

Executive Committee

Tuesday, 4 April 2017

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Bill Hartnett (Chair), Councillor Greg Chance (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Debbie Chance, Brandon Clayton, John Fisher, Mark Shurmer, Yvonne Smith and Pat Witherspoon (during Minute No's 97 to part of 112)

Also Present:

Councillor Nina Wood-Ford (for Minute No.101)

Officers:

Ruth Bamford, Jess Bayley, Clare Flanagan, Sue Hanley, Louise Jones, Jayne Pickering, Amanda Singleton and Judith Willis

Democratic Services Officer:

Debbie Parker-Jones

97. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Juliet Brunner.

98. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Pat Witherspoon declared an Other Disclosable Interest in Agenda Item 9 – Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan – as detailed at Minute No. 105 below.

99. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Work Programme

The following reports which were due to be considered, or possibly considered, at the meeting had been deferred to a later date:

- Council Procurement Rules;
- Financial Regulations;
- Engagement Strategy;

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Chair

- Equalities Strategy;
- Pre-Application Charging Schedule (changing to 'Planning Fees' report);
- Redditch Sports and Physical Activity Strategy 2017/22;
- Health and Safety Policy – Driving at Work;
- Health and Safety Policy – Statutory Inspections;
- Review of Service Delivery Options – HRA Gas Maintenance Service; and
- Policy for HRA Gas Maintenance.

Additional Papers

Two sets of Additional Papers had been circulated prior to the meeting:

- Additional Papers 1 – which comprised an extract of the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 28th March 2017 in relation to the Mental Health Services for Young People Task Group report; and
- Additional Papers 2 – which contained the appendix to the Council's Response to the Solihull Local Draft Plan report at agenda Item 7, which had been omitted from the agenda in error.

100. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 20th February 2017 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

101. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TASK GROUP - FINAL REPORT

Councillor Nina Wood-Ford, Chair of the Mental Health Services for Young People Task Group, gave a brief presentation on the Task Group's final report. She was accompanied by Jess Bayley, Democratic Services Officer and report author. In addition to the Task Group's report which appeared in the agenda papers, Members also had before them a Minute Extract and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee's meeting of 28th March 2017, which had been circulated as Additional Papers 1. It was noted that at the O&S meeting in March the Task Group had been advised that a different department at Worcestershire County Council organised Youth Mental Health First Aid training. The words "Public Health Department" had therefore been removed from the wording of Recommendation 3.

Councillor Wood-Ford explained the background to the report, which had arisen in light of concerns about the prevalence of mental health issues in Redditch. The Task Group wanted to focus on children and young people for early intervention purposes. Some of the categories of people who were at higher risk of mental health and wellbeing problems were highlighted, and it was noted that Redditch had:

- higher levels of deprivation than the county average (one of the higher risk categories);
- a higher proportion of young people in the local population than the county average;
- higher than average mental ill health problems than the county average; and
- a higher suicide rate than the average for the county.

The review had taken place at a time of change to mental health services. The following public documents which had been relevant to the review were emerging, or being implemented, as the review had taken place:

- Worcestershire Transformation Plan for Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing;
- West Midlands Combined Authority's Mental Health Commission's *Thrive West Midlands Action Plan*; and
- Suicide Prevention Plan for Redditch.

The Task Group's report had resulted in a total of seven recommendations which were designed to help young people and the people who worked with them. The Executive Committee was being asked to determine Recommendations 4, 5 and 6 only. Recommendations 1, 2 and 3 were recommendations to external organisations and for noting only. Recommendation 7, which related to the reconvening of the Task Group in 12 months' time to monitor progress in the Borough against actions set out in the documents referred to above, had been resolved by O&S and, again, was for noting only.

Members thanked the Task Group for an extremely helpful report and the hard work that had been put into this very important issue. The Council had been the only authority in the county to sign up to the West Midlands Mental Health Concordat, and invaluable work was also being carried out on the 'Time to Talk' initiative which the Council had pledged support to and which UNISON was leading on within the Council.

