rationale for the provision, the need for numbers, financial information and site location. The expression of interest was submitted to the DfE in November 2018 under the wave 2 process for special provision. In 2019 the DfE announced that the Council had been successful to enter into the process to open a new primary AP free school in Kidderminster. For wave 2 the Council is responsible for identifying the specification for the new school and appropriate revenue funding but the DfE is responsible for the majority of the capital costs of the new school. A specification for the new school had identified a need for 45 primary school places. The Council is committed to commissioning five places at the new school. Funding for this will come from Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block. The Council has also identified the former Sladen Middle School site, Kidderminster as a potential site for the school.

11. The Council is not the proposer for the new school and so the preferred provider will be responsible for carrying out consultation on proposals to open a new school. The Council, following a selection process involving the DfE, has recommended a preferred proposer to the Secretary of State for Education. If the Secretary of State approves a proposer the project will enter the pre-opening phase which would last one and a half years and be managed by the DfE. This phase allows for final confirmation of the site, affordability of capital costs and for the chosen provider to develop their admission arrangements, curriculum and governance. During this phase the trust/proposer would carry out its statutory obligation to consult under Section 10 of the Academies Act 2010 about their free school proposal. If no proposer is approved, the project will cease.

12. The Cabinet has endorsed the work undertaken by Worcestershire Children First and the DfE in respect of the wave 2 process for establishing a primary AP free school in the Wyre Forest area of Worcestershire and has noted that the final decision on the choice of proposer for the new school rests with the Secretary of State and is due to be announced in Spring 2020. It has also approved the proposed location and site of the new school on part of the former and vacant Sladen Middle School site and agreed that the required land would be leased to the new free school on a 125-year lease. The Strategic Director of Commercial and Change would settle the details of the lease. The Cabinet has also approved the revenue funding for the primary places with the intention for the new school to open from September 2021 subject to the signing of the funding agreement between the Secretary of State and the trust. It has noted that the statutory

consultation under Section 10 of the Academies Act 2010 to enter into an agreement with the Secretary of State to set up a free school rests with the chosen trust as part of the pre-opening phase.

Review of Delivery Model for Medical Education Provision

13. The Council has a duty to ensure arrangements are made for pupils who are unable to attend school because of their medical needs. The service is currently accessed through three bases across the county in Kidderminster, Redditch and Worcester and/or for some children and young people home tuition. The service offers education hours of core subject teaching, dependent upon key stage. The current service model is for the Medical Education Team (MET) to deliver support for children who have an assessed medical need and cannot attend school. The children's needs are regularly reviewed in conjunction with relevant medical professionals to ensure timely reintegration to school. If a student's needs cannot be met through school-based support a referral can be made to the MET service.

14. In 2018 an external peer review of the MET was commissioned. The review's report set out the strengths of the service and also identified service areas for development. In 2018/19 measures and actions were taken to improve the physical environment of individual bases. The review and further redesign would seek to identify and address suitable accommodation for an improved and appropriate teaching environment. Any new delivery model should improve the experience and outcomes for children who cannot attend school due to a medical condition. It should also incorporate access to services that will prevent the escalation of health conditions.

15. The Cabinet has noted the issues identified regarding the existing Medical Education Service delivery and approved a proposed timetable for the development of a new delivery model for provision. It has also approved the proposals for a new model for MET provision to be co-produced with families, parents/carers, schools and health partners. It will receive a further report later in the year to consider proposals for the new delivery model following design and co-production work.

Rural Connected Communities – West Mercia 5G Project

16. Following its success in bidding for Government funding to test and explore fifth generation (5G) mobile technologies within the areas of Industry 4.0, Advanced Manufacturing and Security applications in Spring 2018, the Worcestershire 5G Consortium secured additional funding and a 12-month extension of the project to deliver additional outcomes. In August 2019, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) announced a '5G Rural Connected Communities' funding round across the UK. The Council applied to the DCMS as the lead partner of a 'West Mercia 5G' bid to include other public and private partners on a 2-year project to commence on 1 April 2020. The application focused on innovative ways to deploy 5G networks in rural areas. If successful, in Worcestershire the area covered is expected to be around Tenbury and the 'use cases' anticipated to primarily focus on 'health and social care applications'.

