

Minutes of the Cabinet

County Hall

Thursday, 27 October 2022, 10.00 am

Present:

Cllr Simon Geraghty (Chairman), Cllr Marc Bayliss, Cllr Adrian Hardman, Cllr Marcus Hart (Vice Chairman), Cllr Adam Kent, Cllr Karen May, Cllr Richard Morris, Cllr Tracey Onslow, Cllr Andy Roberts and Cllr Mike Rouse

Also attended:

Cllr Mel Allcott, Cllr Matt Dormer, Cllr Matt Jenkins and Cllr Emma Stokes

2119 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Cllr Simon Geraghty declared an Other Interest in agenda item no. 4, Relocation of Redditch Library, as he was a member of the Redditch Town Funds Board on behalf of Worcestershire County Council.

2120 Public Participation

None.

2121 Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 September were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2122 Relocation of Redditch Library

The Cabinet Member for Communities introduced the report and highlighted that the Council had a duty to ensure the provision of a comprehensive and efficient library service, which it was committed to continue to do.

He explained that Redditch Borough Council had an aspiration to open up the town centre and this involved a proposal to relocate the library to the Town Hall. The plans demonstrated that the library could be relocated to enable the delivery of the same services as it currently provided and with a modest increase in floor space. The commercial details were to be finalised, but the report referred to the principles required to be achieved to enable to move to take place.

The Cabinet member referred to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board in Redditch on 25 October, which he had attended, and the commitment given by him that the Council was in listening mode. The Council was planning to consult on the proposals for a 12 week period and would consider the responses to the consultation fully before reaching a final decision.

Councillor Emma Stokes reported on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board, where public speaking had been facilitated and members had asked questions of the Leader of Redditch Borough Council about the context of the proposals and of the Cabinet Member and senior officer about the consideration for the library service. The main issue raised during the OSPB meeting had been about ensuring the consultation was carried out effectively.

A non-member of the Cabinet asked what would happen if the outcome from the consultation showed a majority against the proposed relocation and the Cabinet member reported that all responses would be taken into account.

RESOLVED that Cabinet

- a) Noted the proposals for re-locating Redditch Library as part of Redditch's Town Plan Deal;**
- b) Approved the set of high-level plans and requirements for the re-location of Redditch Library as set out in the report;**
- c) Approved the commencement of formal public consultation on the proposed plans for the relocation;**
- d) Authorised the Strategic Director for Commercial and Change in collaboration with the Chief Finance Officer and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities, to progress further negotiations with Redditch Borough Council for the commercial arrangements for the proposed library relocation and transfer of the library site to Redditch Borough Council, based on the main heads of terms as set out in paragraph 21 of the report; and**
- e) Will receive a further report, in May 2023, on the outcome of the consultation and the negotiations with Redditch Borough Council.**

2123 Redditch Railway Station

The Cabinet Member for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills introduced the report and referred to the purpose of the proposed improvements to the railway station in Redditch being to support improving access to the town and provide a better public realm. The estimated cost of £10m was within the earmarked sum of £11m.

In seconding the recommendations, the Cabinet Member for Highways referred to the proposal enabling future growth and expansion. The Towns Fund

included money for improvements to Unicorn Hill which would link to the wider station scheme.

A member from outside the Cabinet welcomed the proposals for additional cycle parking and queried proposals to improve cycling infrastructure. The Leader responded that sustainable transport was part of the wider regeneration. The Cabinet Member for Highways also referred to recent additions of cycle lanes to Bromsgrove Road in the town and initiatives to maximise use of public transport and e-scooters.

RESOLVED that Cabinet

- (a) Noted the progress to date and supports the redevelopment of Redditch Railway Station;**
- (b) Acknowledged the outcome of an options appraisal for Redditch Railway Station (Appendix 1 of the report);**
- (c) Acknowledged estimates for the construction of Redditch Railway Station and related external works (Appendix 2 of the report);**
- (d) Noted the allocation of £10m funding for delivering Redditch Railway Station which exists within the Capital Programme as set out in the Finance section of the report;**
- (e) Authorised the Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure to obtain tenders for the works;**
- (f) Authorised the Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure in consultation with the CMR for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills to enter into contracts for the construction of the works;**
- (g) Authorised the Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure to enter into an agreement with Redditch Borough Council regarding the redevelopment of their land for public realm as part of the station redevelopment; and**
- (h) Authorised the Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure to enter into an Asset Protection Agreement with Network Rail and any other agreements with the rail industry as required in the construction of the station and related works on their land.**

2124 Worcestershire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 - 2032

The Cabinet Member introduced the report and outlined the process for agreeing the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, including comprehensive

consultation. The Health and Wellbeing Board had approved the Strategy at its meeting on 27 September 2022.

Cabinet members commended the consultation process and the number of responses received, which had helped to focus the Strategy on improving mental health and wellbeing. The cross-cutting nature of the Strategy for Council services was acknowledged.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- a) **ratified the final draft of the Worcestershire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032 (JLHWS); and**
- b) **noted that JLHWS will form a significant part of the Integrated Care Strategy.**

2125 Children and Young People's Plan

The Cabinet Member presented the report and thanked the Health and Wellbeing Board which had accepted it at its recent meeting. He also thanked the Overview and Scrutiny Board whose consideration of the draft document had resulted in the document being simplified; its comments were included in the report.

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommended that Council adopts the Children and Young People's Plan.

2126 Pershore Education Planning Area Review Consultation Responses

Cabinet considered a report which updated it on progress with the proposal to move to a single, two-tier system of education in the Pershore Education Planning Area (EPA). It was confirmed that ideologically the Council was not wedded to a two or three tier system and a mixture of both remained in Worcestershire. This specific proposal reflected the outcome of consultation where a majority of respondents supported the move to a single tier of education in the Pershore Education Planning Area (EPA). Some parents were already choosing to apply to transfer their children to the High School at age 11 in any case, which impacted on local middle schools.

The Cabinet Member reported that the Department for Education had confirmed financial support for changes necessary to the High School, an Academy, subject to final confirmation from HM Treasury. In seconding the recommendations, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care reported that as a local member he understood confusion which arose in the area by being adjacent to an area which had 2 tier education. Local schools were being required to move towards two tier through parental demand so it was appropriate that the Council co-operated with the proposed changes at its maintained schools and supported the first-tier schools to be viable for the future. A clear pathway was needed for pupils and pathways.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- (a) Considered and noted the findings of the pre-publication Consultation undertaken in October – November 2021 as outlined in paragraphs 27 – 29 of the report;**
- (b) subject to confirmation of a successful business case to HM Treasury by the Department of Education, which proposes funding an expansion at Pershore High School being included in the Schools Rebuilding Programme, agreed a commitment to support a collective change of age range to align schools in the Pershore Education Planning Area (EPA) to a single, two-tier (primary and secondary) system of education;**
- (c) noted the capital funding detailed in the Council budget for 2022-23, including the County Council's capped contribution from borrowing of £1.3m in order to deliver either additional accommodation or repurposed accommodation at the LA Maintained schools:
 - (i) Defford-cum-Besford CE First School**
 - (ii) Fladbury CE First School**
 - (iii) Upton Snodsbury CE First School**
 - (iv) Abbey Park First & Nursery School and**
 - (v) Abbey Park Middle School****
- (d) Noted the request from the DfE regarding disposal of surplus land, as set out in paragraph 56 of the report, and agreed in principle that if surplus land as identified is sold by Worcestershire County Council at a future date, the proceeds are paid to the DfE for costs incurred in the expansion of Pershore High School;**
- (e) If a coordinated collective solution can be agreed, delegated to the Cabinet Member for Education, the decision to publish the statutory proposals for Abbey Park First and Middle School to change age ranges to a Primary School; and**
- (f) Noted the critical milestones set out in paragraph 59 for changes from September 2025 at the earliest, subject to funding for Pershore High School from the Department for Education.**

2127 Treasury Management Update

The Leader presented the Treasury Management update to Cabinet, which was presented to the meeting to assure members that he and the Chief Financial Officer were keeping the situation under review.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- (a) noted this report, recognising that the Council is operating within its approved Treasury Management Strategy; and**
- (b) endorsed the Cabinet Member’s conclusions that the Treasury Management activities continue to be cost effective.**

The meeting ended at 11.25 am

Chairman