



Committee and Date

Cabinet

19 October 2016

CABINET

**Minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2016 in the Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND
12.30 - 1.35 pm**

Responsible Officer: Jane Palmer
Email: jane.palmer@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257712

Present

Councillors Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader) - in the Chair, Karen Calder, Lee Chapman, Simon Jones, Malcolm Price, Stuart West and Michael Wood

43 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from the Leader, Councillor Malcolm Pate and Councillors David Minnery and Cecilia Motley.

Cabinet held a minute of silence as a mark of respect on the sad news of the recent death of the Leader's wife, Mrs Sue Pate.

44 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None were declared.

45 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 14 September 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Deputy Leader.

46 Public Question Time

Mr Richard Green had submitted a question querying why the partnership approach and community involvement had not been explored in relation to the Quarry swimming pool. He did not wish to raise a supplementary question and noted the written response tabled at the meeting.

Dr Nick Richards had submitted a question on behalf of the Quarry Swimming and Fitness Forum members relating to the lack of in depth survey of the Quarry plant and buildings and the lack of economic analysis. He asked a supplementary

question to the tabled response on the effect of the location of the new facility on revenue, cost to public health [on those people who walked and cycled to the Quarry] and levels of participation. The Director of Place and Enterprise drew attention to the report presented to the Cabinet meeting on 13 July 2016 and stressed that although Shropshire Council had a preferred location for the new facility there was an option for others to make an expression of interest in the existing facility at the Quarry.

Mr Grainger-Jones, Chairman of the Shrewsbury Civic Society, had submitted a question relating to the one-year period during which all parties could consider their positions and assemble credible alternatives. As a supplementary question, he asked the reasons why Members of the Council who were also members of Shrewsbury Town Council had been advised not to participate in the debate on the swimming pool. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services [Monitoring Officer] explained that dual hatted Members had been given advice and that it was for each individual to make their own decision in the light of the advice that had been provided.

A hard copy of all of the questions submitted and the written responses provided was tabled at the meeting and is included in the formal record of the meeting.

47 Scrutiny Items

There were no scrutiny items.

48 Improved Swimming Facilities for Shrewsbury

Councillors Malcolm Price and Alan Mosley left the meeting during consideration of this item.

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture presented a report from the Director of Place and Enterprise on improved swimming facilities for Shrewsbury.

Councillor Roger Evans stated that he disagreed wholeheartedly with the content of the report; he considered that it was biased and had ignored the consultation results and the views of local people. He stated that the Council should seek to work in partnership with the local community and keep the Quarry pool open.

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture, Councillor Stuart West, stressed that the Council had listened and continued to listen to the local community and he drew attention to the 12-month period for interested organisations to come forward with business cases to keep swimming provision on the Quarry site.

The Deputy Leader commented that the report detailed the Shrewsbury Sports Village, the Sundorne site as the preferred option against which the Quarry option would be compared and thus opened the door for a true comparison to be made. The Portfolio Holder for Adults, Councillor Lee Chapman agreed that the Council needed to identify its preferred option in order for a true comparison with any other bid to be made. He suggested that the 12-month window needed to be used wisely by all parties.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet confirms that:

- i. The Council's preferred location for improved swimming provision in Shrewsbury is the Shrewsbury Sports Village. This decision is based on the options appraisal which was reported in detail to Cabinet on the 13th July 2016.
- ii. In view of the outcome of the public consultation and interest in the retention of a town centre location any interested organisations who wishes to do so, is given the opportunity of up to 12 months to develop alternative business case proposals to retain swimming provision at the Quarry or other town centre location.
- iii. There should be an interim stage and that interested organisations are provided with the opportunity to submit a Strategic Outline Business Case. Any interested organisation which does not meet minimum criteria will be given an opportunity of addressing weaknesses or may choose to withdraw their interest.
- iv. All Strategic Outline Business Cases and Full Business Cases, including the Council's Strategic Outline Business Case and Full Business Case for the Shrewsbury Sports Village, will be evaluated against the process, timetable, evaluation requirements and methodology set out within the Terms of Reference included as Appendix 1 on a comparative basis.
- v. A report on the outcome of the evaluation of all submitted Full Business Cases will be brought back to Cabinet in due course for a decision on the final preferred location. A decision on whether to go ahead with the replacement of the existing pool can be taken thereafter in light of the Council's Financial Strategy.

49 Financial Strategy 2017/18 to 2019/20

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support presented a report by the Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance on the Council's Financial Strategy 2017/18 to 2019/20 and drew particular attention to Chart 1 [paragraph 5.7] of the report and Appendix 3.

Councillor Mosley stated that the use of one-off resources to fund the current budget shortfall was a temporary solution and difficulties would still have to be faced in years to come. The Portfolio Holder for Adults, Councillor Lee Chapman remarked that the report was to be welcomed and he particularly drew attention to the large number of voluntary organisations that could work with the Council towards a sustainable future. The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing, Regulatory Services and the Environment, Councillor Mal Price, added that this was a process to make the budget work in future years and to ensure a fair settlement for Shropshire in years to come.

Councillor Hannah Fraser [Councillor Roger Evans had left the meeting for another engagement] drew attention to paragraph 3.3 of the report and asked when the Council would accept the Government's settlement offer. The Chief Executive advised that Council had already agreed to accept the offer [Council 21 July 2016] and this provided certainty; those authorities who did not accept the offer would be more than likely to receive a decrease rather than an increase in the Government's offer. The Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance added that the offer made was generally the minimum that may be offered [so the amount actually received may be more].

Responding to Councillor Fraser, the Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance stated that the Veolia smoothing reserve had been replaced by £2M growth in the revenue budget.

Responding to a question from Councillor Mosley, the Chief Executive stressed that the transfer of local services would not change and the Council would continue to work with local Parish and Town Councils to take on services with its support.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the use of Core Grants and other short and medium term resources to provide a balanced budget for 2017/18 and reduced funding gap in 2018/19 (as set out in Table 3) be agreed and recommended to Council
- b. That it be noted that to achieve a balanced budget without further Red RAG Rated Savings proposals being implemented will require the allocation of over £34m of short and medium term proposals over two financial years which will not reduce the size of the core funding gap in future years (still requiring £28.7m of base budget savings by 2019/20).
- c. That it be noted that further work is being progressed over the next 12 months to deliver a Sustainable Business Model for the Council to close the Core Funding Gap and deliver a financially self-sufficient Council in the medium to long term.

50 Foster Care Payments Policy

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support presented a report from the Director of Children's Services on the Foster Care Payments Policy and drew attention to the budgetary impact of back pay and the projected spend up to March 2017.

Cabinet noted the aim of the Policy to ensure retention and recruitment of sufficient foster carers to meet the needs of Looked After Children in the county and to effectively compete with independent foster care agencies; the Policy provided a level playing field where all foster carers would receive the same level of allowances and the same amount of training. The excellent work provided by foster carers in the county was recognised and praised.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the proposed new Policy 'Payment Arrangements for Foster Carers' be approved and that it takes effect from 1 April 2016; and
- ii) That the potential financial pressure associated with this change in policy be reviewed and noted.

51 Update on Refugee Resettlement Programme and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) Transfer Programme

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing, Regulatory Services and Environment presented a report from the Director of Adult Services that provided an update on the Refugee Resettlement Programme and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children [UASC] Transfer Programme. He explained that Shropshire had capacity to take another five families and the original offer of 60 people had not yet been reached. Cabinet and all parties present agreed that this was a humanitarian issue and Shropshire should take in as many people as it could afford to. Thanks were voiced to the great efforts and dedication of all those serving on the Cross Party Working Group who were working hard to provide support to refugees in the county.

Councillor Mosley stated that the broader issue of stirring the Government's social conscience to achieve an increase in the quota of refugees being taken by the United Kingdom needed to be considered in the wider arena of a future meeting of full Council.

RESOLVED:

- a) That Cabinet confirms its ongoing commitment to providing support, as appropriate, to Syrian refugees and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children and notes the further update regarding the Asylum Dispersal Scheme
- b) That Cabinet agrees to Shropshire supporting up to a further 5 Syrian refugee families under the Syrian Repatriation Programme managed by UNHR to take the total cohort in Shropshire up to 15 families over the next 12 months, or around 60 or so people, dependent on family size.
- c) That Cabinet agrees to participate in the UASC dispersal scheme on a voluntary basis to reach the 0.07% of our total child population. This will include assisting kent with their challenge of Seeker Children, and future requests to support UASC and refugees from Europe when further clarity is provided on the position regarding how the dispersal scheme will operate, and that delegated responsibility is allocated to the director of children's services to agree any requests for support and to ensure that appropriate staffing resources are in place.
- d) That Cabinet note the number of UASC already supported in Shropshire which will contribute to the overall total required under the UASC national dispersal scheme.

- e) That cabinet notes the need to undertake a further recruitment drive for supported accommodation for UASC.
- f) That cabinet agrees to any further funding being made available for the resettlement of Syrian refugees through extension of the scheme being ring-fenced within a dedicated cost centre in Adult Social Care to provide support to this group of people over the 5 year term of the funding.
- g) That Cabinet agrees to the funding being made available to support the UASC Services.

52 West Mercia Energy Governance

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support presented a report from the Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance detailing the proposed amendments to the Joint Agreement governing the operation of the West Mercia Energy [WME] Joint Committee.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the current Joint Agreement between the WME Member Authorities be amended in line with the report and as attached at Appendix A to this report, and authorises the execution of a Deed of Variation to make such amendments;
- ii) That authority be delegated to the Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance (s151 Officer) to agree with the other constituent authorities any further amendments to the Joint Agreement required prior to completion.

53 Annual Health and Safety Performance Report 2015/16

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support presented a report from the Head of Human Resources and Development on the Annual Health and Safety Performance. He commended the hard work and the progress made by the Health and Safety Team.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the Annual Health and Safety Performance Report 2015/16 be accepted; particularly noting that:

- Good progress has been made during 2015/2016 on managing health and safety across the Council.
- Reportable employee accidents to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) and minor accidents have increased compared to last year's figures.
- Benchmarking with other Unitary Councils show that Shropshire Council performs well in terms of accident statistics.
- The Health & Safety Team continues to maintain a good relationship with the HSE.

54 Exclusion of the Public and Press

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and Paragraph 10.2 of the Council’s Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items.

55 Community Energy

Having declared an interest in this item, the Deputy Leader left the meeting at this point. The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support presented a report from the Director of Place and Enterprise on a community energy model.

RESOLVED:

That the four recommendations be approved as detailed in the confidential report.

56 Exempt Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the confidential Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 14 September 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Deputy Leader.

Signed Leader

Date: