

# Cabinet

Thursday 11 April 2024

## Minutes

### Attendance

#### Committee Members

Councillor Isobel Seccombe OBE (Chair)  
Councillor Margaret Bell  
Councillor Peter Butlin  
Councillor Andy Crump  
Councillor Yousef Dahmash  
Councillor Kam Kaur  
Councillor Sue Markham  
Councillor Jan Matecki  
Councillor Heather Timms  
Councillor Martin Watson

#### Officers

Monica Fogarty, Chief Executive  
Nigel Minns, Executive Director for Children and Young People  
Mark Ryder, Executive Director for Communities  
Becky Hale, Executive Director for Social Care and Health  
Andrew Harper, Head of Strategic Finance  
Rob Powell, Executive Director for Resources  
Virginia Rennie, Interim Director of Finance  
Johnny Kyriakou, Director of Education  
Jane Surman, Head of Communications  
Amy Bridgewater-Carnall, Senior Committee Services Officer  
Nic Vine, Head of Legal & Governance

#### Others Present

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers  
Councillor Marian Humphreys  
Councillor John Holland  
Councillor Jerry Roodhouse  
Councillor Tim Sinclair

#### 1. General

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **(1) Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

There were none.

### **(3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 5 March 2024 were agreed as an accurate record.

### **(4) Public Speaking**

There was none.

## **2. Service Estimates 2024/25**

Councillor Peter Butlin, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property, introduced the report which set out how each service would use the resources allocated in 2024/25, following the budget setting meeting in February 2024.

Councillor Butlin gave an overview of the report, explaining that the Budget Delivery Oversight Group would monitor budget delivery over the next twelve months. The report also asked approval for the adjustments needed since the budget was agreed as outlined at section 3 of the report.

Members noted the significant financial pressures encountered during 2023/24 and recognised the potential impact these would continue to have during 2024/25.

Councillor Butlin highlighted the 61% of the Authority's planned spend on services was commissioned from third parties, 3% higher than last year and specifically in the cost of adults and children's social care and support.

He concluded by advising that any deviation in the finances would be recorded in quarterly reports and scrutinised regularly.

Having received no questions, Councillor Butlin proposed the recommendations as laid out.

### **Resolved**

That Cabinet

- 1) Approve the detailed revenue budget, savings plan, and capital programme for each of the Authority's services set out in Appendices A to N;
- 2) Approve the adjustments to service revenue budgets following the realignment of budgets within and between directorates since the budget was set on 8 February 2024, as outlined in Section 3 and Appendix O; and
- 3) Approve the net transfer of £0.448m to reserves as outlined in Section 3 paragraph 2.

### **3. Council Delivery Plan**

Councillor Yousef Dahmash, Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation introduced the report which presented the refreshed Council Delivery Plan (CDP) for the period April 2024 to March 2026.

He advised that this was a two-year rolling plan which set out key deliverables against the Council Plan approved by Council on 8 February 2022. He explained that this replaced the old Integrated Delivery Plan and aimed to simplify the information for residents to enable them to understand what the Council was doing. The previous document had contained 200 priorities, which had now been condensed to 40. Councillor Dahmash stressed that this did not mean any priorities were being discarded but had been refreshed to make them more succinct.

Councillor Izzy Secombe supported the report, stating that it was a very readable document that provided the information in a simple and straightforward manner.

Councillor Yousef requested approval of the recommendation as written.

**Resolved** that Cabinet approve the Council Delivery Plan as attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

### **4. Warwickshire Strategic Economic Plan 2024-2034**

Councillor Martin Watson, Portfolio Holder for Economy, presented the report outlining the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), which set out a vision for Warwickshire's economy. The SEP looked to leverage opportunities from innovation and positive investment, whilst facilitating sustainability and supporting inclusive growth for the residents and communities of the County.

Councillor Watson highlighted that this had increased from a five year to a ten-year plan, having received feedback during consultation. The document set out a clear vision for Warwickshire, which already had a well performing economy and would help to focus on how to continue that journey in an inclusive, ambitious and sustainable manner.

In addition, the delivery plan had been shortened to cover a two-year period with specific activities.

The Leader supported the plan, reflecting on the changes involving the Local Enterprise Partnership and recognised the engagement with District and Coventry partners.

Councillor Watson assured that there had been a lot of engagement and dialogue with local authority and industry partners, with the Coventry and Warwickshire economy relationship continuing to strengthen. He therefore moved the recommendation as laid out.

