

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Thursday 28 October 2021 at 2.30 pm

Present: Councillor David Hitchiner, Leader of the Council (Chairperson)*
Councillor Liz Harvey, Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairperson)

Councillors Ellie Chowns and Diana Toynbee

Cabinet support members in attendance Councillors John Hardwick and Kath Hey

Group leaders / representatives in attendance Councillors Peter Jinman, Terry James, Bob Matthews and Nigel Shaw

Scrutiny chairpersons in attendance Councillors Elissa Swinglehurst and Phillip Howells

Other councillors in attendance: Councillors Pauline Crockett and Gemma Davies

Officers in attendance: Chief Executive, Interim Head of Legal Services, Acting Director for Adults and Communities, Interim Director of Children and Families and statutory Director of Children's Services, Head of corporate finance and Interim Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste

57. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors John Harrington and Ange Tyler.

*Councillors David Hitchiner, Pauline Crockett and Gemma Davies attended the meeting remotely and did not vote on the decisions taken.

58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

59. MINUTES

Resolved: That the minutes of the meetings held on 23 September and 30 September 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

60. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Pages 5 - 8)

Questions received and responses given are attached as appendix 1 to the minutes.

61. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were no questions from councillors.

62. IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The cabinet member children and families introduced the item and explained that the draft plan had been widely circulated and feedback received had been taken on board. The operational plan was designed to be a live document so would be updated regularly. A number of updates and briefings had been provided to all councillors on this plan.

Cabinet members queried the steps being taken to improve recruitment and retention of staff and heard that this was a regional and national challenge. They also noted that financial support had been provided from the earmarked reserve for children's services improvement and that it was hoped additional financial support would be forthcoming from the Department for Education.

Thanks were expressed to everyone who had contributed to the plans and to staff working on the front line of the service.

The chairperson of the children and young people scrutiny committee commented on the plan saying that:

- The majority of the plan was felt to be good;
- The scrutiny committee had not yet formally reviewed the plan;
- The role of scrutiny going forward had still to be shaped;
- SEND was not mentioned enough in the plan;
- There was a lack of detail on how talk community could be involved.

It was noted that, if the grant funding bid was successful, some of that resource might be used to develop the work on areas such as talk community. Councillors had played an important role in putting the plan together and it was hoped this would continue.

Group leaders and representatives generally welcomed the plans. It was highlighted that:

- The way the plans were implemented would be key;
- The plans represented the start of the journey;
- Many of the issues identified had been highlighted in the past, it was hoped this plan would produce lasting improvement;
- The phrase 'family centred county' was suggested in place of 'child centred' by one group;
- In some areas the financial arrangements needed more detail.

The cabinet member children and families closed the discussion, noting that mechanisms to give assurance were built into the plans and that further work would take place on areas such as the role of talk community.

It was resolved that

- a) Cabinet note the activity undertaken to inform and develop our Strategic and Operational Plans;**
- b) Cabinet endorse the Strategic Plan accepted by the independently chaired Improvement Board on 11 October 2021 in order that it can be presented to the Department for Education, in compliance with the non-statutory improvement notice.**

The leader of the council made closing comments expressing the determination of all involved to get this right and that it would require a team effort throughout the council and working with partners. He appealed to communities to support this effort and commended community volunteers who were a vital part of this. Hearing the voice of the child was important and the leader would be exploring ways for him personally to hear from children and young people.

63. APPROVE A PREFERRED OPTION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW CARE FACILITY IN HEREFORDSHIRE FOR MEETING FUTURE DEMAND AND SERVICE DELIVERY

The cabinet member health and adult wellbeing introduced the item. She summarised the need for additional care capacity in the county and recommended that option 4 of the feasibility study be taken forward for further investigation.

The acting director for adults and communities summarised the report. He explained that the council met regularly with representatives of the market and that the published market position statement set out the intended direction of travel to a mixed economy with the council investing in its own provision. An 80 bed establishment was economic to run and could provide the type of care at the level required. Recent care home closures had reduced provision.

Cabinet members noted that:

- The report also proposed undertaking a similar feasibility study into care home provision for children and was an example of strategic thinking across the adults and children's directorates;
- The council needed to meet its statutory responsibilities and prepare for the demands of an aging population;
- It was important to choose the right size of facility and the right location;
- The development would see the future homes standard put into practice;
- A single 80 bed facility would replace the beds lost by recent closures and provide a modest increase, the council might need to bring forward further schemes in the future if this one was successful and demand increased.

Group leaders and representatives commented on the proposals. Option 4 was generally supported, with option 3 a possibility if a suitable property came to the market. It was highlighted that:

- It was important that the facility was managed in a cost effective way, the acting director explained that the council would build on the lessons learned from operating Hillside, which was running successfully and with operating costs comparable with other providers;
- Care needed to be taken not to distort the local market;
- The council needed to be clear what type of provision the proposed facility would provide;
- The council also needed to look at other measures to support people remaining in their own homes, such as tackling fuel poverty.

It was resolved that:

- a) Having considered the options appraisal for further development of additional care home facilities in Herefordshire Cabinet approves option 4.**
- b) Authority is delegated to the Interim Director for Adults and Communities to take all appropriate steps to develop the preferred option in detail, for further consideration of cabinet.**
- c) A similar options appraisal for new care home or other accommodation for children is prepared for cabinet's consideration.**

The meeting ended at 4.17 pm

Chairperson

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 28 OCTOBER 2021**Question 1****From: Mr M Willmont, Hereford****To: Cabinet member, infrastructure and transport**

Recently, if I recall correctly, a Cabinet Member in discussing issues around the proposed transport hub at the Railway Station suggested that he would not want to see bus shelters in front of/obscuring the view of such an important Listed Building.

This being the case could the Council apply a similar approach to Shire Hall by removing the bus shelters in St Peters Square. These significantly obscure the view of the building and also are a major interference with events, primarily Remembrance Sunday, at the War Memorial. There is a sufficient covered waiting area by St Peters Church. Please remove the bus shelters by 14 November 2021.

Response

Thank you for your question Mr Willmont, that is a very good question and I tend to agree with you.

Obviously the The Shirehall bus waiting facilities, including shelters and improved access for disabled people have been in place for many years. The location provides bus users, many of whom are elderly and with reduced mobility, with safe access to the bus network and some protection from weather when they are waiting for their service. It is important that access is available from the passenger side entrance to the vehicle and the 3 stands have been designed for this purpose – this would not be the case if access was relocated to the adjacent St Peters Church location and hence would not be acceptable in terms of basic health and safety requirements.

Whilst I cannot support your suggestion to pull the shelters down by the 14th of next month (although I appreciate your determination and optimism, even if your tongue is firmly in cheek) it will be possible to look at locations of waiting facilities as part of the City Masterplan project and consider alternatives which maintain convenient and safe access for bus users and also consider overall public realm benefits. I will specifically ask the team dealing with both the Hereford City Centre Improvement (HCCI) project and the broader belated City Masterplan, that is beginning to be drawn together, to consider removing the shelters from in front of The Shirehall to give the public the best view of The Shirehall, which, as you point out, is a heritage asset which deserves respect and appreciation. I am confident we can relocate the same shelters close by in a way that works well.

As we begin to draw our City and County masterplans together, if you have any other thoughts on such matters and aspects of the City's or market town's built environment your experience and knowledge would be much appreciated and you may write directly to me if that is helpful and you so wish, it certainly will be helpful to me.

Question 2

From: Mr P McKay, Leominster

To: Cabinet member, infrastructure and transport

I have noticed that the map of DM Modifications is no longer available on the "Highways and public rights of way map" webpage. This was a useful map, showing what was, or was not, subject of Modification in an area, and I ask if you could confirm that it is Council policy to make such information available and check that it will be reinstated, perhaps as part of a Modification web page upgrade, with option to search from the map?

Response

Thank you for your question, my officers have checked the system and the Map can be viewed through the Online Highways and Public Rights of Way Map (Proposed PROW Orders Tab) using the following link:

[Highways and public rights of way map – Herefordshire Council](#)

The routes highlighted in red shows applications for definitive map modification orders, and amendments to the List Of Streets. This mapping includes both current applications and those that have been resolved either by now being recorded on the Definitive Map or having been rejected on grounds of insufficient evidence. The map is searchable by Settlement, Road or Address.

Alternatively the definitive map modification order (DMMO) register can be viewed at:

[Definitive Map and Statement \(DMS\) – Herefordshire Council](#)

The register is searchable by Parish, Town or Village.

Hope this answers your questions adequately Mr McKay but happy to discuss further.

Supplementary question

Thank you for your reply informing me of the new online location of this information.

Sometime ago the information regarding 'known anomalies' was taken off line, and I wonder if this also has a new location that I am not aware of, and if you could confirm that ways approved for submission on first definitive map as C.R.F. or C.R.B. by Parish Meeting, approved by Rural District Council, but shown by Herefordshire Council as F.P. or B.R. without any explanation to detriment of other users are included 'known anomalies', and if not arrange for them to be included, so that they may be subject to investigation in same manner as other 'known anomalies' as part of the 'Unresourced Projects', reference BBLP Annual-Plan Annex 11 2020-21, acknowledging them as items to be addressed to avoid them becoming overlooked?

Response

A written response would be provided.

Question 3

From: Christine Price, Healthwatch Herefordshire
To: cabinet member, children and families

I would like to ask the following question from healthwatch herefordshire in relation to the Children's improvement plan please.

The plan outlines a measure of success as 'what children and families tell us' and also on page 16 references 'service user groups'.

Can you outline who the SRO will be and who will implement engagement to gain feedback from children and families, what form this will take and how you will ensure it is continual, representative and effective.

Response

The responsible officer will be the Director of Children's and Families who will oversee engagement with new and existing service user representative groups and work with relevant advocacy and support services in Herefordshire (including Healthwatch Herefordshire) to ensure that current and future engagement activities are representative and effective. It is our intention to develop and publish an engagement strategy early in the New Year.

