

MINUTES of the meeting of Cabinet held at Council Chamber, The Shire Hall, St Peter's Square, Hereford, HR1 2HX on Thursday 14 April 2016 at 10.30 am

Present: Councillor AW Johnson (Chairman)
Councillor PM Morgan (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors JG Lester, GJ Powell, PD Price, P Rone and DG Harlow

Cabinet support members in attendance Councillors JA Hyde and NE Shaw

Group leaders in attendance Councillors JM Bartlett, TM James, RI Matthews and AJW Powers

Scrutiny chairmen in attendance Councillors WLS Bowen and PA Andrews

Other councillors in attendance: Councillors CR Butler, ACR Chappell, PE Crockett, J Hardwick and EJ Swinglehurst

Officers in attendance: A Neill, J Davidson, G Hughes, P Robinson and C Ward

148. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor H Bramer.

149. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

150. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 March be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

151. HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT SERVICE - SHYPP CONTRACT (SUPPORTED HOUSING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE PROJECT)

The cabinet member health and wellbeing presented a report to confirm the delivery arrangements for the young persons' housing related support services contract, currently delivered by SHYPP (Supported Housing for Young Persons Project), part of the West Mercia Housing Group. The report had been called in by the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee which had recommended that the counter proposals from SHYPP be properly considered and that cabinet determine whether, in the light of these proposals, they wished to propose any amendments to their previous recommendations.

In response to questions from cabinet members, the following points were made:

That the senior management of SHYPP had accepted the transitional funding of £78,331 for 2016/17. A full case audit of service users in the 20 units of accommodation would be carried out between April and August 2016 in order to establish the level of need and

future delivery model. Once this audit had been undertaken a decision on how to proceed would be brought back to cabinet

Resolved:

That having reviewed the proposal (appendix 2) submitted by SHYPP, and having regard to the reasons (set out at paragraphs 10 and 11 of the report below) for implementing an approach which differs from that proposal, the original decision be confirmed as

- (a) the accommodation based support element of the contract is remodelled with a proportion of the service financed through exempt rents to maintain the existing service level from 1 April 2016;**
- (b) a three month transitional period is allowed from 1 April to 30 June 2016 to support the financial change to the accommodation based support element;**
- (c) a 12 month transitional period is allowed from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 to support the de-commissioning of the floating support element; and**
- (d) funding of £78,331 be made available to support the transition periods in recommendations b) and c) above.**

152. CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN 2016/2017

The cabinet member economy & corporate services presented a report on the corporate delivery plan 2016/17. He reported that the corporate plan had been approved by cabinet on the 5 February, and said that this document represented the action plan to deliver the plan in 2016/17. The following points were made in reply to members in attendance:

- That the baseline figures were in a data book that supported the headline figures outlined in the quarterly report scorecard to cabinet.
- That the end of year progress report would be presented to cabinet on the 16 June.
- The cabinet member (health and wellbeing) said that the statistics in objective 3 of priority 2 were provided by the Department of Health and were designed to highlight the potential areas of need in the county and where resources should be spent. The figures were not meant to be compared with similar statistics provided by the Department for neighbouring counties. It was noted that mental health was the main priority for the health and wellbeing strategy for the county.

The Chief Executive replied to a further question concerning objective 7 of priority 4 of the document, and said that recruitment and retention was regularly discussed within the council, and a personal performance development plan was being introduced for all staff which would look beyond objectives for each employee and toward the kind of organisation that staff would like the council to become.

Resolved: that the 2016/17 corporate delivery plan be approved.

153. APPROVAL OF SMALLHOLDINGS DISPOSAL PLAN

Cabinet received a report on the smallholdings disposal plan. The Leader reported that cabinet was asked to consider the appointment of an Agent who would be responsible for developing recommendations concerning the structure and timing of the smallholding disposals policy. The agents would then be responsible for marketing the estate and implementing the disposals programme agreed by cabinet.

In reply to questions from cabinet members, the following points were made:

- That there had been no change in the council's smallholding policy since it had been approved on 3 December 2015. The new policy had included the decision to undertake a structured disposal of the smallholding estate and the commissioning of independent professional advice to ensure that best value was obtained for the tax payer
- That the agent's report would address areas outlined in paragraph 13 of the report: to maximise financial return; support the welfare of the council's tenants; support the local economy (including the agricultural sector); minimise timescales and maximise community benefits. It would be appropriate to consider timescales for individual tenants at this juncture.
- That the risk of a legal challenge to the appointment of a professional advisor was minimal as they would be appointed via the ESPO 2700 framework in accordance with the public procurement regulations.
- That framework agreements were widely used by the council for other property contracts.

Concern was expressed over the decision to issue notices to quit to several tenants, and a member in stated that he had been informed that the Local Government Ombudsman had agreed to investigate the process of serving the notices as a case of maladministration. It was stated that the monitoring officer had not received any communication from the ombudsman in this matter and and no claim for judicial review had been receivedhad been received.

The cabinet member (Infrastructure) pointed out that farm business tenancies were agree on a rolling basis, and it was usual practice that notices to quit were served toward the end of a given contract term.

Resolved:

That:

- (a) the procurement of an agent to provide professional services in connection with the disposal be undertaken through ESPO 2700 framework; and**
- (b) the identified sites at paragraph 14 be excluded from the disposal.**

154. ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY CLASSROOMS AT MARLBROOK SCHOOL

The cabinet member young people & children's wellbeing presented a report on the provision of temporary classrooms at Marlbrook School. He said that the school was a high performing popular community school and there had been an increase in demand for places in the last six years in reception year (YR) in excess of 90. The provision of temporary classrooms was in line with the school capital investment strategy and the best value option has estimated the cost to be £120k with an additional contingency of £20k.

In response to questions from cabinet members, the following points were made:

- That of the total costs, the school would provide £40k whilst the council would provide the balance of £80k.

- That the intake to the school was a reflection of parental choice, and that additional building would mean that the way people travelled to the school would be a key consideration.
- That traffic issues would be taken into consideration as part of the planning process.

Resolved: That subject to securing planning consent, approval be given to provide an additional temporary classroom at Marlbrook school for a period of two years from September 2016 at a total cost of up to £140k

155. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

The cabinet member (infrastructure) presented a report on the draft local transport plan (LTP) which covered the period 2016-31 and was aligned to that covered by the core strategy. This acknowledged the close linkage between the long term land use proposals set out in the adopted local plan and the supporting transport improvements required to enable that development. The linkages were also relevant to supporting the adopted health and wellbeing strategy and the emerging economic masterplan. The report before cabinet summarised both the main elements of the LTP and changes to the LTP document.

The following comments were made by members in attendance:

That consideration be given to further borrowing in order to allow for investment in the existing road network.

The cabinet member (infrastructure) said that Balfour Beatty were aware of the problems associated with potholes in the county and addressed issues effectively. The LTP would act as an aid to raising additional funds to address these issues, and the council was very effective at raising funds through the bidding process.

A member in attendance said that he would reserve his comments on the LTP for Council, and hoped that the cabinet member had noted his submission as part of the consultation process.

Resolved: That the draft local transport plan (LTP) at appendix 1 and 2 of this report be recommended to Council for adoption

The meeting ended at 12.04 pm

CHAIRMAN