17. The Cabinet has noted the success to date by the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, the County Council and project partners in delivery of the DCMS's Phase One of the 5G Testbed and Trials project and ongoing extension to March 2020. It has endorsed the application of the separate 'West Mercia 5G' project

into DCMS's Rural Connected Communities fund, to support a 2-year research and design project in 5G in rural areas. Should the application be successful, the Cabinet has noted both the award of an initial grant from DCMS would be up to £3.3m and the role of the County Council as the lead partner, managing the project, assuring and financing partners' claims and drawing down funding. It has noted and accepted both the potential opportunities and risks of the project and authorised the Strategic Director of Economy and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy and Infrastructure, to finalise and agree the necessary agreements to progress and support the proposed project. The Strategic Director has also been authorised to take all appropriate actions to progress and support the proposed West Mercia 5G project and to continue to support the current Worcestershire 5G Consortium, including supporting investigations for alternative funding sources to potentially extend the referenced projects and wider programme.

Mr S E Geraghty
Chairman

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and background papers for the meeting of the Cabinet held on 30 January 2020

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COUNCIL
13 FEBRUARY 2020**NOTICES OF MOTION**

Notices of Motion Received

1. The Assistant Director for Legal and Governance reports that he has received the following 3 Notices of Motion. The Constitution provides that any submitted motion must be moved and seconded at the meeting. Otherwise, unless postponed with the consent of the Council, it will be treated as withdrawn.
2. If a motion is in relation to the exercise of an executive function it will be referred to the Cabinet for decision (if applicable this will be indicated below). Otherwise the Council may decide itself to determine the Motion, or refer it to the Cabinet or another appropriate Committee for advice before determining it at the next available meeting.

Notice of Motion 1 – Marked Bays for Car Club Vehicles

3. **This motion is in relation to the exercise of an executive function and will therefore be referred to Cabinet for a decision.**
4. Notice of Motion standing in the names of Prof J W Raine, Mr M E Jenkins, Mrs E B Tucker, Mrs F M Oborski and Mr T A L Wells:

“As a further expression of Worcestershire County Council’s strong commitment to environmental sustainability, and particularly with regard to the pursuit of reduced carbon emissions and improved air quality in the transport sector, we call upon this Council to provide more support for the car clubs within our area, by providing white-line marked bays reserved for car club vehicles at suitable locations on the kerbside as recommended by the clubs.

Car clubs are a fast-growing component of the changing environment with regard to transportation and accessibility, especially at a time when bus services are in sad decline. Sharing vehicles via car clubs that oversee the organising and maintenance of a fleet of vehicles, and which are available to local people to use when they need, rather than each maintaining their own makes absolute sense, especially for those who need to drive only occasionally, and particularly in urban areas where both off-street and kerbside space is limited.

But to operate effectively, it is vital that club vehicles are parked in precise locations, known to all their users (and which can be identified via a special Car Club App). To this end, various local authorities, including Westminster, Bristol and Nottingham, are now working with their local car clubs and are providing white line-marked bays at suitable locations, reserved specifically for the club vehicles.

This Motion calls on Worcestershire County Council to follow suit by working with the county's local car clubs, and also with the district councils, in identifying suitable locations where there is local need/demand for a car club vehicle, and accordingly designating/providing white-lined bays for that purpose."

Notice of Motion 2 – Creche and childcare facilities at County Hall, Worcester

5. This motion is not in relation to the exercise of an executive function and the Council may decide to determine the Motion.

6. Notice of Motion standing in the names of Mr R C Lunn, Ms C M Stalker and Mr R M Udall:

"This Council calls on the Cabinet Member with Responsibility to bring a report to Cabinet on the introduction of a creche and childcare facilities for employees and others located at County Hall, as a potential income generation project".

Notice of Motion 3 – Carbon Emissions Impact Assessment

7. This motion is not in relation to the exercise of an executive function and the Council may decide to determine the Motion.

8. Notice of Motion standing in the names of Mrs E B Tucker, Mr M E Jenkins, Prof J W Raine, Mr T A L Wells and Mrs F M Oborski:

"In 2019 this Council approved a motion calling for Worcestershire to be carbon neutral by 2050. We know that the Council is working on proposals to reduce its carbon emissions, but it is important that reducing our carbon emissions is an integral part of our plans and projects.

Therefore, when determining the viability of potential projects, we need to ensure that their carbon budgets are assessed and used in our decision-making process.

The Council calls on the Cabinet to ensure that for all future projects an assessment of their carbon emissions impact is included, with this being used to assess the viability of competing schemes."

Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.

COUNCIL
13 FEBRUARY 2020**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

1. The following report reviews the work of the Chief Executive over the last year and provides members with an update on key priorities, actions and achievements in that time and also provides members with the opportunity to seek further clarification where required.
2. I would like to start by thanking all staff working for and on behalf of Worcestershire County Council, striving to ensure residents, businesses and communities receive the services they deem important within a very tightly defined financial envelope. Containing costs and managing demand remains a significant issue but I am pleased to report to members that over the last year the new systems and processes introduced have made this more manageable and the Council's finances are broadly in line with the budget set at the start of the year. Should any use of reserves be required at year end, these will be at a low level and sustainable within the Councils overall financial position.
3. Effective Council leadership requires a strong relationship between the officer corps and elected members. As you will recall this was a key priority for myself and the new senior officers who joined the Council in 2018. Over the last year these relationships have developed well and there is now a strong level of understanding and trust between officers and members leading to clear decision-making, financial planning, organisational redesign and performance management.
4. This year has been dominated by four key strategic priorities:
 - a) Strong financial management and budget stabilisation;
 - b) A full organisational redesign;
 - c) The creation and launch of Worcestershire Children First and the Ofsted reinspection; and
 - d) The introduction of a new digital case management system in both Children's and Adult services.

Financial management

5. Strengthening financial management was a key strand of work for the Strategic Management Team (SLT) and the wider management team's agenda in 2019/20. I am therefore pleased to report back today several improvements over the last 12 months, most notably:
 - We managed an original forecast overspend of £17.9m at September 2018 to a significantly reduced year end position of £2 million overspend with sufficient reserves to cover that

- Our 2018/19 Statement of Accounts were one of the first in the region to be produced, and our External Auditors signed them off unqualified and on time. This included no qualification on their assessment of our value for money for the first time in 2 years
- We set a balanced budget for 2019/20 with £20.7 million of saving plans that redirected resources to key priority areas to secure a strong and deliverable budget for the long term
- We have undertaken training for all budget holders and implemented a new reporting tool for them to use (Collaborative Planning – CP). This has extended to our maintained schools
- We have worked closely with Liberata on improvements and improved our working relationship and monitoring of performance
- We set a budget for Worcestershire Children First with clear and costed Support Service Agreements, and we are meeting frequently to monitor WCF's contracted budget
- Our Pension Fund valuation improved significantly due to high performance on our asset management, with the Fund now standing at 92% funded, up from 75% in 2016
- Investment 'pots' – the Fund has implemented alternative investment strategies with differential levels of investment risk with effect from 1 April 2020. The aim is to provide greater control over employers' exposure to investment risk and help stabilise future employer contributions
- We have brought our Internal Audit service back in house and been working hard to manage the number of recommendations outstanding and ensure action to address weaknesses are made. This saw only 22 recommendations relating to Council Services outstanding in December 2019 compared to 89 the previous year
- Our Appointees and Deputies team that look after finances for some of the most vulnerable adults in our County were recognised and accredited by the Government
- We successfully managed the implementation of a social care payments and receipts system (Controcc) alongside the Social Care data system (Liquid Logic) implementation, which has introduced a new payments portal for our providers
- We have strengthened our Finance function with investment in new posts that we successfully fully recruited to first time, including a number of internal appointments.

6. However, despite these achievements there is still more to do, and the Chief Financial Officer - Michael Hudson and his team have several key projects still ongoing, including:

- Centralising and improving the efficiency of the way we pay and collect monies. A pilot exercise in 2019 saw £4 million of debt collected in four weeks. This is being monitored by the Audit and Governance Committee

- Strengthening our Internal Audit function further, building on peer reviews and adopting new ways of working, again monitored by the Audit and Governance Committee
- We are strengthening the process and management of our General Ledger (E5) with a new Systems and Governance team driving improvements in control and reporting
- We are strengthening the governance of our Pension Fund in light of recommendation from the Pension Regulator and the Scheme Advisory Board and we are looking to be a leading light in this field
- We are reviewing the Financial Regulations, schemes of delegation and procedure manuals. This will extend to continued training of budget holders, and a workforce plan for our Finance Team that will include bringing in more apprentices and I am pleased to say we are focused on recruiting from our Worcestershire schools, colleges and university and from our care leavers.

Organisational Redesign and Human Resource Management

7. The organisational redesign has been a major piece of work this year involving all departments at all levels. The fundamentals behind the redesign are to remove operational silos, drive performance and productivity, reform processes to be more efficient and cost effective, and to use digital technology where appropriate to its full potential.

8. The first part of the process has been completed and was reported to members in the Autumn of 2019 and became live in December. A number of new roles were created, and members are currently engaged in the recruitment of staff to the senior structure. Running alongside this process is the roll out of the remaining staffing structures which when complete will lead to a £3m per annum saving. However, restructuring is only the first part of the redesign, to support the leaner structure there also needs to be transformation of our operations and processes. This work is now underway, and the Council is being assisted by C.Co, who are experienced specialists in this field.

9. Within the field of organisational redesign and human resources work has been progressing throughout the year on improving performance, productivity and total reward. The following points illustrate the work completed to date:

- We have moved to 100% compliance with mid-year and end of year ratings submissions for the performance process. This has been coupled with a calibration process looking to move performance ratings to a standard distribution curve. Performance ratings were reviewed at SLT and all relevant DLTs led by the HR Business Partners
- We have continued to embed our core employment policies (Managing Attendance, Conduct, Performance, Grievance etc). These have led to a continued improvement in attendance levels having moved from a projected c10 days average sickness per employee to 7.68 days per employee over the last 12 months. This has returned a significant amount of productivity back in to the business
- Through governance of all matrix agency spend led by the HR Business Partners we have seen a 24% reduction in spend at the end of Quarter 2 (Sept 2019)

compared to the same position 12 months ago. Based on current expenditure/usage we envisage to see an end of year agency reduction of c £.2m over a 12 month period. (Q4 2018/19 £10.5m, predicted Q4 positions 19/20 £8.5m)

- We have continued to focus on recruitment of front-line social workers within Children's Services in Worcestershire Children First. We have met our target of recruiting to 85% permanent front-line practitioner social workers in Children's. As at October 2019 we had 85% permanency based on planned establishment.
- We have developed a Total Reward Strategy which aims to highlight the range of benefits within the employment package that underpins our culture and organisational objectives. It will be held to promote and encourage employee engagement, which in turn will improve performance and productivity. The aim of our future Total Reward Strategy is to ensure we create an affordable, modernised, future fit total reward package with a future focus on employee health and wellbeing recognising the financial context in which the Council is currently working
- We have, following extensive negotiations with our recognised Trade Unions, made proposals on a number of areas relating to our future Total Reward offer. The proposals centre on:
 - Areas of investment around health and wellbeing, total reward statement and a benefits portal
 - A number of scrutiny and governance measures aimed at reducing variable spend
 - A number of contractual changes centred on performance and working hours
- To support true staff engagement we embarked on a series of staff roadshows to discuss the proposals directly with impacted staff. As way of a summary:
 - We spoke to circa 450 people at 12 roadshows across Worcestershire with a further 350 people watching the webcast
 - 2602 employees (unique hits) accessed the Total Reward webpage (i.e. 73% of current headcount)
 - We are currently awaiting the outcome of a trade union ballot on the Total Reward Proposals which is due to conclude in February 2020.
 - Finally, we have launched 'celebrating you', a scheme which is aimed at recognising employees who are going above and beyond in their work. The scheme sees a new category being launched every month with nominations being made by managers/colleagues. These are considered by a panel and I then meet with the three shortlisted winners to recognise and thank them for their work after which they are put forward to be considered for an overall award at a final awards event, scheduled in October 2020. This is a way of recognising outstanding contributions at all levels and allows us to celebrate and highlight the diverse nature of WCC and the great things that staff are doing day to day.

Children's Services

10. 2019 was a positive year for Children's Services. The Council's wholly owned company, Worcestershire Children First, was successfully launched on 1 October. More than 700 staff were smoothly TUPE-transferred to the new organisation, with no negative impact on performance and morale. The Department for Education (DfE) were pleased with the progress made to the agreed timescale.

11. The improvement work in Children's Social Work and Safeguarding got independent and external recognition in July 2019 when Ofsted returned for a full inspection under the new ILACS framework. Ofsted confirmed the services were no longer "inadequate" and graded the service "Requires improvement to be good" with a strong trajectory of improvement. This improvement has been made possible by the success of our workforce strategy that is designed to ensure that the conditions are in place where social work can flourish, and that the organisation is the 'employer of choice' in a very competitive market place. At the end of year children's social work permanency was running at 86%, a significant improvement on the previous year. This results in financial savings from reduction of agency staff as well as ensuring stability of staff to work with children and young people, improving their experience.

12. In October 2019, in line with DfE requirements, the new multi-agency Safeguarding Board arrangement went live with "Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership". The focus of the new partnership is multi-agency quality assurance, protecting children from exploitation and learning lessons from serious cases.

13. In 2019 there was investment in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services as part of the response to the SEND Written Statement of Action from 2018. The development of this workforce in both capacity and practice has resulted in continued improvement this year particularly in the timely completion of the assessment and planning for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP's). In 2018/19 overall, 30% of EHCPs were completed within the 20 week timescale. In December 2019 100% of EHCPs due to be completed were done so within the 20 week timescale. The latest DfE monitoring visit concluded that we are making good progress with the Written Statement of Action and that previous concerns raised about the continuity of effort during a period of organisational change with the establishment of WCF and key senior personnel change were assuaged at the visit.

14. Worcestershire's Troubled Families Programme has been subject to a Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) monitored Recovery Plan since June 2018. In 2019 the MHCLG confirmed that the programme was back on track and had made significant improvements. The programme is built on improving the coordination and delivery of support and service to families with multiple complex needs through whole family working, multi-agency working and intervening early. At the end of December 2019, 75% of the payment by results programme has been achieved, this is as a result of successful interventions and support with families. The Troubled Families programme will be extended for a further year in 2020/21.

15. In May 2019 Ofsted inspected North Bromsgrove High School following an inadequate inspection outcome the previous year (May 2018). The school has improved to Requires Improvement to be Good. Ofsted reported that since the last inspection "the local authority took rapid and decisive action to secure effective leadership of the school.

Two executive interim headteachers were appointed. From October 2018, one of these became full-time and the second continued to support the school. The local authority further strengthened the leadership of the school by appointing an interim executive board in October 2018. Together with further successful appointments at a senior leadership level and inspired by the two interim headteachers, all leaders share a commitment to an ambitious vision for the school's work. As a result, they have created a culture of tolerance and respect."

16. Children's services' leaders and staff have demonstrated a successful approach to improvement that has delivered positive results during the year. This has provided a foundation for further improved outcomes for the county's children, young people and families in the coming year.

Adult Social Care

17. The establishment of the People Directorate will offer a range of opportunities to maximise the impact the Council can have in relation to a sustainable approach to supportive, sustainable communities that will promote and protect people's health and well-being while supporting them to live independently in their communities.

