

Cabinet

MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 11 OCTOBER 2022 AT THE KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Richard Clewer (Chairman), Cllr Laura Mayes (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Phil Alford, Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Cllr Nick Botterill, Cllr Dr Mark McClelland and Cllr Ashley O'Neill

Also Present:

Cllr David Bowler, Cllr Clare Cape, Cllr Gavin Grant, Cllr Sven Hocking, Cllr Nick Holder, Cllr Tony Jackson, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Jerry Kunkler, Cllr Nic Puntis, Cllr Tamara Reay, Cllr Caroline Thomas, Cllr Ian Thorn, Cllr Jo Trigg and Cllr Tim Trimble

89 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Jane Davies.

90 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2022 were presented.

Resolved:

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2022, subject to the Reasons for Decision at minute 85 to read as follows :

‘The pandemic paused the SDAT programme and with the new Business Plan there is a drive to refresh the desire to ensure local Councils are best placed to look after the services and assets at a local level.

The revised policy will streamline the protracted negotiations experienced in the previous programme with an aim to make the policy clearer to those Councils wishing to pursue service devolution and asset transfer.’

91 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

92 **Leader's announcements**

The Leader had no formal announcements although he did indicate that there would be an update on the cost-of-living crises at Full Council on 18 October 2022.

93 **Public participation and Questions from Councillors**

General questions were submitted from the following members of the public:

- Mel Boyle – Social housing
- Dr Celia Beckett – Sites selected for council housing in Trowbridge

Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing explained that the above questions had received written responses which were published on the Council's website prior to the meeting a can be accessed [here](#) at supplement 1.

Dr Celia Beckett, Chair of Hilperton Area Action Group, was in attendance and asked a supplementary question about concerns raised by local residents during the Local Plan consultation process in relation to - lack of crossings for the river and canal making transport solutions impossible, frequent flooding in the Staverton area, a vital wildlife corridor, a special area of conservation for bats and these concerns being addressed. The Leader and Cllr Botterill commented on the Local Plan process and explained that the process was driven by evidence provided by the Council and considered by the Inspector.

94 **Update on Council's response to the climate emergency**

Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing presented a report which provided an update on progress and actions taken in response to the climate emergency.

The Leader explained that the council has made significant progress in responding to the climate emergency. Delivery plans have been published setting out how the Council will deliver its objectives as detailed in the Carbon Neutral Council Plan 2022-2024 and Climate Strategy Delivery Plan for Wiltshire 2022-2024. He commented in detail on the seven delivery themes for Transport, Housing and the Built Environment, Natural Environment, Energy, Green Economy, Waste and Carbon Neutral Council.

Cllr Mayes, Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for Children's Services, Education and Skills noted the incredible progress being made and asked about the Council influence on other organisations not under the responsibility of the Council. The Head of Climate Programme highlighted how the Council is reaching out and working with partners including Town and Parish Councils.

Cllr Blair-Pilling, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection, Leisure, Libraries, Facilities Management and Operational Assets highlighted the work being undertaken at Five Rivers Leisure Centre to install air source heat pumps and solar panels.

Cllr Alford, Cabinet Member for Housing, Strategic Assets and Asset Transfer reported that the Housing Energy Efficiency Programme has undertaken a large

number of retrofit assessments with the aim of the project to reduce the amount of CO2 produced by 15,000 tonnes across the council housing stock.

Cllr Ian Thorn welcomed the report and commented on the fantastic progress made. He indicated that it was important for the council to engage with other organisations to deliver positive outcomes for the county as a whole. Cllr Thorn raised the following issues:

- The opportunity to improve the performance of waste and recycling through public information campaigns and engaging with communities. In response, the Leader and Cllr Dr McClelland agreed that there were opportunities to increase recycling rates and to continue targeting marketing campaigns in this area.
- Judging success, reaching targets and identify progress. The Leader noted that the council is making good progress to achieve targets by 2030.
- The impact on the County as a whole. The Leader noted that it would be very difficult to decarbonise the County by 2030, as this would be reliant on policies set by the Government.
- Some concern with the direction of travel of the current Government.
- Huge opportunity to include policies in the Local Plan as it develops on about the amount of carbon being produced to build the home and then how the home is run by the owners. The Leader reminder Councillors that the Local plan needed to be compliant with national planning framework and the consideration of the inspector. The Local Plan would be as green and sustainable within these limits.
- To oppose fracking in the County. The Leader confirmed that there were no licences for fracking in Wiltshire. The Corporate Director Place confirmed that he would provide additional information to clarify this issue after the meeting.
- The allocation of £1m a year between 2021-2025 to support activity on the high street. The Leader confirmed that work was progressing well and provided meaningful and transformational support to grow businesses, support employment and transform Wiltshire's high streets to meet the needs of the local community.
- Engaging with suppliers and communicating the council's requirements in relation to the climate emergency. The Leader referred to paragraphs 90-93 of the report for examples of current work with suppliers in this area.

Cllr Graham Wright, Chairman of the Climate Emergency Task Group reported that the Task Group welcomed the council's commitment to give an update every six months on progress toward tackling climate change. He spoke about the progress being made, the need for continued focus on the issues, discussions about the various delivery themes by the Task Group, welcome the opportunity to review the next report in May 2023 prior to consideration by Cabinet. He also recognised and appreciated the amount of work to the point, particularly by the Climate Team, and others across the whole council.

Cllr Chris Williams informed the Cabinet that as the Military and Civilian Integration representative for the Council, he had recently visited a military camp in Wiltshire and heard about their plans to become carbon neutral, the outcomes of which would be extended to other military camps in Wiltshire.

Cllr Caroline Thomas commented on the funding of the electric vehicle infrastructure and in particular EV charging points currently not working in certain locations around the county. In response, the Leader explained that national grid capacity was the largest issue to contend with and others forms of green energy could well be available in the future.

Cllr Gordon King welcomed the report and asked about the outcomes if the Council were to achieve carbon neutrality. The Leader expressed confidence in achieving carbon neutrality in the county by 2030 for those areas under the responsibility of the Council, especially with the changes in technology. However, he did remind everyone that the journey was not simple and the measures outside of council control may be delivered by 2045.

Resolved:

That the actions taken in response to the climate emergency following the last update in February 2022 be noted.

Reason for Decision:

To provide Cabinet with an update on actions taken in response to the climate emergency.

95 **Domestic Abuse External Grant Allocation - Year Two (2022-23)**

Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection, Leisure, Libraries, Facilities Management and Operational Assets presented a report which sought authority to endorse the proposals outlined in the report for use against the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) funding, to fulfil the functions of the statutory duty on Tier 1 Local Authorities relating to the provision of support to victims of domestic abuse and their children residing in safe accommodation.

Cllr Blair-Pilling reported that the Secretary of State for DLUHC has determined under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 that a grant of £125m should be awarded to local authorities to enable them to fulfil their statutory functions of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 relating to the provision of specialist support to victims and their families fleeing domestic abuse and living in safe accommodation. He informed Cabinet that the Council has been allocated £832,348 for 2022-23 (year 2 funding).

Cabinet members indicated that the funding was fundamental in supporting children and adults in the area of domestic abuse and they welcomed the enhancement of the local provision.

Cllr Ian Thorn commented on funding and whether anything not spent during 2022/23 would be rolled over into an earmarked reserve and used to support the continuation of the work; He also commented on the support available for male victims of domestic abuse. In response, Cllr Blair-Pilling confirmed that any surplus would be rolled over to support future work in this area. It was noted that the need for support was increasing, and a property was being repurposed to support male victims of domestic abuse.

Cllr Johnny Kidney, Chair of the Health Select Committee confirmed that the Select Committee considered a draft version of the report at their meeting on 22 September 2022. They welcomed the report, noted its contents and would receive an update on outcomes from the funding and other domestic abuse work in 2022/23.

Resolved:

- **To accept the £832,348 allocated from the DLUHC for 2022-23 and endorse the proposals for allocating the grant**
- **To agree to roll any surplus funding to an earmarked reserve.**
- **To agree that any further decisions relating to the distribution of this grant are delegated to the Corporate Director of Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection, Leisure, Libraries, Facilities Management and Operational Assets.**

Reason for Decision:

Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 details the statutory responsibilities of the Local Authority functions relating to the 'provision of support for all victims of domestic abuse and their children, regardless of their relevant protected characteristics, within relevant accommodation' (as defined by the Regulations).

