



Committee and Date

Cabinet

20 November 2024

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2024

In the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Responsible Officer: Ashley Kendrick

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Present

Councillor Lezley Picton (Chairman)

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

204 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Ian Nellins.

205 Disclosable Interests

No declarations of interest were received.

206 Minutes

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2024 be confirmed as a correct record

207 Public Question Time

Public questions were received from:

James Owen, in relation to flooding in Oswestry.

Victoria Moore, in relation to green waste bin stickers.

The full questions and response provided can be found on [Responses to Public Questions - Cabinet 16 October 2024.pdf](#)

208 Member Question Time

Members' questions were received from:

Councillor Rob Wilson, in relation to annual costs for insurance claims and road repairs

Councillor David Vasmer (read out by Councillor Roger Evans) in relation to pothole repairs. By way of supplementary question, the role of Multevo was queried and whether Kier would receive less money due to poor performance. The Portfolio Holder advised that using a subcontractor had brought down the cost of repairs by 60%. He further added that in relation to Kier, the highways team had worked extremely hard in driving down the costs and increasing the productivity of repairs.

Councillor Rosemary Dartnall, in relation to the green waste system. By way of supplementary question, Councillor Dartnall asked for clarity as to whether the production and delivery of green waste stickers were part of one contract and also queried the budget savings over this financial year and next. The Executive Director of Resources confirmed that if £3.25m income had been raised for the 12 month subscription period, this would equate to £1.625m per financial year. By way of clarification, Councillor Roger Evans queried whether the figures were still correct as the original plan had been for 6 months collection in this financial year and with the delay, this was now only for five months. The Leader said she believed the production and delivery of the stickers was one contract but would seek definitive confirmation for Councillor Dartnall. She also advised that one month of additional free collections had always been budgeted for but agreed to obtain clarification of the specifics around this.

The full questions and responses provided can be found on [Responses to Member Questions - Cabinet 16 October 2024.pdf](#)

209 Scrutiny Items

a Developer Contributions Task and Finish Group

Councillor Joyce Barrow, Chair of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented the findings of the Developer Contributions Task and Finish Group, which investigated the application and impact of Section 106 payments on new developments, healthcare, and education provision.

The report identified seven emerging recommendations grouped under six headings, including reviewing developer contributions, raising awareness, rectifying funding use, maximizing infrastructure impact, and ensuring contributions match development needs.

The recommendations were as follows:

Recommendation 1: In recognition that the current CIL Charging Schedule was adopted in 2012, the Council should undertake an urgent comprehensive review of the CIL following the adoption of the Local Plan in 2025. This urgent review should address both the charging schedule (what kinds of development are subject to CIL, and how much will be charged) and further clarify the types of infrastructure where CIL funds are best utilised within the locality in which they were derived, to ensure the highest priority infrastructure is funded.

Recommendation 2: That the review of developer contributions should include looking at the relationship between CIL and Section 106 to help identify the best approach to address the needs and challenges arising from a development. This should include a review of the phasing arrangements to shape how and when money is needed to be made

available by developers to implement different interventions e.g. developing classroom capacity or a new school to meet forecasted increases in pupil numbers.

Recommendation 3: That the difference between CIL and S106, including their application, should be more clearly defined, and communicated to increase awareness and understanding, and help to manage expectations whilst improving public understanding. 14 That opportunities are identified through closer working between Planning Policy and Development Management as we progress towards the adoption of the Local Plan to raise the focus on and visibility of developer contributions. Increased coverage on the Shropshire Council website should include publication of contributions, promotion of the work that has been undertaken as a result of the use of CIL and raise awareness of any work that is underway, including the planned benefits that have been realised or are expected, highlighting the value of developer contributions.

Recommendation 4: That the allocation of CIL or S106 funding for local health provision should clearly specify that funds should be focussed on primary care provision as this has the most direct impact from new development.

Recommendation 5: That there should be greater awareness of the role and purpose of the Strategic Infrastructure Network and the constituent groups by Council officers and Members, as well as externally with partners.

Recommendation 6: That Members are encouraged to give positive consideration to proposed new guidance which will be taken to Cabinet in 2024 regarding using developer contributions for school-based infrastructure (including new school places). This will contain detail around what Shropshire Council requests in terms of developer contributions for primary and secondary school places to include SEND, active travel, and school transport.

Recommendation 7: That the Rurality Toolkit should be used to guide the design, planning, and delivery of services in rural areas to explore various alternatives such as collaborating with Community Trusts using digital technology, or making use of and sharing physical assets, and identifying opportunities to leverage developer contributions to facilitate this process

RESOLVED

To accept the recommendations set out in the report of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Developer Contributions Task and Finish group at Appendix 1.

To provide a response to the recommendations in 6 months time, identifying the reasons why for any that were not accepted, and an action plan setting out how and when those agreed will be implemented.

210 Financial Monitoring Period 5

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities presented the report which provided the latest financial projection for 2024/25. It highlighted a likely (central) projection of £37.2m overspent, within a potential range between a more

favourable projection leading to a £22.3m overspend, up to a more adverse projection leading to a £73.75m overspend.

Members noted the projected overspend is primarily due to the under-delivery of savings, with a current shortfall of £37.9 million, and overspending in social care areas, including £6.8 million in children's services and £4 million in adult care.

Members thanked the Portfolio Holder and officers for their work in producing the monthly reports.

Concern was expressed with regards to the projected level of reserves at the end of the financial year.

The meeting was adjourned briefly due to technical issues.

Members queried the strategic risk assessment which rated the likelihood of containing expenditure as medium and not high, which had been raised at the audit committee in September. Members were advised that the strategic risk was updated regularly and is now rated as high.

In response to a query, the Executive Director for Resources informed members that should a decision regarding cancellation of the North West Relief Road ever come about, officers would review and consider what the implications of that would be within this financial year.

Concerns were raised about the reliance of children's services on key support services like HR and legal, particularly given the impact of the council's redundancy program.

Members expressed appreciation for the collaborative efforts in managing the budget and the need for continuous sharing of financial information.

RESOLVED

3.1. To note that the Period 5 position (as at the end of August) forecasts indicative savings delivery of £52.042m (58%) and a projected spend above budget of £37.262m for 2024/25.

3.2. To note the projected General Fund Balance of £1.559m arising if no further action were taken.

3.3. To note and endorse the actions achieved and planned (para 2.4 and 2.5)

3.4. To require that the Chief Executive and Chief Officers urgently take all possible action to reduce spending between October and March, targeting a significant reduction in forecast spending to bring the outturn in line with the budget agreed by Council in February

211 Draft Financial Strategy 2025/26 - 2029/30

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Resources and Communities presented the report which indicated additional cost pressures of £19.6m, meaning that the overall gap estimated for next year has increased from £17.7m to £37.3m.

Members noted that officers had been asked to review all new cost pressures to confirm whether these are unavoidable pressures that require funding, or whether they are risks which should be understood but which may be substantially mitigated in finalising the budget for next year.

The next update to the MTFS would be brought to Cabinet in December and will set out the headline budget proposals for 2025/26 ahead of launching the public budget consultation.

Members noted that between July and October, the key changes included assuming a higher threshold for Council tax, additional price pressures in contracts, and demand for children's social care based on current trend which have not yet been quantified.

It was confirmed that the income strip had not been included in the capital table as this had not been finalised.

Members noted that the pay inflation figure was currently set at 2.5%, but there was an acknowledgment that this may need to be adjusted based on future negotiations and the number of staff remaining after workforce resizing.

Concern was raised regarding contract inflation which has doubled between July and October. This was due to various factors, including minimum wage increases and different contract terms.

Members acknowledged that the target operating model savings for the next year had been adjusted. Initially, there was an assumption of achieving £2 million in savings, but this had been reduced to £50,000. This adjustment was due to the work being brought forward into the current financial year, making it imprudent to assume an additional £2 million in savings for the next year.

