

## **Cabinet**

31 January 2012 – At a meeting of the Cabinet held at County Hall, Chichester.

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

Members in attendance: Mr Burrett, Mr M Dunn, Mrs Millson and Mr Watson.

## **Declarations of Interest**

59. There were no declarations of interest.

## **Minutes**

60. Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2011 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

## **Urgent Matters**

61. There were no urgent matters.

## **Performance Framework and Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2015/16**

62. The Cabinet received the report on the Performance Framework and Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2015/16 together with the comments from the Select Committees (copy appended to the signed minutes).

63. The Leader set the context for the Performance Framework and invited comments from the Cabinet. Members agreed that the Early Intervention and Think Family approaches were key to supporting vulnerable families and providing them with coordinated services that improved the long-term outcomes for their children. In a similar vein, Age with Confidence would provide support for the elderly in their homes and reduce inappropriate and avoidable admissions to hospital. It would also promote the benefits of early diagnosis of dementia to maintain quality of life and independence and the Clinical Commissioning Groups in the County had welcomed this. Members acknowledged that close collaboration with Public Health would be essential in the delivery of these priorities.

64. Under Minding Our Business, Members welcomed the £15m of new investment, including the development of next generation broadband, to support local businesses.

65. Members recognised that while there was a clear commitment to maintaining roads to a high standard, more needed to be done to inform the public about the timescales involved and how the work was assessed and to reassure them that road safety issues were always dealt with as a priority.

66. Resolved -

That the Performance Framework 2012/15 be recommended to the County Council for approval.

67. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources introduced the budget for 2012/13 and recommended its endorsement by the Cabinet for final approval by the County Council on 17 February 2012.

68. He said that the budget continued to be dominated by the need to find £79m savings over three years and was pleased to report that the £39m savings required in 2011/12 would be delivered by the end of the financial year.

69. The total budget was £1.2bn, comprising net revenue expenditure of £503m, financed principally from Council Tax; Capital expenditure of £140m, financed from borrowing and receipts; and schools expenditure of £597m financed from the Dedicated Schools Grant.

70. The net revenue expenditure of £503m included the requirement to find a further £21.5m savings. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources was delighted to report that the £39m savings requirement for 2011/12 would be met by the end of this financial year. All service budgets reflected the projections made last year inclusive of an appropriate allowance for inflation.

71. Capital expenditure of £140m, although lower than last year, included £35m accelerated expenditure for construction projects that would assist the recovery of the West Sussex economy.

72. The number of personnel working for the Council would reduce to 5173 by the end of 2012/13.

73. The Government was providing a one off grant of £9.6m to provide for a further Council Tax freeze. It agreed Band D Council Tax for County Council services in 2012/13 would remain at £1162. The Cabinet Member commented that it was expected that effects of losing the Council Tax freeze grant in 2013/14 could be contained although no further Government grant was likely. This could be sustained through additional savings of £9.6m, adjusted for inflation, that year to provide stability in the Council Tax for West Sussex residents.

74. The Executive Director Finance and Performance reported on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of Reserves as required under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 and assured the Cabinet that the overall revenue estimates were robust and the level of reserves

was considered adequate. The budget was based on the draft settlement issued by the Government in December 2011 as the final settlement had not yet been issued. He was, however, confident that the budget could be delivered as planned.

75. The Leader thanked the Cabinet, in particular the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources together with the Executive Director for Finance and Performance for delivering the majority of savings in the current financial year from back office functions and for proposing a budget that would achieve the necessary savings next year while continuing to deliver frontline services.

76. Resolved –

That County Council on 17 February 2012 be recommended to approve the series of budget recommendations as presented to the Cabinet, subject to any adjustments necessary in the light of the final settlement figure from the Government.

### **Total Performance Monitor to end of November 2011**

77. Members received the Total Performance Monitor (TPM) to the end of November 2011 (copy appended to the signed minutes).

78. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources commented that this monitor was now two months out of date and that the draft TPM for December showed further improvements. It was anticipated that there would be no measures showing as Red when the December TPM was published.

79. Resolved –

That the Total Performance Monitor to the end of November 2011 be noted.

### **Improvement Plan Update**

80. The Director for Children's Services informed the Cabinet of progress with the Improvement Plan since the last meeting (copy appended to the signed minutes).

81. The Cabinet welcomed the considerable progress that had been made so far. It was recognised that there was still a lot more work to be done to ensure that, as and when the Service was removed from intervention, the new ways of working were sustained and then to further develop to take account of the Munro requirements. Members acknowledged the tireless efforts of all the staff to achieve this position and the support from all Member of the County Council.

82. In response to questions regarding the letter from the Peer Review Team, the Director of Children's Services reassured Members that appropriate action had been taken to address the comments in that letter.

Chairman

The meeting closed at 11.35 a.m.