

COUNCIL
12 SEPTEMBER 2019**REPORT OF CABINET - SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN**

Adult Services – Care and Support Services – Direction of Travel

1. An Adult Services Strategy has been developed which sets out the Adult Services vision and the role the Council has in the market. All current services have been reviewed and Cabinet approved the Strategy for the direct provision of services by the Council's Care and Support Services, which sets out the Council's role in the market.
2. Investment in Howbury House in Malvern has allowed the home to care for people who would otherwise have needed to be placed in other more expensive care home placements. The feasibility of developing a high-needs dementia unit within Howbury House is also being explored but achieving this change would require a capital investment of £206k over the next 5 years. Cabinet noted therefore that future capital resources are likely to be required over the medium-term to fund the desirable works.
3. In order to deliver its vision of promoting independence for adults the Council will expand its current reablement service so that it responds to people in the community as well as those discharged from the Acute hospitals. The estimated cost of the expanded service would be £740k per annum and modelling has shown projected net savings of £1.0m per annum from base budget when fully established from April 2020. This proposed service is currently the subject of a bid for Business Rates Pilot Funding to fund the service for an initial 12-month period. Cabinet approved in principle the creation of a community re-ablement service and delegated the final decision to the Director in consultation with the Cabinet Member.

Libraries Re- modelling

4. Considerable progress has been made over recent years in modernising Worcestershire's library services and ensuring value for money. It is proposed that a Libraries Strategy should be developed following a strategic review and needs assessment process. The Strategy would be able to demonstrate that any proposal to fundamentally change the service delivery model would continue to secure the delivery of a comprehensive and efficient service. A full needs assessment had been undertaken and a formal public consultation was held.
5. The Council was also successful in its application for a peer review through the Arts Council England and Local Government Association partnership. The review concluded that the Council should build on the existing needs assessment and consultation feedback and invest more time in developing and setting out a vision for the future of libraries in a new library strategy which can be delivered within the current financial envelope and also continue to build on more innovative service solutions.

6. Cabinet noted the feedback and findings from the public consultation and peer review and agreed a Worcestershire Libraries Strategy should be developed to set out the longer-term vision for a service across Worcestershire which continues to meet the statutory duty and used to inform the decisions around change and resource allocation for front-line library provision from 2020/21.

7. Cabinet were also informed that savings in 2019/20, which are greater than agreed in the original plan, have been delivered with measures that do not directly impact frontline library service provision. In addition, Worcester City Council have agreed to contribute towards the running costs (£157,000) of both St John's and Warndon libraries. The 2018/19 savings were met in full and the plan for 2019/20 is to achieve £395k savings which comprises the MTFP savings target of £145k plus £250k of early delivery of the 2020/21 target. This leaves £205k to be delivered in 2020/21 which will be identified through the development and implementation of the Libraries Strategy.

8. A further report will be received by Cabinet in Autumn 2019 to consider and approve the Libraries Strategy and implementation plan.

Recommissioning the Council's Customer Services

9. The Worcestershire Hub Shared Service (WHSS) was commissioned to Civica in May 2015 on an 8.5 year contract. The current total annual contract price is £1.044m with Worcestershire County Council contributing £716k per annum.

10. Following the exit of Malvern Hills District Council from the contract on 28 February 2019 and pending future exit of Worcester City Council alongside the reduction in telephony and face to face contacts, it was an appropriate time to review the County Council's own position regarding the contract with Civica and whether it still represents value for money for the Council.

11. The technology landscape within the Council has evolved since the service was commissioned and modern and more cost-effective systems mean the Council should review this arrangement. There are also currently several other externally facing contact centres within the Council which were not within the original scope of the contract.

12. Cabinet has therefore agreed to the recommendation to recommission the Council's Customer Services. This involves giving Civica 12 months' notice of cancellation, negotiating the transformation cost recovery payment required of c£0.7m and creating a new Customer Services Strategy that is aligned with the Organisational Redesign Programme. The Council's Commissioning Cycle would then be followed to recommission the service.

Balanced Scorecard and Corporate Risk Update – Quarter 4

13. The Cabinet has received the latest update of the Corporate Balanced Scorecard for Quarter Four 2018/19. Currently there are 61 indicators reported in the Scorecard. 24 of these are rated 'green' representing good performance or progress. The staff sickness rate was highlighted as demonstrating positive performance progress. 7 Performance indicators were currently assessed as red, with 6 having a

performance update in Quarter Four 2018/19. Actions were being taken to improve their performance. 11 of the remaining indicators are rated amber, the rest (19) were unrated (grey) at Quarter Four.

14. The Corporate Risk Register provides a mechanism for collating and reporting risks that could affect the delivery of corporate objectives. The Cabinet has considered an overview of risks identified at the end of Quarter Four 2018/19. There are 127 individual risks entered in the Risk Register. The register had been reviewed significantly since Quarter 2 and out of date or duplicate risks have been removed. 14 risks are identified as high/'red' risks. The Cabinet has noted the latest update of the Corporate Risk Register including actions to mitigate the risk areas that are rated 'red'.

Quality of Utility Works on the Public Highway – Notice of Motion

15. Following a Notice of Motion at Council on 14 February 2019, Cabinet has noted the information provided by the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways, setting out how the Council can ensure that statutory undertakers, utility companies and 3rd parties not meeting the required standards when undertaking works on the highway are held to financial account and scrutiny. The Council has a duty to co-ordinate all works and the right to protect the highway infrastructure it manages and maintains. The works promoter is responsible for carrying out the works safely and expeditiously to minimise impact.

16. The Council scrutinises applications to minimise disruption and to ensure site works are carried out safely and to an adequate standard. The utility companies are held to account for all works to the public highway and are responsible for rectifying all noted defects. Financial penalties are imposed with fixed penalty notices for breaching permit conditions, defect charges and overrun charges. Works are stopped for dangerous activity and rectification notifications are issued. Improvement meetings are held regularly with all utilities to improve performance.

17. In May 2019 the Permit Scheme to collect a fee for each permit for works was modified to enable greater resource. There were now additional staff to monitor site works. This resource will be reactive to monitor emergency works. In future a lane rental scheme may be introduced for utility companies on strategic town centre streets. This will introduce a daily fee for road space occupation which will incentivise utility companies to pursue detailed works scheduling and make better emergency arrangements to minimise road space occupation. Congestion on the network will then be further reduced due to shorter works periods. Cabinet has noted the information in response to the Notice of Motion and endorsed the approach to holding those undertaking utility works on the highway to financial account and scrutiny.

Mr S E Geraghty
Chairman

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) 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 11 July 2019.