Members noted Recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 7. In relation to Recommendation 4, the Leader stated that he was happy to write the proposed letter to the Secretary of State for Education and to work with the appropriate O&S Member(s) to compile this. The Leader also suggested that a copy of the Task Group's report be sent to the Member of Parliament for Redditch with a covering letter making her aware of the contents of this in light of her work for the town.

The proposals at Recommendation 6 to review the implications for Council Services of Actions 4 and 5 of the West Midlands Combined Authority Mental Health Commission's *Thrive West Midlands Action Plan*, and that the outcomes of this work be reported for the Executive Committee's consideration in due course, were also supported. It was noted that this would complement work which was already being undertaken by the Council. Officers undertook to forward a copy of the *Thrive West Midlands Action Plan* to Members following the meeting.

The Executive Committee did not support Recommendation 5, which proposed the establishment of a new theme dedicated to projects which helped people experiencing mental health and wellbeing problems under the Council's grants programme. Members were of the view that the current themes provided sufficient scope for applications from voluntary and community sector organisations that worked in these fields, with many grants having been awarded over the years to organisations whose work included mental health and wellbeing elements. Councillor Wood-Ford responded that the recommendation had arisen following feedback from such organisations that they were unaware that they could apply to the Council for grant funding. Members agreed that as much awareness as possible of the grants process, the existing themes and the types of applications which could be made under these was key to ensuring that as many organisations as possible applied for grants. They requested therefore that any efforts currently undertaken by Officers in promoting the grants process be doubled to heighten awareness.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Leader of the Council write to the Secretary of State for Education, the Rt. Hon. Justine Greening, urging her to ensure that Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) Lessons, to include lessons about mental health and wellbeing issues, become a statutory part of the national school curriculum (*Recommendation 4 in the report*);**

- 2) a new theme dedicated to projects which help people experiencing mental health and wellbeing problems not be added to the Council's grants programme (*Recommendation 5 in the report*); and
- 3) Senior Officers, following consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Corporate Management and Housing respectively, review the implications for Council Services of the following actions detailed in the West Midlands Combined Authority Mental Health Commission's *Thrive West Midlands Action Plan*:

Action 4: the proposal to evaluate a financial incentive to encourage companies to demonstrate their commitment to mental health and wellbeing; and

Action 5: the proposal to help people to gain housing and work (including potentially supported accommodation); and

the outcomes of this work be reported for the consideration of the Executive Committee (*Recommendation 6 in the report*).

RESOLVED to NOTE the following recommendations from the Task Group to the Emotional Wellbeing and CAMHS Partnership Board and Worcestershire County Council that:

- 4) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) should not withdraw services from young people who fail to engage during their appointments (*Recommendation 1 in the report*);
- 5) a representative of the new Liaison and Diversion Service for Worcestershire should work as a Change Champion in Connecting Families once the service starts to operate in the county (*Recommendation 2 in the report*); and
- 6) Worcestershire County Council should review the provision of Youth Mental Health First Aid training to determine whether a concessionary rate could be offered to enable staff from smaller Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to participate. (*Recommendation 3 in the report*).

RESOLVED to NOTE the following recommendation from the Task Group to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that:

- 7) the Mental Health Services for Young People Task Group should be reconvened in 12 months' time to receive

monitoring updates from Officers about progress in the Borough with the implementation of:

- a) the actions detailed in the *Worcestershire Transformation Plan for Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health*;
- b) the West Midlands Combined Authority Mental Health Commission's *Thrive West Midlands: An Action Plan to Drive Better Health and Wellbeing in the West Midlands*; and
- c) the Suicide Prevention Plan for Redditch (*Recommendation 7 in the report*).

102. REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2017 - 2030

Members considered the informal response submitted by Officers as part of the consultation on the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2017 – 2030. The informal response had been submitted to the County Council on 17th March 2017 in order to meet the consultation deadline and Member endorsement of the response was now being sought.

Officers explained that central government required the County Council to produce LTPs to set out objectives for developing transport plans. The purpose of the consultation on the LTP was to set out the County Council's aspirations and priorities for investing in the transport networks, including infrastructure, technology and services to support all relevant modes of transport including walking, cycling, rail, bus and community transport, as well as highways.

The informal response set out general comments and concerns that the Council had in relation to the LTP, and sought clarification on elements of this. Members endorsed the response and in doing so noted that issues which had previously been raised with the County Council had not been addressed within the LTP. Notably, there was a fundamental lack of regard within the LTP for strategic growth issues related to future housing needs of the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area, and no mention of rail service.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the informal response to the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 2017 – 2030, attached at Appendix A to the report, for submission as the formal Council response be approved; and

RESOLVED that

- 2) **the report be noted.**

103. REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO SOLIHULL DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

Members considered the Officer response (circulated as Additional Papers 2) submitted to the consultation on the Solihull Draft Local Plan. The informal response had been submitted to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council on 17th February 2017 in order to meet the consultation deadline, and Member endorsement of the response was now being sought.

Officers explained that the purpose of the consultation on the Draft Local Plan was to seek views on the revised policies and proposed site allocations for housing and employment land, in addition to those in the existing Plan. The Officer response to the consultation raised a number of concerns which it was felt still needed to be addressed through the Plan. Notably, it was not clear exactly what the Objectively Assessed Housing Need for Solihull was. It was also felt that the Plan did not adequately respond to the shortfall of 37,900 dwellings arising from Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area (GBHMA) as indicated in the Birmingham City Development Plan. Solihull had not formally committed to accommodating 2000 dwellings in a particular location. Also, there was no clear rationale to help determine or indicate what the relevant level of additional housing that Solihull should be accommodating to address this shortfall would be.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the Officer response to the Solihull Draft Local Plan, attached at Appendix A to the report, for submission as the formal Council response be approved; and**

RESOLVED that

- 2) **the report be noted.**

104. VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR GRANT FUNDING - ALLOCATION OF UNALLOCATED FUNDS FOR 2017/18

Members considered the Notes and recommendations of the Grants Panel Meeting held on 14th March 2017.

The Panel considered nine resubmitted major grant applications which had been received from a variety of Voluntary Sector Organisations in line with the Council's five themed Strategic

Purposes, for a number of unallocated sums of money that had been re-advertised in parallel with the Stronger Communities Grants applications. Each of the applications was scored in accordance with the Council's Grants Programme requirements, with recommendations made to either approve or reject each of the applications.

The Panel were informed that the remaining budget of £1,000 under the "Keep my place safe and looking good" Theme remained unallocated as no new or re-submitted applications had been received under this Theme. The Panel agreed that it be recommended to the Executive Committee that the unallocated budget be incorporated into the Stronger Communities grants funding theme for 2017/18.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the following grants for the unallocated budgets for 2017/18 be awarded:

Group	Theme and relaunched amount	Project	Amount
Redditch Play Council	Help Me to Live My Life Independently £16,000	The Redditch Play Council	£16,000
NewStarts	Help Me Run a Successful Voluntary Sector Business £5,000	Skills for a New Start	£5,000
The Ditch Youth Project	Help Me to Live My Life Independently £1,000	The Ditch Youth Project	£1,000

- 2) the unallocated sum of £1,000 relating to the Theme "Keep my place safe and looking good" be included in the Stronger Communities grants funding theme for 2017/18.

105. WORCESTERSHIRE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP PLAN

The Committee received a report which outlined the Memorandum of Understanding and the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan, both of which had been developed, together with partners, by the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership (WSHP) and

were subject to a 10-week consultation which ended on 31st December 2016.

Officers presented the report and explained the background to the WSHP. The group aimed to develop, lead and drive the Worcestershire strategies and strategic plans which related to housing, housing-related support needs and the growth and economic success agenda to ensure a joined-up approach across the county. A more joined-up approach should then enable agencies to use their resources more efficiently in the future. The vision for the Partnership Plan was “the right home environment is essential to health, wealth and wellbeing throughout life”, with the vision being supported by three key priorities as detailed in the report.

