

Cabinet

22 January 2021 – At a virtual meeting of the Committee held at 10.30am with restricted public access.

Present:

Cllr Marshall (Chairman), Cllr Crow, Cllr Elkins, Cllr Hunt, Cllr A Jupp, Cllr N Jupp, Cllr Lanzer, Cllr Russell and Cllr Urquhart

Also in attendance: Cllr Barrett-Miles, Cllr J Dennis, Cllr Hillier, Cllr M Jones, Cllr Turner, Cllr Waight and Cllr Walsh

Part I

59. Declarations of Interest

59.1 No declarations of interest were declared.

60. Minutes

60.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

61. Exceptional Pressures Update

61.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive, Becky Shaw who advised that work continued across the authority and with partners to support residents, communities and businesses.

61.2 Dr Tony Hill, Interim Director of Public Health highlighted the fast pace of the Covid-19 situation and provided the most recent case figures and incidence rates for the County over the last few weeks. He advised that the NHS had lead responsibility for the vaccination programme, supply and demand was a pressure but that just over 50% of West Sussex care home residents had been vaccinated, with more supplies due.

61.3 Lucy Butler, Executive Director for Children, Young People and Learning advised that staffing levels in Children's Social Care were stable, with some face to face visits to children taking place. Whilst some learning bubbles and Early Years settings had closed, school attendance was at or above regional averages. She reported that schools remained concerned about re-opening. School meals for those eligible would be covered in February half term and provision was currently being looked at for Easter, Summer and Christmas.

- 61.4 Keith Hinkley, Executive Director of Adults Social Care referred to significant challenges for the NHS and social care. To mitigate the impact of discharges from hospital care, a broader range of services was being commissioned. 70 care homes were currently closed to new admissions. Services were being directed to critical parts of the system to help reduce pressure and challenges.
- 61.5 Chairmen of the scrutiny committees gave thanks to staff for their ongoing work amidst the pandemic and for continuing to provide and support critical services for residents under these difficult circumstances.
- 61.6 Cllr Dr James Walsh, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group commented on the NHS vaccination programme and the delivery to vulnerable groups. Cllr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group raised the need for a mass vaccination site in Sussex and for suitable IT for home learning pupils.
- 61.7 The Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities, Cllr Duncan Crow, advised of the support provided to those required to shield from the community hubs including helping households with food. The Cabinet Member for Environment, Cllr Deborah Urquhart, asked about support for the NHS vaccination work. She asked whether the Local Tracing Partnership (LTP) could track residents who had not attended for vaccination. Dr Tony Hill responded to these questions and those from others.
- 61.8 Resolved – that Cabinet notes the update and discussion.

62. West Sussex Plan Reset (CAB14_20/21)

- 62.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive, Becky Shaw. The report was introduced by the Leader who advised it was the latest iteration of the new corporate plan for WSCC. The plan now included detailed delivery outcomes and performance indicators to enable to focus and resources on the priorities.
- 62.2 Chairmen of the Health and Adults Social Care, Environment and Communities, Performance and Finance and Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committees noted their Committee's recent deliberations of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the plan and their overall satisfaction and support of them relative to their areas of business.
- 62.3 Cllr Dr James Walsh, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group felt there was a disconnect in the Reset plan from its aspirations and the Revenue Budget proposals. Cllr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group felt that KPIs in the past had not recognised challenges in the Children's or Fire and Rescue Services and therefore had some reservations.

62.4 Becky Shaw, Chief Executive explained the plan was intended as a starting place; that detailed action plans would develop and evolve over time for each department. These business plans would underpin the KPIs and encourage new ones. She advised the plan would return to Cabinet on a quarterly basis, and annually to County Council alongside the Revenue Budget. Cabinet Members commented on the KPIs and respective relevance to the work of their portfolios, particularly in the areas of economy, adults and health and children's social care. The Leader advised although WSCC had faced a number of challenges, work in all areas had been significant with good achievements recognised from external partners. Whilst the authority remained on a journey, which was overlaid with the pandemic, impact would be minimised by continuing to work with partners, resetting priorities and delivering good outcomes for residents.

62.5 Resolved – that Cabinet approves the Reset Plan and supporting documents for further consideration by the County Council at its February 2021 meeting, subject to amendments to KPI 22 and KPI 45 as follows:

KPI 22 – Equivalent tonnes (te) of CO₂ emissions from WSCC activities (CC)

Baseline – changed from 13,492 to 33,912CO₂te

2021/22 – changed from 13,000 to 30,521CO₂te

2022/23 - changed from 12,000 to 29,910CO₂te

2023/24 – changed from 11,000 to 28,116CO₂te

2024/25 – changed from 10,000 to 25,867CO₂te

KPI 45 – Changed to – All member training and development needs identified and training completed within 12 months of 2021 election (future year targets and measures to be set by the Member Development Group)

Baseline – no change

2021/22 – changed from within six months of the 2021 elections to 100%

2022/23 – changed from N/A to To be confirmed (TBC)

2023/24 – changed from N/A to TBC

2024/25 – changed from N/A to TBC

63. Revenue Budget 2021/22 and Capital Programme 2021/22-2025/26 (CAB15_20/21)

- 63.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Finance and Support Services. The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Finance, Cllr Jeremy Hunt, who outlined the report's detail regarding possible future financial risks and the council's ability to deal with those, proposals for a balanced budget, the importance of maintaining healthy reserves and the announcement of additional funding from the Government which enabled the removal or deferral of some savings options. The budget proposed to increase the core council tax rate by 1.99% and the adults' social care precept by 3%.
- 63.2 Chairmen of the Performance and Finance, Fire and Rescue Service and Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committees commented on the Revenue Budget report noting that looking to the future was key.
- 63.3 Cllr Dr James Walsh, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group was concerned about the savings affecting the Early Help service. Cllr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group welcomed the removal of some of the savings proposals but felt this was a reprieve only. Cllr Jones was concerned about cuts to the public health budget, particularly for those residents who don't qualify for additional support under the Care Act. He made further comments regarding the proposals for Early Years funding and adults' social care.
- 63.4 Cabinet Members made the following comments in relation to the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme:
- Significant capital projects for schools were highlighted within the Capital Programme.
 - A consultation on the removal of the Community Initiative Fund had taken place with all members and was supported in the main.
 - Investment to become carbon neutral and on renewable energy was crucial to fulfil the ambitions of the Climate Change Strategy.
 - The Ash Dieback issue would be addressed, with around 40,000 trees likely to be affected.
 - The Public Health Grant was fixed and would be used in ways to be most effective.
 - Children's Services continued on its improvement journey with investment in key services.
 - The council maintained its commitments against the backdrop of the pandemic to provide as much support as possible to residents and communities.
- 63.5 Resolved – that Cabinet endorses the County Council Budget for 2021/22, as set out in Appendix A and Annex 1, the Capital Strategy set out in Annex 2(a) and the Treasury Management Statement set out in Annex 2(b), for approval by County Council on 12 February 2021.

64. Local House Project for Care Leavers (CAB16_20/21)

- 64.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning. The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Cllr Jacquie Russell, who highlighted the identified need for a secure housing pathway for young people leaving care.
- 64.2 The Chairman of the Children and Young Peoples Services Scrutiny Committee, Cllr Stephen Hillier advised the Committee was in full support of the project as it provided stability for care leavers who might otherwise find independence a challenge.
- 64.3 Cllr Dr James Walsh, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, and Cllr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group both welcomed the project and hoped it would be a success to build upon.
- 64.4 Resolved – that Cabinet approves the implementation of a Local House Project in West Sussex in order to deliver the savings outlined in the report.

65. Emerging Issues

- 65.1 The Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities, Cllr Duncan Crow, advised of the positive report received from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) relating to how the service had adapted and responded to the Covid-19 pandemic. The following key points were highlighted:
- Staff wellbeing was a clear priority.
 - New ways of working had been introduced.
 - The service had continued to support the most vulnerable through prevention and protection.
 - The service was praised for its work with other organisations.
- 65.2 The Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities, Cllr Duncan Crow, Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee, Cllr, Steve Waight, and Chief Fire Officer, Sabrina Cohen-Hatton noted the progress made in the service and gave thanks to staff.
- 65.3 The Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, Cllr Amanda Jupp, advised that a permanent appointment had been made to the position of Director of Public Health, and that Alison Challenger would join the authority in April.

66. Date of Next Meeting

- 66.1 The next meeting of the Cabinet will be held on 23 February 2021.

The meeting ended at 1.18 pm

Chairman