

MINUTES of the meeting of Cabinet held at The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Thursday 25 July 2013 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor AW Johnson (Chairman)

Councillors: H Bramer, RB Hamilton, JW Millar, PM Morgan, GJ Powell and PD Price

In attendance: Councillors JA Hyde, LO Barnett, WLS Bowen, MAF Hubbard, TM James, A Seldon, EPJ Harvey, JLV Kenyon, MD Lloyd-Hayes, Anthony Powers and J Hardwick

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor RJ Phillips and Councillor JG Jarvis. Councillor SJ Robertson was in attendance on behalf of Councillor Jarvis.

17. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that

- (a) the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the addition of Councillors WLS Bowen, MAF Hubbard, A Seldon, PA Andrews and JG Jarvis to the list of those attending; and**
- (b) the minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the addition of Councillors MAF Hubbard, JA Hyde, TA James, RI Matthews and A Seldon to the list of those attending.**

18. ADULT SOCIAL CARE NEXT STAGE INTEGRATION - WYE VALLEY NHS TRUST

The Cabinet Member Health and Wellbeing presented the report of the Assistant Director Adult Social Care, which outlined the Adult Social Care Next Stage Integration Project Organisational Change Model. Specifically, the report addressed:

- The proposed operational model and organisational structure for those functions currently part of the Wye Valley s75 and the subsequent headcount (full time equivalent (fte)) impact
- Interim commissioning arrangements for the Learning Disability Community Service
- Financial implications for the 2013/14 & 2014/15 Adult Social Care Revenue Budget

The Cabinet Member Health and Wellbeing made the following points in relation to the report:

- The proposal created a platform to deliver integrated care pathways in partnership with the Clinical Commissioning Group and the NHS. Whilst facing significant

financial challenges in line with other local authorities, the proposals sought to maintain appropriate services for the most vulnerable residents.

- He referred to the aims of the Adult Social Care Business Plan, which was the basis for the proposed changes. The new system would support and encourage service users to take responsibility for their own wellbeing, and would move away from a model of delivered care, to a model involving customer choice, charging and early intervention.
- The Next Stage Integration Project was a key component of the Business Change Transformational Program, and would deliver approximately 10% of overall required savings.
- The report described the current model, which would cease to operate in September 2013, the proposed model, and the processes required for moving forward, including any necessary organisational changes. Under the new model, the Council would take responsibility for the social care functions of initial contact, assessment, safeguarding and review.

During the ensuing discussion the following key points were made:

- Under the current scheme there had been an average delay in assessments of approximately three months. A main aim of the NSI project was therefore to conduct assessments quickly, with the most urgent assessments happening within hours under a new “rapid assessment” scheme..
- The demand for adult social care was increasing at a time when budgets were being reduced. With this as a backdrop, therefore, the project had been devised to provide a viable service delivery, and an improved user experience with greater choice and control.
- Consultation on the project was ongoing and improving, and to ensure that comprehensive feedback was achieved, service user and care representative groups had been set up. The joint project group with the Wye Valley NHS Trust would also continue to meet. It was important to recognise that changes would not be implemented until adequate supply of care was in place, and there was certainty that any potential risks had been mitigated.
- In response to a question, the Assistant Director Adult Social Care and Commissioning confirmed that the detailed plan relating to integrated care pathways were being worked on. The initial aim had been to set the direction of travel, and next would be an agreement on the pathways in partnership with the Wye Valley NHS Trust, the Clinical Commissioning Group and the 2gether NHS Foundation Trust.

