

Cabinet

3 December 2019 – At a meeting of the Cabinet held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester.

Present:

Mr Crow, Mr Elkins, Mr Hunt, Mrs Jupp, Mr Jupp, Mr Lanzer, Mr Marshall, Mrs Russell and Mrs Urquhart

Part I

11. Declarations of Interest

11.1 In accordance with the code of conduct the following personal interests were declared:

- Mr Michael Jones as a member of Crawley Borough Council in relation to agenda item 5d and a member of the Electrical Vehicle Task & Finish Group (TFG) in relation to agenda item 5e.
- Mrs Joy Dennis as a member of the Electrical Vehicle TFG in relation to agenda item 5e.
- Mrs Jacquie Russell as the Chairman of the Electrical Vehicle TFG in relation to agenda item 5e.
- Mr Nigel Jupp as a member of Horsham District Council in relation to agenda item 5d.
- Mr Bob Lanzer as a member of Crawley Borough Council in relation to agenda item 5d

12. Minutes

12.1 Mrs Amanda Jupp, Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, asked if the first bullet point of paragraph 8.4 be reworded to simple state she had reservations in relation to option 5 and that the Chief Executive of Crawley Borough Council was leading on a Task and Finish Group.

12.2 Resolved – that with the above amendment the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

13. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Update 2020-21 to 2023-24

13.1 Mr Jeremy Hunt, Cabinet Member for Finance, introduced the previously circulated report by the Director of Finance and Support Services.

13.2 Mr Hunt explained that the report provided an update on the Councils Medium Term Financial Strategy projections. He explained that the position had changed since the last update to the Performance and Finance Select Committee in October and £2.2million was now required to balance next year's budget.

13.3 Mr Hunt explained the challenges and continued pressure on services particularly the improvement plans for Children's Services and Fire & Rescue. He also highlighted the uncertainty around government funding going forward. However, Mr Hunt was hopeful that a balanced budget would be presented to County Council in February 2020.

13.5 Cabinet noted the update.

14. Key Decisions

14.1 Mr Paul Marshall, The Leader, introduced the item explaining that each Cabinet Member would introduce their respective reports before opening to comments from the Select Committee Chairman and Minority Group Leaders.

14.2 Mr Marshall highlighted that the proposal relating to a reduction in the Post-16 Support Services identified for consideration at the Cabinet meeting in July was being deferred whilst further work was undertaken to review the service within the wider Children First Improvement Plan. Mr Nigel Jupp, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, added that in relation to that proposal he had recently visited the service to see their work for himself and hoped to be able to report back to Cabinet in the near future.

15. Creation of Additional Special Support Centres in Schools - phases 2&3 (CAB03(19/20))

15.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Education & Skills.

15.2 Mr Nigel Jupp, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, introduced the report. He explained that this followed on from a previous decision that successfully implemented phase 1 of this project and that this proposal was to move forward into phases 2 and 3. In the absence of Mr David Barling, Chairman of Children & Young People Services Select Committee, Mr Jupp confirmed that the Committee had previewed this decision and were supportive of the proposals. Mr Jupp invite his Cabinet colleagues to support this decision.

15.3 Mr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group, stated that he felt that the proposals made sense, but he asked for reassurance that the needs of the pupils be put ahead of cost savings. He also raised concern about the suitability of modular buildings.

15.4 Cabinet Members spoke in support of the proposal commenting that reducing the time that children have to travel and educating them within their local communities will no doubt better their quality of life. Mr Jupp confirmed that the modular buildings would have a long-life span and also meant less disruption within the schools during installation. He also confirmed positive feedback had been received from the schools.

15.5 RESOLVED that Cabinet approve the proposal to develop a full business case, to be taken through the County Council's capital governance process, for the second phase of the project for opening additional Special Support Centres (SSC) places attached to schools for

opening in September 2020 and to bring forward any individual schemes under phase 3 of the SSC investment programme from 2021 to 2020, where it is possible to do so. All the individual specific schemes that are brought forward under phases 2 and 3 will be subject to their own approval process.

16. Review of Library Offer (CAB04(19/20))

16.1 Cabinet considered the report by Executive Director Place Services.

16.2 Duncan Crow, Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities, introduced the report stating that he felt this saving proposal had the least impact on customers and provided reassurance that there were no plans to close any of the Counties libraries. He also explained that much work had been done to look at the needs of vulnerable customers.

16.3 Mr Andrew Barratt-Miles, Chairman of Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee stated that when previewed by Committee most members were in favour of the proposals, but concern was raised about vulnerable people, particularly in rural areas. Concern was also raised as to whether this proposal would have any impact on the future delivery of Community Hubs. The Committee did also request that the Cabinet Member ask Parish Councils to help assist vulnerable residents.