RESOLVED

3.1. To discuss the emerging pressures for the coming financial year, including both those pressures that have been quantified and which result in a gap position of £37.310m, and also those further pressures that are not yet quantified and which risk significant further widening of the gap.

3.2. To require officers to continue work to

- review and reduce, as far as possible, identified pressures, and
- prepare savings options for the coming year, to secure the balanced budget approved by Council in February

212 CCTV in Shrewsbury

The Portfolio Holder for Culture and Digital presented the report on the plans for the Shrewsbury Town Centre CCTV service following the public consultation and discussion with partners.

This set out the outcome of a consultation with partners, local businesses and the public on the future of CCTV monitoring. The reality was that while CCTV played an important role in deterring crime and promoting public safety, the current gold standard of 24/7 active monitoring was simply not sustainable in the face of current financial challenges.

The recommendation was to approve option one, 24/7 CCTV with passive monitoring - a best endeavours approach which would act as a deterrent but with a more flexible cost-effective monitoring model. Option 4, had gained support from the public in the consultation, but would require partner funding. This had been actively pursued again with partner agencies but they were also facing their own challenges and this option was not possible at the present time.

It was understood that some residents may be concerned about the change, but the Portfolio Holder reiterated that CCTV would continue to play a vital role in public safety, working alongside other initiatives such as the West Mercia Police Town Centre Policing Unit and Rangers. There would also be an opportunity to work with volunteers and partners to provide additional monitoring at peak times or during higher risk events. Questions were asked about timescales and the possibility of unintended consequences stemming from the change and Cabinet members reported that extensive talks on CCTV provision had been held with partners going back to 2019 but it had not been possible to secure revenue funding from others since then. The Leader thanked Shrewsbury Town Council for its commitment to contribute towards maintenance costs of the system.

RESOLVED:

1. That In absence of any further partner funding commitment to support the most popular option from consultation (Option 4), and to help meet the Council's savings target, to approve Option 1 with monitoring of CCTV moving to a "best endeavours" approach where staff's priority will be responding to out of hours service calls, rather than CCTV monitoring.
2. To agree to explore with partners the feasibility of a volunteer programme to provide additional monitoring capacity. This could provide additional active monitoring capacity during specific identified peaks and higher risk times.
3. That the Council and other partners continue to seek other funding options to help support additional CCTV monitoring.

213 Annual Report- Sustainable Travel Team

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Education presented the report which highlighted the work of the Sustainable Travel Team over the last academic year, and the key ambitions of the department, seeking approval of KPI's, an annual report of some of the key milestones and council instruction to return annually for progress updates.

The Sustainable Travel Team was established in February 2024 and had made significant progress in promoting sustainable travel options for school children. The team has implemented various initiatives, including school streets, scooting training, and grants for

schools to manage travel-related issues. The team’s work had been recognised nationally which was a great achievement.

The team has been actively engaging with local communities and schools to promote sustainable travel. This included site visits and addressing specific issues raised by local members.

Questions were asked about the current status of sustainable travel infrastructure and if there were any plans to improve cycling and walking paths in Shrewsbury. Members were advised that that the Council had been working on a comprehensive plan to enhance sustainable travel infrastructure and this included the development of new cycling and walking paths, as well as the improvement of existing ones.

Members were reassured that the budget for sustainable travel had been carefully planned and would not affect other environmental projects. Promoting sustainable travel was a priority for the Council to ensure a greener and healthier community.

Members welcomed the return of sustainable travel from the WSP contract to in-house management, expecting more efficient delivery and better outcomes. A suggestion was received to set more ambitious targets for the KPIs, particularly for the Our Journey program and the Green Light program.

RESOLVED

To endorse the annual report, and agree to incorporate the KPI’s listed in the report at 3.1 – 3.8 within the Council’s Performance Management Framework for annual reporting to allow baselining activities to understand the current position in Shropshire, and identify targets to work towards in the next academic year (25-26)

214 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 20 November 2024.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: