



Committee and Date

Cabinet

17 July 2024

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2024

**In the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND
10.30 am**

Responsible Officer: Ashley Kendrick

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Present

Councillor Lezley Picton (Chairman)

Councillors Cecilia Motley, Ian Nellins, Robert Macey, Gwilym Butler, Dean Carroll,
Kirstie Hurst-Knight, Mark Jones, Dan Morris and Chris Schofield

152 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Julian Dean and Tanya Miles, Executive Director of People.

153 Disclosable Interests

There were no disclosable interests received.

154 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2024 as an accurate record.

155 Public Question Time

Adam Fejfer, in relation to the voluntary redundancy scheme. A response was provided by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities.

The full questions and the responses provided to them are available from the public question item on the web page for the meeting [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 5th June, 2024, 10.30 am — Shropshire Council](#)

156 Member Question Time

Members' questions had been received from the following:

Councillor Peter Broomhall, in relation to pothole repairs. In response to a supplementary question regarding the time scale for repairs to potholes in New Street, the Portfolio Holder for Highways confirmed that he would speak to the Highways team and send a written response.

Councillor Rob Wilson, read aloud by Councillor Roger Evans, regarding overgrown hedging. By way of supplementary question, a request was made for the Council to conduct a social media and public information campaign about landowners' responsibilities under the 1980 Highways Act, including why it is so important to keep footways fully accessible. It was confirmed that this would be investigated after the pre-election period.

Councillor Bernie Bentick, in relation to Meole Active Travel Quarter. In response to a number of supplementary questions, the Portfolio Holder for Highways requested that they be sent in an email for a written response to be provided.

The full questions and responses provided can be found on [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 5th June, 2024, 10.30 am — Shropshire Council](#)

157 **Scrutiny Items**

There were no scrutiny items.

158 **Financial Outturn 2023/24**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities introduced the report which provided a detailed review of Shropshire Council 2023/24 financial performance for revenue and capital.

He highlighted the challenges and achievements of the previous financial year, the savings delivery, and the contingency plan of using reserves.

The finance team and the staff were thanked for their work.

Concern was expressed regarding the financial outturn, the use of reserves and level of overspend. It was also noted that the financial outturn had been raised within the performance report as an exception. The Portfolio Holder explained the difficulties of predicting the demand and inflation and advised that the overspend was only a small percentage of the gross and net budget, and that the council was transparent about the issues faced.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet Members:

In respect of the revenue budget:

- a. Noted that the outturn for overall variance in the year is £7.877m above budget
- b. Noted the consequent level of the General Fund balance is £8.237m.
- c. Noted the service-related use of £19.424m of Earmarked Reserves & Provisions and the resulting level of earmarked reserves of £35.407m (£26.551m if the balances held by schools are excluded).
- d. Noted the level of savings delivery achieved over the year
- e. Noted that the combination of earmarked and un-earmarked (General) reserves of £43.644m is below a level that would be regarded as safe, taking into account local circumstances. The MTFS sets out an agreed plan to restore these balances to safer levels.

Relating to ringfenced funding:

- f. Noted the performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – £0.623m (3%) deficit outturn for 2023/24 on £20.532m turnover, and the resulting level of the HRA reserve of £11.737m.
- g. Noted the outturn for the DSG and the consequent level of the DSG reserve.
- h. Noted that the level of school balances has decreased by £0.451m, from £7.791m in 2022/23 to £7.340m, in the financial year.

In respect of the capital programme:

- i. Approved net budget variations of £16.156m to the 2023/24 capital programme (in Appendix 10) and the re-profiled 2023/24 capital budget of £100.012m.
- j. Approved the re-profiled capital budgets of £117.776m for 2024/25, including slippage of £7.673m from 2023/24, £92.339m for 2025/26 and £48.873m for 2026/27 as detailed in Appendix 13.
- k. Accepted the outturn expenditure set out in Appendices 11 and 12 of £92.339m, representing 92.3% of the revised capital budget for 2023/24.
- l. Approved retaining a balance of capital receipts set aside of £15.175m as at 31st March 2024 to generate a one-off Minimum Revenue Provision saving of £0.420m in 2024/25.

159 Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 4 2023/24

The Portfolio Holder for Culture and Digital presented the report which showed progress to date and highlighted the improvements in recycling rates and temporary accommodation and 11 exceptions that had been raised.

Queries were raised regarding the targets for street lighting conversion, environmental permit inspections and EHCP backlogs. The Portfolio Holder for Highways confirmed that the streetlighting conversion project was due for completion by the end of June and that some lights were unsuitable for conversion; therefore meeting a target of 100% was not possible. He also advised that the service was working to improve the environmental permit inspection rate. With regards to the EHCP targets, the Portfolio Holder for Children and Education advised that there was an action plan in place and that all partners had agreed to clear the backlog by December.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities highlighted that there were more indicators that were performing well than those which were not and that the council was transparent about the issues.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

- 1. Reviewed and considered performance dashboard information alongside this exception report.

2. Noted progress to date in achieving the outcomes of The Shropshire Plan (TSP) and comment as appropriate.
3. Considered that the KPIs currently agreed remain the same for 2024/2025.
4. The Portfolio Holders considered reviewing the targets for the agreed KPIs with the relevant Executive Director.
5. Considered a new set of KPIs and deliverables aligned with the review of The Shropshire Plan.

160 Treasury Management Update Quarter 4 2023/24

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities introduced the report which outlined the treasury management activities of the Council in the fourth quarter of 2023/24. It highlighted the economic environment in which treasury management decisions had been made and provided an update on the performance of the treasury management function.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet noted that the Council remains fully compliant with the agreed prudential indicators and the treasury management strategy.

161 Financial Monitoring Period 1

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities presented the report which members noted was the first of its kind to provide early insight into the year ahead. He explained the projected overspend of 29 million and the contingency plan of using reserves.

Members noted that the savings plans that were started in the last financial year should start to be realised in this financial year. Further detail and clarity would be provided in the next periods.

The finance and transformation teams were thanked for their work, together with the Portfolio Holder for bringing the report forward.

Concern was raised regarding the projected revenue outturn by service and the number of comments about 'in development' for plans to address the £62million savings. This amounted to over £1million per week and now being in June, targets have not been met. There was also concern regarding a shortfall of £10 million for capital receipts.

The Portfolio Holder responded and advised that at the end of April, which was six weeks ago, there was only 23% of savings which were undefined, which is around £14.3million. However, there was a contingency plan, and they will try to deliver as much of the savings as possible this year.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet Members:

1. Noted that the position set out in the report reflects the best information available after the first 4 weeks of the year (with c90% of the year remaining), and hence considerable uncertainty in these early estimates which will be taken forward as a 'floor' position. P2 will be expected to help set out a 'ceiling' position, resulting in a 'control corridor' which can be considered in future reports.
2. Noted that at the end of Period 1 (30th April 2024), the indicative level of savings delivery is £47.907m (77%), resulting in a projected spend over budget of £29.006m for 2024/25.
3. Noted the projected General Fund Balance of £9.815m for 31 March 2025 if the projected spend over budget is realised.

162 Recommendation for the Adderley, Moreton Say and Norton in Hales Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to Referendum

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services presented the report which sought Cabinet approval to proceed to local referendum on the Adderley, Morton Say and Norton in Hales (Three Parishes) Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Portfolio Holder congratulated the Three Parish Neighbourhood Plan group and the three parish councils in Adderley, Moreton Say, and Norton in Hales for reaching this stage. Should the report be approved, the date for the referendum had been confirmed as the 25th of July 2024.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet agreed:

1. The Three Parishes Neighbourhood Plan meets the 'Basic Conditions' and all the other legal requirements as summarised in the Independent Examiner's Report, subject to the modifications proposed in the Schedule of Modifications (Appendix 2)
2. The required modifications be agreed, and that the final 'referendum' version of the Three Parishes Neighbourhood Development Plan (April 2024) (Appendix 4) proceed to local referendum.
3. The referendum area be that as defined as the designated area to which the Three Parishes Neighbourhood Development Plan relates.

163 Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with the provisions of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and Paragraph 10.4 [3] of the Council's Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items.

164 Exempt Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2024 be accepted as an accurate record.

165 Pump House, Coton Hill Disposal Report

RESOLVED:

To approve the recommendations as set out in the exempt report.

166 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 17th July at 2pm.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: