

Cabinet

20 June 2023 – At a meeting of the Cabinet held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ.

Present: Cllr Marshall (Chairman)

Cllr Crow, Cllr J Dennis, Cllr Hunt, Cllr A Jupp, Cllr Lanzer, Cllr Russell, Cllr Urquhart and Cllr Waight

Also in attendance: Cllr Boram, Cllr Linehan and Cllr Montyn

Part I

1. Declarations of Interest

1.1 In accordance with the code of conduct Cllr Bob Lanzer declared a personal interest as a member of Crawley Borough Council in relation to item 7, The Sussex Shared Delivery Plan: Improving Lives Together.

2. Minutes

2.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2023 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

3. Performance and Resources Report - Quarter 4 2022/23 (CAB01_23/24)

3.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Support Services. The report was introduced by Cllr Jeremy Hunt, Cabinet Member for Finance and Property who outlined the performance and finance summaries for the quarter. The outturn position reports an overspend of £182k which will be managed through inflationary contingency reserves. Adults and Children Social Care continue to be the biggest pressure areas and support from Government going forward will be required to help manage this. The statutory override for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit remains for three years, however plans are needed to deal with this challenge. The Cabinet Member highlighted that some capital projects had been accelerated.

3.2 Cllr Kevin Boram, Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee congratulated the service on its performance and highlighted the importance of retained firefighters and their dedication to keeping people safe.

3.3 Cllr Paul Linehan, Chairman of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee recognised the financial pressures and challenges around placements for children cared for by the local authority reflecting market and national challenges. The Committee welcomed improvements in care leavers in employment, education and training and were pleased to hear the KPI relating to child protection plans is being

revised for 2023/24 to better reflect performance in this area. The challenge of Education and Health Care needs assessments was noted but the Committee was pleased that funding will be released to schools at the 20-week mark. The Committee recognised the impact of Covid-19 on attainment for disadvantaged pupils and KS2 and the pressure of the DSG.

3.4 Cllr Pieter Montyn, Chairman of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee advised the Committee had noted the impact of inflation and cost of living pressures on the Council's operations and that increased demand on most services is likely to present budget challenges. The Committee sought reassurance that effort is made to lobby the Government for increased funding in all areas and particularly in social care. Non delivery of savings is a concern and the Committee will monitor doubtful debt provision. The Committee requested to be informed on the cost of workforce absence to the Council.

3.5 The following points were made by Cabinet Members in discussion:

- Cllr Paul Marshall, Leader of the Council set out the aims in the Council Plan to deliver service priorities and to protect the environment. He highlighted the unbudgeted and unexpected challenges faced in recent months and the Council's ability to respond to these. He explained the positive achievements throughout the year including a good or outstanding Ofsted rating for all in-house residential children's homes, the ongoing delivery of many highway schemes and the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), improved Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision through the capital programme and carbon tonnage savings for schools.
- Cllr Steve Waight, Cabinet Member for Support Services and Economic Development advised of the portfolio underspend despite changes and additional costs to the statutory complaints services. The SmartCore project is a challenging and complex piece of work and the Cabinet Member thanked officers for their ongoing commitment to its delivery. The Smarter Working programme is ongoing and will likely result in the use of fewer buildings therefore giving potential for a reduction in the Council's carbon footprint. He welcomed the professionalism and effectiveness of the workforce and the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on absence.
- Cllr Jacquie Russell, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Learning and Skills described a challenging year for the portfolio with the complexity and cost of placements resulting in an overspend. Plans are in place to reduce the percentage of external providers and the number of children cared for is consistently lower. A recent full Ofsted inspection reported significant improvement and the service continues a relentless focus on quality and consistency of practice. The growth in numbers of those with an EHCP and requiring home to school transport has resulted in an overspend in the Learning and Skills element of the portfolio. The DSG deficit remains a big concern but work is underway to deliver better value for SEND activity. Adult learning re-provision has added a cost pressure and the Cabinet Member thanked staff in the service for mitigating the impact of recent disruption to this service.

- Cllr Deborah Urquhart, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change and Deputy Leader said the council is in a sound financial position and the use of contingency and reserves has offset challenges of inflation and demand in social care services. A national award has been won in recognition of the local energy company at the Manor Royal business park for the County Council's partnership working. A collaborative project with Chichester college and university is underway to inspire waste prevention, reduction and recycling. The increased disposal costs due to inflation have been offset due to reduced tonnages and increased recycling income and revenue from solar farms has offset energy costs. Work is underway to decarbonise the corporate estate.
- Cllr Joy Dennis, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport reported an outturn overspend of £1m owing mainly to energy costs. The number of required safety repairs has increased following wet weather. Concessionary bus fares have offset some overspend, as has additional works from highways and street works. Government funding has enabled the roll-out of on street electric vehicle charging. Significant improvement in highways defect repairs has been achieved, although recent weather has returned the KPI to amber. Work in partnership with Sussex Safer Roads and Sussex Police is ongoing to reduce the number of killed and seriously injured cases looking at where higher numbers of accidents occur and measures which can be taken to mitigate these.
- Cllr Bob Lanzer, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing described the increased access and availability of the Gro Health app to support mental health and physical health. The Cabinet Member hosted a seminar with a range of organisations which considered the effect of the pandemic on homeless people with its recommendations passed onto The Housing Forum. West Sussex has a good measure for the healthy weight of 10-11 year olds however work is ongoing to improve this further. Postponed activity during the pandemic resulted in a reserve which will be used to top-up the public health grant.
- Cllr Amanda Jupp, Cabinet Member for Adults Services advised the service ended the year on a balanced budget reached through mitigation measures and underspend in some areas. Continuing pressures on the service will present challenges in terms of demand and obtaining required savings. The Market Sustainability Plan has been published; strengthening the care workforce and supporting people to remain in their communities is a key focus. A data review and improvement plan will provide more up to date information to help inform and monitor the service and progress.

3.6 Cllr Hunt discussed the increased revenue budget for the financial year and the importance to try and remain within this budget in view of the pressures ahead. Cllr Hunt thanked staff, Cabinet and the Scrutiny Committee members for their comments and support for the work done by all teams.

3.7 Resolved – that Cabinet

1. agree the following transactions to cover the £10.541m Portfolio overspend position:

- a) Utilise the remaining £4.747m Contingency Budget
- b) Utilise the £0.665m Sources of Financing additional income
- c) Utilise the £4.947m additional income within Non-Portfolio budgets
- d) Utilise £0.182m from the Inflation Contingency Reserve

2. Agree the proposed changes to the Key Performance Indicator Measures detailed in Annex C.

4. West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Statement of Assurance 2022-23 (CAB02_23/24)

4.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Fire Officer. The report was introduced by Cllr Duncan Crow, Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue who outlined the requirement of the Statement of Assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and how that has due regard to the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). The Cabinet Member outlined the strategic priorities contained within the Statement and set out the performance of the 29 core measures in the assurance framework. The Horsham live fire training centre will become operational next month and ongoing improvements are taking place in the fire estate.

4.2 Cllr Kevin Boram, Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee thanked the service and team for the preparation of the complex document which clarifies important issues. Cllr Boram noted the journey ahead for the CRMP, the education of residents through consultation exercises and reflecting the needs of the community, partnership and joint working to deliver these services. The Committee will continue to look at issues related to workforce.

4.3 Cabinet Members noted the importance of the retained firefighter cohort and the need to increase their numbers.

4.4 Resolved – that Cabinet approve the West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Annual Statement of Assurance 2022-23.

5. Review and Appointment to Outside Bodies (CAB03_23/24)

5.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Law and Assurance.

5.2 Resolved – that Cabinet agrees to:

1. Remove the Shadow Sussex Integrated Care System Partnership Forum from the Outside Bodies list, following establishment of the Sussex Integrated Care System through an Integrated Care Board and the Health and Care Assembly.

2. Appoint Cllr Greenway to the Bognor Regis Regeneration Board for the remainder of the Council term (May 2025.)

6. The Sussex Shared Delivery Plan: Improving Lives Together

6.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Assistant Director for Health Integration. The report was introduced by Cllr Bob Lanzer, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing who set out the overview, structure and priorities of the Sussex Shared Delivery Plan. The Cabinet Member thanked officers in public health for their involvement and input into the strategy and delivery plan, which included putting a greater emphasis on prevention work, references to the Adult Social Care Strategy and Children First health priorities, amongst other key areas. Alan Sinclair, Director of Adults and Health added that the delivery plan was the product of positive joint working giving it a place-based focus. Work with the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board will be critical as the plan is delivered.

6.2 Cabinet Members agreed the importance of recognising place-based priorities and noted the pressure on acute systems, including waiting times and lists. Cabinet were pleased with the focus on immediate and longer-term improvement priorities and agreed the importance of managing demand and working on a preventative approach.

6.3 Resolved – That Cabinet give their support for the Sussex Shared Delivery Plan ahead of the Sussex Integrated Care Board on 5 July 2023.

7. Date of Next Meeting

7.1 The next meeting of Cabinet will be held on 25 July 2023.

The meeting ended at 12.13 pm

Chairman