

**Council****Thursday, 9 July 2015, County Hall, Worcester - 10.00 am****Minutes****Present:**

Mr I Hopwood (Chairman), Mr R C Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr A T Amos, Mrs S Askin, Mr J Baker, Mr R W Banks, Mr M L Bayliss, Mr A N Blagg, Mrs S L Blagg, Mr C J Bloore, Mr PJ Bridle, Mr J P Campion, Mr S J M Clee, Mr S C Cross, Mrs P E Davey, Mr P Denham, Mr N Desmond, Mrs E A Eyre, Ms L R Duffy, Mr A Fry, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr W P Gretton, Mr A I Hardman, Mr M J Hart, Ms P A Hill, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Mr C G Holt, Mr M E Jenkins, Ms R E Jenkins, Mr R C Lunn, Mr P M McDonald, Mr A P Miller, Mrs F M Oborski, Mr J W Parish, Mr S R Peters, Dr K A Pollock, Mr D W Prodger, Mrs M A Rayner, Mr A C Roberts, Mr J H Smith, Mr R J Sutton, Mr C B Taylor, Mr J W R Thomas, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall, Mr G J Vickery, Mr T A L Wells and Mr G C Yarranton

**Available Papers**

The Members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. Thirteen questions submitted to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (previously circulated); and
- C. The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 14 May 2015 (previously circulated).

**1676 Apologies and Declaration of Interests (Agenda item 1)**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A A J Adams, Mr M H Broomfield, Mrs J L M A Griffiths, Mr P Grove, Mr L C R Mallett and Prof. J W Raine.

Two declarations of Other Disclosable Interests were made by:

Mr C J Bloore - whose future Father-in-Law had a business involving bees (Agenda item 6 - Notice of Motion 2).

Dr K A Pollock - as a member of Tenbury Boxing Club (Agenda item 3).

**1677 Public Participation**

Two petitions were presented at the meeting and one person addressed the Council on Agenda Item 5(a)(i).

<b>(Agenda item 2)</b>	Mrs Rosemary Henderson presented a petition seeking the application of a 20 mph speed limit in Tennis Walk, Worcester and adjacent highways.
	Ms Ruth Forecast spoke on Agenda item 5(a)(i) and outlined to members the proposals to welcome Syrian refugees to the Malvern area.
	Mrs Kathleen L'Enfant presented a petition which sought a review of the roundabout and traffic calming measures on the A449 in Broadwaters, Kidderminster.
	The Chairman thanked all those who had taken part in the public participation process. The petitioners would receive responses from the appropriate person in due course.
<b>1678 Minutes (Agenda item 3)</b>	<b>RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.</b>
<b>1679 Chairman's Announcements (Agenda item 4)</b>	The Chairman referred to the printed Announcements which had been circulated to all members. He particularly drew attention to the Charity Day being arranged on 2 October 2015.
<b>1680 Reports of Cabinet - Matters which require a decision by Council - Humanitarian Relief - Syrian Refugees (Agenda item 5(a)(i))</b>	<p>The Council had before it a report from Cabinet in relation to a Notice of Motion referred there on 12 February 2015.</p> <p>The report set out that the Council had referred the following Notice of Motion to Cabinet for advice:</p> <p><i>The County Council wishes to play its part in the humanitarian relief programme for Syria by responding to the UK Government's call for local authorities to host small numbers of refugee families – doing so by asking the relevant Cabinet Members with Responsibility to consider providing their support and expertise to a Malvern Hills District Council-led initiative to host up to twelve such families.</i></p> <p><i>We would ask Cabinet Members with Responsibility to consider committing to working collaboratively with Malvern Hills District Council and other local agencies, initially to develop a support framework and strategy as the basis of an application to the Home Office's Syrian Vulnerable Persons' Relocation Scheme (and, if successful, to participate in the implementation of the strategy by receiving, welcoming and supporting Syrian families through their process of resettlement)."</i></p>

The Leader of the Council confirmed that the Cabinet had considered a report on the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme which listed the implications for the Council of putting forward an application to the Home Office's Syrian Vulnerable Persons' Relocation Scheme.

