

# Cabinet

Thursday, 10 September 2020

## Minutes

### Attendance

#### Committee Members

Councillor Izzi Seccombe (Chair)  
Councillor Peter Butlin  
Councillor Les Caborn  
Councillor Jeff Clarke  
Councillor Andy Crump  
Councillor Colin Hayfield  
Councillor Kam Kaur  
Councillor Jeff Morgan

#### Others Present

Councillors Adkins, Bell, Boad, Chilvers, Falp, Golby, Holland, Kondakor, Pandher, Roodhouse and Webb

### 1. General

#### (1) Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Heather Timms and Councillor Helen Adkins

#### (2) Members' disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

In relation to devolution and local government reform, Councillor Keith Kondakor declared an interest as a member of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council.

Regarding agenda item 13 Councillor Peter Butlin declared an interest as his daughter in law was employed at Paddox School, Rugby.

#### (3) Minutes of the Previous Meetings

The minutes of the meetings of Cabinet held on 9 July 2020 and 27 August 2020 were agreed as accurate.

#### (4) Public Speaking

None

## **2. Council Plan 2020-2025 Quarter 1 Performance Progress Report Period under review: April 2020 to June 2020**

Councillor Kam Kaur (Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation) introduced the published report and highlighted some key elements of it. Members' attention was drawn to pages 27 to 30 of the agenda pack where six areas of concern were noted. Regarding Covid-19, the meeting was informed that work was underway on a recovery performance framework.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group) proposed the establishment of a cross party working group comprising three or four members to assist in the development of the performance dashboard. He welcomed that indicators had been changed to reflect circumstances citing suicide levels as an example. The principle of the establishment of a working group was agreed; One of the first areas it may wish to consider being success criteria.

Councillor Les Caborn (Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health) acknowledged that some performance in adult social care was below target. The Quality Assurance Team was back working normally and a deep dive into performance was underway. An area of success was a reduction in permanent admissions to nursing homes. This indicated success in assisting people to continue to live in their own homes.

Councillor Keith Kondakor acknowledged the usefulness on the KPIs and dashboard. He called for indicators regarding cycle routes and cycling.

Councillor Jeff Morgan (Portfolio Holder for Children's Services) observed that when considering the number of children in care it is important to ensure that these are the right children. That there had not been an increase in the number of children entering care may have been a reflection of Covid-19 and delays in court orders.

Councillor Kaur closed by emphasising the need to link key business measures to recovery. She agreed to work with officers to set up the cross-party working group.

### **Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

- a) Notes the progress of the delivery of the Council Plan 2020 - 2025 for the period as contained in the report.
- b) Agrees the proposed changes to the Commissioning Intentions Framework.

## **3. 2020/21 Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring Report**

Councillor Peter Butlin (Deputy Leader – Finance and Property) summarised key elements of the published report explaining that the County Council was in a good position to face future challenges. Members' attention was drawn to page 50 of the agenda pack where Covid-19 pressures had been specifically identified. Particular areas of concern were the high needs block where deficits roll forwards from one year to the next, the increase in costs of children's placements owing to Covid-19 and a shortfall of funds for the new business support model.

Regarding Capital, Cabinet was informed that there had been a degree of slippage with some projects. In addition, it had been found necessary to reprofile some existing projects whilst some new projects had seen an increase in costs.

Councillor Keith Kondakor suggested that slippage with projects could be attributed in part to a lack of resources in Design Services. He noted that the Kenilworth to Leamington cycleway had not apparently been started and questioned the business case for the need for the Bermuda Bridge project to proceed. Finally, Councillor Kondakor reminded the meeting that as part of the Nuckle project the County Council had provided £1m to Coventry City Council to provide a new platform at Coventry station. That platform had yet to be constructed. In response to Councillor Kondakor, Councillor Jeff Clarke (Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning) stated that a meeting was scheduled to be held with Coventry City Council to discuss the new platform. The Bermuda Bridge project was out to tender. The Kenilworth to Leamington cycleway project had been delayed by Covid-19 and whilst capacity amongst staff had been an issue the Council was keen to build the cycleway as soon as possible.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse recognised that the Covid-19 pandemic would have a serious impact on resources. Having highlighted town centre spend he referenced page 65 and asked what were the two most significant risks to forecasts.

