

# Minutes

## Cabinet

Date: 18 December 2017

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

Time: 9.00 am to 10.48 am

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr M Tett (in the Chair).

Mr N Brown, Mr W Chapple OBE, Mr J Chilver, Lin Hazell, Mr M Shaw, Mr W Whyte and Mr A Hussain

### **OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr D Watson

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Miss N Beagle, Mr R Ambrose, Ms S Ashmead and Ms R Shimmin

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr M Appleyard; Deputy Cabinet Member Mr A Hussain attended as substitute.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

### **3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 and 17 November 2017 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **4 HOT TOPICS**

**Cabinet Member for Transportation;** Thanked the Winter Maintenance Team and Transport for Buckinghamshire for the work undertaken during the cold spell, to keep the County moving. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Transportation was also thanked for the work he and Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) Officers had undertaken in promoting the Looked after Children Christmas gift campaign. The generosity of Buckinghamshire's residents had been exemplary.

**Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing;** Thanked all residents who had volunteered to help vulnerable residents during the adverse weather conditions.

**Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment;** Noted he had attended a meeting with Highways England where the concept of an Express Way running alongside the East West Rail line was discussed.

**Leader;** Noted he had attended a meeting exploring the Economic Heart of England Alliance, Hertfordshire and Swindon had recently joined the alliance and it was likely others in surrounding areas would follow suit. It was noted also that with central Government initiatives regarding recycling of plastics were beginning to emerge, the County Council would continue to work to tackle this issue locally.

#### **5 QUESTION TIME**

None.

#### **6 FORWARD PLAN FOR CABINET AND CABINET MEMBERS**

**RESOLVED**

**Cabinet NOTED the report.**

#### **7 CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS**

**RESOLVED**

**Cabinet NOTED the report.**

#### **8 SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME & INQUIRY WORK PROGRAMME**

**RESOLVED**

**Cabinet NOTED the report.**

#### **9 ADULTS SERVICES UPDATE**

Lin Hazell, Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing introduced the item; key points were highlighted as follows:

- A transformation programme was underway which focussed on how to help residents stay in their homes for as long as possible.
- The programme aimed to reduce the length of hospital stays and help individuals to help themselves.
- Packages of care would be reviewed.
- Delayed transfers of Care (DTC); the team were working hard with hospital colleagues to meet government standards. It was noted that as a Local Authority the County Council were performing well however the overall system within Buckinghamshire including Acute Trusts was not performing well. It was advised that this issue was due to be explored further by the Health & Wellbeing Board.
- The demand on NHS and Social Care services continued to increase, the County Council were working in partnership with providers to manage demand.
- Following the recruitment drive in September 2017, 18 new social workers and social work assistants had been appointed and were due to start in January 2018.
- Better Care Funding; confirmation had been received from the Communities team that the funding for this initiative within Buckinghamshire would not be reduced.

## **RESOLVED**

**Cabinet NOTED the report.**

## **10 DRAFT BUDGET**

Mr J Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources and Mr R Ambrose, Director of Finance and Assets provided an introduction. During discussion key points were highlighted as follows:

- Members of the Public who had responded to the budget consultation were thanked for their comments.
- Cabinet were asked to approve the draft revenue and capital budgets, before the Local Government final settlement which was due to be provided by central Government later this week.
- It was noted that accurate planning had been made up to 2019 however assumptions had been made beyond 2020 as the picture was unclear.
- The draft budgets for each portfolio had been devised in consultation with the Cabinet Member.
- Risk and impact assessments had been undertaken.
- A proposed Council tax increase 4.99% was noted.
- The Highways maintenance budget had increased to £15m per year, over four years
- It was confirmed that the draft budget would be scrutinised 9-12 Jan 2018 by the Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee.

Portfolio updates were provided as follows:

Transportation;

Over the last year a major tree survey had been undertaken, following its findings there had been an increase within the budget for funds to be spent on tree works. Another £1m overall

would be applied to the revenue budget, some of this would be applied to the tree programme and HGV strategy. An Equality Impact Assessment had been completed.

