

Minutes

Cabinet

Date: 19 February 2018

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

Time: 10.45 am to 12.30 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr M Tett (in the Chair).

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

OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr S Lambert

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ms N Beagle, Mr R Ambrose, Ms S Ashmead, Ms R Shimmin, Mr T Vouyioukas, Mrs C Marriott and Ms K Wager

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr B Chapple, Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment declared an interest relating to item 9, stating that his son worked within the Childrens Services Department at the County Council.

3 HOT TOPICS

Cabinet's attention was brought to the following;

- Children's Services were continuing their seminars and information sessions on fostering and adoption with the next meeting due to be held in March

- There continued to be public interest in the Early Help Review, it was noted work was ongoing to plan how to conduct a 6 months review
- It was noted the Government were half way through their consultation of an opt out transplant system to increase organ donation
- Work continued on the Handy Cross Roundabout, it was highlighted that Highways England were carrying out the works and that the County Council were not. It was noted that disruption would be caused and that the County Council were publicising information in an attempt to cease disruption. Division signage was being made as clear as possible.

4 QUESTION TIME

None.

5 FORWARD PLAN FOR CABINET AND CABINET MEMBERS

Cabinet noted the report.

6 CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS

Cabinet noted the report.

7 SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME & INQUIRY WORK PROGRAMME

Cabinet noted the report.

8 MODERN SLAVERY INQUIRY

Mr S Lambert, Member of the Transport, Economy and Environment Select Committee, Chair of the inquiry and Ms K Wager, Committee and Governance Advisor attended the meeting to present the report. During discussion key points were highlighted as follows;

- Councils had a responsibility to tackle Modern Slavery and safeguard the vulnerable
- There were eight recommendations outlined in the report
- Working in partnership with external organisations around the County was key
- Three evidence session had been held as part of the inquiry
- The inquiry was originally going to be a two stage inquiry, with the second stage looking at establishing prevalence in Bucks. However as the committee concluded their evidence gathering for the first stage of the inquiry, they learned that Funding was being provided for a pilot victim service by The Police and Crime Commissioner
- The Charity RAHAB would be delivering a 12 month pilot service in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes to provide support to victims of Modern Slavery and other exploitation, similar to those already running in Reading and Oxfordshire
- A key priority for the service would be to identify demand for the service, which in turn would, build an evidence base to understand prevalence locally. Therefore, the inquiry

agreed that it was no longer necessary to progress to stage 2 of the inquiry. It would instead review the evaluation of the pilot service under recommendation 8. Estimated figures nationally for victims of Modern Slavery were 10-13k, although this was an ever changing figure as this became a more focused area of work and recognised to be a significant underestimate

- There was an anti-slavery partnership set up which the County Council was part of and was Co-Chaired by the Councils Community Safety Manager and the Thames Valley Police
- It was confirmed that overall responsibility for reviewing the pilot service sat with the PCC as funders of the pilot service, but that the Community Safety Team at the County Council would be involved in this review and the findings would be shared with the Select Committee as per recommendation eight
- The County Council did not currently have a Modern Slavery Statement, and the inquiry recommendations highlighted this as a key area for the Council to implement, which was reinforced by recently published Local Government Association Guidance (Dec 2017)
- Following extensive discussion Cabinet expressed that further information was needed before a response be provided to the recommendations

RESOLVED

Cabinet AGREED to DEFER their response to the recommendations, subject to further clarification on;

- **Financial pressures**
- **Partnership working**
- **Statements**

The above would be presented at a future Cabinet meeting, a date would be confirmed following this meeting.

9 OFSTED INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Mr W Whyte, Cabinet Member for Childrens Services present the report, joined by Mr T Vouyioukas, Executive Director for Childrens Services. During discussion key points were highlighted as follows:

- The Official OFSTED report was highlighted in the report
- Whilst OFSTED had deemed the County Council as inadequate, progress was acknowledged in some areas
- There were ten recommendations to be reviewed
- A key theme had been that the rate of change was too slow and inconsistent
- Some improvements had already been made including;
 - the appointment of a new Executive Director for Childrens Services
 - improvements to corporate parenting
 - financial investment in services
 - improvements to foster care and adoption services
 - support provided to care leavers

- The rate of referral into the service remained high with prevalence of domestic abuse being a key factor, this was believe explored by the Child Safeguarding Board
- Proactive focus and a target service for Early Help was key
- The service were confident that the timeline within the action plan was achievable as the expectation was all staff would be working to implement the actions within their everyday working to ensure it becomes the norm for running the service
- Briefings on the findings of OFSTED were being held which were available to all staff, these had proved popular with further dates being added which reflected a keenness from the wider organisation to assist in moving the service out of inadequate

RESOLVED

Cabinet CONSIDERED the report.

10 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Monday 05 March 2018

**MARTIN TETT
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**