Whilst Members supported the Plan a concern was raised that various references were made in this to affordable housing, but that there were no references to social housing, which were two separate things. A Member also expressed disappointment that Redditch Co-operative Homes were reportedly unaware of the existence of the Plan. Officers agreed to take Members’ comments back to the Council’s Chief Executive.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan be endorsed; and**
- 2) the Worcestershire Memorandum of Understanding be agreed.**

(During the consideration of this matter, Councillor Pat Witherspoon declared an Other Disclosable Interest in this item by virtue of her being one of the Council’s representatives on Redditch Co-operative Homes, and remained in the room during the consideration of this.)

106. FINANCE MONITORING QUARTER 3 2016/17

The Committee received a report which detailed the Council’s final financial position for the General Fund Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the period April to December 2016 (Quarter 3 2016/17). Officers apologised for the omission of report appendices 2 (HRA Monitoring April – December 2016/17) and 3 (Revenue Budget Reconciliation) from the agenda papers, which they confirmed they would circulate to Members after the meeting.

It was noted that there was currently a revenue underspend of £54k, projected to be £59k by the year end. This included a proportion of the projected underspend being allocated back to the HRA.

Officers explained the position in relation to the Capital Budget Summary. Whilst there were a few underspends in the third quarter due to the timing of projects commencing, it was anticipated that the majority of capital expenditure would be on target to budget for the financial year. There were expected carry forward positions on the crematorium enhancement and HRA capital projects.

Paragraph 3.6 of the report detailed information in relation to the HRA. Rental income had shown a shortfall of £189k due to the increase in the number of Right to Buy sales following relaxation of the discount rules. This had partially been offset by a £17k increase in non-dwelling rental income due to higher than expected garage lettings. There had been other significant overspends in the Repairs and Maintenance and Supervision and Management teams, for the reasons detailed in the report. It was reported that the detail included in the missing Appendix 2 would further inform Members as to the financial position for the HRA.

Regarding the number of void properties requiring costly repair works, Members queried whether the Council pursued former tenants to recover repair costs. Officers stated that so far as they were aware the Council did seek to recover such costs, and that they would check how this was done and would report back to Members on this. It was confirmed that void recharges had been looked at under transformation and that this was an area which the relevant Head of Service was currently looking into. Members queried how many void properties were affected and whether the trend for this was increasing, details of which Officers also agreed to obtain and to circulate to Members. Officers also provided clarification on the reference to “temporary staff vacancies” detailed at page 106 of the agenda. This referred to staff vacancies which had temporarily been held vacant, rather than to vacancies for temporary members of staff. It was agreed that this wording be amended in future to avoid any further confusion.

RESOLVED that

the current financial positions for the quarter April to December 2016, as detailed in the report, be noted.

107. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14th February 2017.

It was noted that there were no recommendations to consider.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14th February 2017 be received and noted.

108. MINUTES / REFERRALS - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS ETC.

Minute Extract of 28th March 2017 Overview and Scrutiny Committee

A Minute Extract and recommendations arising from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 28th March 2017 (circulated as Additional Papers 1) were considered along with Agenda Item 5 – Mental Health Services for Young People Task Group – Final Report (Minute No.101 refers).

109. CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD - PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE

Councillor Yvonne Smith, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Regulatory Services and the Council's representative on the Worcestershire County Council Corporate Parenting Board (CPB), provided Members with an oral update on the work of the Board. It had been agreed that an item from the Portfolio Holder updating Members on the work of the Board would appear on all Executive Committee agendas from hereon, in light of the outcomes of the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services and Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board in late 2016. The CPB was a means of securing elected Member engagement with the issues affecting children in care. The Portfolio Holder updates to Executive would help to disseminate relevant information in a public arena, to show that work was being carried out and would allow questions to be raised on this.

Councillor Smith proceeded to give a detailed oral update as set out below.

1. The CPB was a cross-party advisory body to Worcestershire County Council's Executive and others, on matters concerning Looked After Children (LAC; children and young people either in Foster Care or in Children's Residential Care) and Care Leavers.
2. It existed to ensure that the needs of LAC and Care Leavers were met.
3. It had no decision-making powers.

