

**Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet
held on 22 January 2019**

Present:

Cabinet Members:

Councillors	Izzi Seccombe OBE	Leader of Council and Chair of Cabinet
	Peter Butlin	Deputy Leader (Finance and Property)
	Les Caborn	Adult Social Care & Health
	Jeff Clarke	Transport & Planning
	Andy Crump	Fire and Rescue and Community Safety
	Colin Hayfield	Education and Learning
	Kam Kaur	Customer & Transformation
	Jeff Morgan	Children's Services
	Dave Reilly	Environment and Heritage & Culture

Non-Voting Invitees:

Councillor Richard Chattaway Leader of the Labour Group

Other Councillors:

Councillors Sarah Boad, Jonathan Chilvers, John Holland, Keith Kondakor, Maggie O'Rourke and Alan Webb

Public attendance:

None

1. General

(1) Apologies for absence

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse - Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

(2) Members' Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None

(3) Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2018 and Matters Arising

The minutes for the meeting held on 11 December 2018 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

(4) Public Speaking

None

(5) Chair's Announcement

Councillor Izzi Seccombe (Leader of Council and Chair of Cabinet) welcomed Lisa Kitto (Interim Assist Director for Finance and ICT) to Warwickshire County Council.

2. One Organisational Plan Quarterly Progress Report - April to December 2018

Councillor Kam Kaur (Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation) introduced the published report stating that overall the performance of Warwickshire County Council is good. There remain three areas of high demand that are a matter of concern namely, Education and Learning, Children's Services and Children and Young Families. However, for these and other service areas where some concerns exist over performance the report sets out the remedial measures that are in place to address them.

Councillor Peter Butlin (Deputy Leader, Finance and Property) briefed Cabinet on the financial aspects of the report. Members' attention was drawn to recommendations b and c that propose the transfer of £2.104m to Business Unit reserves and the approval of the use of underspends to fund overspends in Waste Management and Dedicated Schools Grant funded services within Education and Learning. Councillor Peter Butlin emphasised that overall the financial performance of the County Council is good and that where issues have been identified plans are in place to address them.

Councillor Sarah Boad expressed concern over some aspects of Community Safety and Fire performance (Page 5 of 9 of the published dashboard). It was noted that at certain times of the year response time targets for appliances are being missed and that performance was lower than in 2017/18. Councillor Boad suggested that any reduction in the number of appliances available to the Fire and Rescue Service may have a negative effect on response times in the future. Concerns were also raised over the number of people killed in fires in the County. Members were reminded that often fire deaths involved vulnerable people. Assurances were sought that measures are in place to safeguard these people where possible.

Referring to the employment rate chart on page 12 of 26 of the published report Councillor Keith Kondakor noted that the information provided was for 2017/18. Councillor Kondakor suggested that whilst the information appeared encouraging it was not reflective of the current position. It was noted that unemployment figures published on the day of Cabinet presented a less positive picture. In response Councillor Izzi Seccombe reminded Cabinet that it is necessary to utilise the data that is available. Nevertheless, she did agree that the unemployment claimant data should be evaluated.

Regarding the rate of land sales Councillor Keith Kondakor suggested that these are not happening quickly enough. It was suggested that land sales, the corresponding rate of house building and the availability of school places are interlinked. In response Cabinet was informed that school places have little to do with land sales. The funding for school places is provided through Section 106 funding and directly from central government.

Councillor Andy Crump (Portfolio Holder for Fire & Rescue and Community Safety) responded to members' concerns over fire related issues. He stated that the location of fire stations in towns was determined at a time when the need to reach fires was the principal consideration. Over time the balance of work for the Fire and Rescue Service has moved from fighting fires to rescue situations (ie at road traffic accidents). As a result, the ideal location for a fire station is close to the main

highway network. Ensuring that fire stations are in the best location is part of a long term project.

Councillor Crump added that much work is undertaken to reduce the incidence of fires. However, the very hot summer of 2018 proved to be particularly challenging.

In response to Councillor Boad's observations concerning the need to maintain the number of appliances available Cabinet was reminded that the resourcing of the Fire and Rescue Service would be considered as part of the Council's budget setting discussions on 7 February 2019. Concerning fire deaths, it was noted that these are always thoroughly investigated with a view to establishing their cause and any lessons that may be learned for the future.

Resolved

That Cabinet:

- 1) Notes the progress of the delivery of the One Organisational Plan 2020 for the period as contained in the report;
- 2) Approves the net transfer of £2.104 million to Business Unit reserves in order to support the delivery of services in future years, as outlined in section 3.2 of the report; and
- 3) Approves the use of underspends in Other Services to fund overspends in Waste Management and Dedicated Schools Grant funded services within Education & Learning, as outlined in section 3.1.5 of the report.

3. 2019-20 Refresh of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2020

Councillor Peter Butlin explained that the report before Cabinet was presented as a final update prior to the Council's budget setting meeting. Particular attention was drawn to section 2 of the report which set out the impact of the Local Government Finance Settlement (released on 13 December 2018). Supplementary information had been provided to the meeting concerning Council Tax collection. Replacing section 3.3 of the published report this stated,

3.3 Surplus/Deficit on Collection

As part of setting the council tax we also have to take into account any surplus/deficit on collection of council tax from previous years. The breakdown of the surplus/deficit across the districts is shown in Table 2 and provides an **additional £1.453 million one-off** funding available to support the budget in 2019/20.

Table 2: 2019/20 Surplus/(Deficit) on Council Tax Collection	
	£m
North Warwickshire	0.498
Nuneaton and Bedworth	0.451
Rugby	0.191
Stratford-on-Avon	(0.711)
Warwick	1.024
Total	1.453

Referencing Table 1 of the published report Councillor Keith Kondakor observed that the Council Tax base in Warwick has increased by over 4%. It was suggested that this may be attributable to the number of students located in Warwick District. In contrast Nuneaton and Bedworth and North Warwickshire have seen comparatively little growth.

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers (Leader of the Green Group) welcomed additional funding proposed for waste management but considered that more should be done to tackle the underlying issues around waste i.e. waste generation.

In response to a question from Councillor Sarah Boad concerning additional funding for children with special educational needs Cabinet was informed that this equates to approximately a 2% increase in budget.

Regarding the Fire and Rescue Service budget members were reminded that the savings proposals contained in the report were those put forward by Corporate Board. These along with others will be considered by Council on 7 February 2019.

Resolved

That Cabinet:

- 1) Notes the latest resource and spending information and the impact on the emerging budget proposals;
- 2) Notes the Assistant Director of Finance and ICT's risk assessment on the level of general reserves, as detailed in Appendix D of the report;
- 3) Agrees to extend the use of the Redundancy Fund to meet the costs of staffing changes arising from the new operating model and service transformation;
- 4) Agrees to publish, in light of the information provided, its 2019/20 budget resolutions for recommendation to Full Council on 7 February 2019;
- 5) Authorises the Assistant Director of Finance and ICT to incorporate the outstanding resource information into the budget resolutions to be considered by Full Council on 7 February 2019; and

- 6) Agrees to recommend that Council, in the event of final resource figures being above or below the estimates used in this report, approve that the variation be managed by an adjustment to the Medium Term Contingency.

4. OOP 2020: Development of Strategic Objectives 2019-20

Councillor Kam Kaur presented the report and explained the background to the new strategic objectives.

Councillor Alan Webb commended the objectives but emphasised that given the financial pressures the Council is under it may be a major challenge to meet them.

Councillor Keith Kondakor commended the objective around composting and waste and emphasised the need to be realistic in what can be achieved.

Resolved

That Cabinet approve the proposed OOP 2020 strategic objectives 2019-20 for onward consideration at Full Council on 7 February 2019.

5. Youth Justice Service Inspection

Councillor Andy Crump explained that the report before Cabinet presented a good news story. Cabinet commended officers of the Youth Justice Service for their hard work both for in terms of the service they deliver and also their agile response to the inspection.

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers echoed the comments regarding the officers of the service and asked whether the proposed saving of £222,000 will impact on the effectiveness of the service. In reply Cabinet was informed that savings proposals will be discussed at Council on 7 February when all groups will be able to table their proposals.

In response to a question from Councillor Richard Chattaway regarding proposed service redesign Councillor Crump agreed to share his views on this with members as work progresses.

Resolved

That Cabinet:

- 1) Notes that the Youth Justice Service Inspection resulted in an overall rating of Good with some elements rated Outstanding; and
- 2) Commends the staff of the service on the outcome and approves the continuing work on the Inspection Improvement Plan which will be monitored by the Youth Justice Chief Officer Board.

6. Inspection of Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services

Councillor Andy Crump introduced the report and commended staff for their contribution to the inspection process. It was noted that the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service was one of the first to be inspected under the new regime. 8 out of 11 broad areas for inspection were deemed to be good. An improvement plan has been developed. This can be monitored by the Fire & Rescue and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Other members commended the Service for the result of the inspection. Councillor O'Rourke stressed the need to address vacancy rates whilst Councillor Boad advocated the greater use of social media to address issues around diversity of workforce. In addition, Councillor Boad reminded Cabinet of the need to reflect on risk when considering resource allocation.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe agreed that diversity of workforce is an issue that will require attention adding that the recruitment of retained firefighters also presents a challenge.

The meeting was reminded that during the summer of 2018 appliances from Warwickshire had attended heathland fires in Staffordshire and at Saddleworth Moor near Manchester. In Warwickshire the Service had worked hard throughout that summer to promote fire prevention. (An example of this was a press release regarding the dangers of the careless disposal of barbeques).

Councillor Richard Chattaway cautioned against reductions to the Service's budget suggesting that this could have an impact on response times.

In conclusion Councillor Crump,

- Noted that collaboration with the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service will assist in reducing response times adding that he would provide Councillor Boad with more information on them.
- Stated that work is ongoing with communities to address diversity issues.
- Again thanked officers of the Fire and Rescue Service for their endeavours

Resolved

- 1) That Cabinet note the formal inspection report published on 20 December 2018;
- 2) Commends the staff of the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service for their hard work in relation to the 2018 inspection and also for their ongoing service to the community.
- 3) That the Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitor the resultant action plan and related improvements.

7. Any Urgent Items

None

8. Reports Containing Confidential or Exempt Information

Resolved

That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the items mentioned below on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

EXEMPT ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PRIVATE (PURPLE PAPERS)

9. Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2018 and Matters Arising

Resolved

The exempt minutes for the meeting held on 11 December 2018 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

10. Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service - Training Provision

Councillor Andy Crump explained the background to the report adding that discussions regarding enhancements to training facilities for firefighters had been ongoing for a considerable time.

Councillors sought assurance that the proposals before Cabinet would match those previously considered in terms of the quality of the training to be delivered. In reply Councillor Crump stated that the proposals on the table would provide a similar level of training.

Councillor Pete Butlin reminded Cabinet that Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service is now working in partnership with the West Midlands Service and that there is scope to share training facilities.

Resolved

Cabinet agreed the recommendations as set out in the exempt minutes.

11. Boarding School Policy

Councillor Jeff Morgan (Portfolio Holder for Children's Services) introduced the report explaining that the policy before Cabinet related to the placement of some looked after children at boarding schools. Members were informed that for some looked after children education at a boarding school can offer the best solution. Social and educational benefits can come from the additional attention and structure such children will receive at boarding school.

It was explained that the report and appendices were being considered in closed session on the grounds of confidentiality. It was expected that following the Cabinet meeting the Boarding School Policy would be made public.

Members agreed that the implementation of the Boarding School Policy should be monitored by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Morgan closed by emphasising that the primary focus for the County Council is the wellbeing of the child. No child would be placed at a boarding school unless all parties were satisfied that this offered the best solution.

Resolved

That Cabinet agrees to the adoption of a Boarding School Policy:

- To add to its placement sufficiency strategy for looked after children and
- As an edge of care option.

12. Land at Crick Road, Rugby

Councillor Peter Butlin explained the background to the published report. Members expressed their support for the proposal.

Resolved

Cabinet agreed the recommendations as set out in the exempt minutes.

The meeting rose at 15.12.

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Chair