RESOLVED: that:

- (a) the achievements of the Next Stage Integration Project to date be noted;**
- (b) the termination of the section 75 agreements with WVT on 13 September 2013 and with 2gether on 31 March 2014, be agreed**
- (c) the proposed operational model and organisational structure for those functions currently part of the Wye Valley S75 and subsequent headcount impact set out in paragraph 8.20 of the report be agreed;**
- (d) the interim commissioning arrangements for the Learning Disability Community Service set out in paragraph 8.24 of the report, be agreed;**
- (e) the Director for People’s Services be authorised to implement the proposed model, organisational arrangements and undertake the commissioning of the required services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing as appropriate;**

- (f) the contract award decision process be delegated to the Director for People's Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing as appropriate; and**
- (g) the financial implications for the 2013/14 & 2014/15 Adult Social Care Revenue Budget as set out in paragraph 11 of this report, be noted.**

19. HEREFORDSHIRE COUNTY NETWORK RENEWAL (PSN)

Cabinet considered a report about the Wide Area Network service contract for Herefordshire Council and its partners, which was due for renewal in March 2014. Members noted that the contract was currently managed by Udata Infrastructure UK Ltd, which cost the Council approximately £435,000 per annum. The Council was working with Hoople to ensure that the replacement contract delivered value for money, and the Assistant Director People Policy and Partnerships outlined the various options available to the Council, namely:

- To procure network provision independently for the council and its local partners only.
- To procure WAN provision through Staffordshire County Council's Framework Agreement.
- To procure network provision collaboratively through the West Midlands collaborative PSN..

Cabinet was asked to agree the approach and delegate decision making about the preferred option to the Assistant Director People, Policy & Partnerships so that the timeline for the work could be achieved. The final decision would be made after consideration by the IM&T Board on 29th July 2013. The decision would be made in consultation with the Cabinet Member Highways and Transport, the Chief Financial Officer and the Solicitor to the Council on 31st July 2013. Cabinet further noted that, in respect of one of the proposed options (third bullet point above), the decision could only be made with the full knowledge of the proposed contract details which would not be available until after the Cabinet meeting. A decision on this option would need to be made by 8th August 2013, this being the due date when full contractual commitment was needed.

Cabinet also noted the progress made towards re-procuring a Network Connectivity contract for Herefordshire Council in time for the current contract end date of March 2014.

Members made the following principal points in discussion:

- In response to a question from the Chairman of the General Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it was confirmed that substantial savings and improved technology were possible through the various options, and that sufficiently detailed information would be available after the meeting, to enable the decision to be delegated.
- The Assistant Director People Policy and Partnerships emphasised the need to be clear and realistic about the Council's requirements when agreeing an option. She added that the main criteria for the decision were cost, and the timescales for accessing services.
- Assurance was given that network confidentiality would be a fundamental part of the new contract, and controls would be put in place to ensure that the network was PSN compliant.

RESOLVED: That the Assistant Director People, Policy & Partnership be granted delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member Highways and Transportation, Chief Financial Officer and Solicitor to the Council, to make the decision on the Wide Area Network re-procurement for Herefordshire Council.

20. MAJOR INVESTMENT IN HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

Members considered the report of the Head of Highways and Community Services, which highlighted the need for additional investment in improvement in county road conditions, and requested delegating the approval of the detailed case and programme for such investment to officers. The report identified the various options for investment over a twenty-year time period. During the ensuing discussion, the following key points were made:

- Members welcomed the proposals, stating that there was a need to achieve a programme of long-term investment with reduced maintenance costs. It was important to produce a detailed business case to ensure the correct strategic approach.
- In response to a question, the Head of Highways and Community Services confirmed that the contract modelling would take account of the assessment of carriageway and drainage conditions. The contract would seek to address the underlying problems of road condition, rather than just providing temporary solutions such as pothole-filling.
- As part of the scheme of improvements, the contractor would meet with parish councils in the autumn of 2013, to encourage engagement in the Lengthsman scheme. There would also be a seminar for Herefordshire Councillors.

RESOLVED: THAT

- (a) the Director for Places and Communities (in consultation with the Chief Officer Finance and Commercial), be authorised to develop the detailed business case for investment in improvement in road conditions.**
- (b) the detailed business case and associated programme of works shall be developed to enable works to commence from the spring of 2014; and**
- (c) the Director for Places and Communities be authorised subject to the Chief Officer Finance and Commercial being satisfied that that the business case for investment represents value for money, to proceed with the delivery of the programme of works to improve the condition of roads in accordance with the key performance parameters established in the detailed business case.**

21. WEST MERCIA YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

The Cabinet Member Children's Services presented a report in respect of the proposed annual Youth Justice Plan, which would be considered by Council at its September meeting. The Plan was jointly shared by Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and Worcestershire Local Authorities. The following points were made in discussion:

- The Plan had identified key areas for attention, such as the need to provide additional support for more vulnerable groups. One such group was looked-after children. This issue was being addressed though a sub-group of the Youth

Offending Sub-Committee, which would work in collaboration with the Safeguarding Children Board, the Probation Service and other service areas.

