

Cabinet

27 July 2021 – At a meeting of the Cabinet held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ.

Present: Cllr Marshall (Chairman)

Cllr Crow, Cllr Hunt, Cllr A Jupp, Cllr N Jupp, Cllr Lanzer, Cllr Russell, Cllr Urquhart and Cllr Waight.

Apologies were received from Cllr J Dennis, Cllr Lord and Cllr Wall

Also in attendance: Cllr Hillier and Cllr Montyn and Cllr Oxlade

Part I

6. Declarations of Interest

6.1 No declarations of interest were made.

7. Minutes

7.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 June be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

8. Early Help Service Redesign (CAB02_21/22)

8.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning. The report was introduced by Cllr Jacquie Russell, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, who outlined the redesign proposals, the responses to the consultation and the changes made after reviewing those.

8.2 Cllr Stephen Hillier, Chairman of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee advised that, overall, the proposals were supported to continue with the Children's Services improvement journey and to reduce intervention from social care. The Committee further felt that effective communication would be crucial for residents and partners to know how and where to access services.

8.3 A written statement from Cllr Kirsty Lord, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group was read out. Cllr Lord questioned the decision to carry out change whilst responding to the pandemic and alongside improvement work. She questioned accessibility with fewer 'front doors' and the impact on other services which operated from some centres. Cllr Lord stated that the response to consultation did not show support and suggested it be re-run.

8.4 Cllr Chris Oxlade, Leader of the Labour Group commented that the consultation results made clear how essential the service was and that the Labour Group did not feel it was clear how the

service would be delivered or how the centres would be utilised. He praised the troubled families initiative and asked how families who need support would be identified through the new model and suggested the decision be deferred and rethought.

8.5 The following comments and points were made by Cabinet in discussion:

- The consultation had taken account of what the public had said, with 5 changes which strengthened the original proposal.
- The Early Help offer was about delivery of a service and not the preservation of buildings.
- The service review supported the principles of the Council Plan in that it made best use of available resources, prioritised the most important things and those with most impact and through managing demand on services.
- The universal offer was preserved in areas where there was the greatest need.
- The DfE Commissioner for West Sussex Children's Services improvement supported the proposals in principle.
- Dedicated link workers in schools would play a key role in the revised offer in identifying children in need of help.
- The Early Help offer would be a flexible service increasing reach and providing a more targeted approach.
- Evidence and experience from other authorities has been drawn on.
- Local member knowledge would be vital over the coming weeks, as would talking to community groups to find alternative arrangements for other building users.
- Running costs would be reduced to enable additional staffing to deliver bespoke group work. Equally, WSCC would save on buildings' emissions, a step towards mitigating the effects of climate change.

8.6 The Leader thanked respondents to the consultation and highlighted the decision is about creating the most agile and effective service which reduces the need for intervention from social care. Cllr Russell summarised that change was integral to the wider transformation of the service and therefore further deferment was not an option. In considering the consultation feedback, adjustments had been made to reflect those in changes to the proposals, and this would increase the reach of the service.

8.7 Resolved – that Cabinet:

1. Approves the revised Early Help Service offer for implementation in December 2021.
2. Agrees plans for a staff consultation from early September 2021 to begin the process of implementing the new offer.

3. Agrees plans for Early Help to continue to operate out of 12 centres and declare the other centres surplus to the Early Help service's operational requirements.

