

MINUTES of the meeting of Cabinet held at Council Chamber, The Shire Hall, St Peter's Square, Hereford, HR1 2HX on Thursday 21 July 2016 at 2.00 pm

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

Councillors PD Price

Cabinet support members in attendance Councillors BA Durkin, NE Shaw and EJ Swinglehurst
Group leaders in attendance Councillors JM Bartlett, RI Matthews and AJW Powers
Scrutiny chairmen in attendance Councillors WLS Bowen
Other councillors in attendance: Councillors PJ McCaull and J Hardwick
Officers in attendance: Jo Davidson, Geoff Hughes, Claire Ward, Richard Ball, Sukhdev Dosanjh, Steve Hodges, Penny Jones, Mairead Lane, Josie Rushgrove, Chris Baird and Andy Hough

7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors H Bramer, D Harlow, J Lester and P Rone.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

9. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

10. END OF MAY CORPORATE BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

Cabinet received a report to consider performance for the first two months of 2016/17 and the projected budget outturn for the year.

The Leader pointed out that at the meeting on the 16th June, that there had been a misalignment of figures in Appendix B of the end of year corporate budget and performance report 2015/16 that had subsequently been rectified. The totals figures were not affected and no decisions had been dependent on the report. An updated report had been issued with the agenda for the meeting on the 28th of July.

In reply to a question from a Group Leader, the head of corporate finance said that these were not the figures that had been questioned at full Council. Those figures pertained to the cost of borrowing and had been reported in the treasury out-turn report.

The director for economy, communities and corporate said that the headline figure for this report was the projected full year outturn, based on spend until the end of May 2016, of an overspend of £1.5m. Action plans were in hand in all directorates to address the

in-year pressures and to help mitigate the impacts of the external economic environment. It was not unusual at this period in the year for there to be forecasted overspends.

The projected full year outturn based on spend until the end of May 2016 is an over spend of £1.5m, which represented 1% of the budget. The 2016/17 savings are £10.9m; £9.4m (86%) of which are on track to be delivered during the current year. Action plans are being undertaken in all directorates to address the in-year pressures and to help mitigate the impacts of the external economic environment. It is not unusual at this period in the year for there to be a forecasted over spend; actions contained within the directorate overviews in paragraphs 8-39 are expected to manage this

The assistant director environment and place said that as the performance reports were only for the first two months, some areas had not reported as they did not report on a monthly basis. Each directorate had a performance dashboard. He added that there would be a seminar on the 5 year land supply on the 25th July.

The cabinet member, health and wellbeing said that work was ongoing in both children's and adult's wellbeing in order to address areas of overspend. The key for the directorates to address was the overspend in client groups. Whilst the forecast overspend was still £2m, this figure was lower than the previous year's expenditure, and much had been done to address cultural issues within the directorates around partner organisations and key workers such as social workers. She went on to say that the quality of care within adult's wellbeing had improved over the last year which was beneficial for the service user and the service, as good care was better value for money. The assistant director, commissioning adults and wellbeing, detailed the four elements of the recovery plan, which were single handed care; to minimise voids and maximise block contract use; the implementation of a cultural change programme and internal support and challenge process with specialist staff supporting social workers.

She went on to say that whilst there was an overspend in children's wellbeing, there was also a significant improvement against the previous year. The directorate faced a challenge from the increase in numbers of looked after children, but the young people's plan was having a positive impact in this area.

In reply to a question from a Group Leader, the director, children's wellbeing said that there were issues around the recruitment of experienced social workers and that all west midlands councils were experiencing difficulties in recruitment. The number of agency workers had been reduced from around fifty in previous years to nine.

In reply to a question from a Group Leader, the assistant director environment and place said that there was a gap in the cycle network in Kings Acre road but that there was an opportunity to rectify this with the Three Elms housing development, which would come to planning committee shortly.

In the ensuing debate, the following points were made:

- That schemes of less than £500k all followed the same rigorous budget management process as larger projects and were monitored on a monthly basis.
- That the annual report on the 5 year land supply would be available to members at the seminar on the 25th July, which would take members through the figures that were contained in that report.
- That gross expenditure had not been reported in the adult's wellbeing report, but these figures could be supplied if required.

- That the most recent submission of the Better Care Fund to NHS England had been approved and the council's exposure to the risk sharing arrangement with the Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group had been limited.

Resolved

That:

- (a) Cabinet notes the council was currently projecting an overspend of £1.5m; and;**
- (b) Performance for the first two months of 2016/17 be considered.**

11. BUDGET AND CORPORATE PLANNING CONSULTATION

A report seeking approval for consulting on plans to reshape the council's services to meet the financial challenge and current budget proposals for future financial years, as well as the draft proposals available to Herefordshire Council as part of the budget setting process for 2017/18 and out to 2020/21 was received.

The director for economy communities and corporate said that the consultation process would take place over the summer and autumn. It was proposed that targeted groups in an on-line consultation. Stakeholder engagement would be widely sought, and parish councils, businesses and partner organisations would be approached as part of the consultation process.

In the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- That the consultation would be more focused than it had been in previous years, and it was important to remember that it was not merely a question of the number of respondents. Two thousand responses had been received in 2015, which was higher than in the previous year. Engagement with organisations was important and the quality of responses from this source would help judge the success of the consultation.

In response to a question from a Group Leader, the director for economy, communities and corporate said that whilst the top 25 businesses in the county would be targeted, smaller and medium sized enterprises would be engaged through a number of business breakfasts.

Resolved: That the approach for consulting on plans to meet the financial challenges for the coming 4 years and beyond and the capital programme and budget proposals for 2017/18 and beyond as set out in the report be approved.

12. PERFORMANCE, RISK AND OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The assistant director environment and place presented a report to propose a revised performance, risk and opportunity management (PROM) framework that would support members and officers to manage performance and risk and deliver improved outcomes for local people. He outlined the key components of the framework, and said that the changes took into consideration the recommendations from the Audit and Governance Committee working group.

In reply to a question from a Group Leader, the directorate services team leader said that once the framework had been posted onto the council's website, it was envisaged that a clearly signposted link from the documents would allow the public to submit issues for consideration.

Resolved: That the revised PROM framework be approved for implementation with immediate effect.

13. NEW MODEL IN TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING (NMITE) UNIVERSITY

The director of economy, communities and corporate presented a report to approve the approach to council-owned property and land disposals in support of the development of a university for Herefordshire.

The Cabinet member, infrastructure, said that the scheme had received universal support across all parties and with all members. He pointed out that whilst there would be a great deal of change over the lifetime of this project, this was a good initial step which identified the process to help the

During the ensuing the debate the following points were made:

In reply to a question from a Group Leader, the Leader said that the process had taken two years because there was a Green Book requirement to provide a business case in order to get the project underway, and that, with help from council officers, this case was now in place.

The regenerations programme manager stated that it would not be possible for a building on the Gaol street car park site to be built on stilts, as the car park was within the curtilage of the City Walls, and part of a heritage site. Any building could not be higher than three stories, and such a move would render the building insufficient for the needs of the university.

- That there would be a clause on any capital sale in order to ensure that the council benefited from an uplift in the value of a given site. Values quoted in the report were indicative, and that full market value for sales of sites would be ensured at the time of sale.
- That as it would not be possible to find one building of sufficient size within the city for the university, they had requested that a number of buildings be utilised for different departments. This would have the added advantage of ensuring that there was an economic benefit to the city, as students would not be focused in one area.

It was noted that the acquisition of Franklin house had been fully funded by Advantage West Midlands, and no council monies had been used in the purchase.

- That the promises for funding that had been made by Government departments for the university were being actively pursued now that there was a new administration in place.

Resolved

That:

- (a) approval be given for one or more of the sites identified in the report, to be sold or leased to the Herefordshire Tertiary Education Trust (HTET) subject to achieving market value;**
- (b) authority be delegated to the director of economy, communities and corporate, to take all operational decisions necessary, following consultation with the section 151 officer and relevant Cabinet members, to implement the above recommendation, and,**

- (c) authority be delegated to the cabinet member contracts and assets, following consultation with relevant cabinet members, to determine disposal to HTET of any additional sites on similar terms.**

14. COLWALL CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Cabinet member, health and wellbeing presented a report to approve the building of a new school for Colwall Church of England Primary School at the identified site of Mill Lane, Colwall, which included the purchase of land to enable building to take place and associated works to fulfil planning and transport requirements.

In the ensuing discussion, the following points were raised:

That the landowner was aware of the proposal to build a school and that he was keen to support the community by facilitating the purchase. A draft heads of terms and options agreement were in hand.

The cabinet member, health and wellbeing said that she supported this initiative, especially as it would be next to the village hall, allowing for joint use and support for the hall.

In reply to a question from a Group Leader, the Head of Educational Development said that the true costs for the project would become clearer once all tenders had been received. The Education Funding Agency (EFA), could not formally proceed until the land had been secured. The site was 3.1 acres in size.

That the Trust who held the existing site had agreed that sale of that site would go toward the cost of the new school.

Resolved:

That:

- (a) a new primary school for Colwall be located on the Mill Lane site identified in appendix 1; the purchase of land at the Mill Lane site at a cost of £1.2m, be agreed, subject to planning consent being secured;**
- (b) the building of a one form entry primary school for Colwall including associated works to fulfil planning and transport requirements and fees at a cost of up to £5.1m be approved conditional on planning consent being secured;**
- (c) the payment of an option agreement fee of £50,000, included in the estimated £1.2m for purchase of land, to secure the land sale be made; and;**
- (d) authority be delegated to the director for children's wellbeing to take all operational decisions necessary to implement the above recommendations within the budget agreed.**

15. DISPOSAL OF ALL OR PART OF THE BROAD STREET CAR PARK, LEOMINSTER

Cabinet received a report to approve the principle for the disposal of all or part of the public car park at Broad Street, Leominster.

In reply to a member in attendance, the director for economy communities and corporate said that the purpose of the report had been phrased in the way that it had in order to

allow the council flexibility as to which part of the car park it would dispose of. Property services were mindful of the need to protect long-stay lorry parking in Leominster.

A Group Leader welcomed the level of consultation that had been undertaken locally and asked that there should be transparency going forward on any decisions in order to help allay public concern in the town.

Resolved

That:

- (a) disposal of all or part of the site is approved in principle; and;**
- (b) the programme of activity set out at paragraph 16 of this report be implemented to a further decision on a specific proposal.**

16. HEREFORD CITY CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

Cabinet received a report to improve the public realm in Hereford and to consider consultation feedback and approve the Hereford city centre improvements delivery programme including on street parking in Hereford.

In the ensuing discussion, the following points were made in reply to questions from a Group Leader:

- That whilst the centre of High Town had been resurfaced in 2009, the work had been undertaken using existing materials. The work would now be carried out using new materials which were more robust.
- That there had been discussions with the civic society and cycle groups as to how the palfrey sets would be used, and the council would ensure that routes could be used by all. The sets were not causing problems for cyclists in Widemarsh street.
- That Balfour Beatty was working with the organisers of the Three Choirs Festival in order to minimise disruption in the city during the festival in 2018.

In reply to a member in attendance, the head of infrastructure delivery said that discussions were in hand with the civic society and other users to support the continued use of historic features in High Town.

Resolved:

That:

- (a) The High Town public realm scheme shown in appendix A to the report be approved for phased implementation;**
- (b) Funding of up to £1.6m be allocated from within the existing highways and transport capital budgets within the approved capital programme to enable the delivery of phase 1 of the High Town public realm scheme as set out in appendix B to the report to be delivered in 2016/17 and the schemes identified in (c) and (d) below. Subject to funding being available, further phases be included in future public realm annual plans from 2017/18 until the schemes are completed;**
- (c) a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) be promoted to enable the introduction of**

on-street parking charges together with appropriate consequential changes to existing restrictions in the streets listed in paragraph 12 of this report and that authority is delegated to the assistant director environment and place to finalise the details required to commence the formal consultation process, and that, subject to the consideration of any representations received, take the necessary operational decisions required to implement an appropriate TRO; and;

- (d) public consultation be carried out in relation to the potential introduction of residents parking schemes within residential areas to the west of the A49 trunk road between the River Wye and Widemarsh Common and the introduction of a cycle contraflow on St Owen Street as shown in Appendix C to the report.**

The meeting ended at 3.45 pm

CHAIRMAN