In response to a question from Councillor Dave Parsons (Deputy Leader of the Labour Group) regarding the Comprehensive Spending Review Councillor Izzi Seccombe (Leader of Council and Chair of Cabinet) informed the meeting that any announcement on this was some way off, the LGA having yet to make its submission.

Returning to the Kenilworth to Leamington Cycleway Councillor Butlin reminded the meeting that the project presents a number of serious challenges in technical and land acquisition terms. In terms of the risks to forecasts, Councillor Butlin observed that tax take will be reduced for a time. It had been noted that there will be no increase in tax take this year. Redundancies are expected and this will further lead to a reduction in tax take, but the economy was expected to rally. He had hoped that the Comprehensive Spending Review would provide a three-year settlement. This would help with planning. However, it was more likely that a one-year settlement would be provided.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

- a) Notes the forecast overspend of £3.364m for the 2020/21 financial year on the Council's revenue budget.
- b) Notes there is a forecast under-delivery of the 2020/21 savings requirement to the value of £2.995m.
- c) Approves the transfer of £8.000m revenue underspend in Corporate Services to reserves to provide some capacity to phase the need to deliver additional savings to balance the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

d) Notes the increases to the approved 2020/21 capital programme of £37.370m since the programme was last reported in March 2020, as part of approved changes totalling £53.900m to the cost and funding of schemes across the length of the programme.

e) Approves the carry forward of the reprofiled spend on the capital programme of £23.710m in 2020/21 into future years.

#### 4. Council's COVID-19 Recovery Plan

Councillor Izzi Seccombe introduced the item, reminding members that the process had commenced with the June 2020 Cabinet meeting. She commended all those involved in the recovery working groups noting that further input had been provided by members since August. That the recovery plan works with the Council's corporate plan was noted. The role of communities and partners was stressed and it was announced that surveys and community engagement would soon be commencing.

Councillor Les Caborn thanked officers and staff who had contributed to the working group of which he had been Chair. He observed that priorities 1,2 and 4 were particularly related to the work of his group adding there remains much work to be done.

Councillor Keith Kondakor commended the work of the groups but reminded members that whilst Covid-19 is a major issue, so too is climate change. He added that the work on these two areas should proceed simultaneously.

Councillor Kam Kaur emphasised the need to consider how the Council would work with communities.

Councillor Andy Crump (Portfolio Holder for Fire & Rescue and Community Safety commended the Fire and Rescue Service for its response to the pandemic. He noted that community groups had provided a great deal of support during this difficult time.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse acknowledged the efforts of those involved in the working groups adding that 94% of members involved with them felt they had been effective. Paragraphs 5.5 and 5.6 of the covering report were singled out as they emphasised the need to align the recovery plan to other core strategies including the child poverty strategy.

Councillor Jeff Clarke reminded the meeting that the list of priorities and actions was not exhaustive. It would be added to as circumstances required.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe closed by recognising that there was some uncertainty around timescales for recovery. This was because the pandemic was changing constantly. She stressed the need to monitor numbers and be sensitive to key moments such as the return to university.

#### Resolved:

That Cabinet:

1. approves the Council's Recovery Plan included as **Appendix A**, subject to actions being costed and affordability assessed against the available investment funds, with any on-going

implications being considered in the Medium Term Financial Strategy refresh for 2021/22 onwards; and

2. approves the next steps for development of the Council Plan for 2021/22.

## **5. Draft Annual Governance Statement 2019-20**

Councillor Kam Kaur reminded Cabinet that the presentation of the Annual Governance Statement is an annual occurrence, The document had been presented to the Audit and Standards Committee in July and to the Council's external auditors. It would be presented to Council in October.

### **Resolved:**

That Cabinet endorses the 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement for submission to Council for approval.

## **6. Capital Investment Fund 2020/21 Q2**

Councillor Peter Butlin explained the background to the published report adding that the CIF had been a major success being based on the growth of the County.

Councillor Keith Kondakor highlighted the schemes relating to air quality monitoring. For this to succeed it will be necessary to obtain buy-in from the district and borough councils.

In reply, Councillor Butlin observed that most district and borough councils in Warwickshire do monitor air quality although they tend to focus on NO2. He agreed to send a more detailed briefing to Councillor Kondakor on what the scheme should mean for Nuneaton and Bedworth.

### **Resolved:**

That Cabinet approves:

- 1) £3.615 million from the Capital Investment Fund for relocation work at Kingsway Nursery & Children's Centre and recommend to Full Council to add to the Capital Programme at a full cost of £5.165 million.
- 2) £0.430 million from the Capital Investment Fund for replacement bollards in Stratford, Nuneaton and Bedworth and add to the Capital Programme.
- 3) £0.750 million from the Capital Investment Fund for the extension of the small business capital grants scheme and add to the Capital Programme at a full cost of £1.330 million.
- 4) £3.025 million from the Capital Investment Fund for improvements to the A3400 Birmingham Road Corridor (Stratford) and recommend to Full Council to increase the existing scheme in the Capital Programme to a full cost of £6.525 million.

5) £2.002 million from the Capital Investment Fund for improvements to the A446 Stonebridge Junction (Coleshill) and recommend to Full Council to add to the Capital Programme at a full cost of £2.378 million.

6) £4.682 million from the Capital Investment Fund for improvements to the A429 Coventry Road Corridor (Warwick) and recommend to Full Council to add to the Capital Programme at a full cost of £5.921 million, on the condition that CIL funding is secured from WDC.

7) £1.968 million from the Capital Investment Fund for procurement of measuring equipment to support evidence led decision making in tackling the climate emergency and air quality and recommend to Full Council to add to the Capital Programme at a full cost of £2.058 million.

8) The authorisation of the Strategic Director for Communities to procure and enter into any agreements to give effect to the proposals on terms and conditions acceptable to the Strategic Director for Resources.

## **7. Revenue Investment Funds 2020/21 Quarter 1 Report**

Councillor Peter Butlin stated that this fund was set up in February 2020. Members' attention was drawn to the descriptions of the schemes as set out in the report.

Councillor Les Caborn commended the schemes and singled out the art-related project as a good means of building confidence amongst those with mental health issues. This view was supported by Councillor Roodhouse who reminded members that there had previously been funding available to support arts, but this had ended.

Councillor Peter Butlin closed by stating that he hoped to see more bids come forward.

### **Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1) Approves a £0.150m allocation from the Place Shaping and Capital Feasibility Fund to the Art Challenge for Economic Recovery project.

2) Supports the progress made on the Economic Recovery Strategy with four projects approved by Corporate Board under the under the authorisation delegated to Chief Executive at a total cost of £0.458m.

3) Authorises the Strategic Director for Communities to procure and enter any agreements to give effect to the proposals in 1 and 2 on terms and conditions acceptable to the Strategic Director for Resources.

## **8. Customer Service Excellence Standard Reaccreditation**

Councillor Kam Kaur stated that this report presented a good news story for Warwickshire. Cabinet was informed that accreditation was an annual occurrence with a further review due in early 2021.

### **Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the outcome of the Customer Service Excellence Standard Reaccreditation which took place during January 2020.
2. Agrees the actions to address the partial compliances and the areas for improvement as outlined in Appendix 3.
3. Acknowledges the Compliance Plus and Areas of Good Practice as detailed in Appendix 4.

## **9. Local Digital Declaration**

Councillor Kam Kaur summarised the key elements of the published report which set out the principles, benefits, risks and requirements of the Local Digital Declaration. That this work would link to the priorities of the Covid-19 Recovery Plan was recognised. Cabinet was informed that next steps would include the establishment of a project group overseen by the Data and Digital Board.

Councillor Keith Kondakor suggested that highways should be an initial focus. For this it will be necessary to bring the district and borough councils on board. He also recognised the value of “open data” noting that “apps” can be developed around this information. Councillor Jeff Clarke stated that new IT had enhanced working relations with contractors seeing the introduction of an interactive response for highways issues.