16.4 Mr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group, confirmed that Select Committee support was not unanimous and that his group was opposed to this proposal. He asked if consideration could be given to using a smaller, less costly vehicle to provide a mobile service. He also raised concern about the community solution that he believed was not yet in place to support vulnerable residents. Mr Jones stated he did not support the early closure of the main libraries.

16.5 Cabinet Members spoke in support of the proposals and praised services such as home library direct as a help to tackle social isolation and loneliness which were already in place. Mr Crow confirmed this proposal would have no effect on the Community Hubs Project. Mr Crow also stated that replacing the vehicles would be expensive both in procurement time and purchase cost. He also confirmed that the cost for a smaller vehicle would not be sufficiently less.

16.6 RESOLVED that Cabinet approve:

- (1) the cessation of the mobile library services;
- (2) the reduction in evening opening hours in the 4 main libraries with some minor adjustments elsewhere to ensure the offer is consistent across libraries from April 2020; and
- (3) minor logistical changes that will impact working practices but not customers

17. Local Assistance Network (LAN) (CAB05(19/20))

17.1 Cabinet considered a report by Executive Director of Adults and Health.

17.2 Mrs Amanda Jupp, Cabinet Member for Adults & Health introduced the report explaining that following a direct consultation with the providers the proposal was to continue to support individuals in the most immediate crisis and the smallest social enterprise providers. She confirmed that this proposal had taken account of the Task & Finish Groups recommendations.

17.3 Mr Bryan Turner, Chairman of Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee, stated that his Committee had delegated review of this proposal to a Task and Finish Group and that he was pleased that their recommendations had been taken into account.

17.4 Mr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group, stated that his group opposed any further reductions to the LAN and therefore asked Cabinet not to support this proposal. He did welcome the proposal to maintain the level of funding for foodbanks.

17.5 Cabinet Members spoke in support of the proposal. They referred to the fact that Citizens Advice Bureaux are already supported in that the County Council provides core funding of £350,000 per annum separate to the LAN. They also stated that the allocation proposed for Children and Family Centres will be based on actual spend in previous years.

17.6 Mrs Jupp also referred to a public health fund of £387,000 that is being given to Stonepillow and Turning Tides to allow them to help single people at Accident & Emergency who may require services other than hospital services. She also highlighted that a number of the foodbanks had secured other funding sources.

17.7 RESOLVED that Cabinet approve that the fund available for the Local Assistance Network grant allocations for 2019/20 be £100,000 and for the fund to be allocated in line with the priorities identified in section 3. of the attached report.

18. Reduction in Funding for Recycling Credits (CAB06(19/20))

18.1 Cabinet considered a report by Acting Executive Director Place Services.

18.2 Mr Roger Elkins declare a personal interest as a Member of Arun District Council and Mr Duncan Crow declared a personal interest as a Member of Crawley Borough Council.

18.3 Mrs Deborah Urquhart, Cabinet Member for Environment, introduced the report stating that this fund was intended to be shared with collection authorities to cover the cost of separate waste collections. However, in West Sussex we have co-mingling collections, so the District and Borough Councils do not have that additional cost. She went on to explain that the County Council had been sharing this fund as an incentive to increase recycling rates but there was no evidence to suggest this was working. Mrs Urquhart therefore highlighted the proposal to terminate

payments for recycling credits but to retain £2m in reserves to support any commitments to projects that increase recycling rates.

18.4 Mr Andrew Barratt-Miles, Chairman of Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee stated that when previewed by Committee most members were in favour of the proposals, but that support was not unanimous. He explained that information was sought from the District and Boroughs to evidence the use of the funds provided to them and but that the evidence had not been supplied.

18.5 Mr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group, stated that his group opposed this proposal and suggested it would result in unintended consequences such as contaminated loads. He also stated that it was an example of poor partnership working and that District and Borough Councils also had financial pressures.

18.6 Cabinet Members spoke in support of the proposal and highlighted that any use of this fund should be evidence based. They endorsed the proposal for the use of the reserve to incentivise schemes for improved levels of recycling.

18.7 RESOLVED that Cabinet approved that:

(1) The County Council formally notifies all the District and Borough Councils (D&Bs) in the county of the termination of all payments for recycling credits except those which are statutorily eligible under the Environmental Protection (Waste Recycling) Payments (England) Regulations 2006 from 1 April 2020.

(2) £2m is placed in a reserve to support Ds&Bs who commit to implementing a new service model for refuse and recycling collections, to a specification and timetable agreed with the County Council, including separate food waste collections, or agrees with the County Council alternative approach that will improve performance and reduce costs.

(3) £0.3m is set aside for the West Sussex Waste Partnership to deliver joint projects such as those concerning schools waste, education, campaigns etc. and to undertake waste composition analysis; and that

(4) Authority is delegated to the Acting Executive Director Place Services to develop, in consultation with D&Bs, the specification for the new service model, criteria for awarding the funding and the calculation method.

19. Electric Vehicle Strategy (CAB07(19/20))

19.1 Cabinet considered a report by Acting Executive Director Place Services.

19.2 Mrs Deborah Urquhart, Cabinet Member for Environment, introduced the report stating that to meet Government aspirations a network of charging infrastructure was required. She said there were both economic and environmental reasons to support this proposal. She thanked the Task and Finish Group for help in putting the Strategy together and recommended to Cabinet to support the proposal.

19.3 Mr Andrew Barratt-Miles, Chairman of Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee stated that he supported the proposal. He did highlight that he felt more information should be made available to the public about grants available for purchasing electric vehicles and having charging points installed.

19.4 Mr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group, welcomed the proposed strategy and hoped it would boost take up within the County.

19.5 Cabinet Members spoke in support of the proposal and highlighted how it supported other work going on within the Council such as Solar Farms, Solar panels for schools and the County Council's own reduced energy consumption. They also stated they would welcome more funding and research from central government into alternative energy such as hydrogen, to reduce the pressures on the national grid.

19.6 RESOLVED that Cabinet approve the Electric Vehicle Strategy for the period of 2019 – 2030, attached as Appendix 2.

20. Lease of Vacant Residential Properties to a Registered Provider (CAB08(19/20))

20.1 Cabinet considered the report by Director Property and Assets.

20.2 Mr Jeremy Hunt, Cabinet Member for Finance, introduced the report that detailed the future use of some County Council owned properties to be leased to a registered provider for the purpose of housing homeless families.

20.3 Mrs Joy Dennis, Chairman of Performance and Finance Select Committee stated that the report was due to come before her Committee later in the week but asked what consideration had been given to security arrangements especially to any properties where close to school grounds. She also asked what consideration had been given to what happens if the registered providers do not receive the grant funding and would the County Council be liable for the costs.

20.4 Mr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group, welcomed the proposal and asked if more vacant properties could be identified for this use. He also asked for reassurance about the accessibility of the properties for families such as bus routes or nearness to amenities.

20.5 Cabinet Members welcomed the proposal but asked that the questions raised by Mrs Dennis be responded to prior to the decision being published. In reference to Mr Jones's question that would be something for the registered provider to assess.

20.6 RESOLVED that Cabinet approve, subject to scrutiny and responses to the questions above, that:

1) The County Council enters into Lease agreements with the Registered Provider, YMCA Downslink Group on selected residential properties identified as suitable to house families to whom the County Council has a

Children Act duty for their temporary accommodation, and such other suitable properties as become available at nil rent to the registered provider, for either 6 or 11 years (length of lease to be determined by extent of works required to bring the properties up to standard) on the terms set out in section 2 of the report; and that

2) Authority is delegated to the Director Property and Assets in consultation with the Director of Law and Assurance to conclude the terms of the leases, and the nomination arrangements with the Registered Provider and to agree the list of suitable properties to be part of proposal for the scheme currently and in the future, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, should further properties become available.

21. Forward Plan

21.1 The Leader introduced the previously circulated report that listed all future decisions currently in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions. The Leader asked Cabinet to note the report and identify any decisions that require decisions at a future Cabinet.

21.2 Mr Tony Kershaw, Director of Law and Assurance, provided an update as a new edition of the Forward Plan had been published on 2 December 2019. He explained that a number of decisions listed as November had slipped to December and that three new decisions had been added, two for Education and Skills in relation to school funding and admissions arrangements and one for Economy and Corporate Resources in relation to the Crawley growth programme.

21.3 Mr Duncan Crow, Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities, confirmed that a decision had been published this morning for the procurement of replacement wheelchair accessible minibuses.

21.4 Mr Nigel Jupp, Cabinet Member for Education & Skills, referred to the decision on Woodlands Meed scheduled for January 2020. Mr Jupp stated that in anticipation of that decision he was minded to recommend to Cabinet that they honour the commitment made at County Council in February 2019 for new investment in the college, subject to an independent report on the fabric of the buildings and their suitability to meet the needs of the students. He stated that a report had been published and would be discussed at Children and Young People Services Select Committee tomorrow. He stated that he understood the long and difficult history in relation to this decision.

21.5 Mr Roger Elkins, Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure, referred to his previous decision about Highways Maintenance and stated he had now decided that pre-emptive county-wide weed spraying would be undertaken in 2020.

22. Outside Bodies Review and Appointments (CAB09(19/20))

22.1 Cabinet considered the report by Director of Law and Assurance that detailed proposed changes to appointments to outside bodies..

22.2 RESOLVED that Cabinet approved:

1) Changes to the appointments to the Outside Bodies listed in Appendix 1 until the end of the term of the County Council in May 2021.

2) Removal of the outside bodies listed in Appendix 2.

23. Date of Next Meeting

23.1 It was confirmed that the next meeting of Cabinet was scheduled for 14 January 2020.

The meeting ended at 12.40 pm

Chairman