The Cabinet had also considered a suggestion by the original mover of the Notice of Motion (Prof. J W Raine) that the Cabinet should agree to seek information from other host authorities, contact the Government to seek reassurance, and write to MPs to seek support.

The Cabinet believed that to prevent disadvantage to existing residents who needed to remain the first priority, the current financial climate signing up to an unquantifiable financial risk that could have long-term implications which could not be justified.

The Cabinet had therefore recommended that the Notice of Motion was not supported at this stage due to the financial implications, unquantifiable risks and that there was no guarantee of funding from Government beyond the first year, as detailed in the report.

The Cabinet had also agreed that the scheme continued to be monitored and the situation reviewed should the funding arrangements from the Home Office change and any decision to progress the scheme be delegated to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning.

The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning also explained why the Cabinet had recommended the course of action it had.

The signatories of the Motion present at the meeting confirmed that they wished it to be dealt with as originally printed and was accordingly moved by Mrs F M Oborski and seconded by Mrs S Askin.

It was then moved by Mr P M McDonald that the words "and we call on the Government to fund refugees fully throughout their residency" be added to the Motion. With the agreement of the signatories of the Motion present the Motion was so altered to become the substantive motion before Council.

A debate ensued during which the following principal points were made. Those arguing for the Motion:

- that the Syrian refugee crisis was on a scale that compelled the international community to act swiftly.
- the measures being proposed were modest in scale but such action would at least act as a model for others to follow.
- to refuse to give any help could be regarded as a callous and unfeeling act.
- to promise help would send out the message that Worcestershire could act on the world stage and was indeed world-class.
- the UK should not lag behind other EU and other countries who had already offered to give refugees a home.
- that the matter should not be left to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility but be a cross-party consensus.

Those against the Motion argued:

- that the County Council had a duty to safeguard the public purse and could not sign what was effectively a 'blank cheque'.
- it was not clear the extent to which other public services would be impacted by a decision to support the Motion. It was this lack of clarity and not any lack of desire to help which was the key.
- that the Government had already contributed to the international response to the crisis in Syria.
- in order to assist where possible the Cabinet Member with Responsibility had been given delegated authority to act by the Cabinet should circumstances dictate.

**On a named voted the Motion was lost.**

Those voting for the Motion: Mrs P Agar, Mrs S Askin, Mr J Baker, Mr C J Bloore, Mr P J Bridle, Mr S C Cross, Mr P Denham, Mr A Fry, Ms P A Hill, Mr M E Jenkins, Ms R E Jenkins, Mr R C Lunn, Mr P M McDonald, Mrs F M Oborski, Mr J Parish, Mrs M A Rayner, Mr R J Sutton, Mr J W R Thomas, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr R M Udall, Mr G J

Vickery and Mr T A L Wells (22).

Those voting against: Mr I Hopwood, Mr R C Adams, Mr A T Amos, Mr R W Banks, Mr M L Bayliss, Mr A N Blagg, Mrs S L Blagg, Mr J P Campion, Mr S J M Clee, Mrs P E Davey, Mr N Desmond, Mrs L R Duffy, Mrs E A Eyre, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr W P Gretton, Mr A I Hardman, Mr M J Hart, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Mr C G Holt, Mr A P Miller, Dr K A Pollock, Mr D W Prodger, Mr A C Roberts, Mr J H Smith, Mr C B Taylor, Mr P A Tuthill and Mr G C Yarranton (28).

Mr S R Peters abstained.

**1681 Reports of Cabinet - Matters which require a decision by Council - Capital Programme - Post-16 Supported Living (Agenda item 5(a)(ii))**

The Cabinet had considered a report on resources for Post-16 Supported Living Accommodation. The report set out proposals to include a sum of £1million in the Capital Programme. The aim of the proposals was to offer a significantly better service at reduced cost, compared with some of the external provision, by having direct access to the Council's own property.

The Cabinet had recommended that Council approved the addition of £1 million to the Capital Programme for the development of in-house Post-16 Supported Living Accommodation within Children's Services to be funded by revenue savings from the project.

