

**MINUTES of the meeting of Cabinet held at Council Chamber, The Shire Hall, St Peter's Square, Hereford, HR1 2HX on Thursday 16 June 2016 at 2.00 pm**

**Present:** Councillor PM Morgan (Deputy Leader in the Chair)

Councillors H Bramer, DG Harlow, JG Lester, PD Price and P Rone

Cabinet support members in attendance Councillors NE Shaw and EJ Swinglehurst

Group leaders in attendance Councillors JM Bartlett and RI Matthews

Scrutiny chairmen in attendance Councillors PA Andrews and WLS Bowen

Other councillors in attendance: Councillors EPJ Harvey

Officers in attendance: Alistair Neill, Jo Davidson, Richard Gabb, Geoff Hughes, Mairead Lane, Josie Rushgrove, Martin Samuels and Claire Ward.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor AW Johnson.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**3. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**4. HEREFORD RELIEF ROAD (HEREFORD BYPASS)**

The cabinet member, infrastructure, presented the report on the Hereford relief road (Hereford bypass).

He reported that the decision made on the 6<sup>th</sup> June at the planning committee to approve the route of the southern link road had not been called in by the Minister of State.

During his presentation he highlighted a number of areas, including that:

- The relief road was a key infrastructure project that was necessary to drive the economic growth of Hereford and the region and had been identified as a priority within the LTP, the Core Strategy and the Marches Strategic Economic Plan. It had also been a key theme within the emerging economic masterplan for Herefordshire.
- The Core Strategy had been adopted in October 2015 and committed the council (in policy SS3) to work with developers and stakeholders to ensure the timely development of strategic proposals and key infrastructure requirements.

- The preferred option for Hereford had been published for consultation in September 2010 and included a western bypass with a package of sustainable transport measures. The supporting analysis had concluded that whilst these measures improved the performance of the network, it was only in combination with a bypass that they provided the network capacity necessary to support growth. The western alignment had been preferred due to the likely significant impacts to the east on the River Lugg Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and the Lugg Meadows SSSI.
- A Hereford bypass would increase traffic capacity to allow the city to grow with more homes and jobs and enable full delivery of Herefordshire's Core Strategy housing and employment allocations, including those at the Hereford Enterprise Zone and the Three Elms employment site.

In reply to questions from members, he went on to say that:

- One of the substantial risks in timetable for the project had been overcome as the southern link road had been approved by the planning committee although it was still open to a possible judicial review. It was important that target dates should be met within the overall timetable.
- Traffic monitoring was in place on all roads in and around the city in order to provide the necessary data to support the business case for the relief road. The council was in dialogue with Highways England and the government regarding the project, and it was important that it be pushed forward in order to ensure that these partners were confident that progress was being made.

The Leader of the Independent Group said that there were alternative routes, and that a road to the east would make more sense from the point of view of serving the Enterprise Zone.

In reply to a member's question concerning funding to be provided by the council to develop the relief road proposals, he said that the required funding would be forthcoming. It was noted that the services of WSP / Parsons Brinckerhoff consultants are provided through the Council's contract with Balfour Beatty Living Places which was the subject of a full procurement process a few years ago and there is no need to carry out a separate procurement process for this project.

**Resolved:**

**That:**

- (a) funding of £600k be approved to support works necessary to inform route selection; and**
- (b) authority be delegated to the assistant director environment and place to take all operational actions necessary to progress the Hereford bypass to route selection within the resources (including external funding) available.**

## **5. END OF YEAR CORPORATE BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE REPORT 2015/16**

Cabinet received the end of year corporate budget and performance report 2015/16.

The cabinet member, health and wellbeing, reported that there was evidence of significant improvement against targets in the area of adult social care. Whilst the client budget was still overspent and work was still required to deliver improvement in the directorate, there was a need to address the culture across the whole health system. As

an example of this, she drew members' attention to the work being undertaken in the development of community connections, bringing the voluntary, professional and statutory services together, as had been achieved in the Golden Valley Supportive Communities Project and the Leominster Community Connections.

The cabinet member, children's wellbeing, said that there had been an overspend in children's wellbeing, but that some of the reasons for this were obvious as, for example, the number of looked after children stood at an all-time high for the county of over 300. Work was underway to ameliorate the situation.

