

THE CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Luttrell Room, County Hall, Taunton, on Wednesday 15 November 2017 at 10am.

PRESENT

Cllr D Fothergill (in the Chair)

Cllr A Groskop	Junior Cabinet members:
Cllr D Hall	Cllr C Aparicio Paul
Cllr D Huxtable	Cllr F Purbrick
Cllr C Lawrence	Cllr Fraschini
Cllr F Nicholson	Cllr G Verdon

Other Members present: Cllr L Leyshon, Cllr J Lock, Cllr T Lock, Cllr T Munt, Cllr L Redman, Cllr W Wallace.

Apologies for absence: Cllr J Woodman

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

Members of the Cabinet declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a District, City/Town or Parish Council:

Cllr A Groskop	South Somerset District Council
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Junior Cabinet Members declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a District, City/Town or Parish Council:

Cllr C Aparicio Paul	South Somerset District Council
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Cllr F Purbrick	Yeovil Town Council
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At the Chair of Cabinet's invitation Cllr Anna Groskop informed members of the sad death of Ian Clarke, South Somerset District Council's Monitoring Officer. The Chair thanked Cllr Groskop and noted that the Council's thoughts are with Mr Clarke's family.

42 **MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE CABINET HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2017** - agenda item 3

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

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

The Chair noted that two public questions had been submitted by Mr Behan and Mrs See regarding Early Help services. It was agreed that written responses would be provided by the Cabinet Member for Children and Families as neither speaker was in attendance.

44 **County Vision 2017-2021 - agenda item 5** – agenda item 5

The Leader of the Council, Cllr David Fothergill introduced the report, noting: the importance of the Vision, encompassing partners both in and out of the County, and that the Vision had already been considered by the Scrutiny Committee for Policies and Place.

The Director – Corporate Affairs, Simon Clifford, noted that the Vision would be shared with key partners including district councils, Police, Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Service, Health, and representatives from the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sectors. The Director further highlighted: the importance of improving people’s lives; links with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy; the recognition of financial stability; helping Somerset residents to remain independent and help themselves; the recent Scrutiny Committee debate and general support for the approach; and that a stakeholder event was planned in January.

Further points raised in debate included: the importance of partners taking ownership and working together; ensuring alignment with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy; looking at what kind of targets and metrics could be used to measure delivery; the impact of potential devolved powers; and ensuring alignment with the Council’s forthcoming new People Strategy.

The Director – Corporate Affairs responded to the points raised in debate, noting: recognition that the Vision could not be achieved by the Council alone; and that the Vision document was still being refined before being presented to Cabinet and Council for approval in February 2018.

The Chairman asked if there was support for the proposal and both Junior and Cabinet Members were in consensus.

Following consideration of the officer report, presentation, appendix and discussion the Cabinet RESOLVED to endorse the new Vision for Somerset and to note:

1. The Vision and its aims will be delivered by partners across Somerset and in some cases beyond our own boundaries.
2. The Vision and its aims are a long-term ambition on a timescale beyond the life of any single Administration.
3. All key decisions and impact assessments within SCC will reference the Vision and its aims to ensure alignment.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

45 **CHILDRENS SERVICES IMPROVEMENT UPDATE – WORKFORCE UPDATE** – agenda item 6

The Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Cllr Frances Nicholson, introduced the report, noting her thanks to the Director of Children's Services, the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Community Services and the Director of HR & OD.

The Director of HR & OD, Chris Squire, highlighted: the increased number of permanent Social Workers employed by the Council; the importance of the Council developing its own staff; the importance of organisational culture; Social Worker practice standards; value based recruitment; the reduction in staff turnover for Social Work roles; the 'think before you walk' approach; social value and the importance of opportunities for children leaving care; and 'try before you apply' opportunities for Social Workers to spend a day with the Council.

Further points raised in debate included: the importance of permanent staff; the importance of improving young people's lives; combined work with Adult Social Care; the importance of ensuring positive outcomes for children and young people; employment opportunities for care leavers and links to the 'grow your own' initiative; employing apprentices; staff retention and ensuring Social Workers stay in Somerset; and working with other Local Authorities.

The Director of Children's Services informed members of the Step Up to Social Work Programme, highlighting that Somerset County Council was the lead authority for the South West region.

The Chair highlighted that there was support for the progress that had been made and that both Junior and Cabinet Members were in consensus.

Following consideration of the officer report, presentation, appendix and discussion the Cabinet resolved to commend and note the progress that has been made with the Children's Workforce Development Strategy.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

46 **HEART OF THE SOUTH WEST PRODUCTIVITY CONSULTATION RESPONSE** – agenda item 7

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development, Cllr David Hall introduced the report, noting: the importance of responding to the consultation to the County Council, partners and local businesses; the importance of working with the Local Enterprise Partnership; and importance of Government 'buy-in'.

The Strategic Commissioning Manager – Economy and Planning, Paul Hickson, further highlighted that: the consultation follows the joint devolution

prospectus; and the consultation draft had been completed as a result of collaborative work across the South West region.

Further points raised in debate included: the importance of a robust consultation response; links between a university for Somerset and the 'grow your own initiative'; the importance of the rural economy to Somerset; the importance of tourism and connectivity in rural areas; the importance of the South West region working together; and the work of the Scrutiny Committee for Policies and Place.

There was a consensus of support from the Junior and Cabinet Members to the proposals.

Following consideration of the officer report and discussion the Cabinet resolved to:

1. Endorse the vision, strategic themes and objectives proposed in the consultation draft of the Heart of the South West Productivity Strategy.
2. Approve the points set out in paragraph 1.7 of this report as key considerations for SCC's response to the consultation draft; and
3. Delegate to the Lead Director for Economic and Community Infrastructure approval of the final technical response to the consultation by the deadline of 30th November 2017.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

47 **Heart of the South West – Proposed Joint Committee** – agenda item 8

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development, Cllr David Hall, introduced the report noting: two bordering areas already have devolution deals; positive messages from central government; the formation of the Committee was as a result of 2 years of work; Somerset County Council has the lead governance role; the importance of protecting all Council's existing powers and functions; removing the requirement for an elected Mayor; the Joint Committee would include representatives from Local Authorities, the National Park Authority, the Local Enterprise Partnership and Clinical Commissioning Groups; the financial contribution required from each member authority; and that the first formal meeting of the Joint Committee was scheduled to take place at the end of January 2018.

Cllr Hall further highlighted an amendment to paragraph 11.5 of Appendix B – Inter Authority Agreement to read 'All press releases and public statements to be sent out on behalf of the Joint Committee shall be the responsibility of the press office of the Administering Authority'.

Further points raised in debate included: the staffing impact for the Council's Democratic Services Team; the importance of the region working together;

FOI requests and potential time commitment; and the importance of budget transparency.

In response to the points raised in debate, the Council's Monitoring Officer, Julian Gale, noted: the importance of the Joint Committee being regionally owned; and the requirement for a budget and cost sharing agreement. The Cabinet thanked the Monitoring Officer for his extensive work on the proposals.

There was a consensus of support from the Junior and Cabinet Members to the proposals.

Following consideration of the officer report, appendix and discussion the Cabinet resolved to recommend the Council to:

1. Approve the recommendation of the HotSW Leaders (meeting as a shadow Joint Committee) to form a Joint Committee for the Heart of the South West;
2. Approve the Arrangements and Inter-Authority Agreement documents set out in appendices A and B for the establishment of the Joint Committee with the commencement date of Monday 22nd January 2018;
3. Appoint the Council's Leader - Cllr D Fothergill - and the Deputy Leader - Cllr David Hall - as the Council's named representative and substitute named representative on the Joint Committee;
4. Appoint Somerset County Council as the Administering Authority for the Joint Committee for a 2 year period commencing 22nd January 2018;
5. Approve the transfer of the remaining joint devolution budget to meet the support costs of the Joint Committee for the remainder of 2017/18 financial year subject to approval of any expenditure by the Administering Authority;
6. Approve an initial contribution of £10,500 for 2018/19 to fund the administration and the work programme of the Joint Committee, noting that any expenditure will be subject to the approval of the Administering Authority;
7. Agree that the key function of the Joint Committee is to approve the Productivity Strategy (it is intended to bring the Strategy to the Joint Committee for approval by February 2018);
8. Authorise the initial work programme of the Joint Committee aimed at the successful delivery of the Productivity Strategy;
9. Agree the proposed meeting arrangements for the Joint Committee including the timetable of meetings for the Joint Committee as proposed in para 2.14

Note – The Cabinet agreed the following amended paragraph 11.5 of Appendix B of the report (the inter-authority agreement) as follows:

11.5 All press releases and public statements to be sent out on behalf of the Joint Committee shall be the responsibility of the press office of the Administering Authority.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report and noting the amendment agreed at the meeting

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report and amendment agreed at the meeting

48 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health – agenda item 9

The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing, Cllr Christine Lawrence, introduced the report.

The Director of Public Health, Trudi Grant, highlighted that there are currently 6000 deaths per year in Somerset; the majority of people want to die at home and not in hospital; we are good at planning for births, but not deaths; and that we all need to ensure our wishes are known.

Further points raised in debate included: the importance of a dignified death; discussion at the recent Health and Wellbeing workshop; using Parish Council's to help disseminate information from the report; the financial costs at the end of life; place of death statistics; suicide statistics in Somerset; the practical challenges being experienced for cremations for larger people with particular reference to the Yeovil area.

In response to the points raised in debate, the Director of Public Health noted that Somerset's suicide statistics were in line with national averages.

The Public Health Specialist further noted that the majority of suicides in Somerset are young men; that dying in hospital isn't necessarily bad and may be the most comfortable place for some people with terminal conditions; and the importance of the work of hospices.

There was a consensus of support from the Junior and Cabinet Members to the proposals.

Following consideration of the officer report and discussion the Cabinet resolved to:

1. be an advocate for a calm and dignified end of life
2. encourage people to plan ahead and make their wishes known
3. be an advocate for carers and ensure the role of Somerset's volunteers is promoted and valued
4. encourage cooperation between organisations, especially at this very sensitive time

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

49 Quarter 2 Revenue Budget Update – agenda item 10

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development, Cllr David Hall, introduced the report noting: the revenue budget overspend was currently predicted to be £9.1m or 2.92% of the total budget; and that Children's Services accounted for £3.48m of the overspend.

The Director of Finance, Legal and Governance, Kevin Nacey, highlighted that the overspend had not been sufficiently reduced since the last update.

The Leader of the Council noted his disappointment at the potential projected overspend, and requested that the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Performance take all necessary actions to reduce the projected overspend. This proposed amendment to the recommendations was approved unanimously by the Cabinet.

Further points raised in debate included: the importance of spending wisely when someone needs help; the Clinical Commissioning Groups contributions to Children's Services activity; preventing the need for high cost provision; accommodation for care leavers and working with District Council's; ensuring the Council receives timely payment of invoices; and the use of schools reserves.

In response to the points raised in debate, officers noted that the Council only writes-off a very small percentage of debts; and the Council is working with housing providers and the voluntary sector, but there is a shortage of accommodation suitable for care leavers.

There was a consensus of support from the Junior and Cabinet Members to the proposals and the management action being undertaken.

Following consideration of the officer report and discussion the Cabinet resolved to note the contents of this report and the potential outturn position for the year and to authorise the Chief Executive and the S151 Officer to take any necessary actions to reduce the projected overturn.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

50 **Quarter 2 Capital Budget Update** – agenda item 11

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development, Cllr David Hall, introduced the report noting: the capital budget was well managed with a £0.577m overspend representing less than 0.5% of the total budget; and that the building of new schools was likely to increase.

