

Cabinet

23 February 2021 – At a virtual meeting of the Cabinet 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

Apologies were received from Cllr Barrett-Miles and Cllr J Dennis

Also in attendance: Cllr Hillier, Cllr M Jones, Cllr Turner, Cllr Waight and Cllr Walsh

Part I

67. Declarations of Interest

67.1 No declarations of interest were made.

68. Minutes

68.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 January be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

69. Covid-19 Pandemic Update

69.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive. The report was introduced by Cllr Amanda Jupp, Cabinet Member for Adults and Health who advised on the current position in the county. A pan-Sussex asymptomatic community testing programme had been submitted to the Department of Health and Social Care for approval.

69.2 Cllr Nigel Jupp, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills highlighted the positive attendance figures for West Sussex schools. Cllr Duncan Crow, Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities advised of the work of the community hub in supporting additional residents for shielding and the winter grant scheme to deliver meals and praised the Fire and Rescue Service welfare checks work and continued support to the South Coast Ambulance. Cllr Bob Lanzer, Cabinet Member for Economy and Resources raised the need to assist the hospitality sector to reopen and urged residents to help the recovery through tourism in the county. Cllr Jeremy Hunt, Cabinet Member for Finance highlighted the support from government grants and how they were being used for local communities.

- 69.3 Dr Tony Hill, Interim Director of Public Health provided an update on most recent case figures, hospital capacity and the vaccination programme. Keith Hinkley, Executive Director of Adults and Health noted positive hospital flow and the mobilisation of community-based care services. Becky Shaw, Chief Executive, advised further support for businesses was expected to be announced from government in the budget.
- 69.4 Cllr Bryan Turner, Chairman of the Health and Adults Social Care Scrutiny Committee felt the focus now needed to be on the recovery of the care home market, domiciliary care and approaches to the treatment of cancer patients. He also noted the new strengths developed within the service.
- 69.5 Cllr Steve Waight, Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee considered the low rates of sickness or absence, and that he hoped school visits by the FRS could also recommence on 8 March. He further noted the reduced offsite training and the use of virtual reality training.
- 69.6 Cllr Stephen Hillier, Chairman of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee felt that teachers, frontline and early years staff should be vaccinated, that early years provision should be monitored so that it remains robust to support families and he asked about attendance levels of children with Education and Health Care Plans.
- 69.7 Cllr Dr James Walsh, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group noted the absence of a mass vaccination centre in Littlehampton and suggested one may assist increasing uptake in hard to reach groups. He asked what percentage of care home staff had been vaccinated.
- 69.8 Cllr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group welcomed the decrease in covid-19 case rates but asked about areas where rates were higher and how BAME communities were being reached. He said that teachers and early years staff should be prioritised for vaccination.
- 69.1 Cabinet Members made further comments in addition and in response to the points raised by the Scrutiny Chairmen and Minority Group Leaders:
- On 12 April, it was hoped libraries would reopen and operate as before, that record offices would open and it was expected there would be demand for ceremonies. Citizenship and birth registrations would be prioritised.
 - The Executive Director for Children, Young People and Learning had been lobbying government on the issue of vaccinations for teaching professionals.

- The figure relating to children with EHCPs over the past year was ahead of the national and regional average.
- The data for number of care staff who had been vaccinated would be circulated following the meeting.
- Lobbying had taken place to ensure all children on role at Early Years settings received their funding whether they were in attendance or not. This had reassured providers.

69.10 The Leader summarised the discussion noting that whilst there remained challenges, the priorities continued to be protecting residents, opening services and rebuilding the economy.

69.11 Resolved – that Cabinet notes the update and discussion.

70. Consultation on Early Help Service Redesign (CAB17_20/21)

- 70.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning. The report was introduced by Cllr Jacqui Russell, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People who outlined the planned widespread public consultation to review the Early Help service with proposals for a more agile and targeted approach and that during lockdown, even with centres closed, early help contacts had increased.
- 70.2 Lucy Butler, Executive Director for Children, Young People and Learning told Cabinet the proposals sought to be preventative to stop the requirement of intervention by social care. The proposals would include greater working with schools and the better focussing of resources.
- 70.3 Cllr Stephen Hiller, Chairman of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee advised the Committee considered the report in January and felt it was right to look at redesigning the offer for a more far reaching and aligned service between early help and social care. He advised the Committee supported the consultation and would review the outcomes in June.
- 70.4 Cllr Dr James Walsh, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group expressed concern at the closure of Find it Out Youth Centres and felt this may contribute to mental health issues. He asked the service to consider carefully the closure of Children and Family Centres.
- 70.5 Cllr Michael Jones, Leader of the Labour Group felt the overall reach of the service would not be increased by closing Children and Family Centres and asked for the footfall data by each individual centre. He asked why a pre-consultation exercise had not been undertaken to look at why people weren't attending the centres.

- 70.6 Cllr Duncan Crow, Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities commented that the plans were about delivering the best outcomes and not about cutting a service, noting it should reduce the demand on social care. He added a 'do nothing' approach would not manage the increase in demand the service. Cllr Nigel Jupp, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills felt it would enhance and strengthen the connection with schools and that an informal consultation with schools had shown them to be supportive. Cllr Amanda Jupp, Cabinet Member for Adults and Health gave her support for the proposals noting that the West Sussex early help model was recognised nationally for its intervention work. Cllr Jeremy Hunt, Cabinet Member for Finance advised he felt the proposals were another step in the council's improvement journey. Cllr Deborah Urquhart, Cabinet Member for Environment felt the proposals were innovative and enabled support to reach those in rural areas.
- 70.7 The Leader noted that libraries, health services and schools were also accessible for young people to access services otherwise provided by the Find it Out Centres. Alix Macfarlane, Interim Head of Communication and Engagement advised Cabinet of the consultation hub on which FAQs would be added and updated.
- 70.8 Cllr Jacquie Russell, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People thanked colleagues for their input and summarised that the buildings would be placed strategically in areas of greatest need, that libraries would deliver open access groupwork and that the consultation commencement was not about footfall but delivering the best outcomes for children and families.
- 70.9 Resolved – that Cabinet approves the plans for consultation from early March 2021 on the proposals for the Early Help service, the outcome of which will return to Cabinet in July 2021 for further consideration of the proposals for the service.

71. Emerging Issues

- 71.1 Cllr Deborah Urquhart, Cabinet Member for Environment advised of a recent pollination conference which had over 300 residents and community groups in attendance. She hoped to build on the work with communities by re-wilding gardens, green spaces and highway verges.

72. Date of Next Meeting

- 72.1 The next meeting of the Cabinet will be held on 23 March 2021.

The meeting ended at 12.27 pm

Chairman