18. Budget pressures remain a concern as demand continues to rise due to the needs and complexity of those requiring support. It remains the priority of Adult Social Care that the most vulnerable individuals are protected and supported. The full implementation of the 3 Conversation model has seen significant benefits in relation to promoting self-reliance and demand management.

19. We have seen an Acute Hospital System under increasing pressure which has had a significant impact on the level and type of services we provide to support people following a hospital admission. A key objective in 2020 will be to maximise opportunities to actively work with our citizens to avoid hospital admission and promote access to reablement.

20. Following the creation of Worcestershire Children First our 'Community' Services are now located with the new People Directorate. Much of the focus of these services over the past year has been on implementing the necessary changes required to reduce reliance on Council funding. Through our new Libraries Strategy, staff continue to push working closely with partners to use buildings to best effect and deliver services to our residents in a different way. Our Archives and Archaeology service are generating more income than ever, and our Registration Services are responding well to national changes to marriages and civil partnerships. These services continue to collectively support a large number of our residents and I thank all the staff for embracing change.

COaCH

21. A One Worcestershire strategy to raise the profile of the county goes from strength to strength. The Council is working with a growing network of almost 400 private and public sector partners from all parts of Worcestershire to promote the county as an excellent place to live, work and invest.

22. A campaign last autumn to raise awareness of the One Worcestershire initiative was seen by more than 7 million people in London and across the West Midlands conurbation.

23. Worcestershire continues to have one of the fastest growing economies in the country and the Council will continue to work with the Local Enterprise Partnership, the six district councils and our other partners to support the business community.

24. We have continued to make good progress in all areas of digital technology. Our IT service was successfully insourced with no disruption to Council services and is delivering savings and a much more flexible and customer focussed service. A new joint Library Management System with Worcester University was successfully procured and implemented in The Hive and other Council libraries also delivering savings and a modern on-line system for customers and staff. Our Adult Social Care Case Management system has been successfully upgraded to a modern Liquidlogic system which will allow staff productivity improvements through improved mobile working. Our Children's Social Care service in WCF are also on track to be upgraded to Liquid Logic by the financial year end.

25. Our IT infrastructure has been reaccredited to Public Services Network (PSN) standards and our upgrade to the latest versions of cloud-based software (Microsoft Windows 10, Office 365 and Exchange On-Line) are well advanced. We have made additional investment in cyber security and offsite data backup resilience. We are embedding process redesign and technology automation within the principles of our organisational redesign.

26. We have developed a real-time procurement spend tool, to be able to easily drill down into the Council's procurement activity with the supply base, to identify cost saving opportunities. This has enabled the Commercial Team to work with the service areas to contribute towards our in-year savings challenges. Notable achievements include securing a new 5-year fixed price integrated Prevention and Early Intervention contract with the Health & Care Trust; a 5-year fixed price contract for Drug & Alcohol recovery service, lower broadband and mobile phone charges and a new lower cost managed print service.

27. We have worked hard to develop our use of research, data and insight to drive decision-making across the Council. In particular, the requirement for improved access to data for all scrutiny meetings has resulted in the development of a standard set of performance and management information for panels to inform scrutiny activity.

28. In addition in 2019, the Council's research team won the award for "best use of health or social care research" at the annual LARIA (local area research and intelligence) conference awards. The research developed approaches to predict those most at risk of needing Council-funded care who had previously funded their own care (self-funder pickups).

Property and Health and Safety

29. We continue to focus on ensuring our estate is kept safe and complaint with significant investment this year. Staff may have noticed new fire doors and other improvements. ANPR is being introduced at County Hall to help manage our parking

capacity as we know this is important to staff and visitors. The Property team also play their part in the strategic developments of the Council including the establishment of WCF by making the transition from Wildwood to a new working environment in County Hall as easy as possible.

Projects and Programme Management

30. The team have assisted with an incredible variety of change and savings projects including the establishment of WCF, Social Care Case Management implementation, and development of the Library Strategy and associated consultation.

Environment Economy and Infrastructure

31. The Council redesign is taking shape with the new Assistant Director posts beginning to take shape and several specialist roles are in the process of being created to allow technical services to be delivered.

32. Work on the reshape of the Directorate will continue this year with all roles to be filled shortly and efforts to fully utilise new systems and ways of working to deliver productivity gains and genuine efficiencies.

33. Officers continue to successfully root out grant funding wherever possible. Examples include:

- a range of external funding to support businesses, householders and public organisations in reducing their environmental impact and in many cases enabling them to save money
- approximately £300,000 being obtained in Government and private sector funding for the installation of public EV charge points, with a further 25 at Parkway
- a number of Major Infrastructure Projects including the A38 Route Enhancement Programme, Churchfields and the Severnscap Business Plan
- approximately £5,000,000 of additional ERDF funds have been secured that will see the highly successful growth and investment programmes run through to 2023.

34. We continue to be shortlisted for awards, with the Worcestershire 5G Consortium shortlisted for '5G Leadership Awards' at last year's World Communication Awards 2019, having been awarded 'highly commended' in the same category in 2018. The Consortium also won the 'Most Commercially Viable Use Case' at the 5G Realised Awards earlier in 2019. We held onto the title of Council of the Year at the West Midlands Energy Efficiency Awards and were shortlisted for a number and won a number of industry awards for the Battenhall Railway Bridge extension project. We, along with Public Health colleagues, also picked up a commendation at the Royal Town Planning Institute Awards for Excellence in Planning for Health and Wellbeing.

35. The new Worcestershire Passenger Transport Strategy (2019-2030) was adopted last November. This was a significant piece of work for Transport Operations and involved production of a draft Strategy and Consultation with all our stakeholders. We

received circa 2500 responses, all of which were carefully considered to enable a detailed analysis of results. The objectives and timelines in the Project Plan were met and the Strategy was delivered in accordance with political governance processes. This is a great example of a team effort, drawing on individual and team expertise and will provide a clear framework for going forward from here.

36. We have progressed many infrastructure projects involving many disciplines and staff within E&I, the wider Council and beyond, e.g. Project Management, Planning, Environmental, Asset Management, Highways, Network Management and Traffic Management.

37. We also continue to promote and position the county as a place to do business. Sponsorship of festival of innovation that champions innovation across the county and draws business and participants from a growing international reach. Dr Pollock presented the excellence in professional services won by ISO quality service at the Chamber of Commerce awards this year, and Worcestershire firms are continuing to do well in the national awards.

38. Our improvements on Worcestershire's roads continues apace, with 275km of roads being improved in 2018/19. The Highways teams continued to work hard during the Autumn to ensure our roads keep moving.

39. I would also like to say a big thank you to Highways, Flood team, Emergency Planning and other colleagues for their superb efforts in managing the major floods we have had over the Autumn of this last year. Many properties and roads were badly affected on several occasions between late October and December, and the hard work of all involved and our partners in the District Councils and Environment Agency ensured we managed the difficult conditions and kept things moving as much as practicable.

40. Our staff continue to deliver on our diverse range of services. The following gives a flavour of the extent of this:

- 128 Traffic Regulation Order requests received, 122 implemented;
- 2,554 development control applications cases completed
- Regular, planned inspections of 2,700 miles of roads and maintenance of 105,000 highway gulleys and 1,320 grit bins
- 150 miles of improvements to C-class and Unclassified roads, directly benefiting over 12,000 homes and 27,000 residents across the county
- 25,786 street works permits granted, including 18,599 to utility companies
- 29 primary and 15 secondary precautionary gritting treatments across the road network during the 2018/2019 winter service season

41. County Enterprises recently celebrated 40 years in business and marked the occasion by holding an Open Day to showcase and celebrate the work done by its employees. County Enterprises is an engineering and packaging operation run by the Council that provides employment opportunities for people with learning and physical disabilities. Despite challenges to its main markets it continues to progress with ambitious business plan development.

