

THE CABINET

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Luttrell Room, County Hall, Taunton, on Wednesday 14th June 2017 at 10am.

PRESENT

Cllr D Fothergill (in the Chair)

Cllr D Hall
Cllr D Huxtable
Cllr C Lawrence

Cllr F Nicholson
Cllr J Woodman

Junior Cabinet members:

Cllr C Aparicio Paul
Cllr G Verdon
Cllr F Purbrick

Other Members present: Cllrs S Coles, H Davies, J Hunt, T Lock, G Noel, B Revans, N Taylor, A Wedderkopp

Apologies for absence: Cllr A Groskop, Cllr Fraschini

1 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – agenda item 2

There were no declarations of interest.

The Leader took the opportunity to welcome everybody and introduce the Cabinet Members and Junior Cabinet Members. The Leader highlighted that only the Cabinet Members were the voting members of Cabinet and Junior Cabinet Members would contribute to the debate on the items at Cabinet.

He explained that following the publication of the agenda the Council had received an update from the latest Ofsted Monitoring Visit and the Director of Children's Services would be presenting a report for information to this meeting. He suggested that this report and the Children and Young People's Plan update report be considered after the public question time item. This was agreed by the Cabinet.

2 **MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE CABINET HELD ON 12 APRIL 2017** - agenda item 3

The Chairman asked for some clarity regarding minute 681 which stated that the Cabinet had delegated responsibility to sign the minutes of the last quadrennium to the Leader of the Council. The Governance Manager informed members that he had been unable to obtain a signature from the former Leader of the Council so the minutes were being brought to this Cabinet meeting for agreement.

The Cabinet agreed the minutes and the Chairman signed these as a correct record of the proceedings.

3 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (PQT) – agenda item 4**

There were no public questions.

4 **Update on Ofsted Monitoring Visit - agenda item 7a**

The Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Cllr Frances Nicholson, introduced the report which summarised the findings of the Ofsted Monitoring visit to the County Council on 2 and 3 May. She gave a summary of the background to this and the key findings.

Director of Children Services Julian Wooster explained this was the third in a series of monitoring visits which would culminate in a full re-inspection. The overall findings demonstrated that the Council was making adequate progress in improving services for children and young people in Somerset. However improvements were needed in improving consistency in social work practice, health assessments, mental health needs of young people, return to home interviews, absence from school of children looked after, and placement choices.

The Council was aware of weaknesses in the service and had put in a number of actions to drive improvements.

Further points discussed were:

- Continuing work with Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Improving communication with Avon and Somerset Police
- There would be another big push on promoting foster care and recruitment of foster carers
- Further work was needed on recruitment and retention policies for social workers and this was being addressed in a number of ways. The focus going forward would be addressing retention.

The Chairman welcomed the report and acknowledged there were a number of issues which were improving and others which still needed further improvements. He was reassured this will be fed through Corporate Parenting Board and Scrutiny Committee.

He asked Cabinet Members and Junior Cabinet Members if they supported the approach and there was a consensus. He then moved the recommendations.

The Cabinet RESOLVED to welcome the confirmation from the Ofsted monitoring visit of the progress in improving services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers, and noted the need for continuous improvement.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

5 **CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT - SOMERSET'S CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2016-19 PROGRESS** – agenda item 7

Cllr Nicholson introduced the report regarding the progress in year 1 of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2016-19 which was originally approved by Cabinet in May 2016. The multi-agency plan reflected the commitment of strategic partners and the County Council for children's services to be good or better in three years. The plan was supported by through 7 improvement programmes. It was essential that partners worked together on this. The plan had been commended by Ofsted.

Philippa Granthier, Assistant Director Children's Services Commissioning, gave further information on the progress and impact of the CYPP. The main improvements were outlined in the table shown at 2.2 in the report. The Children's Trust Executive were pleased with the progress but recognised there was still a significant amount of work to do. Action plans for 2017/18 had been drawn up.

Further points raised in the debate included:

- On-going problems with some partner organisations around data sharing but solutions were being sought to address this.
- Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee to recruit 7 member champions for each improvement programme and this was suggested as an amendment to the recommendation which was agreed by Cabinet members.
- The role of the Scrutiny Committee to invite CAHMS to address any issues.
- Hospital admissions for children and young people shown on the CYPP dashboard on page 63 was shown red. This was being looked into further to analyse whether this was a data issue.

The Chairman asked if there were support for the proposal and both junior and cabinet members were in consensus.

Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion, the Cabinet RESOLVED to acknowledge the significant work that has been undertaken to date and endorse the improvements and achievements in delivering the seven improvement programmes.

It also asked for the Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee to nominate a member champion for each of the 7 programmes as a matter of urgency.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report.

6 **SOMERSET PREVENTION CHARTER** – agenda item 5

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing Cllr Christine Lawrence introduced the report about the Somerset Prevention Charter which formed part of the work of the Somerset Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP). The Charter provided a common understanding of prevention across many organisations, committing organisations to the vision and principles of prevention, and delivering with co-signatories and others the actions.

Director of Public Health Trudi Grant explained the charter had been formally endorsed and adopted by key STP and Health and Wellbeing Board partners.

Further points raised in the debate included:

- The use of data to move from prevention to predicting. It was hoped to do this more in the future.
- The use of the word prevention. This was used a lot in national documents and was meant to be used positively.
- The Somerset Information Network was highlighted as a valuable resource for members which should be promoted to them.
- The Health and Wellbeing Strategy was due to be refreshed this year.

