

Cabinet

24 April 2012 – At a meeting of the Cabinet held at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mrs Goldsmith (Chairman), Mr Barnard, Mr Brown, Mr Catchpole, Mr Evans, Mrs Field, Mr Griffiths and Mr Montyn.

Members in attendance: Mrs Millson and Mrs Whitehead.

PART I

Declarations of Interest

1. There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes

2. Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2012 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

Urgent Matters

3. There were no urgent matters.

Total Performance Monitor to end of February 2012

4. The Cabinet received the Total Performance Monitor (TPM) to the end of February 2012 (copy appended to the signed minutes). The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources was pleased to report that the Revenue Budget for all services was underspent and the TPM had been reporting this for the last couple of months so the £37m savings for 2011/12 were on target. There were a few fluctuations in the Capital Programme but nothing was untoward. The Executive Director, Finance and Resources confirmed that he had not seen any material problems as the 2011/12 accounts were being closed down.
5. At the end of March 2012, there were 176 fewer posts than projected so the reduction of nearly 1300 full time equivalent posts over 3 years should be achieved by March 2013.
6. The Executive Director, Finance and Resources reported that there were two Measures that were likely to be showing as Red in the year end TPM. They were:
 - Measure 20(b) – There were 2,000 tonnes more waste arisings than projected going to landfill
 - Measure 21(1) – The percentage of recorded safety defects repaired within the timescales set out in the County Council's policy was 83% against the target of 95%.

7. The Deputy Leader expressed his disappointment that the waste arisings target had been missed. However he was pleased to report that the mechanical biological treatment plant was progressing on schedule. When it became operational the volumes going to landfill would significantly reduce. The Deputy Leader also reported that he was continuing to work with Better Tomorrows to improve the rates of diversion from landfill.
8. Regarding Measure 20(b), the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport informed the Cabinet that the contractor had provided extra work gangs at its own risk to tackle the shortfall in performance. As a result the backlog of defects had reduced from 1000, to 45. £3m was being spent in 2012/13 on surface dressing of roads.
9. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services commented that the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) was currently working to support 64, out of the 80 planned, young mothers. Participation was voluntary and more was being done to encourage young mothers to take up the offer of support. Not all referrals to the Family Intervention Project (FIP) received so far were suitable to join it due to very tight eligibility criteria. However the Cabinet Member stressed he wanted as many eligible families as possible were supported as possible.
10. The Cabinet requested a presentation on the FIP and FNP at a future meeting.

Improvement Plan Update

11. The Cabinet received the report on the Improvement Plan for Children's Services (copy appended to the signed minutes). The Cabinet Member for Children's Services was pleased to report on significant progress with the Service. All new systems were working well and the timeliness of initial and core assessments were now among the best He thanked the staff for the hard work they had put in to improve the Service.
12. The Leader, Cabinet Member and officers would be meeting the Minister of State for Children and Families on 17 May 2012 to report on progress but the meeting would not result in Children's Services being taken out of intervention. That was subject to Ofsted agreeing that the Service was rated at least adequate. That inspection would use an interim framework as Ofsted was moving to a new multi-agency framework in April 2013. Staff were being supported in preparedness for the unannounced two-week inspection which would include interviews with social workers, observing their practice, managers' supervision and multi-agency meetings over the period. The inspectors might also attend home visits. Members noted that while the Service could recommend that an inspector did not make a home visit, it did not have a veto. Only the children who were the subject of proceedings could veto a visit.

13. In response to a question, the Director of Children's Services confirmed that Sussex Police would be locating its child protection team at the Children's Access Point (CAP) in Horsham, from June 2012. Only technical problems with introducing their IT systems into the building had delayed them joining the CAP already.

The Way We Work

14. The Executive Director, Customers and Change, introduced the report on the changes to the ways of working at the County Council (copy appended to the signed minutes). She had been pleased with the positive response of the 200 staff who had already moved to the new IT platform. There had also been a positive response to the "Big Clear Out" of the offices. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources commented that the move to the new IT platform made it possible to close 43 administrative buildings and improve efficiency.

Appointments to Outside Bodies – Approved Duty

15. The Cabinet noted that appointments had been recently been made to new outside bodies, namely the Police Crime Panel and the Horsham Health and Wellbeing Partnership. In addition there were 6 other Health and Wellbeing Partnerships to which appointments could be made. For appointed Members to be able to claim expenses, these needed to be agreed as "approved duties".

16. Resolved

That appointments to the Police Crime Panel and the Borough and District Health and Wellbeing Partnerships in West Sussex be agreed as approved duties.

Chairman

The meeting closed at 11.13 a.m.