9. Health and Social Care Integration (CAB03_21/22)

- 9.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Executive Director of Adults and Health. The report was introduced by Cllr Amanda Jupp, Cabinet Member for Adults Services who outlined that the newly published Health and Social Care Bill formalised working relationships between local authorities, the NHS and other partners. The Integrated Care System (ICS) proposed should help these partnerships plan and deliver the best outcomes for communities and improve health. Keith Hinkley, Executive Director for Adults and Health added that how West Sussex responds and engages the new arrangements is key, and the integrated governance model acknowledges the critical sovereignty of the partners.
- 9.2 A statement was read from Cllr Garry Wall, Chairman of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee, in which he welcomed the report and recommendations and the council's commitment to integrated care. He noted the changes were necessary to provide the complex range of services to residents but asked whether the required funding will be available to manage demands on services. The committee would be considering how best to scrutinise the proposals at its next Business Planning Group meeting.
- 9.3 Cllr Chris Oxlade, Leader of the Labour Group welcomed the commitment to partnership working across health and social care in West Sussex but felt that appointments to the outside bodies should also include councillors from the minority groups, particularly members with particular experience or a background in health. He felt that information sharing between partners needed to improve and awaited the developing plans with interest.
- 9.4 Cllr Kirsty Lord, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group submitted a written statement in which she welcomed the increased integration of commissioning and services but had concerns about the size of the ICS and the danger that it could lose touch with local community needs. Cllr Lord also suggested further consideration be given to the outside body appointments and asked that MPs and government were lobbied to clarify the funding arrangements now and into the future.
- 9.5 The following points were raised by Cabinet:
- The concept of an integrated care system was welcomed; the pandemic had encouraged joint working and this had delivered positive outcomes. The ICS was therefore appropriate and timely.

- Cabinet felt it was important that time is given to allow the approach to integrated working to bed in and to learn from experiences before making any further changes to the framework.
- Financial and resource implications would need to be carefully considered as the plans developed.
- Appointments to these outside bodies had been carefully considered.

9.6 Keith Hinkey, Executive Director of Adults Services advised, in response to questions over the finances that this provided an opportunity to develop joint and agreed plans, and questions surrounding investment would be settled through the core budget setting process within the county council. The issue of boundaries of responsibility would require ongoing discussions guided by the Care Act and national guidance to enable a collaborative approach to transforming services. A further governance charter was expected, as was information on the inspection regime. The council plan would be important to monitor relative performance and provide intelligence for the council plan for next year.

9.7 Resolved – that Cabinet approve:

1. The approach set out in the report to maintain the County Council's lead role and commitment to integrated care and improving population health working where appropriate across Sussex and to develop further plans with the local NHS to maintain this approach.
2. That the Director of Public Health shall sit on the shadow NHS Sussex Integrated Care System Board to represent the County Council's full range of interests.
3. That the Executive Director Adults and Health (DASS) continues to sit on the Sussex Health and Care Partnership Executive to represent the County Council's full range of interests.
4. To add the shadow Sussex Integrated Care System Partnership Forum to the County Council's Outside Body list and appoint Cllr Bob Lanzer, as Chairman of the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board, Cllr Amanda Jupp, as Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Cllr Garry Wall, as the Chairman of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee to represent the County Council on the Sussex Integrated Care System Partnership Forum, until the end of the term of the County Council in May 2025.
5. To confirm the appointments to the NHS Hospital Trusts as listed in 2.11 of the report, until the end of the term of the County Council in May 2025.

10. Quarterly Performance Monitor - Outturn 2020/21

(CAB04_21/22)

- 10.1 Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Finance and Support Services. The report was introduced by Cllr Jeremy Hunt, Cabinet Member for Finance and Property who described a challenging year, but that significant funding from government had helped to address the impact of COVID-19. Although the year had ended with an underspend of £8m, the longer-term impact of the pandemic remained unknown and other financial pressures were building. The Director of Finance and Support Services added that there were a number of uncertainties ahead including collection rates for council tax and business rates and the overspend on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) was a significant challenge. There had been some financial benefits including staff working remotely, a reduction in travel and the use of online training.
- 10.2 Cllr Pieter Montyn, Chairman of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee asked how the underspend passed to reserves was to be prioritised, how unspent grants could be avoided in future and whether issues with the Capita contract could have been resolved earlier. He also asked whether delayed capital investments would be caught up during the year and what action could help reduce staff sickness absence.
- 10.3 Cabinet Members made the following points in discussion:
- Cllr Amanda Jupp advised that unusual circumstances created by the pandemic led to a significant fall off in demand on care services, however this demand would rise again across all areas.
 - Cllr Nigel Jupp advised that proposals were being developed to reduce the overspend on the DSG. Underlying causes were being considered to combat the overspend, such as working with schools to become more inclusive, efficiencies and working with parents.
 - Cllr Steve Waight advised that the payment to Capita was arrived at after negotiations over increased activity. He advised that sickness absence due to stress and anxiety is being looked at. He noted that the council had had a good year in terms of performance and that staff, both frontline and support should be congratulated. He highlighted the reduction in travel and contributions to greenhouse gases and the key work of the service transformation fund which helped with the overall operation of the council.
 - Cllr Jacquie Russell advised the required placement numbers for children had exceeded expectations which meant external fostering arrangements had to be sought. Case loads had increased and agency staff expenditure was a further contributor to the outturn variation of £1.5m, however, despite the pandemic, savings had either been delivered in full or temporarily mitigated to enable the use of underspend elsewhere.

