

## **COUNCIL**

### **9 NOVEMBER 2023**

## **REPORT OF CABINET - SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN**

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### **Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2021-22**

1. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 places a responsibility on the three safeguarding partners in each local authority area, these being the local authority, the local integrated care board and the chief officer of police, to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area. Within Worcestershire, the three safeguarding partners are supported in fulfilling this responsibility by the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP).
2. The three safeguarding partners are also required to publish a report at least once in every 12-month period detailing their progress. Stephen Eccleston, Independent Chairman of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership introduced the report and outlined the key points from the WSCP Annual Report 2021/2022; the work of the Safeguarding Partnership; the work of the various Partnership sub-groups including the GET SAFE Partnership Group, the Quality Assurance Practice and Procedures Group, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) Group; the Education Head Teachers Safeguarding Steering Group; and the funding arrangements.
3. Cabinet has received the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2021/2. Cabinet has noted the progress of the work of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

### **Worcestershire Strategy for Children and Young People with SEND 2023-2026**

4. Local Authorities and partners must have regard to the SEND Code of Practice (January 2015) which provides statutory guidance on duties, responsibilities, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations. It relates to children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabled children and young people up to the age of twenty-five.
5. The purpose of Worcestershire's SEND Strategy is to deliver the local partners' statutory duties by setting out a case for change and improvement. This refreshed Strategy has been co-produced with the SEND and All Age Disability Partnership Board including the Parent Carer Forum. Workshops were also held with school children to inform the priorities.
6. Six Strategic Priorities were identified as part of the development of the latest SEND Strategy, and they are:
  - i. Identification and assessment of SEND is timely and effective;
  - ii. There is sufficient and effective SEND provision;

- iii. There is awareness and understanding of SEND within local communities;
- iv. Outcomes for young people with SEND are improved as a result of effective planning, preparation for adulthood and better coordination of service delivery to ensure positive transitions as they progress through their education;
- v. Children and young people (CYP) with autism achieve positive outcomes and the support required to enable this is in place; and
- vi. Emotional health and wellbeing is actively promoted for CYP with SEND and their families and effective targeted and specialist support is available for those CYP at risk of or experiencing difficulties.

7. These priorities form part of a plan to drive a programme of work that will be overseen by representatives of the accountable bodies through the SEND and All Age Disability Partnership Board, reporting to Children and Young People's Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board. Cabinet has approved the Worcestershire Strategy for Children and Young People with SEND 2023-2026.

### **Resources report - Revenue Budget Monitoring Month 4 (31 July) 2023/24**

8. The County Council's net budget of £401 million was set by Full Council in February 2023. The overall outturn forecast at Period 4 is for a net forecast overspend of £18.246 million at the end of the financial year after the use of budgeted risk reserves.

9. At budget setting, £7 million was identified as likely to be required from reserves to mitigate against 2023/24 pressures. This comprised £2 million risk for Children's Social Care placements and £5 million risk for non-delivery of savings. Additional business rates income of £4.1 million is also forecast to be received this financial year. Utilising these mitigations would leave a net forecast overspend of £18.246 million.

10. The majority of the overspend forecast is based on demand being faced within Adults and Children's social care as well as Home to School Transport and is a situation that will be subject to change as we progress through the financial year. Demand management and savings opportunities are being implemented within People Services and WCF; however co-ordinated cross council action is required to support the closure of the forecasted financial gap. Cabinet has noted the forecast year end position as at 31 July 2023.

11. The Council set its budget for 2023/24 in February 2023, within it there were £22.4 million of savings targets which have been applied to directorate budgets. £1.6 million of these proposals are relating to one-off use of grants, including Public Health, and a further £1.5 million of the savings are also one-off, giving a recurrent pressure from 2024/25 of £3.1 million to be mitigated. Cabinet has noted the current progress regarding savings plans approved by Council in February 2023.

12. The Director of Public Health has reviewed the 3-year plan for the use of the Public Health Reserve, the opening balance for 2023/24 being £9.1 million. Of this £5.2 million is expected to be utilised in year. Cabinet has noted the current plan for use of the Public Health Reserve. Cabinet has approved the use of reserves and noted the forecast year end position on reserves. Cabinet has noted the report on the Quarter 1 position relating to Treasury Management.

## **The Healthy Worcestershire Programme**

13. Cabinet has agreed the termination of funding for the current Lifestyle Service, PLUS Service, and Strong and Steady Service at the end of March 2024, enabling these budgets to be pooled to create a more integrated health improvement service commencing in April 2024.

14. Cabinet has authorised the Director of Public Health to procure a new service that provides an integrated health improvement programme aimed at enabling adults to stay active, socially connected, and safe from crime as they get older. Weekly sessions will be run in local venues within the heart of communities. They will offer strength and balance programmes, healthy lifestyle advice, community safety information and links to a wide range of other health promoting activities in the local community. The aim will be to provide a positive experience for residents which enables them to achieve the best physical, mental, and social wellbeing possible.

15. Cabinet has authorised the Director of Public Health to enter into and execute, under seal as may be required, any contracts or ancillary documentation in relation to the award of the contract.

## **Shrub Hill Towns Fund Funding Agreement**

16. Worcestershire County Council purchased the Shrub Hill Industrial Estate (SHIE) on 30 November 2020. In January 2021 Worcester City Council submitted a Worcester Town Investment Plan (TIP) for £27.8m of funding across six projects. This included an ask of £10.5m for Shrub Hill Regeneration, to support the development of a new high-quality mixed-use quarter for the city. On 8 June, the City Council received an offer of £19.6m to support all or any of the submitted projects.

17. Funded through Towns Fund, Worcestershire County Council commissioned a condition survey and feasibility of refurbishing Isaac Maddox House into an Enterprise Centre. Isaac Maddox House requires significant work undertaking to bring it up to compliance with Building Regulations and to make it attractive to potential occupiers.

18. Worcester City Council presented a Shrub Hill Regeneration Full Business Case to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), following approval from Policy and Resources Committee on 24 May 2022, with a capital allocation of £9,425,000. It is proposed that Worcestershire County Council, as owner of Isaac Maddox House and Highways Authority, will deliver the majority of the capital works to both of the interventions identified within the Full Business Case. The Full Business Case identifies the key interventions as Public Realm Enhancements, and an Enterprise Centre (Isaac Maddox House).

19. Cabinet has noted the allocation of Towns Fund monies by Worcester City Council to the redevelopment of Isaac Maddox House and the creation of a new public realm connection to the City Centre.

20. Cabinet has authorised the Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills to enter into the proposed Funding Agreement to deliver the Towns Fund Shrub Hill projects. Cabinet has authorised the Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure to obtain tenders for the works. Cabinet has authorised the Strategic

Director for Economy and Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills to enter into contracts for the construction of the works.

## **Treasury Management Mid-Year Update to 31 August 2023**

21. Cabinet has received and noted a Treasury Management mid-year report which covers the period to 31 August 2023 in order to ensure that it receives timely updates and to ensure compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code). The report includes a mid-year update on: An economic financial year to date update; a review of the Council's investment portfolio; a review of the Council's current borrowing strategy; and a review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits. Cabinet has endorsed the conclusions that the Treasury Management activities continue to be cost effective.

## **Worcestershire County Museum**

22. The County Museum's current 60-year leases for the museum at Hartlebury Castle ends in February 2026. The two leases have Security of Tenure under Part II of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954. The landlord is Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust with whom the Council collaborates to open the site to the public as a major visitor destination for Worcestershire.

23. The vision for the County Museum's future is for space and programmes of work that attract earned income, grant funding and commissioning from primary care networks and partners that will support the Council to improve health outcomes for Worcestershire residents.

24. Under the Joint Museums Service terms of reference, the Joint Museums Committee consider the operation of an effective museum service and recommend a preferred option on any significant business model changes to Cabinet. They reviewed four possible options which included relocating to County Hall, Worcester, a new build alongside the Countryside Centre at Worcester Woods, and a mothball option. Cabinet has approved the preferred option (option A) recommended by the Joint Museums Committee, which was to remain at Hartlebury Castle, North wing, with an administration block and a new build Transport Gallery.

25. Cabinet has authorised the Strategic Director of People in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities to implement the approved option, including the negotiation of a new management agreement and the submission of a development phase application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Cabinet has authorised the Director of Commercial and Change to negotiate and implement a new lease.

## **Contact Points**

### Specific Contact Points for this report

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## **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and background papers for the meetings of the Cabinet held on 28 September 2023 and 26 October 2023:

[Agenda for Cabinet on Thursday, 28th September, 2023, 10.00 am - Worcestershire County Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

[Agenda for Cabinet on Thursday, 26th October, 2023, 10.00 am - Worcestershire County Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)