

MINUTES of the meeting of Cabinet held at The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Thursday 21 February 2013 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor JG Jarvis (Chairman)

Councillors: H Bramer, RB Hamilton, AW Johnson, PM Morgan, GJ Powell and PD Price

In attendance: Councillors AM Atkinson, JA Hyde, NP Nenadich, P Rone, MAF Hubbard, RI Matthews and A Seldon

Officers:

65. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor RJ Phillips, Cabinet Member Enterprise and Culture.

66. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

67. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

68. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2012/13

The Cabinet Member Financial Management presented the report of the Chief Officer Finance and Commercial and made the following points to Cabinet.

- The report indicates the financial position as at end of December 2012, which includes revenue, capital and treasury management positions.
- The projected financial position at year end is for an overspend of £3.8m. This is a slight increase on last month and should an overspend continue it would be funded through general fund balances.
- Main area of pressure is Adult Services. In addition though there had been pressure caused due to adverse weather conditions creating an additional £120k spend.
- It is anticipated there will be a spend of £44m on capital schemes in 2012/13, which will be largely be funded by grants and contributions from central government as well as capital receipts and prudential borrowing.
- The treasury management strategy also projects an underspend of £710k through delayed borrowing, capitalisation on interest and using short term arrangements with other local authorities.

The following points were made in discussion:

- In response to a question on West Mercia Supplies (WMS), Cabinet was advised that the profit sharing figures related to the financial year 2011/12 and that subsequent to

this WMS had been sold and therefore there would be no annual profit sharing. It was noted that we had received a capital receipt.

- In response to a question on PCT debt, the director advised that a further meeting with the PCT was required to resolve the matter.
- In response to a question on the Amey contract and the related risks, the director advised it was a low risk however, it was unlikely the matter would be resolved within this financial year.
- In referring to page 12 point 9 of the report Cabinet was asked if the remaining £1.471m of the projected outturn was still achievable. It was felt that this would be the case.

RESOLVED

THAT:

- a) the report and the forecast position be noted;**
- b) the Leadership team continue to deliver a further level of savings for 2012/13 in order to minimise any impact on reserves at year end; and**
- c) the treasury management report at Appendix C to the report be noted.**

69. MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING IN HEREFORDSHIRE: CONTEXT, PRIORITIES AND FOCUS OF HEREFORDSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD AND HEREFORDSHIRE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD

Mr Andy Churcher, Business Manager for both the Adult and Children Safeguarding Boards, attended Cabinet in the place of Mr McCallum, Independent Chairman of the Safeguarding Boards. He stated that the report outlined the current priorities of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board and that of the Adults Board taking into account the recommendations following the Ofsted Inspection.

The following comments were made in discussion:

- In response to a question on raising awareness and understanding in the general population with regards to safeguarding Cabinet was advised that a campaign was launched at the beginning of the year and staff were also working with the communications department.
- In response to how the views of different organisations such as youth voluntary groups, nurseries and staff were taken into account Cabinet was informed that forums had been developed to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and understanding. In addition lay members were on the boards representing residents and users and staff surveys were being developed for feedback.
- The director advised that children safeguarding was developing slightly more quickly than that of adults which was because not as full a range of partners were engaged in the process as would be liked, however, measures were being taken to improve this.
- Cabinet noted that the next Ofsted Inspection would be a multi-agency inspection and not just the Council.
- In explaining how board members addressed issues for the board and not just for the organisation the member represented, the director advised that the Children's Trust held the board to account and vice versa, as set out by the government.

- In acknowledging the increase in knowledge and awareness amongst the public it was noted that the increased awareness inevitably brought about more alerts being raised.

RESOLVED

THAT:

- a) the priorities, focus and context of safeguarding outlined in the reports and the assurance that they provide be noted; and**
- b) the comments made at Cabinet to the Boards about their future work programmes be noted.**

70. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

The Cabinet Member Education and Infrastructure presented the report and made the following comments:

- The report before Cabinet was the same as the one that went to General Overview and Scrutiny (GO&S) and that the comments of GO&S would be reflected in the report to Council.
- That the meeting of July 2012 Cabinet had agreed that the Local Transport Plan and the Local Development Framework would be dealt with separately.
- A simplified plan providing greater clarity on actions and delivery was proposed. The key point was to reduce congestion in Hereford City and make it an easier place to visit.
- From 1 April public health would be the responsibility of Council and it was the wish of Cabinet to encourage walking and cycling. It was also intended to introduce a 20 mph limit in the historic centre, replace signage and concentrate on major events in the city with the aim of having the centre traffic free for shoppers.

The following comments were made in discussion with Members:

- Concern was raised for low income families and the cost of car parking.
- Cabinet was informed of the idea for areas to adopt park and share points to help reduce the amount of vehicles coming into the City centre.
- It was felt the LTP was the beginning of a very good strategy, but effort must be put into improving the walking routes.
- The Cabinet Member, Environment, Planning and Housing welcomed the report, how it would work in conjunction with the LDF and the development of park and share, cycle routes and the possibility of bicycles being taken onto buses.

RESOLVED: That the Local Transport Plan (LTP) for 2013/14 to 2014/15 be approved by Cabinet and the recommendations of the General Overview and Scrutiny Committee be incorporated into the final report for adoption by Council.

71. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK/COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

This item was withdrawn and will be dealt with at the meeting of Cabinet on 27 February.

72. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT PERIOD TO END DECEMBER 2012

The Cabinet Member, Corporate Services presented the report of the Assistant Director People, Policy and Partnerships. The Cabinet Member made the following introductory comments:

- There will be one further outturn report for the Joint Corporate Plan in May.
- The March Cabinet meeting will consider the Delivery Plan for the new Corporate Plan effective from April 2013.
- The majority of projects in the Corporate Delivery Plan are being delivered to schedule and where data is available it indicates a positive direction of travel.

In discussion the following comments were made about specific areas of performance:

- The digital channels programme has been stabilised and there is a clear understanding of what needs to be delivered for the end of the financial year.
- The internal auditors report for treasury management has given the authority the highest rating of 'substantial' assurance.
- Call centre abandonment rates were slightly worse than last year, however, call volume is up 31%. This mainly related to calls about bad weather and flooding issues.
- There has been an increase in agency staff covering permanent posts due to absence or vacancy. Directors would continue to assess the business requirements for agency staff.
- The Cabinet Member Education and Infrastructure informed Cabinet that all Members would be invited to the launch of Broadband. In response to a comment on digital broadband the Cabinet Member advised that it was good as long as you had access, which not everyone had.
- Cabinet was advised that the application to government for funding for the link road had been submitted.
- In referring to page 10 of the report on free schools the Cabinet Member Education and Infrastructure stated he felt there was a conflict of interest for the Department of Education and the authority. He added the authority had good relations with all schools in the county, however, Herefordshire was not an area in the country where there was a demand for new schools, and it was questioned whether the free school was financially sustainable. Cabinet felt there should be a demonstrable demand for the free school. It was added that the point had not yet been reached when consultation needed to be carried out, however, it should be noted there was still 1,000 spare school places in the county.
- In referring to the Public Health Care Transition the Cabinet Member Health and Wellbeing advised that some further work was needed on the transfer of contracts from the PCT to the Council which had been identified as a risk in the transition report. Work would continue on the transfer and robust action would be taken to address concerns.

RESOLVED: That performance for the period to end of December 2012 be noted.

The meeting ended at 3.40 pm

CHAIRMAN