

Minutes

Cabinet

Date: 12 November 2018

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

Time: 10.30 am to 11.30 am

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 A Hussain, Mr C Harriss and Mrs A Cranmer

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ms R Bennett, Mr R Ambrose, Mrs S Ashmead and Ms R Shimmin

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None were received.

Deputy Cabinet Members in attendance were Mrs A Cranmer, Mr C Harriss and Mr A Hussain.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 22 and 29 October were **AGREED** as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

4 HOT TOPICS

Cabinet's attention was brought to the following:

The Leader highlighted Remembrance Day events and services that had taken place across the County and those he had personally attended. He gave his thanks to all those involved and those that attended.

The Cabinet Member for Transportation highlighted the Chancellor's announcement of £420m pothole fund, with Buckinghamshire having an additional £4-6m to spend on its roads. Meetings would take place to review how best to spend the additional funding. He also stated that the gritters had already been out three times this autumn.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills drew Cabinet's attention to the Home to School Transport consultation that was underway. Consultation sessions had started with more to come over the coming weeks. The consultation would close on 4 January 2019.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services highlighted the Early Help consultation running until 13 December 2018, with a public meeting being held that evening in High Wycombe. Details of all public meetings could be found on the Buckinghamshire County Council website [consultation page](#). Mr Whyte also highlighted the new online counselling service [Kooth](#) that had been launched in October for children and young people in Buckinghamshire. The services had been commissioned in partnership with Oxford Health NHS and the Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group. Mr Whyte gave thanks to all the children in the county that had taken part in Remembrance parades, including Scouts, Guides, Cadets and school children.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing raised recent findings by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) with the financial stability of local provider Allied Healthcare. Lin Hazel highlighted the CEO of Allied had written to commissioning bodies giving reassurances and that the County Council had notified any relevant service users. The situation would be monitored closely going forward.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment highlighted the Household Waste Recycling Centre consultation that had just ended. There had been a high number of responses to consider and therefore the report into Cabinet to consider any recommendations would move from 10 December to 7 January Cabinet meeting. Mr Chapple also confirmed that the recent Unitary announcement had no impact on the consultation as decisions would still need to be taken due to budgetary pressures.

5 QUESTION TIME

There were 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 Q2 2018/19 FINANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Leader highlighted that the County were experiencing a number of budget pressure this year, in particular in Children's Services and Adult Social Care. He stated that some of these pressures had been offset by releasing contingencies funds. Currently there was a forecasted pressure of £200k at year end after.

Cabinet were asked to:

NOTE the Quarter 2 outturn forecast for revenue and capital budgets and discuss areas of concern.

Mr Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources highlighted the following points:

- The report set out the Revenue and Capital positions at the end of September 2018.
- Revenue outturn showed an overspend of £0.2m which was a significant improvement on the previous quarter which showed the effectiveness of financial management actions.
- Overall portfolio forecasted overspend was £7.1m with the biggest overspends being in Health and Wellbeing and Children's Services portfolios.
- There was a £6.9m underspend in corporate costs, Treasury Management and Capital financing mainly related to reserves and contingencies that were not expected to be used or needed and lower debt interest.
- Capital showed a net forecast slippage of £10.7m with the biggest items relating to Respite Care and schemes funded by the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and projected to be continued into next year.
- A refocus on debt management had resulted in a £0.8m reduction in the last year.

Cabinet raised and discussed the following points:

- Mr Whyte, Cabinet Member for Children's Services highlighted recent press claims that the Council were cutting children's services. Mr Whyte gave assurances that this was not the case and they were investing heavily in children's services, over and above what had been forecasted for. He stated that there were national pressures in the increase of looked after children which were also reflected in Buckinghamshire with additional children now in council care that had not been budgeted for. Regular budget

meetings took place within the service and investments in Buckinghamshire children's homes continued.

- Mr Chapple, Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment highlighted that even though his portfolio currently showed a 14% underspend this was only a reflection of the savings due to hot weather last year and could only be seen as a one off.
- Mr Appleyard, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills highlighted the overspend in Home to School Transport which was two thirds of the portfolio budget with other areas of pressure being special needs education and maintaining standards in schools.
- Mr Chilver stated that pressures in Property remained due to the backlog in maintenance and increased cost in contracts. Mr Chilver highlighted that the two recent investment properties would significantly help towards balancing the budget by year end.

RESOLVED: Cabinet NOTED the Quarter 2 outturn forecast for revenue and capital budgets and discussed areas of concern.

10 MODERNISING LOCAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE

The Leader referred Cabinet to the recent decision made by the Secretary of State to implement a new single unitary council in Buckinghamshire. The new Council would be implemented by April 2020 and elections would be held in May 2020.

Cabinet were asked to:

NOTE the recent decision from the government to implement a new single unitary council in Buckinghamshire; a further report to Cabinet will be provided when more detailed information is available.

Cabinet raised and discussed the following points:

- The importance of working closely with districts in particular due to the short timescales for implementation. The Leader stated he had written to district Leaders a number of times to discuss joint working going forward.
- The next key stages were making a decision on what will happen with district and parish and town council elections planned for next year. Mr Tett stated that it was hoped these would be postponed to then fall in line with unitary elections in May 2020. Mr Tett also stated that the next key stage was to agree the wording of the order to be put forward to Parliament. This was due to be agreed by the end of November.
- Cabinet discussed the importance of significant engagement with local communities and with parish and town councils.
- Reassurances to residents that services will continue as normal and any changes would be notified to residents in advance.
- A decision needed to be made in relation to the number of councillors that would be agreed for the new authority. The Secretary of State had set out in his announcement that it could be 147 rather than 98 as set out in the Council's business case and Cabinet discussed the logistical and financial issues of having an additional 49 members.

- Joint communications going forward was discussed and Cabinet were keen to work with district colleagues on joint messages to staff. In the meantime staff roadshows at BCC had taken place led by the Chief Executive.

RESOLVED: Cabinet NOTED the recent decision from the government to implement a new single unitary council in Buckinghamshire; a further report to Cabinet would be provided when more detailed information was available.

11 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)

12 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

RESOLVED: The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 22 and 29 October were **AGREED** as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

13 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

10 December 2018

**MARTIN TETT
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**