Further points raised in debate included the potential options for increasing the value of the Capital Investment Programme and accommodation for young people and care leavers.

Following consideration of the officer report and discussion the Cabinet resolved to 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

51 **Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2017-18** – agenda item 12

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development, Cllr David Hall, introduced the report noting that the report gives a summarised account of Treasury Management activity and was being brought to Cabinet for consideration as the Council is embracing CIPFA's best practice recommendations. The Cabinet Member further noted that the Council's level of debt remains unchanged and that the average level of interest paid is 4.66%.

Further points raised in debate included: compliance with prudential indicators and ensuring any borrowing is affordable; the average rate of interest currently being paid by the Council; and the interest rate which would be applied to any new borrowing.

Following consideration of the officer report and discussion the Cabinet resolved to note the contents of this report.

Following consideration of the officer report and discussion the Cabinet resolved to endorse the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report for 2017-18 and recommend it is received and endorsed by Full Council on 29th November 2017.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

52 **Quarter 2 2017/18 Performance Monitoring Report** – agenda item 13

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development, Cllr David Hall, introduced the report noting that: there are currently two segments of the performance wheel which are rated as red, Safer Children and Better Care and Managing our Business; and that there were no segments with declining performance.

The Strategic Manager – Performance, Emma Plummer, further noted the improved performance of the Managing our Business indicator and highlighted the performance summary detailed in the report which showed there were no objectives with a downward direction of travel.

Further points raised in debate included: ensuring the proposed actions are adequate to improve performance.

The Commercial and Business Services Director highlighted the work of the Technology and People Programme.

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

1. Considered 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. Considered that the proposed management actions are adequate to improve performance to the desired level.
3. Agreed 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

53 **Somerset Waste Partnership Draft Business Plan 2018 – 2023** – agenda item 14

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development introduced the report noting that: Mickey Green had recently been appointed as the Waste Partnership's Managing Director; the Somerset Waste Partnership was formed 10 years ago; that significant changes were planned across Waste Partnership contracts; and the importance of effective communication.

The Waste Partnership's Managing Director made a powerpoint presentation to the meeting and highlighted: significant changes would include greater waste prevention, recycling and recovery; the importance of engaging with children; the importance of the use of data and technology; legislative changes; the proposed new energy from waste facility and associated financial savings; and launching the Waste Partnerships new website.

Further points raised in debate included: proposed future changes to collection frequencies as a result of Recycle More; potential HR implications; the importance of communication with the public; and a request for further details of the recycle more proposals, along with the Chair proposing an associated amendment to the report's recommendation to remove the requirement to note the proposals for recycle more. The proposed amendment was agreed by the Cabinet.

In response to the points raised in debate the Lead Director for Economic and Community Infrastructure noted that Waste Partnership core team are SCC employees, and that contractor's employees would normally be subject to TUPE arrangements if required.

The Chair highlighted that there was a consensus amongst Junior and Cabinet Members.

Following consideration of the officer report, presentation, appendix and discussion the Cabinet resolved to approve the Somerset Waste Partnership's Draft Business Plan 2018-23 (as set out in Appendix A).

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

54 **Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 – proposed capital and revenue savings** – agenda item 15

The Director of Finance, Legal and Governance introduced the report noting: the importance of helping people to help themselves; the forecast revenue budget gap for 2018/19 was £7.6m; the work of the Strategic Opportunities Board; that if successful the Council's housing infrastructure bid would result in £15m extra funding during the 2017/18 financial year; and that the savings proposals would be brought to the Council's three Scrutiny Committees during January 2018.

Further points raised in debate included the need for further details regarding the savings proposals.

Following consideration of the officer report and discussion the Cabinet resolved to note the forecast MTFP position for 2018/19 and note the likely timetable of announcements of key funding decisions by government that will determine our own course of actions.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED: As set out in the officer report

REASON FOR DECISION: As set out in the officer report

55 **ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS** – agenda item 16

The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing noted that the Council had been awarded a Leading Light Accolade for its domestic abuse work.

CHAIR