**Resolved** that Cabinet approve the Warwickshire Strategic Economic Plan 2024-2034, to be effective from 1 May 2024.

### **5. Approval to proceed with Procurement - Renewal of Microsoft 365 licences and support**

Councillor Dahmash introduced the report which requested approval to use the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) contract to secure Microsoft 365 licences and support for the next three years.

Councillor Dahmash advised that as originally stated in the report, the price per licence had increased and therefore, this had resulted in an increase from the approved budget for 2024/25. This was due to a combination of licence cost increases and additional licences for increased headcount.

However, Members noted an adjustment to the costs likely to be incurred since the report was published. Councillor Dahmash advised that due to ongoing negotiations, the Council were able to access licences at pricing previously in force. This meant a reduction in the value of licences, reducing the overspend in 2024/25, although this would still be funded as originally provided for in the report. Confirmation of the figures was still awaited and would be circulated in due course.

Following a question from the Leader, Councillor Dahmash confirmed that education academies paid for their own licences.

Councillor Dahmash outlined the three recommendations as proposed.

### **Resolved**

That Cabinet

- 1) Approves the use of the CCS (Crown Commercial Services) contract to secure its Microsoft 365 licences and support for the next three years from 1 June 2024;
- 2) Authorises the Executive Director for Resources to enter into all necessary agreements under the CCS contract to implement this decision, on terms and conditions acceptable to him; and
- 3) Approves the use of the Financial Management Reserve to meet the potential overspend in 2024/25, if offsetting reductions in in-year spending are not forthcoming, and a request for on-going funding is brought forward as part of the 2025/26 Medium-Term Financial Strategy refresh.

### **6. Coventry and Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education**

The Portfolio Holder for Education, Councillor Kam Kaur, outlined the report which proposed the agreed syllabus for use in all of Warwickshire's Schools without a religious character, over the next five years (2024-2029).

Councillor Kaur explained that the previous syllabus had been due to run until 2022, however, the Covid pandemic had impacted on the delivery of the future syllabus. She referred to the beneficial work that continued to take place between Warwickshire and Coventry schools. If approved, the proposed syllabus would be used in schools from September 2024, with a launch date planned for April.

Councillor Seccombe referred to the membership of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education group (SACRE), which included Councillors Sarah Boad, Justin Kerridge and Parminder Singh Birdi. Councillor Kaur took the opportunity to thank all members who were part of the group and took the time to meet termly and support the collaborative working with Coventry.

Having considered the report, it was

**Resolved** that Cabinet approves the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education for use in all of Warwickshire's Schools without a religious character over the next five years (2024-2029).

## **7. Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024-2029**

The Portfolio Holder for Education, Councillor Kam Kaur, outlined the report which asked Members to endorse the Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024-29. She advised that as the Delivery Plan was in a very draft form, she was not requesting endorsement of it as it required further work.

She therefore proposed that the recommendations be amended to remove number 2) which referenced the Delivery Plan. Councillor Kaur gave an overview of the engagement undertaken with schools and the NHS, which had incorporated the diverse nature of the County and characteristics within schools.

Councillor Jan Matecki highlighted the input of the Educational Attainment Task and Finish Group and thanked members for the work they had put into the plan.

In response, Councillor Kaur echoed his points, advising that a report would be forthcoming with further recommendations from the Task and Finish Group.

Councillor Kaur proposed the revised recommendation.

### **Resolved**

That Cabinet endorses the Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024 – 2029 and recommends it for approval to full Council.

## **8. Reports Containing Exempt or Confidential 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 Schedule 12A of Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1972.

## **9. Exempt Minutes of the 5 March 2024 Meeting of Cabinet**

The exempt minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 5 March 2024 were agreed as an accurate record.

## **10. Approval to tender Advocacy Services**

Councillor Margaret Bell, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health introduced the item and summarised the exempt report.

**Resolved** that the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

## **11. Approval to procure contract(s) and leases for the operation of Reuse Shops at Warwickshire Household Waste Recycling Centres**

Councillor Heather Timms, Portfolio Holder for the Environment, Climate and Culture, introduced the item and summarised the exempt report.

**Resolved** that the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

## **12. Land at Coney Grey Farm**

Councillor Peter Butlin, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Property introduced the item and summarised the exempt report.

**Resolved** that the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

The meeting rose at 14.20

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Chair