#### Childrens Services;

It was noted that the general picture for the Childrens Services budget had been good. Contrary to a lot of commentary that had been made around the budget reductions within Childrens Services it was advised that these had been targeted to specific areas of the portfolio and there had been budget increases to meet demand in other areas. There continued to be an increase year on year for staffing. Savings for looked after children had already been demonstrated during 2017/18. It was noted that significant year on year increases were in place to deal with demographic increase for statutory services. An Equality Impact Assessment had been completed.

#### Education and Skills;

It was noted that there was a huge pressure on Education, the team continued to work hard through Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Education and Skills strategies to ensure the service stayed within budgets whilst continuing to deliver efficiencies to stay within budget. An Equality Impact Assessment had been completed.

#### Resources;

Revenue Budget, Cyber Security costs were highlighted which were necessary to ensure data was protected. Legionella and Asbestos surveys, the team continued to make good progress in addressing this. The property asset income generation schemes were helping to deliver revenue income. Additional income was being reflected within the shared back office service agreement that had been made with Harrow Legal Services. An Equality Impact Assessment had been completed.

#### Community Engagement and Public Health;

The budget for Children aged 0-5 remained at £6m and the school nursing service would remain at £1.2m. An Equality Impact Assessment had been completed.

#### Health & Wellbeing;

It was noted that Adult Social Care represented 38% of the overall budget. Reassurance was provided to Cabinet and Members of the public that the area was being closely monitored. The support packages were increasing in complexity as life expectancy was increasing. There were also considerable issues experienced in retaining staff although recently 18 more staff had been employed. It was hoped that the Transformation programme would drive out more savings, the service were focusing on providing value for money alongside quality of life for residents. An Equality Impact Assessment had been completed.

#### Planning and Environment;

It was noted that the income generated through the Energy from Waste (EfW) plant was a work in progress. The service continued to be one of the most valued provided to the vast majority of residents. Within Planning a further enforcement officer had been appointed. It was noted the reserves had been built up from the excess money coming in from the EfW plant, in the short term these could be used to balance the budget providing that a long term plan was

in place to ensure reserves were replaced. An Equality Impact Assessment had been completed.

Leader;

It was confirmed that an Equality Impact Assessment had been completed.

It was confirmed that the draft budget would be open to intense cross party scrutiny by the Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee in early January 2018. Following this Cabinet would reconsider the draft budget, based upon the Select Committees and findings and the final budget would be passed through Cabinet with a recommended to full council late February 2018 for agreement.

## **RESOLVED**

**Cabinet APPROVED the draft budget for wider consideration.**

## **11 Q2 COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Leader provided an introduction. During discussion key points were highlighted as follows:

Leader;

- The roll out of fibre broad band continued throughout the County. Key measures included the three main enterprise zones, rollout had been completed for just over 95.1% of the County, with work being undertaken with District colleagues to provide further funding to extend the coverage. It was noted that due to the geographic make-up of the County, it was proving difficult to roll out fibre broadband to some of the more rural areas within Buckinghamshire.

Community Engagement and Public Health;

- It was noted that Public Health NHS Health Checks continued to be a difficult area. It was suggested that further support from local doctors would help to push the agenda. NHS Health checks was an area that people were questioning the value of, further information would be required from Central Government as to whether this area was one that should continue to be pursued.
- Alcohol and drug treatments remained a priority, it was noted that many children and adults at risk came from dysfunctional families therefore these were important areas to focus on.

Health & Wellbeing;

- The service had fallen short of the target for transitioning young people into Adult Social Care, although the indicator had moved slightly in the right direction, which had been the first time there had been any movement since quarter one.
- A transition board had been set up which would be looking to monitor indicators on a regular basis.
- The working relationship between the children's and adults portfolio needed to be strengthened to ensure the best accommodation was found for these young people.

- The percentage of placement clients who were receiving an annual review continued to be difficult to manage due to the large number of clients, however work continued.
- Slow progress was also being made on supporting adults with learning disability and mental health services to live independently.

#### Childrens Services;

- Management issues were being dealt with following appointment of the new Director of Childrens Services.
- Repeat referrals had not improved since the last quarter which was disappointing.
- The Multi agency domestic abuse strategy had been refreshed, with partners playing a big role in the strategy.
- Assessments being completed within 45 working days was fractionally below the tolerance, it was confirmed pressure would remain on teams to meet the target.
- The initial child protection conference measure was well within green which was encouraging.
- Child protection plans lasting two years or more; some legacy cases remained which were still being worked through.
- Looked after Children in residential care remained at red, this area continued to be a huge challenge for the County Council as there were not enough foster carers currently who were willing or equipped to deal with children with difficult needs. A drive would continue to recruit more foster carers.

#### Education and Skills;

- The service had recently recruited two educational psychologists.
- Exclusion rates were disappointing; a new pilot scheme had been set up to have professional bodies involved with the schools and families to tackle the problems earlier.
- Within Buckinghamshire it was pleasing to point out that no looked after children had been excluded.
- A scheme had been set up called "Side by Side" which would work with the families and educational psychologies to assist a child who was experiencing problems
- Education, Health and Care plans (EHC), old statements were being migrated to the new EHP format which continued to be a national challenge.
- 90% of children were attending schools that had been rated good or outstanding.

#### Resources;

- It was noted the indicators related to the whole Council and not just the resources portfolio.
- Revenue and Capital forecast outturns were closer to budget, Revenue forecast £3m underspend, £8m actual slippage which related to well-known projects that had been delayed or put on hold.
- Additional income generation remained strong with current projections exceeding the initial figure.
- Savings through service efficiencies continued, as outlined elsewhere in the meeting.

- Contingencies were set aside in budgets to take account of risks, overall the budget was showing a one-off underspend at present.
- Other councils were attempting to be more commercial, it was noted Buckinghamshire had been delivering real revenue contributions to the budget which had enabled better delivery on front line services.

#### Planning & Environment;

- It was confirmed that both indicators were green.
- The service were looking to improve education around waste, currently schools were attending the EfW site to be taught about recycling however it was confirmed more could be done to promote this.
- As a County 501kg of waste was thrown away each year per household, the team were working to reduce this further to 450kg, which would bring the recycling up to 60%.

#### Transportation;

- Continued to deliver on congestion management indicator

### **RESOLVED**

**Cabinet NOTED the report.**

## **12 PROPOSED RESTORATION OF FORMER LANDFILL SITE - TRENCHES LANE, WEXHAM**

Mr J Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources provided an introduction to the item. During discussion key points were highlighted as follows:

- The area had been a problem for many years.
- The proposal was to bring in and disperse inner soil to improve the site which would in turn improve public amenity for residents with the potential for recreational uses.
- Costs incurred would be covered by the developer and therefore there would be no cost to the taxpayer.
- There would be a stringent planning process where residents would be fully consulted.
- Soil would be imported by rail; therefore residential impact should be minimal.

### **RESOLVED**

**Cabinet APPROVED the report and AUTHORISED the Cabinet Member for Resources to sign off agreement of terms and SUPPORTED the Council entering into agreements to facilitated completion of the lease.**

## **13 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

### **RESOLVED**

**That the press and public be excluded for the following item which is exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 because it**

**contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)**

**14 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

Confidential session was not required to discuss the minutes, therefore the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September were agreed as an accurate record in public session.

**15 PROPOSED RESTORATION OF FORMER LANDFILL SITE - TRENCHES LANE, WEXHAM CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX**

Confidential discussion was not required.

**16 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

08 January 2018.

**MARTIN TETT  
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**