

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 9 July 2020 at 10.00 am in Remote Meeting

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY, 15 JULY 2020

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY, 20 JULY 2020)

Present: Councillors S Davies (Chair), R A Overton (Vice-Chair), A J Burford, E M Callear, L D Carter, R C Evans, C Healy, S A W Reynolds, P Watling and D Wright.

Also Present: Cllr A J Eade (Conservative Group Leader) and Cllr W L Tomlinson (Liberal Democrats / Independent Group Leader)

CAB-9 Declarations of Interest

None.

CAB-10 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2020 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CAB-11 2020/21 Financial Monitoring Report

Key Decision identified as **2020/21 Financial Monitoring Report** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 10 June 2020.

RESERVED FOR COUNCIL

Councillor R C Evans, Cabinet Member for Council Finance & Governance presented the report of the Director: Finance & HR, Chief Finance Officer.

Cabinet Members noted the significant impact of the coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) on the country, which had impacted on the Council's financial pressures. There were increased costs in relation to the provision of Social Care; the purchase of essential personal, protective equipment (PPE); income shortfall following the closure of facilities and services; and a projected shortfall in relation to Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates. The Council received £10.1m from the National Emergency Response Funding grant, Members noted the projected pressure was estimated to be around £20.7m. Cabinet Members also noted a projected £8m shortfall from business rates and council tax, which resulted in a residual pressure of around £18.6m.

Work was being undertaken to refine and update the pressures and identify mitigations, which would feed into the Mid-Year 2020/21 Service & Financial Planning Strategy.

There were a number of variations noted from the approved budget, as noted in the report. Members acknowledged that the majority of these were in relation to Covid-19.

The funding outlook for the medium term was still very uncertain. The Local Government Finance System changes had been deferred and funding levels for 2021/22 remained unclear. The one year Government 'spending round' was expected to be announced in the autumn.

The Capital programme totalled £94m which included all approvals since the budget had been set. Projected spend was 78.4% of the budget allocation. The impact of Covid-19 would be closely monitored and projections updated once information became available.

The Income monitoring position was noted; Covid-19 had significantly impacted on collection rates, with Business Rates, Council Tax and Sales Ledger all behind target. Debt recovery action had been suspended from March 2020, as part of a range of support provided to residents and businesses.

Cabinet Members discussed the impact Covid-19 had on the Borough, including the significant financial impact and urged central government to provide the promised financial support for local Councils. In response to a question from the Conservative Group Leader, the Leader stated that he would continue to work with the Borough's two MPs to lobby for a fair deal for Telford and Wrekin.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that it be noted that the 2020/21 revenue budget position has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic;**

- (b) to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that delegation be granted to the Director: Finance & HR to, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Council Finance & Governance, make changes to the Service & Financial Planning Strategy to reflect Covid-19 grants received and any associated spend;**

- (c) the position in relation to capital spend be noted and to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL it approves the changes to the capital programme as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report;**

- (d) the collection rates for NNDR, council tax and sales ledger be noted**

Key Decision identified as **Better Homes For All** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 10 June 2020.

Councillor D Wright, Cabinet Member for Economy, Housing, Transport and Infrastructure, presented the report of the Director: Housing, Employment & Infrastructure. The report provided Cabinet with an update on the programme.

Members noted the report, which advised:

- More than 200 Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) had been licensed and two prosecutions had taken place to address poorly managed HMOs;
- Over 400 enforcement notices had been issued to bring properties up to standard;
- The first Banning Order in England had been granted, which prevented the landlord concerned with working in the property industry for up to five years;
- Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers tackled all aspects of Anti Social Behaviour;

The report set out proposals to maintain and broaden the scope of the programme to make best use of and improve the quality of existing homes in the Borough. Two new priority areas had been identified for 2020/21:

- Bringing long term empty residential properties back into use;
- Tackling fuel poverty across the Borough by increasing the take up of energy efficiency schemes and funding. This included the publication of the Statement of Intent for the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report and stated that housing was the foundation to build lives. Cabinet Members discussed the impact of fuel poverty and welcomed the support available to residents. A discussion was held in respect of the recent government announcements on fuel poverty and it was confirmed that the scheme would be looked at in detail to ensure residents received the most benefit.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the continued progress outlined in Section 4 of the report be noted;**
- (b) The next steps as set out in Section 5 of the report, specifically 5.1.3 and 5.2.2 along with the Statement of Intent set out in Appendix A of the report, outlining the approach to Empty Properties in the Borough and Improving Energy Efficiency to help address fuel poverty be agreed;**
- (c) That authority be delegated to the Director: Housing, Employment & Infrastructure, in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Members for Housing, Transport & Infrastructure and Enforcement, Community Safety & Customer Services, to take the necessary steps to implement these recommendations.**

CAB-13 Health & Wellbeing Strategy

Key Decision identified as **Health & Wellbeing Strategy** in the Notice of Key Decisions published on 10 June 2020.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care presented the report of the Director: Health, Wellbeing & Commissioning. The report outlined the proposals for the refreshed Health & Wellbeing Strategy for 2020/21 – 2022/23. It was noted that the strategy had been produced before the full impact of Covid-19 had been realised. The pandemic had significantly impacted on resident's health and wellbeing, particularly in relation to emotional and mental wellbeing. The strategy had been updated to reflect the recovery, reform and reset agenda.

The proposed priorities were:

- Continued development of the Telford & Wrekin Integrated Place Partnership
- Focus on tackling health inequalities
- Call to action to improve emotional and mental wellbeing
- Protection from infectious diseases and other threats.

Cabinet Members paid tribute to the work of the local community to support the strategy.

RESOLVED that the Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2020/21-2022/23 be approved.

CAB-14 Ofsted ILACS Report

Non-Key Decision

Councillor S A W Reynolds, Cabinet Member for Children's Services presented the report of the Executive Director: Children's & Family Services. The report presented the findings of the recent Ofsted Inspection of the Local Authority Children's Services.

The inspection assessed the Council's Children's Services to be 'outstanding'. Two of the three main inspection areas (the experiences and progress of children in care and the impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families) were judged 'outstanding' and the remaining area (experiences and progress of children who need help and protection) was 'good'. It was noted that only 18 local authorities had been judged to be outstanding and Telford & Wrekin was the only authority in the West Midlands and North West of England to achieve this.

One area was noted to need improvement, 'the quality of recording in children's plans and at key management decision points'. The Local Authority

was required to submit an action plan responding to the report within 70 working days of receiving it.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report and praised the officers for their hard work to achieve the judgment. Cabinet Members acknowledged that this report had been ten years in the making and raised the significant investment that had occurred in children's services over this time.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) The content of the report be noted;**
- (b) The request by Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to monitor the implementation of the action plan be noted and supported;**
- (c) The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee be asked to provide a report to Cabinet setting out progress being made against the Action Plan.**

CAB-15 Outstanding Shared Lives Service - The Outcome Of The Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection Of The Local Authority Shared Lives Service

Non-Key Decision

The Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care presented the report of the Director: Adult Social Care. The report summarised the results of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of Telford & Wrekin Shared Lives Services. The service had been assessed to be outstanding.

Cabinet Members noted that the service was only one of 5% of Shared Lives Schemes across England rated outstanding. The report highlighted areas of good practice.

The Service had looked for further development opportunities, which included:

- A promotional campaign
- An extended home from hospital pilot
- Extended day support offer
- Shared Lives Plus.

Cabinet Members stated that this was a good news story and acknowledged that as well as being an excellent, supportive service, it also provided good value for money. Cabinet Members praised the hard work of the small, dedicated team of officers who worked in this service.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) The content of the report be noted;**
- (b) The Outstanding Shared Lives Service and in particular the high quality of care provided by Shared Lives Carers that support residents be supported and promoted;**

(c) The Shared Lives Services be supported to continue to develop as outline in Section B, 5.4 of the report to support more people in Telford and Wrekin.

The meeting ended at 10.59 am

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Anthea Lowe
Associate Director: Policy & Governance
Date: **Wednesday, 15 JULY 2020**

Signed

Date: Thursday, 24 September 2020