**RESOLVED that the addition of £1million to the Capital Programme for the development of in-house Post-16 Supported Living Accommodation funded as set out in paragraphs 9 – 11 of the report be approved.**

**1682 Reports of Cabinet - Summary of decisions taken (Agenda item 5(b))**

The Leader of the Council reported the following topics and answered questions in relation to them:

- FutureFit: Commissioning of Learning and Achievement
- Update on Commissioning of Adult Social Care Services
- Resources Report (21 May 2015)

**1683 Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 1 - Public Transport (Agenda item 6)**

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion standing in the names of Mr P Denham, Mrs P Agar, Mr P M McDonald and Mr R M Udall.

The Notice of Motion was moved by Mr P Denham and seconded by Mrs P Agar who both spoke in favour of it as providing a potential improvement for the short and medium-term.

**1684 Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 2 - Protection of Pollinators (Agenda item 6)**

The Council then agreed to consider and deal with the Motion on the day.

The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways acknowledged that he would be happy to look into the matter and report to Cabinet in accordance with the Motion.

**On being put to the meeting the Motion was carried.**

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion standing in the names of Mr A N Blagg, Mr A I Hardman and Mrs E A Eyre.

The Notice of Motion was moved by Mr A N Blagg and seconded by Mrs E A Eyre who both spoke in favour of it. In response to a query it was explained that the Motion did not affect planning policy.

**The Motion being in relation to the exercise of an executive function then stood referred to Cabinet for a decision.**

**1685 Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 3 - Childhood Obesity (Agenda item 6)**

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion standing in the names of Mrs E B Tucker, Mr T A L Wells, Mrs F M Oborski, Professor J W Raine and Mrs S Askin.

The Notice of Motion was moved by Mrs F M Oborski and seconded by Mrs E B Tucker who both spoke in favour of it.

The Council then agreed to consider and deal with the Motion on the day.

A debate ensued during which the following principal points were made in favour of the Motion:

- the need to encourage community-led initiatives to tackle obesity issues, rather than seeking to impose top-down solutions.
- that the role of local authorities as planning authorities, guardians of public health and advisors to schools should be focussed on creating an environment in which healthy eating, exercise and a healthy lifestyle became paramount.
- schools were doing much good work already and could enhance this to become the bedrock of healthy eating for the next generation.

- curriculum changes, the removal of school kitchens and a change to the contents of school vending machines had created an environment for unhealthy eating and a new balance had to be established.
- that the Council was in a position to take a wide-ranging strategic approach and could also tackle issues such as safer routes to school, encouraging walking and cycling as well as guidance to schools and in this way play a pivotal role.

Members also spoke against the Motion citing:

- the role of scrutiny in gathering evidence and disseminating good practice.
- that schools were often bombarded with information and advice and what was needed was signposting to existing relevant information. There was also a responsibility for parents to ensure their children ate healthily. Much was already being done and achieved and as such the Motion was superfluous.
- that resentment had built up against a 'Big Brother' approach to what many considered personal lifestyle choices. Schools were already in receipt of often large quantities of relevant information. Society was aware of the healthy eating messages and how to act on that advice.

**On being put to the meeting the Motion was lost.**

**1686 Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 4 - Clerk to the Lord Lieutenant (Agenda item 6)**

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion standing in the names of Mr P M McDonald, Mr G J Vickery, Mr R M Udall and Mr C J Bloore.

The Notice of Motion was moved by Mr P M McDonald and seconded by Mr G J Vickery who both spoke in favour of it.

The Council then agreed to consider and deal with the Motion on the day.

A debate ensued during which the following principal points were made:

- that any public money being spent in the county should be accounted for, especially at a time of unprecedented public sector austerity.

- any system which meant that money could be spent by an unelected person who in turn was not responsible to the Council was out of step with the modern world.
- that even the scrutiny process seemed unable to obtain the reassurance that every penny of public money was accounted for.

Other members spoke against the Motion saying that:

- the system was open and transparent and this Motion was a thinly-veiled attack on the monarchy.
- the people of Worcestershire valued the role of the monarchy and the monarch's representative in the county.
- the Lord Lieutenant was an excellent ambassador and did sterling work in the community and across the county and his involvement was well organised.
- this was not the subject of public concern it was portrayed to be.

It was moved by Mr J H Smith and seconded by Mrs L C Hodgson under PSO 19.12.1(ii) 'that the question now be put'. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised that this closure motion could only be put if the Chairman considered that the matter had been sufficiently discussed. The Chairman so indicated and after the mover's Right to Reply and on being put to the meeting Council **RESOLVED 'that the question now be put'**.

**On a named vote the Motion was lost.**

Those voting in favour:

Mrs P Agar, Mr J Baker, Mr C J Bloore, Mr P Denham, Mr A Fry, Ms P A Hill, Mr R C Lunn, Mr P M McDonald, Mr R M Udall and Mr G J Vickery (10).

Those voting against: Mr I Hopwood, Mr R C Adams, Mr A T Amos, Mrs S Askin, Mr R W Banks, Mr M L Bayliss, Mr A N Blagg, Mrs S L Blagg, Mr P J Bridle, Mr J P Campion, Mr S J M Clee, Mr S C Cross, Mrs P E Davey, Mr N Desmond, Mrs L R Duffy, Mrs E A Eyre, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr W P Gretton, Mr A I Hardman, Mr M J Hart, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Mr C G Holt, Mr A P



**1687 Reports of Cabinet Members with Responsibility - report of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care (Agenda item 7(a))**

Miller, Mrs F M Oborski, Dr K A Pollock, Mr D W Prodger, Mr A C Roberts, Mr J H Smith, Mr R J Sutton, Mr C B Taylor, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr T A L Wells and Mr G C Yarranton (35).

Mr M E Jenkins, Ms R E Jenkins, Mr J Parish, Mr S R Peters, Mrs M A Rayner and Mr J W R Thomas abstained (6).

The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care presented her report which covered a number of overarching issues:

- Adult Social Care generally
- Day Service Review
- Supported Employment
- Working with Partners
- Digital Access Website
- Provider Markets
- Carers
- Safeguarding
- Staffing

The Cabinet Member with Responsibility answered questions about the report which included:

- market place resilience. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility commented on the problems of pay scales in other jobs and the attractive rates of pay which made it difficult to recruit to the residential care sector. The Living Wage would clearly impact on this and the situation would be monitored closely.
- what support was available for microbusinesses in the area of social care. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility outlined the help in kind and the limited opportunities for support with some set up costs.
- CCGs and the main challenges to be faced in the next few years. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility acknowledged it would be a challenging time and covered a number of specific issues including changes in supply and demand, health integration and combined authorities. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility also referred to the Patient Flow Centre, patient triage and GP surgeries where there would be access to social work support.

**1688 Reports of Cabinet Members with Responsibility - report of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Localism and Communities (Agenda item 7(b))**

- the Ability House at the University of Worcester and what an excellent training resource it was.
- the difficulties of retaining staff at the end of their training period. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility referred to this as a perennial problem but was being addressed by examining and enhancing remuneration packages.
- deferred payments and the effects of these on Council budgets. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility explained how measures were being put in place to 'even out' some of the peaks and troughs of cash flow.
- the Cabinet Member with Responsibility also commented on the early days of the Safeguarding Board and some of the work undertaken.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for her report.

The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Localism and Communities presented her report which covered a number of overarching issues:

- Libraries
- New Libraries
- Adult Learning
- The Joint Museum Service
- Arts Service
- Archives and Archaeology Service
- Worcestershire Youth Music Service and the Music Education Hub
- Corporate Information Management Unit (CIMU)
- Registration and Coroner Service
- Countryside Services
- Gypsy and Traveller Service
- Voluntary and Community Sector
- Regulatory Services
- The Hive
- Act Local

The Cabinet Member with Responsibility answered questions about the report which included:

- an update on the facilities at Redditch Library and the new users at the building.

- the current status of the mobile library service following remodelling.
- an update on remodelling of services at Bromsgrove Library.
- the possibility of reviewing the opening hours of the Archives and Archaeology Services.
- instrumental music tuition.
- retention and disposal of country parks.
- animals grazing on verges.
- the likely withdrawal from the Regulatory Services shared service and whether district councils could take on some of the regulatory and trading standards roles.

The Cabinet Member with Responsibility undertook to:

- give details of the Joint Committee's work via the Member Portal.
- give details of the Regulatory Services work via the Member Portal.
- give written responses regarding fees and Hive footfall.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for her report.

**1689 Question Time**

Thirteen questions had been received by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and had been circulated before the meeting. Twelve questions were asked. All answers are enclosed with these Minutes.

**1690 Reports of Committees - Summary of decisions taken by the Audit and Governance Committee (Agenda item**

The Council received the report of the Audit and Governance Committee containing a summary of decisions taken.

<p><b>9(a))</b></p> <p><b>1691 Reports of Committees - Summary of decisions taken by the Pensions Committee (Agenda item 9(b))</b></p>	<p>The Council received the report of the Pensions Committee containing a summary of decisions taken.</p>
<p><b>1692 Reports of Committees - Summary of decisions taken by the Planning and Regulatory Committee (Agenda item 9(c))</b></p>	<p>The Council received the report of the Planning and Regulatory Committee containing a summary of decisions taken.</p>
<p><b>1693 Reports of Committees - Summary of decisions taken by the Standards and Ethics Committee (Agenda item 9(d))</b></p>	<p>The Council received the report of the Standards and Ethics Committee containing the summary of decisions taken.</p>

The Council adjourned for luncheon between 12.50 p.m. and 1.35 p.m.  
The meeting ended at 2.53 p.m.

Chairman .....

## **COUNCIL 9 JULY 2015 - AGENDA ITEM 8 – QUESTION TIME**

***Answers given at the meeting may have been a précis of the full answer which is set out below. In some cases additional information is also included. Where, due to time or other constraints, it was not possible for the question to be asked formally the written response is also included below.***

**QUESTION 1** – Mr R M Udall asked Mr A I Hardman:

“Will the Leader of the Council join me in congratulating Worcester Warriors for winning the British and Irish Cup, the English Rugby Championship and gaining promotion back to the Premiership? Also, will he join me in congratulating the Worcester Women’s Rugby Team for their significant success, for their national team call ups and their continuing membership of the England Rugby Women’s Premiership? Worcester now has two sides in the top flight of English Rugby, something Worcestershire should be really proud of. Does he agree that such sporting success is good for the entire county?”

### **Answer Given**

I would be more than delighted to join Mr Udall in congratulating the Warriors in winning the British and Irish Cup and gaining promotion back to the Premiership. But my knowledge of Rugby is rather limited and hence I would be happy to take his word that not only are the Warriors doing extremely well but also the Women's Rugby Team. I would also expect him to join me in congratulating the County's Cricket Club in having a splendid season in the top flight of cricket in their 150<sup>th</sup> year; for which the Chairman unveiled a plaque. Yes this is a great boost for the county.

### **Supplementary Question**

Mr Udall raised a supplementary question about the wider role of sport in building success, improving the local economy and helping health and wellbeing. The Leader referred to the good work being undertaken by the County Council, district council colleagues and other partners.

**QUESTION 2** – Mr S R Peters had given written notice that he wished to ask Mr J H Smith:

*"Would the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways inform me what criteria are used when assessing requests for pelican crossings and how many such crossings does the County Council plan to install during the coming year?"*

### **Written Answer**

Thank you for your question. Requests received by the county from across the county are collated and added to a list for investigation when funding becomes available. At this point, a basic feasibility study is taken forward to ascertain whether the scheme is deliverable and whether it serves the general public with maximum benefit to all users.

The criteria which are used to ascertain whether a request for a pelican crossing is feasible are as follows:

1. Data monitoring is undertaken. This monitoring includes Speed data, pedestrian crossing data and Gap analysis. Speed data is used to ascertain which type of crossing would be applicable for the location. Examples are: a zebra crossing can be installed on a road where the 85% speeds are below 35mph. A Pelican crossing would be required if this figure is above 35mph.
2. Visibility Splays and Stopping Distances. There is a minimum visibility requirement for different locations and different types of crossings in relation to the speeds. This is DfT guidance which we adhere to, to ensure safety for all users crossing the road. There must be adequate visibility for drivers approaching the crossings and adequate stopping distance for a car to stop.

The Sustainable Schemes Team are not planning to deliver any crossings in this financial year however there are developments across the county which will be delivering a number of infrastructure improvements within their locality, some of which may be delivering controlled crossings.

**QUESTION 3** – Mr A T Amos asked Mr J Campion:

*"Would the Cabinet Member for Children and Families join with me in congratulating and encouraging Year 3 children at Oasis Academy Primary School in Warndon for their initiative in launching the Share A Book With Warndon curriculum project to enhance the local environment and community and which I am supporting through my Divisional Fund by paying for the book-inspired benches which the children will decorate and place within the local community?"*

**Answer Given**

Mr Campion said he was delighted to join Mr Amos in congratulating pupils at Oasis Academy Primary School in Warndon. He added that it was never too early to instil a love of books and reading.

**Supplementary Question**

In response to a supplementary question Mr Campion agreed that youngsters should be encouraged to read whether that be on electronic media or through physical books.

**QUESTION 4** – Mrs M A Rayner asked Mr J H Smith:

*"In the light of current events would the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways explain why we are finding that School Crossing Patrols are being axed without reference to the local members? Could he please explain why this policy has changed?"*

**Answer Given**

Thank you for your question. Further to your meeting with officers on 24 June I believe progress has been made generally with the School Crossing Patrol (SCP) Service.

In terms of cutting SCP's without reference to Councillors, as you are aware the circumstances for the SCP staff member (I think) you are referring to were not straightforward and involved data protection issues. The decision to review the site is standard procedure and is adopted countywide.

I can confirm there has been no policy change with regard to liaising with members. However it is important that officers do communicate with local members when changes happen.

#### Supplementary Question

In response to a supplementary question about the removal of a certain school crossing patrol and what criteria were being used Mr Smith confirmed that there was no wholesale removal of school crossing patrols and where a removal was contemplated this would be due to specific reasons at that particular crossing. He stated that whilst he could not give a definite guarantee that things wouldn't change as far as he was aware there were no plans at the moment to do away with school crossing patrols.

**QUESTION 5** – Mr P M McDonald asked Mr J Campion:

*"Would the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families please inform me of how many posts are unfilled in the area of children's social services?"*

#### **Answer Given**

As at 31 May 2015 there were 39 social work vacancies within Children's social care. This figure includes both front-line safeguarding social workers, and non-front line social workers such as those working in fostering and adoption. This represents 19% of the overall established workforce of 206.5 posts.

Within the frontline social work teams where there has been targeted activity to reduce the number of vacancies there are 21 vacancies against an established workforce of 141, which equates to 15% of posts vacant. This will fluctuate month-on-month.

#### Supplementary Question

In response to a supplementary question Mr Campion outlined other measures being used by the Council to recruit and retain social workers.

**QUESTION 6** – Mr P M McDonald asked Mr J Campion:

*"Would the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families please inform me of the monies spent on agency and temporary staff in the area of children's social services area?"*

#### **Answer Given**

Within the Assessment and Intervention Teams (front-line safeguarding teams) in the financial year 2014/15 there was a £2,518,000 spend on agency staffing from an overall spend of £9,644,000. This included posts such as front line social workers,

team managers and general managers. A further £310,000 was spent on temporary supernumerary posts to support the transformation of social care.

Within the Provider Services, from an overall spend of £7,718,000, a total of £1,183,000 was spent on agency workers, including social workers, team managers, general managers and temporary transformation posts.

From the overall social care spend on staffing of £17,362,000, a total of £4,011,000 equates to spend on agency workers equating to 23% of the overall spend. As the workforce becomes more stable and experienced we expect this to reduce.

#### Supplementary Question

In response to a supplementary question about the possible use of staff banks as was the case in the Health Service, Mr Campion stated the Council would explore any option to achieve the appropriate level of service provision.

**QUESTION 7** – Mr R C Lunn asked Mr A I Hardman:

*"Would the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Finance tell Council how long is it taking on average for Service Level Agreement invoices to be sent to end users such as schools?"*

#### **Answer Given**

The charging of Service Level Agreements to maintained schools and academies for this financial year will take on average 4 months. This is due in part to the process of coordinating the contracts for the services which are included in the HR/Finance commissioning programme. This is being undertaken by the Services to Schools Project Team.

Once all the contracts are received a journal will be processed for maintained schools by the end of July. Invoices for academies are also expected be completed by the end of July.

#### Supplementary Question

In response to a supplementary question about the effects of late invoicing Mr Hardman undertook to provide Mr Lunn with a written answer.

**QUESTION 8** – Mr R C Lunn asked Mr J H Smith:

*"Can the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways please tell us how many outstanding Traffic Regulation Orders there are (e.g. putting in, or taking out of Parking Schemes)? What is the average time it is taking to complete them?"*

#### **Answer Given**

Thank you for your question. Following on from our conversation I understand your question in more related to residents' parking orders.

As you may be aware, the Traffic Management Team (TMT) have successfully committed to dealing with one Resident Parking Scheme, along with the 100 live TROs at any one time. However, as the number of RPS requests increased along



with Member expectations, the Team agreed to carry out additional scheme analysis and implementation in addition to this which has helped to maintain the balance – this being known as the RPS Initiative.

In short, there are three separate processes the Team undertake,

- Firstly, the initial desktop survey/analysis (DTS) is carried out and this establishes whether the basic criteria for a scheme are met and can be taken forward. These basic criteria include available kerb space to meet the need for at least one car per household (0.8 in conservation areas), percentage of properties that have off-street parking spaces being less than 50% etc. The Local Member is advised if the area is suitable for further consideration and it is added to the RPS waiting list.
- The next stage is to formally survey those residents affected (within an area agreed with the elected member) to make them aware of the pros and cons of the scheme, the costs involved for those who purchase permits (approximately £40 per annum depending on which District is affected), the fact that we need at least 50% to respond, and of those responses, 80% need to be in favour of a scheme. The TMT then hand deliver these letters with pre-paid envelopes for response, normally within a three-week period. The responses are analysed and reported to the Member, with a recommendation based on criteria as to whether the RPS request can proceed to the formal TRO stage or not.
- If the survey yields a positive response, we then have to carry out the normal TRO process to implement a scheme

These processes apply to both new scheme requests and petitions for the removal of current RPS – the only difference being at least 50% of residents have to want a scheme removed before we will carry out the formal TRO process.

#### Supplementary Question

In response to a supplementary question Mr Smith confirmed that presently the time taken for such schemes was 6-9 months.

**QUESTION 9** – Mr R M Udall asked Mr M L Bayliss:

*"Will the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning confirm that all bidders for Council Contracts compete on a level playing field in order to provide goods and services to the County Council?"*

#### **Answer Given**

Yes all procurement processes are robustly managed to provide a level playing field to a wide variety of potential bidders. It is easy for companies of any size to register on the council's eTendering portal to get access to all opportunities.

#### Supplementary Question

In response to a supplementary question about tax avoidance Mr Bayliss undertook to investigate Mr Udall's claims on the production of evidence and said he would be pleased to meet the questioner to discuss it further.

**QUESTION 10** – Mrs P Agar asked Mr J H Smith:

*"Worcester city was recently paralysed by road works on four out of five arterial roads on the east side of the river. Would the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways agree that this is the kind of problem that arises out of commissioning work out of house, in particular, that you lose control of the work schedule to your contractor?"*

**Answer given**

Thank you for your question. Whilst I wouldn't go as far as to say that Worcester was paralysed, there were traffic issues recently arising out of a safety critical gas main that needed attention on Newtown Road, and an unplanned gas escape on Bath Road. So, I would not agree that commissioning highways work means that we lose control of the work schedule. We work closely with our highways maintenance and improvements contractors to schedule works, and co-ordinate these with Utility works in the best possible way to minimise disruption.

**Supplementary Question**

In response to a supplementary question about fine-tuning the process Mr Smith assured the questioner that the County Council worked hard with utility companies to improve working practices where possible.

**QUESTION 11** – Mrs P Agar asked Mr J H Smith:

*"Can the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways confirm that, in future, the Council is not planning to invest any money in bus transport, other than 106 money, and that you regard the provision of local bus services as a purely commercial matter?"*

**Answer Given**

Thank you for your question I don't wish to rehearse the various debates on the bus consultation process where we had over 8000 responses. The main areas were:

- Open for Business – shopping etc.
- Children and families
- Environment
- Health and Well Being

At the same time, further fruitful discussions took place with bus and community transport operators regarding the extension of the commercial networks and the best way of providing competitively tendered subsidised transport services.

This resulted in a number of services being commercially operated, albeit sometimes at a reduced level of service, together with a proposed new tendered network which Cabinet approved in June 2014. The revised network of services was introduced on 1 September 2014. Inevitably the reduction in funding has seen a consequential reduction in patronage of local bus service in the county, but still substantial usage by residents travelling to work, for education and essential shopping.

This considerable usage of bus services by children, adults and pensioners living in urban and rural areas demonstrates the continuing need for the funding of bus

services. These are a lifeline in decreasing social exclusion and giving access to essential services as well as reducing congestion on the roads and contributing towards improved air quality.

#### Supplementary Question

In response to a supplementary question about improvements to bus services Mr Smith outlined the Council's commitment to bus transport in the county.

#### **QUESTION 12** – Mr G J Vickery asked Mr M J Hart:

*"Following the Worcestershire Acute Hospital Trust's presentation at the last Health and Wellbeing Board meeting, now that the Care Quality Commission and the West Midlands Clinical Senate have reported on their concerns about the robustness of the Trust's reconfiguration proposals, Clinical Commissioning Groups, media and public concerns about capacity and sustainability, coupled with a 2015-2016 financial plan envisaging a £31million deficit, is it not time for the county's acute hospital services to be provided on a collaborative basis with neighbouring providers?"*

#### **Answer Given**

The West Midlands Clinical Senate supported the proposed clinical model for surgery, gynaecology, obstetrics and paediatrics. This would see more planned surgery being undertaken at the Alexandra Hospital with emergency surgery being undertaken at the Worcestershire Royal Hospital. Overnight consultant-led births and children's acute hospital services would be provided from the Worcestershire Royal Hospital. The Clinical Senate noted that staff and the public would need a clear and common understanding about where to take children who require hospital treatment, and that the local NHS would need to confirm that there is sufficient capacity at Worcestershire Royal Hospital to manage the additional children.

For emergency medicine, the Clinical Senate supported the recommendation of the previous Independent Clinical Review to develop a major Accident and Emergency Department at the Worcestershire Royal Hospital site linked to a local Emergency Unit at the Alexandra Hospital able to receive and manage medically urgent cases 24 hours a day. The Clinical Senate asked that more work be carried out on the detail of this model, and this is now being led by the Future of Acute Hospital Services in Worcestershire Programme Board. All NHS organisations in Worcestershire support this work.

Neither the Clinical Senate nor the previous Independent Clinical Review supported the transfer of services at the Alexandra Hospital to an alternative provider.

#### Supplementary Question

In response to a supplementary question Mr Hart reiterated that the Council wished to see a safe, accessible and co-ordinated health service for all residents of the county.

#### **QUESTION 13** – Mrs F M Oborski asked Mr J H Smith:

*"In 2014 a greengrocers in Vicar Street, Kidderminster was successfully prosecuted and fined for trading on the highway and causing obstruction to pedestrians. That*

*trader is now continuing to commit those same offences. What steps can be taken to prevent this activity?"*

**Answer Given**

The company and manager of this shop were convicted in 2014 of obstructing the highway. The latest complaints are being investigated. We cannot say more about the investigation at this stage in order to avoid prejudicing any legal proceedings.

Supplementary Question

In response to a supplementary question about the possibility of tackling repeat offenders by standard warning letter Mr Smith promised to give a written response.