- A study was being undertaken in collaboration with the West Mercia Constabulary to identify why youth re-offending figures had recently shown a slight increase. This was a national, as well as a local trend. However, in terms of Herefordshire, the crime detection rate had improved and was higher than other areas, and this might explain some of the perceived increase.
- In response to a question about young people from other authorities that were temporarily in looked-after residency in Herefordshire, it was noted that there was no requirement for the other authority to pick up any costs associated with youth offending. There was, however, a responsibility on residential homes looking after young people from other authorities, to notify Herefordshire Council of the residency.

RESOLVED: that the Youth Justice Plan as prepared, be endorsed, and it be recommended within the Policy Framework, that the Plan be approved by Council at its meeting on 27 September 2013.

22. INTEGRATED CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 1

The Cabinet Member Corporate and Assets presented the Corporate Performance Report, which reviewed the Council's overall performance in terms of service delivery for the first quarter of 2013-14. She commented that there were indications of underperformance in some areas which needed to be addressed, some targets needed to be altered so that they were more relevant, and some gaps in data needed to be filled, but overall, the report provided an invaluable and detailed evaluation tool which gave a clear picture of performance.

Members identified some issues with the Council's web presence and appearance which required improvement. The Assistant Director People Policy and Partnerships also noted that the website did not function fully with some tablet devices, and said that she would look into this. She was working with website users to identify any key problem areas, and she invited Members to log into the inbuilt feedback tool on the website to report any particular issues that they had.

With reference to the data provided on economy and economic development, the Group Leader for It's Our County requested more detail in future reports, citing examples of Food, Tourism and the Edgar Street Grid, enterprise zones, and progress made with the economic implementation plan. The Leader of the Council suggested that there would be merit in submitting such requests in writing to officers in future, to enable time for a detailed response, and inclusion in the report.

RESOLVED: that the corporate performance for the first quarter 2013/14 be noted.

23. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Members considered the report of the Chief Officer Finance and Commercial, which gave the financial position for both revenue and capital budgets to 31 May 2013, and also included the treasury management position.

The following additional points were discussed:

- The budget review figures of April/May 2013 reflected a considerably improved position. Some extra saving schemes were identified at that time, although they were not included in this report because they were awaiting Cabinet Member decision. The budget movements to be actioned for the June Monitoring report were outlined in Appendix D to the report.

- The Central Government National Settlement had enabled funds to be set aside to spread the cost of items such as statutory redundancy, and the Council was awaiting the final position on this. £773 thousand had been earmarked as a revenue contingency pending the decision.
- The Cabinet Member Corporate and Assets, in response to a question, said that she would provide more information on youth assets to the Group Leader of It's Our County after the meeting.
- With reference to a figure of £3.3m in paragraph 8.13 on page 122 of the report, identified as "unused grants", the Head of Corporate Finance reported that approximately one third of this figure related to ringfenced grants for schools. A thorough review of grants carried forward at the end of the year had been undertaken, and the remaining unused grants had been identified as definite future expenditure.
- The Leader of the Council said that he would obtain more detailed information as requested by the Liberal Democrat Group Leader, in relation to projected outturn, actual savings and capital borrowing.

RESOLVED: that

- (a) the projected outturn for 2013/14 be noted;**
- (b) the budget movements in Appendix D of the report, to be actioned for the June monitoring report, be noted; and**
- (c) the earmarking of the £773k revenue contingency for redundancy costs (pending central government's clarification of funding options), be noted.**

The meeting ended at 4.42 pm

CHAIRMAN