

Minutes

Cabinet

Date: 8 December 2014

Venue: Mezzanine Rooms 1 & 2, County Hall, Aylesbury

Time: 10.31 am to 12.25 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr M Tett (in the Chair).

Mr M Appleyard, Mrs P Birchley, Mrs L Clarke OBE, Mr P Hardy, Lin Hazell, Mr M Phillips and Ms R Vigor-Hedderly

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr R Ambrose, Mrs S Ashmead, Mrs A Davies, Mrs K Jones, Mr J Povey, Mr A Shutter, Ms S Turnbull and Mr C Williams

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Leader welcomed Lin Hazell back to Cabinet as the new Cabinet Member for Children's Services (The Cabinet Member). Under Item 8 the Cabinet Member declared that she was previously Chairman of the Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee and she had been a member of the GP Services Inquiry Working Group.

3 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 November 2014 were agreed as a correct record after 'work' had been added to the third sentence which was revised to read as 'The Leader thanked the Cabinet Member for all her hard work over the last 12 months and added that she had made a major contribution to the service.'



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



4 HOT TOPICS

The following hot topics were discussed:

- The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing reported that at the end of November she and the Leader were present at the opening of Stokebury in Old Amersham which is a new facility for people who are recovering from an episode of mental health. This was the last part of the Home Options Programme which has provided 87 places 13 more than originally envisaged and was a fantastic facility especially for people with aspergers syndrome and autism. The Cabinet Member was pleased that 20 new self-contained flatlets were providing a permanent home for the service users who were happy with their new homes. The Cabinet Member considered that this was an excellent example of what has been done in Buckinghamshire for some of the most vulnerable residents. The Leader was delighted by how happy the residents were with the facilities and he congratulated the Team and thanked the Cabinet Member for the invitation.
- The Leader reported that Sunday had seen the first opening to the public, in about twenty seven years, of the original Old County Hall in the Market Square. He explained that two of the main rooms were being restored under Phase One of an extensive restoration programme. More would be restored in the coming months. In addition, at the back, the old Porters Lodge had been refurbished and was being offered as low cost start-up offices/studios/workshops for small businesses in the Aylesbury and Buckinghamshire area. This was one example of how the County Council was trying to generate new business growth and to give an opportunity to residents in the county to start their own businesses. Information was available about how to take up the new units under the title '@Porters Lodge' on twitter.

5 QUESTION TIME

There were no questions asked.

6 SCANNING AND PLANNING

Cabinet noted the Cabinet Forward Plan, Select Committees Work Programme, Rights of Way Committee Definitive Map Schedule and Progress on Planning Applications.

7 CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS

The report was noted.

8 HEALTH & ADULT SOCIAL CARE SELECT COMMITTEE GP SERVICES INQUIRY: FINAL REPORT

Cabinet received the report of the Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee GP Services Inquiry.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services introduced the report in her role as the previous Chairman (the Chairman) of the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC). She explained that the Inquiry was into access to GPs and the clear findings were that there was an imbalance between capacity and demand for GP services.

Members were invited to ask questions and the following points were raised:

- Congratulations were expressed from both from a Member and Public Health England on the report.

- It was noted in paragraph 23 that extra demand had been generated because of a more proactive approach with NHS healthchecks uncovering conditions requiring follow up and increasing instances where longer appointment times were required because of complex and multiple conditions which had put pressure on GPs. There was a shortage of younger GPs in General Practice because many of them preferred to specialise in hospitals.
- The report was commended and a question was asked about where it needs to be received in order to get noted. With reference to the Patient Feedback it was suggested that many patients can make appointments if they are very sick.
- The Chairman replied that many patients often want to see one Doctor on a certain day and at a certain time and that most of these requests can be met. She added that each surgery had a different way of managing urgent appointments. It was anticipated that the report would be circulated to the District Councils, Chief Executives, MPs and representatives from Health.
- The Chief Executive asked for clarification of recommendation 8 that NHS England acknowledge the concerns over the imbalance in local GP service capacity and demands and commit to additional funding for CCGs undertaking co-commissioning of GP services within the Area Teams so this additional CCG Activity is adequately resourced. He asked if NHS England were being asked to do something or if they had already acknowledged the concerns. The Chairman replied that they had already acknowledged the concerns.
- In the executive summary of staff the Chief Executive asked if the capacity issues related to GPs and practise nurses or administrative staff and paramedics. He suggested that the CCGs may want to look at the opportunities for training staff at Aylesbury College, Bucks New University and Amersham and Wycombe College.
- The Chairman replied that the general focus was the recruitment of medical staff and that not been any reports of problems being experienced with recruiting administrative staff.
- The Leader asked to what extent did GP surgery appointments accommodate commuters and can GPs work around them. He noted that elderly patients who grew up with a system with a named GP worry about continuity. In relation to Recommendation 4 referring to securing developer contributions, the Leader asked was it realistic to expect developers to fund GP surgeries.
- It was suggested that a large development is built additional surgeries should be provided to take the pressure off existing practises. The Chairman replied that all the information relating to a patient should be recorded electronically and available for reference. She added that some GP surgeries were staying open until 8pm and were opening early in the morning and others were open on Saturday mornings to try and meet the needs of commuters.
- The Chairman thanked the Vice Chairman of the HASC and the Policy Officer for their contribution to the report.

The Leader commended the piece of work and he suggested that it would be interested to watch A&E Services unfold.

Cabinet NOTED the report and no response was required.

9 DRAFT REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS FOR 2015/16 TO 2018/19

Cabinet received the report of the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources setting out the draft revenue and capital budgets for 2015/16 to 2017/18.

The Leader introduced the Draft Revenue and Capital Budgets. He explained that in February 2013 a four year budget was recommended and considered to be sustainable. Three significant pressures emerged during the year including the ability to introduce pay and display

parking and increased parking enforcement has resulted in a pressure of £0.5m, in Adult Social Care a forecast overspend and there was a rapid increase in the forecast overspend in Children's Services. The budget needs substantial changes in order to support the Government's Financial Strategy. There will be an impact on BCCs responsibility for adults, Children's Services, road maintenance and increased pressure on the provision of school places. BCC was the lowest funded County Council in the UK in revenue support grant from the Government and there were no proposed changes in the autumn statement. The final statement will be published on 17 December.

The Leader asked about how BCC felt the consultation was able to meet the needs of residents. The Cabinet Member for Community Engagement reported that 2,034 responses had been received from 425 organisations which was 57% more than last year and that the majority of residents supported a minimum 2% council tax increase. The residents had a high regard for the services provided by the County Council including roads, protecting vulnerable children and adults and that the main concern was access to high speed broadband. The Leader acknowledged that residents generally see road improvements as one of the main priorities. He explained that the increase in funding from Children's Services reflected the desire to protect the vulnerable and noted that Broadband was very important for residents but not a priority for those residents who already had it.

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources explained that there was a major problem with revenue and that last year the budget for Children's Services was insufficient. In Children's Services a £1m overspend had been forecast and a decision was required on whether to put the overspend into the base budget or leave as a risk.

The capital commitments include:

- the reduction in the contribution to the waste reserve
- maintaining an increased commitment to the road programme
- an increase in money to provide additional school places and not all the money was available from central government.

The Service Director Finance and Commercial Services (the Service Director) explained that the proposals set out in the paper showed a balanced revenue and capital budget and a two year settlement. The autumn statement indicated no additional cuts in 2015/16. An £11.2m reduction was anticipated in 2015/16. Changes included an extra £10.5m to take account of the Task and Finish Group recommendations and the Ofsted Improvement Plan, the effects of an aging population was reflected in a 1.99% increase in Council Tax for 2015/16 and the next 2 years. 80% of savings will be achieved through efficiencies. The capital programme was £364m over 3 years and included priorities of £25m for improving Highways, £30m for primary school places and £25.5m for secondary school places over 3 years.

The Leader proposed bringing forward the expenditure on the roads on the capital programme and reducing the contribution from revenue to waste reserves. The revenue contributions to capital were being reduced. It was noted that most portfolios had to fund efficiencies or make service reductions.

Cabinet was invited to comment and the following points were made:

- The Education and Skills savings had been achieved through a reduction in costs for Home to School transport as the significant subsidy paid by the County Council on fares was being removed.
- There was concern about retaining the budget to maintain standards in schools. During the next 2 years budgets will be reduced to focus on improving performance and therefore school transport must become self- funding.

- The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing reported that the Medium Term Plan (MTP) required a £12m saving by 2017 despite a 30% increase in the number of people requiring the service and the Learning Disability Service had experienced a 4% increase in spend. Reports revealed that the service was very efficient based on unit costs and BCC was 26.8% more efficient than neighbouring authorities. Based on the MTP last year approximately £6m growth in the budget was expected. It will be necessary to revise the savings proposed and additional investment will be required to support the Ofsted recommendations, Winterbourne and the Future Shape Programme. It was noted that more than £10m of one-off savings had already been achieved in addition to those in the MTP. Adult Social Care was experiencing the largest changes since 1947 and following the Care Act. There was a commitment to support the Council but there was a caution that this includes significant risks. Following the increase in statutory duties it had become necessary to find a more stretching and ambitious way of managing the challenge.

The Leader invited comments and the following points were raised:

- The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources explained that the pressure was in Social Care and not just in Children's Services.
- The Chief Executive noted that the Task and Finish Group looked at the budget for Older People and also requested that the Group reviews the proportion of the budget being spent on Learning Disability.
- A large amount of the capital costs within education will be over 3 years and a significant scale of building will be required to accommodate the extra children requiring the service. An additional extra 80 forms of entry were created in September 2014 across the County and the ability of schools to expand was becoming a problem.
- The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources noted that one of the huge pressures on BCC was the growing population and there will be huge constraints on what can be achieved. The percentage of the budget spent on Children's Services will increase from in 2014/15 12.4% to 16.3% and in Health from 34.7% to 36.9% and the budget for other services will go down.
- The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources considered that it will be necessary to think strategically about how to manage the budget necessary and to look at reorganisation and consider working with other councils across the South East and that it will be necessary to look at priorities in a much more focussed way and that a decision will be required on what outcomes are the most critical in order to determine how to allocate funds.
- It was considered that prudent budgeting had taken place and that residents recognised that it will be necessary to increase council tax.
- The Leader noted that £25m will be spent on the roads additional money will be spent on Children's Services following the Ofsted inspection and that it will be necessary to reduce spending on broadband and on the waste reserve.

Cabinet was invited to comment in relation to the Equalities Impact Assessment:

- It was recognised that more work was required.
- Disappointment was expressed that there was an unnecessary burden on local government.
- Due regard was made by Cabinet to the Equalities Impact Assessment.

RESOLVED

Cabinet:-

Approved the Strategic Plan and the Revenue and Capital budgets for wider consideration by the Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee and other interested parties such as the business community and partner agencies in Buckinghamshire.

10 THE COUNCIL'S OPERATING FRAMEWORK

Cabinet received the report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources asking them to agree the Council's Operating Framework with minor amendments detailed below:

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources explained that a new structure was being introduced in April 2015 with four Business Units. The operating Framework will be agreed by Cabinet annually and it was considered that the framework will form the operation of a modern Council.

One change to Shared Services will be that after 31 March 2016 the Business Units cannot go to outside sources for the provision of Shared Services without demonstrating that there is a business case that there is not a major adverse effect of the rest of on the organisation. It will be necessary to ensure that a competitive service is provided for customers. The Delivery Units will be required after 31 March 2016 to contract for a minimum of period 6 months. The Shared Service Business Unit must be market competitive within a 2 year period.

The Overview and Scrutiny Team Leader explained that if agreed this will be a live document with staff and will provide a single document as a toolkit for managers to use in understanding what the key rules are. The key audience will be members and staff and this will be published to maximise transparency.

An explanation was requested of the Council Board and why there was no reference made to the HQ Management and who the members were. Cabinet were informed that the Council Board replaced the Chief Officers Management Team (COMT). The Council Board comprises the 4 Managing Directors of the Business Units, the Director of Assurance and the Director of Strategy and Policy.

The Chief Executive added that Members sit on the Board of each of the Business Units. The HQ Board comprises of the Chief Executive, the Director of Assurance, the Director of Strategy and Policy, the Managing Director of Business Enterprise and two Members who are the Leader and Deputy Leader. The HQ Management Board will commission support services from Shared Services in the same way as other Business Units. The HQ Management Board will be responsible for Strategic Commissioning Plan. Clarification was requested on use of the term 'HQ Management Board'.

During a discussion the following points were made:

- The Framework was welcomed as an opportunity for the Business Units to be entrepreneurial. It was noted that the Support Services will not be managed by the Business Units.
- The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources explained that the objective was to make Shared Services Business Units provide a cost competitive service.
- The Leader cautioned that he did not want Future Shape to result in the destruction of the County Council as an entity. This is about providing better lower cost services to the residents and not about individual business units going off alone and acting in a way that is destructive to the rest of the County Council. He wanted to see costs being scrutinised and Business Units looking for opportunities to bring in new revenue but the County Council must not be destroyed.

- The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources considered that the amendments safeguard the future of the Council.

RESOLVED

- 1. Cabinet agreed the Council's Operating Framework with minor amendments which comes into effect on 1 April 2015.**
- 2. That any subsequent changes to the Operating Framework are either a key decision of Cabinet or the Leader in consultation with relevant Cabinet Members as appropriate.**

Key Changes Replacement Text to Chapter 6 Operating Framework V30

- A new BU will provide Shared Services where there is a value for money proposition for council-wide delivery.
- Those services will continue to be provided in-house and purchased by other BUs for an initial transition period up until 31 March 2016; providing time for transforming those services to commercial standards (this is a 2-year 'buy back' starting from the date at which the Future Shape Business Plan was agreed in March 2014. See Appendix 1 for further details).*

*subject to a business case demonstrating the potential impact on the rest of the organisation and the formal agreement of the One Council Board and sign off by the Leader of the Council.

11 ACTION PLAN TO REDUCE OVERSPENDS

Cabinet received the report of the Action Plan to reduce overspend.

In Transportation the forecast overspend had been reduced to £24k. In Health and Wellbeing there was a £1.2m overspend forecast and £500k had been released from contingency to reduce the forecast to £700k. The overspend in Children's Services had increased and the Action Plan was not delivering the recovery that was hoped and a £1m overspend had been forecast which was causing much concern.

It was hoped that Health and Wellbeing Portfolio will achieve a balanced budget. It will be necessary to look at the proposals for Children's Services and anticipated that savings can be achieved or service delivery be addressed to make some changes.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources considered that a follow up to the Task and Finish Group be established to address the in-year overspend and the additional £1m for next year which he considered was very serious.

The Chief Executive explained that an Improvement Board was about to embark and the Secretary of State's adviser was on site and he suggested that a report is presented to the next Cabinet on the Actions taken and the budget forecast. There was a confidence that the service can be put on the road to recovery. The Leader noted that the DfE advisers were on board and there was an Improvement Board he cautioned too many teams but this was a red flag control and a serious risk and needed to be reviewed. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources expressed disappointment that not much had been achieved during the monitoring period and he was encouraged by the Chief Executive's comments.

RESOLVED

Cabinet agreed the recommendation that the action plans continue to be monitored on a monthly basis.

12 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

12 January 2015.

**MARTIN TETT
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**