



Committee and Date

Cabinet

17 July 2023

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2023

**In the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND
10.30 am – 12.30 pm**

Responsible Officer: Amanda Holyoak

Email: amanda.holyoak@shropshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01743 257714

Present

Councillor Lezley Picton (Chairman)

Councillors Cecilia Motley, Ian Nellins, Gwilym Butler, Kirstie Hurst-Knight and Robert Macey

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dean Carroll and Richard Marshall

2 Disclosable Interests

None were declared.

3 Minutes

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

4 Public Question Time

Public questions were submitted by:

Dr Alison Caffyn - in relation to the recent ruling of the Planning Inspector into the Footbridge Farm intensive poultry planning appeal at Tasley

and

Victoria Moore – in relation to yet to be installed Sutton Grange Shrewsbury Play Park.

The questions and answers provided to them are available from the [webpage for the meeting](#)

5 Member Question Time

There were no questions from members.

6 Scrutiny Items - New Housing Developments Task and Finish Group

Councillor Joyce Barrow presented the report of the Place Overview Committee, setting out the findings and evidence-based recommendations of the New Housing Developments Task and Finish Group. She thanked members and officers who had participated and supported the work and drew attention to the key learning points the group had established.

The report was welcomed by all members and it was hoped that it would be possible for an action plan to be produced quickly, if possible in time for consideration at the first meeting of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee who would then go on to monitor implementation going forward. Following discussion of the report a member of the council went on to speak of his concerns in relation to amendments to original planning conditions.

The Leader requested that a briefing session for members on building control be arranged as soon as possible, as well as included in the induction programme following the next election.

The Cabinet welcomed the extremely helpful report and all the recommendations within it and thanked all who had contributed to it.

RESOLVED:

To accept the recommendations of the New Housing Developments Task and Finish Group and request that an action plan for delivery of these recommendations be proposed by July 2023.

7 Treasury Management Update Quarter 4 2022/23

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources presented the report.

RESOLVED:

To note that the Council remains fully compliant with the agreed prudential indicators and the treasury management strategy.

8 Climate Strategy & Action Plan Monitoring Report 2022

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Environment and Transport introduced the report explaining that whilst the level of the reduction in corporate carbon footprint was disappointing, the past three years of carbon monitoring had been influenced significantly by the covid pandemic. There was also a lag between identifying potential actions and projects, the delivery of measurable savings and performance was expected to accelerate significantly in future years.

During discussion members welcomed the carbon literacy training undertaken by senior staff and Cabinet members hoped this could be spread widely to all staff and members as soon as possible, and particularly procurement staff as a priority. The work commissioned

for a detailed analysis of supply chain carbon emissions was also welcomed as well as the continued investment in projects which did not benefit the council's performance directly but would help to reduce emissions from communities and businesses. Measures related to fuel and heating in buildings were also discussed and the need to work effectively with partners and lead the way for the county.

The Leader reported on efforts with local education providers to establish retro-fitting courses and recruitment issues experience on finding anyone to teach these.

The Deputy Leader thanked the support from members on the cross party panel which was much valued alongside the hard work and expertise of the dedicated officer team.

RESOLVED

- 1.1. That Cabinet approves the draft Corporate Carbon Performance Monitoring report 2021-22 (Appendix 1) for publication;
- 1.2. That Cabinet supports:
 - i. Efforts to widen understanding and ownership of the need for urgent climate action and carbon reduction through training and the identification of a staff 'climate change' champion in each service.
 - ii. An Officer report being prepared to explore how the Council's procurement policies can be updated to help accurately quantify and help suppliers to reduce indirect carbon emissions, which now account for around 93% of the Council's corporate carbon footprint.
 - iii. Work to prepare a corporate 'Climate Change Adaptation' strategy during 2023 to identify key climate risks, their potential impact on the delivery of council services, staff and service users and to set out actions and measures to moderate these risks.

9 Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 4 2022/23

The Portfolio Holder for Digital, Data and Insight, introduced the report, the final one before a new set of Key Performance Indicators supporting delivery of the Shropshire Plan were introduced. These were currently being finalised and took on board the feedback from members. Ongoing effectiveness of the new indicators would be kept under review going forward.

Discussion went on to cover a number of areas, including recycling rates, road conditions, numbers killed or seriously injured on roads, homelessness, as well as appropriateness of rag rating and responsibility for performance indicators held in partnership.

It was hoped the new indicators would be shared with members before finalisation.

RESOLVED:

To consider and endorse the corporate performance report.

To consider the emerging issues in this report as set out in paragraph 9.

To review both the appendix and performance portal to identify any performance areas to consider in greater detail at future performance scrutiny meetings.

10 Financial Outturn 2022/23

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources introduced report, reminding members that when the budget for 2022/23 was set, inflation was predicted at 3%, and was now at a 40 year high, there was no knowledge of the Ukraine War and subsequent unprecedented global turmoil, the surge in fuel prices, the cost of living crisis and a higher pay award than envisaged. These factors were all compounded by extreme pressure in children's services and adult social care.

He also drew attention to the impact of partners not meeting financial responsibilities. He thanked staff for their work in achieving the current overspend in these circumstances and pointed out that if inflation had been as predicted then a surplus would have been achieved at the end of the year. He thanked officers for all the hard work undertaken in achieving the position reached.

Subsequent discussion covered the percentage of intended savings made; impact of interest rates; impact of the overspend on the 2023 – 24 budget, the general reserves balance, the capital receipts programme, the LGA peer review findings and the impact of the Getting Leadership Right programme in moving forward.

The Portfolio Holder said that his aim was for reporting on progress going forward to be as transparent as possible with monthly indicators and financial reports available, rather than having to wait for compilation of end of quarter figures. He also intended those reports be provided for Transformation and Improvement Scrutiny Committees ahead of Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

In respect of the revenue budget:

- a) *Note that the outturn is an overspend of £8.499m.*
- b) *Note the consequent level of the General Fund balance is £7.093m.*
- c) *Note the service-related use of £33.192m of Earmarked Reserves & Provisions.*
- d) *Note that the combination of earmarked and un-earmarked (General) reserves 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:

- e) *Note the performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – £0.768m (4%) surplus outturn for 2022/23 on £19m turnover, and the resulting level of the HRA reserve of £12.359m. The level of the accumulated surpluses held as a reserve should be reviewed and an appropriate action plan brought forward.*
- f) *Note that the level of school balances has increased by £2.296m, from £8.191m in 2021/22 to £10.487m. The level of accumulated net surpluses in schools'*

balances is considerable, and schools should identify the rationale for holding balances at those levels.

In respect of the capital programme:

- g) *Approve net budget variations of -£4.007m to the 2022/23 capital programme (in Appendix 11) and the re-profiled 2022/23 capital budget of £111.112m.*
- h) *Approve the re-profiled capital budgets of £26.575m for 2023/24, including slippage of £10.747m from 2022/23, £110.787m for 2024/25 and £56.264m for 2025/26 as detailed in Appendix 15.*
- i) *Accept the outturn expenditure set out in Appendices 12 and 13 of £100.365m, representing 90.3% of the revised capital budget for 2022/23.*
- j) *Approve retaining a balance of capital receipts set aside of £17.465m as at 31st March 2023 to generate a one-off Minimum Revenue Provision saving of £0.572m in 2023/24.*

11 Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities Technical Consultation on the Proposed Infrastructure Levy - Shropshire Council Response

The Leader explained that the purpose of the item was to consider and agree the Council's response to the Government's current consultation on the introduction of a new Infrastructure Levy as a key mechanism for securing developer contributions towards infrastructure and affordable housing. She thanked staff for the work carried out in developing the response and the views from the cross-party local plan working group had been useful and welcome.

RESOLVED:

To approve the response to Government's Technical Consultation on the Proposed Infrastructure Levy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

That authority be given to the Executive Director of Place to agree, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Regulatory Services, any additional minor changes to the Council's response to this consultation ahead of its submission to the Government by the 9th June 2023.

12 River Severn Partnership Demonstrator Projects

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Climate Change Environment and Transport introduced the report which was welcomed by all.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1. To approve the Council's role in managing and delivering the Shropshire based demonstrator programme, under the River Severn Partnership, utilising the Council's formal statutory role as Lead Local Flood Risk Management Authority (LLFA).

- 3.2 To approve the Council signing two grant funding agreements for the River Perry and Rea Brook, which exceed £500,000 in grant contribution, thereby enabling transfer of the Defra funds to Shropshire based delivery partners
- 3.3 To delegate to the Executive Director of Place, Section 151 officer and the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Environment and Transport to:
 - 3.3.1 proceed with setting arrangements for the delivery and monitoring of benefits associated with the demonstrator programme, in partnership with the Environment Agency.

13 Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED

That in accordance with the provisions of schedule 12 A 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 the consideration of the following item

14 Exempt Minutes

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2023 were confirmed as a correct record.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: