

Cabinet**Thursday, 24 September 2015, County Hall, Worcester -
10.00 am**

		Minutes
Present:		Mr A I Hardman (Chairman), Mr M L Bayliss, Mr A N Blagg, Mrs S L Blagg, Mr J P Campion, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr M J Hart, Mrs L C Hodgson and Mr J H Smith
Also attended:		Mr M H Broomfield, Mr I Hopwood, Mr P M McDonald, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs E B Tucker, and Mr P A Tuthill 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 16 July 2015 (previously circulated). A copy of document A will be attached to the signed Minutes.
1678	Apologies and Declarations of Interest (Agenda item 1)	None.
1679	Public Participation (Agenda item 2)	None.
1680	Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2015 (Agenda item 3)	RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Cabinet held on 16 July 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman
1681	Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report	The Cabinet considered the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2014/15 and the progress of the work of the Board. The details were set out in the report and its Appendix. Diana Fulbrook, the independent Chair of WSCB,

**2014/15
(Agenda item 4)**

presented the Annual Report and on the work of the Board in relation to the Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan, the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, multi-agency learning, and improved user feedback. It was disappointing that the Board could not give a reassurance about the safety of young people in the system but the Improvement Board was now overseeing the Back to Basics safeguarding improvement plan and there was evidence of improved practice. By the end of the year she hoped to be able to demonstrate better outcomes for children. The Board was improving the pace of the delivery of its statutory duties.

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

- a) How did the work of the Board help engender co-operation, information sharing and partnership working and what plans did the Board have to make further improvements? Diana Fulbrook explained that it had been recognised that there had been an over-emphasis on commissioned Early Help Services and the expectation that they would deliver all that was required. Discussions had been held at the Board about the need for early intervention and assessment to prevent problems escalating for children and there was agreement amongst all the agencies that the Strategy needed refreshing
- b) How confident was the Independent Chairman that the work of the Board would improve safeguarding next year and what action plans were in place? Diana Fulbrook stated that the Improvement Board was looking closely at why there was a problem with timelines. There was an important role for partner organisations in this respect. The CQC inspection had identified issues related to health and the Board were conscious that this was an issue that needed addressing
- c) What had been the biggest successes of the Board to date? Diana Fulbrook commented that a lot of work had gone into ensuring that a Child Sexual Exploitation action plan and strategy was in place albeit further work was now required to implement it. She also highlighted the establishment of the MASH and the rolling out of the Suicide Prevention guidance as significant achievements

- d) What structures had the Board implemented to ensure agencies co-operated effectively in Early Help or was it the structures themselves that prevented effective co-operation? Diana Fulbrook stated that the Board had restructured this year in an attempt to sharpen up its processes. The previous structure had not been an impediment to co-operation but the new structure would improve the ability to focus on the key issues
- e) Had the Board examined best practice in other areas of the country? Diana Fulbrook indicated that the Board had examined best practice and as a result had a good understanding of general partnership arrangements and how agencies worked across the country. It was not easy to find a universal model structure but it helped in realising what structure was effective and why. She had also been in contact with other independent Board Chairman to share information
- f) In response to a query about the further work that needed to be done in respect of Child Sexual Exploitation, Diana Fulbrook explained that an issue emerging from the CQC Inspection was that although the structure and practices were in place, practitioners were not routinely using the Child Sexual Exploitation screening tool. In the next couple of months it was anticipated that the screening tool would be revised and re-issued to frontline workers
- g) Diana Fulbrook explained that one of the problems of Child Sexual Exploitation was that it was a hidden problem. Victims did not necessarily see themselves as victims. It was therefore important to look for signs and understand them and this required a change in thinking and practice.

RESOLVED: that

- (a) the 2014/15 WSCB Annual Report be received;**
- (b) the progress of the work of the Board be noted; and**
- (c) the 2014/15 WSCB Annual Report be presented to full Council in November 2015.**

**Governance of
Worcestershire
Youth Music
(Agenda item 5)**

Worcestershire Youth Music service. 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 with Responsibility for Localism and Communities commented that the service had ambitions to develop its offer and role beyond young people, music and the county boundaries. The transfer of the service to a Company Limited by Guarantee with charitable status with a wider cultural/arts brief was the right governance model to enable this to happen and meet our statutory duties. Worcestershire was leading the way nationally and the proposal would improve income, be more flexible, and target doubling the number of pupils engaged

- b) A Member from outside the Cabinet commented that it appeared at the moment that the Council was doing as much as Government funding would allow to fulfil its objectives. When would the Statement of Objectives for the proposed governance arrangements be made available? The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Localism and Communities responded that the Articles of Association for the Charity would be drafted and made available in due course. It was proposed that there would be a limited proportion of the Trustees on the Board from the Council. The service was already doing things differently and had made £650k savings over the last few years and she was confident that despite limited funds, the service could achieve great things. The approach adopted for this service could be used as a template across the country

- c) The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Localism and Communities commented in response to a query, that the change to Academy Status of schools would not have an impact on the service because the philosophy of the service was to provide music for all so the emphasis was on the opportunity for the individual (rather than the school) to apply to use a musical instrument.

RESOLVED: that

- (a) a Company Limited by Guarantee with charitable status be supported in principle as**

**1683 Future of the
Bishops Wood
Centre
(Agenda item 6)**

the preferred governance option for the Worcestershire Youth Music service (Option 5), and the development of a Detailed Business Case for this option be approved; and

- (b) authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families, in consultation with the Director of Children's Services and the Director of Business, Environment and Community, to take the final decision on the future governance of the Worcestershire Youth Music service based on the findings of the Detailed Business Case.**

The Cabinet considered proposals for the future of Bishops Wood Centre. The details were set out in the report and its Appendix.

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

- a) The Cabinet Member for Localism and Communities believed that this was a good opportunity to secure the long term future of the centre and its environmental work. A working group which included representatives from the County Council and National Grid had carried out an extensive exercise to identify a suitable organisation that could potentially take on the Council's delivery role at Bishops Wood. The Field Studies Council had been identified as the preferred alternative delivery organisation
- b) The Field Studies Council had a good reputation in this area of work and there was confidence that the good work that had already taken place at the Bishop Wood Centre would continue under their leadership
- c) The local member commented that he fully supported the proposals as the only way to ensure that the educational activities at the Centre would continue in the future
- d) A Member from outside the Cabinet commented that the Council appeared to be deviating from its commissioning policy by making a loss in terms of Central and Property recharge costs on this transfer of responsibilities for this service. In response, the Leader of the Council stated that this small loss was vindicated in terms of the

overall aim of ensuring that the service continued to be provided for the long term educational benefits of the county. In addition, he re-iterated that the Council did not own the site and he wished to put on record the Council's thanks to National Grid, the landowners, for their past and continued co-operation and investment in the Centre.

RESOLVED: that

- (a) the Director of Business, Environment and Community, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Localism and Communities, be authorised to enter into discussions and finalise the relevant due diligence and transfer agreements in order that the delivery of the Bishops Wood Centre is transferred to the Field Studies Council; and**
- (b) the Director of Business, Environment and Community, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Localism and Communities, be authorised to consult with staff and Unions over the process of transfer.**

1684 Self-Sufficient Council - Income from Sales, Fees & Charges (Agenda item 7)

The Cabinet considered the development of a policy for maximising income received from sales, fees and charges. The details were set out in the report.

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

- a) The Leader of the Council introduced the report and commented that the Council could not generally make a profit from sales, fees and charges but it was appropriate that a charging policy be reviewed annually with a full review of the policy at the start of each new Council
- b) A Member from outside the Cabinet agreed it made sense to have indexation to avoid massive delayed increases but expressed concern that the additional charge of 2% above RPI would be an onerous burden on adult social care service users. It was pointed out that paragraph 7 of the report recognised there would be no impact for these users, where charging was only applicable to those who are assessed within a tightly regulated procedure as having the ability to pay and which already operated on the basis of full cost recovery.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care explained that there were particular guidelines that governed Adult Social Care. The original arrangements for calculating a financial assessment of each individual's needs and financial capabilities would continue. There were guidelines for the thresholds for the assessment of an individual's income and savings.

RESOLVED: that

- (a) the report be noted;**
- (b) the charging principles in relation to executive functions as shown in paragraph 12 and 19 of the report be agreed;**
- (c) the policy be fully reviewed at the start of each new Council (every 4 years); and**
- (d) the annual review of charging under this policy be delegated to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Finance.**

1685 Commissioning of Transactional HR and Finance Services (Agenda item 8)

The Cabinet considered the appointment of the preferred bidder for Transactional HR and Finance Services. The details were set out in the report and its Appendices.

In the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- a) The Cabinet Member for Transformation and Commissioning introduced the report and commented that in line with the Council's future operating model and as an excellent Commissioning Authority, the Council had gone out to tender for the Council's Transactional HR and Finance Services. The tenders were robustly evaluated, reviewed and moderated and it was proposed that Liberata be appointed as the service provider. Liberata had a strong track record in this area and future projected savings amounted to £2.2m over the seven year contract period. Liberata intended to have a Worcester base and there was the potential for additional local jobs. Small elements of the service would remain in-house
- b) This proposal meant that the Council could achieve greater efficiencies than if the service was retained in house. The Council had obtained the

right price from the preferred bidder for a back office function which would enable resources to be channelled into front-line services

- c) The commitment by Liberata to use 25 modern apprentices over the period of the contract was welcomed. In response to a query about the term "modern", the Cabinet Member for Transformation and Commissioning explained that this was a government phrase that related to government-backed official apprenticeships.

RESOLVED: that

- (a) the recommendation to appoint Liberata UK Limited ('Liberata') as the preferred bidder of Transactional HR and Finance Services as outlined in their bid be approved; and**
- (b) the Director of Commercial and Change, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning, be authorised to agree any final details and to take all steps necessary to give effect to the decision in (a) above and for the completion of the contract with Liberata; and**
- (c) to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning be authorised to change the scope of related business support services at a later date within the boundaries of the relevant OJEU notice and procurement legislation and using the change control process in the contract.**

1686 Resources Report (Agenda item 9)

The Cabinet considered a Resources Report. The details were set out in the report.

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

- a) The Leader of the Council introduced the report and commented that the Council would continue to deliver savings through its FutureFit targets with £19.7m of the £27.5 2015/16 target being met. It was proposed that the Kidderminster Railway Station enhancement scheme be added to the capital programme. This scheme was backed by the Council, Worcestershire LEP and Birmingham and Solihull LEP. The Looked after Children's

placement budget continued to be a significant financial pressure. A lot of work had been undertaken to improve early intervention to reduce costs although he fully expected it to be overspent in this financial year. The statutory Annual Financial Statements for 2013/14 had now been closed as the external auditor was satisfied that the objection made to the accounts had been addressed. The external auditor had indicated that they were likely to give an unqualified opinion on the 2014/15 Financial Statements

- b) The Kidderminster Railway Station project was important given the increase in rail usage across the network. There were 700k users of the station in 2004/05 which had risen to 1.5m in 2013/14. The station was very popular but required upgrading/updating and improvements to its connectivity with other forms of transport. This project would help improve access for local commuters to the north and south of the country
- c) The Cabinet Member for Highways reported that unfortunately there had been a delay in the opening of the first Supported Living property at Cheltenham Road, Evesham
- d) In response to a query, it was confirmed that the connectivity of the Severn Valley Railway to the main-line had been upgraded by Network Rail last year.

RESOLVED: that

- (a) Council be recommended to approve the £4.3 million Kidderminster Railway Station addition to the capital programme, and the capital budget cash limits be updated accordingly;**
- (b) the current progress regarding the FutureFit programme be endorsed;**
- (c) the Cabinet Member's conclusions concerning revenue budget monitoring up to 31 July 2015 be endorsed;**
- (d) the Cabinet Member's conclusions concerning capital budget monitoring up to 31 July 2015 be endorsed; and**
- (e) the current position of the annual statutory**

financial accounts process be noted.

The meeting ended at 11.25 am.

Chairman