4. It was chaired by County Councillor Marc Baylis who was responsible for Children, Families and Communities.
5. It met at least six times a year.
6. Membership of the CPB comprised 6 County Councillors and one Councillor from each of the Worcestershire District/Borough Councils.
7. A number of County Council Officers (including Catherine Driscoll as the responsible Director), District/Borough Council Officers and representatives from various partner agencies such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Babcock Prime and the Community and Voluntary sector such as Swanswell also attended the meetings.
8. Children and young people from the Who Cares We Care Children in Care Council and Speak Out Care Leavers Council also attended to represent the voices of the children and young people.
9. Listening to the LAC was a golden thread running through the Board to provide children and young people with an opportunity to help shape the services they received.
10. Reports and presentations were taken to the CPB for consideration and at the 2nd February 2017 meeting the following items were discussed:
 - a presentation on the Care Leavers' Strategy and Strategic Plan;
 - the Annual Corporate Parenting Board report;
 - a report on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children;
 - Council key issues debate feedback;
 - the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Pledge;
 - the Children's Services Ofsted Report relating to Corporate Parenting; and
 - the CPB's Work Programme.
11. District responsibilities were mostly about providing an appropriate place for Care Leavers to live and to prevent them from going into bed and breakfast accommodation.
12. It was crucial that the district housing departments received sufficient notice that a Care Leaver was about to leave care and confirmation that the Care Leaver had the ability to manage their tenancy.
13. Sadly some care leavers did not have the basic skills to manage their finances, to cook and clean and could get into difficulties with their tenancies.

In closing, Councillor Smith read out the following quotes:

From the Care Leavers' Strategy by Eleanor Schooling, Ofsted National Director of Social Care, December 2016:

“Care is what we receive from our family and friends. Sometimes we forget that it can be as simple as having supportive and healthy relationships with people who care about us. As Corporate Parents, we try to replicate that relationship as closely as possible, so that Care Leavers get the same support that many of their peers get as they begin adulthood.”

And from a young person who attended a CPB meeting:

“We don’t need you to know us personally but we want to know that you think of us and our needs when you are planning services.”

Members thanked Councillor Smith for the comprehensive update. It was agreed that the best approach was for Councillor Smith to continue to provide oral updates in the future, unless she felt that a written report was more appropriate. As this was the first update which had contained a lot of background information it was requested that a detailed minute be provided for this. A query was raised as to whether Members should be sent a copy of the CPB minutes. Councillor Smith responded that the meetings were not open to the public and that all reports were marked not for publication. She was unsure as to why the Board minutes were not made public and confirmed that she would check with the County Council why this was the case, and would seek confirmation from them as to what information could and could not be obtained.

Councillor Smith confirmed that the next CPB meeting was due to take place on Thursday 6th April 2017, which she would update Members on at the June Executive Committee meeting.

RESOLVED that

the update be noted.

110. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

111. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that

under S.100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter on the grounds that it involves the likely

disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended.

Item 15 – Customer Access and Financial Support Services Shared Service Business Case.

112. SHARED SERVICE BUSINESS CASE FOR CUSTOMER ACCESS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

The Committee received a confidential report on the Business Case for Customer Access and Financial Support Services. Members were advised that the Business Case had already been considered by the Shared Services Board who had endorsed this.

Officers gave a presentation on the proposed Business Case, which included details of:

- the strategic and operational purposes for Customer Access and Financial Support;
- transformation work which had been carried out over the preceding 3 years and which would continue in the future;
- the financial and staffing implications of the proposed structure; and
- the evidence-base to support the proposals.

Officers advised that a shared service would provide for greater resilience and enable changes to be made to the structure, which in turn would provide for greater one-to-one support for customers in need. Work carried out by the service had also evidenced a need to provide dedicated financial independence support to customers.

The proposed structure would provide a sound base moving forward, finalise working arrangements which had been in place for some time and ensure the provision of a high quality customer focused service. The proposed structure also recognised that there were significant external influences which were outside of the Council's control but which the Council had to adapt to quickly, for example Welfare Reforms, and provided flexibility for this and to continue to meet customer demand.

Members supported the Business Case and thanked Officers for an excellent evidence-based report.

RECOMMENDED that

the Business Case for the Customer Access and Financial Support Services Shared Service be approved.

[During consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that exempt information would be revealed relating to labour relations matter.]

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 9.05 pm

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Chair