Councillor Peter Butlin asked whether the new arrangements would allow people to bypass the requirements of the Data Protection Act. He was informed that this would not be the case.

### **Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Agrees that Warwickshire County Council signs up to the Local Digital Declaration.
2. Endorses the proposed next steps in benefiting from being signatories to the Declaration.

## **10. Home to School Transport Policy**

Councillor Colin Hayfield (Portfolio Holder for Education and Learning) stated that the policy change before Cabinet was small but important. The proposal was to alter the definition of a pupil’s “qualifying school”. The definition introduced previously had stated that the qualifying school was that which was closest to the pupil’s home. It took no account of priority areas. The proposed change would reintroduce priority areas.

The move was welcomed by Councillor Izzi Seccombe who considered it offered a pragmatic solution.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet endorses the following revision to the Home to School Transport policy:

The definition of a pupil's qualifying school is altered to mean either the closest qualifying school to the pupil's home address, with places available, that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the pupil and takes in account any special educational needs that pupil may have, or the priority area school in which the pupil resides. This change would be implemented from publication of the Home to School Transport Policy.

**11. Establishment of a Framework Agreement for Children's Therapeutic Services and Interventions**

Councillor Jeff Morgan (Portfolio Holder for Children's Services) introduced the report. In particular he referred Cabinet to section 3 of the report which set out the advantages of the approach being proposed. Not only would it improve quality control it would also enhance information sharing and provide a boost to the supply side.

Councillor Dave Parsons (Deputy Leader of the Labour Group) welcomed that the arrangement would also apply to special guardianship orders.

**Resolved:**

- 1) Cabinet approves proceeding with an appropriate procurement process for the provision of a Children's Therapeutic Interventions Framework on behalf of Adoption Central England.
- 2) Cabinet approves and authorises the Strategic Director for People to enter into all relevant contracts for the provision of Children's Therapeutic Interventions Framework on terms and conditions acceptable to the Strategic Director for Resources.

**12. Warwickshire Foster Carer Association**

Councillor Jeff Morgan informed Cabinet that there had been a Foster Carer Association in the past but that had fallen into disuse. It was now being rejuvenated but in order for this to happen, resources would be needed. The purpose of the association would be to improve partnership working and encourage people to become foster carers. The proposal was welcomed by Councillor Pam Williams.

**Resolved:**

That Cabinet:

1. Supports the Warwickshire Foster Carer Association (WFCA) applying for charitable status.
2. Approves and authorises the Strategic Director for People to provide



the Warwickshire Foster Carer Association with £15,000 towards their set up costs for establishing the charity for the financial year 2020/21 and to make a further payment of £10,000 to the charity for the year 2021/22, subject to terms and conditions acceptable to the Strategic Director for Resources.

### **13. Proposal to Establish Specialist Resourced Provision at Paddox Primary School, Rugby**

Councillor Colin Hayfield explained the background to the proposal as set out in the report. He emphasised the need to provide early support for children with special needs. If successful those children can enter mainstream education.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse stated that there remain traffic issues around Paddox School but recognised that pick up and drop off of pupils using the specialist facility will likely be different from those for the main school.

Councillor Peter Butlin observed that local service delivery is good for the children and for finances.

#### **Resolved:**

That Cabinet approves the establishment of specialist resourced provision at Paddox Primary School, Rugby.

### **14. Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman - Annual Review and Summary of Upheld Complaints**

The report was introduced by Councillor Kam Kaur who, as well as summarising its key elements added that the impact of Covid-19 on performance was as yet unknown.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe commended the report and the work of officers.

#### **Resolved:**

That Cabinet notes the annual review and summary of upheld complaints issued by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the financial year 2019/20.

### **15. Exclusion of the Press and Members of the Public**

Agreed

### **16. Exempt Minutes of Meeting held on 9 July 2020**

The exempt minutes of the 9 July meeting were agreed.

### **17. (Exempt) Insurance Service Tender 2021-2028**

The recommendations to the exempt report were agreed as printed.

The meeting rose at 15.30

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Chair