There was a consensus of support from both Cabinet members and Junior Cabinet members for the proposal.

Cllr Lawrence moved the recommendation.

Following consideration of the officer report and discussion, the Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the adoption of the Somerset Prevention Charter on behalf of Somerset County Council.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report.

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report.

7 **FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR TRAVEL DEMAND MANAGEMENT** - agenda item 6

Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development Cllr David Hall introduced the report for a framework agreement for travel demand projects. Although this was being established to primarily deliver the Hinkley Point C related programme the framework could be used to procure any other travel programmes it may wish to deliver.

Strategic Manager for Major Programmes Andy Coupe explained that section 106 agreement money would be used to deal with the impacts of the project such as activities to support a reduction in traffic and road safety schemes.

Other points raised in the debate included:

- To ensure that parish councils were given enough notice regarding any work in their communities
- Councillors had a responsibility to their divisions to keep up to date what was happening and to communicate with their parishes
- Members were urged to seek the assistance of the major programmes team and to maximise any benefits
- Continual logging and recording of problems and work which has achieved good results to learn lessons for future major programmes
- Flexibility in the framework was welcomed

The Chairman summed up the debate and highlighted that due regard had been given to the impact assessment.

There was a consensus of support from both Cabinet members and Junior Cabinet members for the proposal.

Cllr Hall moved the recommendation.

Following consideration of the officer report, appendix, impact assessment and discussion, the Cabinet RESOLVED to:

- Agree to the appointment of the suppliers to the Lots identified in Appendix A following a competitive process for a Framework Agreement for Travel Demand Management that will have a maximum duration of four years.
- Agree the case for exempt information for Appendix A to be treated in confidence, as public disclosure of the commercially sensitive data contained within would prejudice the Council's position in ensuring competitiveness of future tender processes

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

8 **COUNCIL PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT Q4 2016-17** – agenda item 8

Strategic Manager for Performance Emma Plummer presented the report which provided an overview of the council's performance across the organisation. The performance summary was depicted in the table at 2.2. there were three red segments which were for consideration and further explanation was shown in appendix A.

The Chairman of Scrutiny for Policies and Place Cllr Tony Lock raised concerns about the importance of data being current to make meaningful recommendations. There was a balance between ensuring that data was also accurate. However this would be further considered.

Cllr Coles asked about ensuring slippages were addressed. He was informed the current segments showing a declining performance were due to natural variation between reporting points and the pre-election period restricting positive news coverage.

There was a consensus of support from both Cabinet members and Junior Cabinet members for the proposal.

The Chairman moved the recommendation.

Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion, the Cabinet RESOLVED to:

1. Consider and comment on the information contained within this report specifically those areas identified as a potential concern under Section 3.0 of this report and the “issues for consideration” section of Appendix A.
2. Agree this report and Appendix A as the latest position for Somerset County Council against its County Plan.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

9 **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT Q4 2016-17 – agenda item 9**

Cllr Hall introduced the report which outlined the Council’s Revenue Budget final outturn position for the 2016/17 financial year. He explained there were some challenges ahead and highlighted the under and overspend funding in table 2 shown at page 99. This was a good result considering the council’s position at the beginning of the year. He also drew member’s attention to the general reserve movements shown in table 5 on page 101 and the returns services had given back to general reserves.

Further points raised in the debate included:

- Collection Fund surplus figures were currently estimated
- The use of locum staff, costs involved and plans to reduce the number of temporary staff
- Further details regarding the savings that will deliver the 2017/18 agreed Medium Term Financial Plan would be made available to members as soon as possible by the Director of Finance and Performance.

The Chairman thanked officers for the report and was pleased this showed last year’s allegations of financial troubles at the Council as unfounded.

There was a consensus of support from both Cabinet members and Junior Cabinet members for the proposal.

Cllr Hall moved the recommendations.

Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion, the Cabinet RESOLVED to:

Note the contents of this report and the outturn position for the year and approve:

1. Carry forward requests of £1.248m to be used against future commitments (Section 4);
2. Specific requests to write off overspends to the General Reserves totalling £15.033m and £0.179m (Section 2, Table 2 and appendices) and the future use of the reserves (Section 5, Table 4 and 5).

Note the transfer back to General Reserves of £6.915m from underspends (Section 2, Table 2 and Section 5, Table 5);

Note the treatment of the £19.527m Schools Budget balance, as approved by the Schools Forum (Section 3);

Note the Aged Debt Analysis as shown within Section 6

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

10 **CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT Q4 2016-17** – agenda item 10

The Director of Finance and Performance, Kevin Nacey, presented the report outlining the Council's Capital Investment Programme outturn position for 2016/17 and updates on changes since the quarter 3 report presented in February. Appendix A provided examples of projects completed during the 2016/17 financial year, a number of good schemes had been carried out. Sufficient receipts had been generated to add to the capital programme.

Cllr Coles asked about the current status of the Northern Inner Distributor Road scheme and was informed that the Director of Commissioning and Lead Commissioner for ECI services, Paula Hewitt, would brief him.

The Chairman commented there had been some tremendous work during the past financial year.

There was a consensus of support from both Cabinet members and Junior Cabinet members for the proposal.

Cllr Hall moved the recommendations.

Following consideration of the officer report, appendices and discussion, the Cabinet RESOLVED to:

- Approve the various virements (£1.601m) and various supplements (£3.906m) as detailed in section 2.9.
- Note the contents of this report.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

11 **ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS** – agenda item 11

There was none.

(The meeting ended at 11.54 am)

CHAIRMAN