42. It has been a busy and productive year and the above are only a small fraction of the services and outputs the County Council has achieved. I would like to conclude this

report as I started by expressing my thanks to all the staff, managers and Councillors who have made this possible.

PAUL ROBINSON

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Chief Executive) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.

COUNCIL
13 FEBRUARY 2020**QUESTION TIME**

Question 1 – Home to School Transport - Hanley Castle High School

1. Mr P Middlebrough will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills:

"This winter there have been many occasions when students who live in Upton upon Severn and attend Hanley Castle High School have been unable to walk to school because of the closure due to flooding of Hanley Road and so have needed to use motorised transport.

This entails a round trip of at least 15 miles depending on which other roads are flooded.

These students live within the statutory walking distance or 3 miles and so are not entitled to school travel assistance. What steps will the Cabinet Member take to ensure that free school travel assistance is available on days when Hanley Road is flooded?"

Contact PointsCounty Council Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.

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COUNCIL
13 FEBRUARY 2020**REPORTS OF COMMITTEES - SUMMARY OF DECISIONS**
TAKEN BY THE PENSIONS COMMITTEE

Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) Rectification

1. The Council's provider ITM have advised that the final report on the GMP expected from HMRC was not released in December 2019 and is now due by the end of February 2020. ITM have produced a range of tests in preparation for a dry run of the identified cases (approximately 1,000) which, subject to receipt of the HMRC data, they are planning to undertake in March 2020. The results of the dry run will be issued by ITM during April 2020 and will include details of all members impacted by the reconciliation process which will require rectification.
2. To enable the Fund to commence implementation of the rectification, the Committee has supported a series of GMP rectification proposals and granted delegated authority to the Chief Financial Officer to undertake the final implementation with a net limit of up to £500,000. A further report containing the rectification statistics will be presented to the Committee meeting on 26 June 2020.

Business Plan

3. The Business Plan is reviewed and updated quarterly to deliver an extra management / governance tool to: help officers to manage the Fund's activities; and assist the Pensions Committee to ensure the ongoing management and development of the Fund is in line with longer term policy, objectives and strategy. The Committee has noted the Worcestershire Pension Fund (WPF) Business Plan as at 10 January 2020 and the general update from the Administering Authority.

Local Government Pension Scheme Central (LGPSC) Budget and Strategic Business Plan 2020/21

4. Each year LGPSC is required to produce an updated budget and Strategic Business Plan. The intention of the Company and Practitioners Advisory Forum (PAF) which has key representation from lead officers for each of the Partner funds is to take an agreed set of papers to the Shareholder Forum. Given the importance and financial implications for Worcestershire's Pension Fund, it was felt that the 2020/21 LGPSC budget and strategic business plan should come to the Pensions Committee for consideration before it went to the Shareholders Forum meeting.
5. The Committee was informed that the Shareholders Forum meeting due to take place on 11 February had been postponed due to concerns expressed by a number of shareholders about the proposed budget. The date for the re-arranged Shareholder Forum meeting had yet to be arranged. To ensure that there is no further delay of the Stakeholder Forum meeting beyond this financial year, the

Committee has granted delegated authority to the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee to agree to waive the required 30 days notice period for the convening of the Shareholder Forum meeting, should it be necessary.

6. In light of the fact that the Shareholders Forum meeting is likely to take place in advance of the next scheduled meeting of the Pensions Committee and to avoid any unnecessary delay, the Committee has granted delegated authority to the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee to carry out due diligence on the LGPS Central budget updated proposals and the Chairman as Shareholder to agree the proposed 2020/21 LGPSC budget unless the updated budget extended the break-even position of the Worcestershire Pension Fund beyond 2038 thereby impacting on the original cost-sharing agreement.

7. The Committee also noted the LGPSC latest version of the LGPS Central Budget 2020/21 presentation and the LGPS Central Strategic Business Plan.

Mr P Middlebrough
Chairman

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda papers for the meeting of the Pensions Committee held on 31 January 2020.