- Cllr Duncan Crow advised the Independent Advisory Panel had recognised the progress made within the Fire and Rescue Service. COVID-19 had presented a challenge for the FRS in being proactive in preventative work. Staff within the service had been supporting the emergency response and had received a COVID-19 inspection. The response to critical fires had exceeded the target for the first time in several years. An underspend in the communities budget was due to closed libraries and reduced staff travel but staff from libraries had taken on new tasks such as working with the community hub.
- Cllr Deborah Urquhart advised that forecasting spend was a difficult challenge as was predicting waste and recycling tonnage. She advised the Ash Dieback process needed to commence as soon as possible.
- Cllr Paul Marshall advised demand profiling during the pandemic was a very difficult task and service demand did not align with fiscal years. He added the support from Government in 2020/21 to deliver COVID-19 mitigation had enabled a capable financial position.

10.4 Cllr Hunt summarised that the position in December 2020 was reported without the expectation of the grants then received. The council needed to remain in a sound financial position to enable any challenges ahead to be met and managed.

10.5 Resolved – that Cabinet:

1. Notes the information contained in the Quarterly Performance Monitor, in particular the outturn financial position
2. Agrees the allocation of the contingency budget and underspend set out in paragraph 2.1 below:

It is proposed that the total corporate underspend of £8.923m, which is made up of £3.144m from portfolio underspending, £5.676m of unused Contingency budget and £0.103m of other non-portfolio underspending, is transferred to the following reserves:

- £4.700m Adults and Health Pressures and Recovery Reserve – to fund anticipated pandemic rebound pressures in 2021/22.
- £1.200m Ash Dieback Reserve – to accelerate critical tree felling works in 2021/22.
- £3.023m Service Transformation Reserve – in-year homeworking/ change in service delivery savings to be used to fund future innovative projects.

11. Appointments to Outside Bodies (CAB05_21/22)

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

11.2 Resolved – that Cabinet agrees to:

1. Appoint Cllr Sarah Payne to fill the vacancy on the Chichester Harbour Conservancy for the remainder of the Council term (May 2025)
2. Appoint Cllr Gary Markwell to replace Cllr Alison Cooper on the Littlehampton Harbour Board for the remainder of the Council term (May 2025).
3. Appoint Cllr John Charles to replace Cllr Gary Markwell on the Littlehampton Harbour Board Advisory Body for the remainder of the Council term (May 2025).
4. Appoint Cllr Deborah Urquhart to the Shoreham Harbour Joint Leaders Board for the remainder of the Council term (May 2025).
5. Appoint Cllr Nigel Jupp to the Duke of Edinburgh Award for the remainder of the Council term (May 2025).
6. Appoint Mrs Angela Smith as the Vice-Chairman on the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education.

12. Emerging Issues

- 12.1 Cllr Steve Waight, Cabinet Member for Support Services and Economic Development advised that despite the change in legal requirements, the view had been taken that staff should continue to work from home at least until September. Smarter ways of working is an ongoing project for the council with staff welfare at the heart.
- 12.2 Becky Shaw, Chief Executive added that the pandemic had advanced smarter ways of working and where there were clear benefits these would be retained to make for better experiences for customers and staff. The principles would be driven by business need, customer experience and enabled staff. Learning and trialling was taking place with teams currently looking at technology, workplace design and locations, all of which would be underpinned by the council plan and climate change agenda.

13. Date of Next Meeting

- 13.1 The next meeting of the Cabinet will be held on 14 September 2021.

The meeting ended at 1.10 pm

Chairman