He went on to say that staff retention was of central importance to the directorate, and the use of agency social workers had been reduced so that 74% of social work staff were now full time. This allowed both for cost savings and for a greater robustness in the service that was delivered.

The cabinet member, economy & corporate services said that there had been a reduction in residual household waste sent to landfill and that kerbside recycling continued to improve.

Other successes included the closure of two legal cases in 2015/16 in favour of the council. Absence in the directorate had been reduced to 8.45%

In the ensuing discussion, the following areas were highlighted:

- That in the area of social care, good care was often the cheaper option that helped to ensure that service users remained independent for as long as possible.
- That there were plans to improve the positioning of Wellbeing Information and Signposting for Herefordshire (WISH) in order to ensure that greater use was made of the service, and that this may mean that it would be moved in to the library, once the building had been refurbished.
- That care should be taken not to overburden the relatively small number of volunteers that the council was increasingly relying on to deliver services.
- That the council was on track to meet its target regarding work with troubled families. It was obliged to identify 600 families, and there were currently 426 known to the service. This was a priority for the council, and work was being undertaken with adult's wellbeing in order to ensure that alternative accommodation was available for older children who were not in a position to stay at home.
- That, in comparison with its neighbours, the council was one of the highest spending authorities in the area of mental health care for working age adults and those over 65.

In reply to a question from a member regarding the medium term financial strategy report, the head of corporate finance said that the capital receipts had been reserved and that the investment in the enterprise zone would generate capital rents of £60m over the term of the strategic plan. A return of £7m was expected in 2016-17. She added that she would provide a note to all members in order to address concerns expressed over the discrepancy in Appendix B between the report in February and the capital outturn for 2015-16. A note would be added to the report in the future in order to make it easier to interpret.

The cabinet member, economy & corporate services thanked the Chairman of general overview and scrutiny committee for his question, and said that he would give the

mineral and waste policy consideration as soon as possible and that he would get back to him in writing.

In reply to a question regarding sickness levels in the adults wellbeing directorate, it was noted that whilst it was almost twice as high as in the economy, communities & corporate directorate that this was a result of the nature of the work in adult social care. Infections was higher amongst service users, and staff were encouraged to take additional sick leave in order to help ensure that infections were not spread to the elderly service users.

**Resolved:**

**That**

- (a) the final outturn for 2015/16 be noted;**
- (b) the movements in reserves set out at paragraphs 66-68 be approved;**
- (c) debts written off in the period be noted;**
- (d) the treasury management outturn report be recommended to Council for approval; and**
- (e) performance for 2015/16 be considered.**

## **6. DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP PROJECT**

Cabinet received a report to agree a commissioning model for the procurement of a developer to work with the council to deliver the development of sites in council ownership. The cabinet member, contract and assets, said that the partnership model would allow the council to establish a long term strategic partnership with a market leading developer.

In reply to question from a member, the cabinet member went on to say that an alternative option would be to set up a joint venture partnership of one form or another, and that the appendix to the report outlined five different models that could be utilised. Many of the aspects and benefits of a joint venture company were included in the partnership programme.

In reply to a question from a member in attendance, the cabinet member added that the project sought to identify a partner who would provide a focus on projects that could be pump-primed using receipts from the county farm sales.

A member said that she had a great deal of experience setting up similar partnerships in other sectors, and said that care should be taken when setting up such partnerships.

A member suggested that the process should include an assessment of the amount of business that would be placed in the county, rather than nationally. He suggested that key performance indicators should be developed against all social values.

It was noted that there were a few areas of the Old Market Development that could not be undertaken by firms within the county, but that the firms that had taken on the work had engaged apprenticeships as part of these schemes.

**Resolved:**

**That**

- (a) the council commission a developer to progress the development of**

**suitable sites in its ownership including the capability to progress development funding and provision of services and to be open for use with other collaboration partners as required;**

- (b) an EU compliant procurement (using the competitive dialogue process) be undertaken as outlined at Appendix 4, to appoint a developer; and**
- (c) the use of the sites at Station Approach and Merton Meadow (South) as evaluation case studies during the procurement be approved.**

The meeting ended at 3.35

**CHAIRMAN**