To support the implementation of new duties in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Wiltshire distributed its allocated year 1 funding (£830,051) to further strengthen the local support offer to victims and their families fleeing domestic abuse and living in safe accommodation. The decision making was underpinned from evidence from the local health needs assessment, an independent review of services including a map and gap, as well as service-user engagement.

In April 2022 government committed a further £125million to be allocated to local authorities, for year two, of its three-year commitment to invest in domestic abuse services. Wiltshire have been awarded £832,348.

To maximise the opportunities of this additional funding, enhancing the local support offer available to victims and their families in Wiltshire experiencing domestic abuse, Wiltshire requires Cabinet approval to endorse the proposals for the allocation of this funding across the local system.

The proposals seek to build on the learning from those projects invested in as part of the year one funding and allows for continuation where early results have been indicative of positive engagement and better outcomes for those using the interventions and in receipt of the support. Using the funding on those proposals included in the paper will enable work to continue and to ensure there are no gaps in service delivery, which could place vulnerable service users at risk.

96 **Parish Stewards - Additional Funding**

Cllr Dr Mark McClelland, Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding presented a report which requested an increase in the budget for the Parish Steward Scheme to increase the capacity and capability of the service.

Cllr Dr McClelland explained that the Council has been operating the Parish Steward Scheme successfully for many years and is a service that is greatly appreciated by the local communities.

The Leader referred to a statement from Rushall Parish Council in support of the proposals. The Statement was published in Supplement 1 on the Council's website at this [link](#).

The Cabinet noted that in order to increase the capability of the Parish Stewards it is proposed to add a two-person support team with additional equipment. Cllr Dr McClelland confirmed that the Parish Steward Support Team would be shared between the stewards and deployed as required, with care taken to ensure that they are programmed to be fully utilised.

Cllr Ian Thorn welcomed the report and asked that Town and Parish Council are made aware of the additional capacity of the Teams and the scope of work that can be undertaken.

Cllr Jerry Kunkler, Chair of the Environment Select Committee confirmed that he and Cllr Bob Jones, Vice Chairman of the Environment Select Committee, received a briefing on the report on 7 October 2022. He noted that Parish Stewards are valued by both councillors and parishes alike, and the report was welcomed and supported. They were reassured that any work will be appropriately prioritised and that the scope of the Stewards scheme will be reiterated to parishes and councillors to manage expectations.

Resolved:

- (i) That a budget of £233,000 is included for each of the years 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/5 to provide a Parish Steward Support Service. This one-off funding, totalling £699,000 will be provided from the Business Plan Priority reserve.**

- (ii) Arrangements are made with the highways term maintenance contractor for the supply of a suitable two-person team and associated equipment to support the Parish Steward scheme.**

Reason for Decision:

The Parish Steward scheme is important to the town and parish councils and the local communities, and their work contributes to improving the safety and appearance of Wiltshire's highway network. The increased budget will enable the Parish Stewards to undertake additional work on the network.

97 **Update on Social Mobility and community conversations**

Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing presented a report which provided detail of activity arising from recent community visits and pilots of ongoing community conversations.

The Leader explained that as part of Wiltshire Council's commitment to improving social mobility and tackling inequalities, senior leaders from a range of public sector organisations took part in community visits to Studley Green, Trowbridge and Bemerton Heath, Salisbury earlier this year. Leading to the development of ongoing community conversations for these areas, with the intention of piloting a bold and innovative approach to develop solutions, tailored to the strengths and needs of local areas and then adapting and rolling this out elsewhere in Wiltshire in due course.

The Director of Public Health emphasised that the process, vision and development of action would take place over the longer term, working with partners, community groups and residents. The report detailed a number of quick wins that have been supported by public service providers following initial engagement with local communities.

Cllr Ian Thorn referred to a successful garden tools loan project he was involved with some time ago and commented on how the community was engaged in the process. He also addressed the issue of councillors being advocates for their local area, and how the local authority can be a real motivator for change and engagement with residents. He asked about the approaches and methodologies the council was employing. The Leader agreed that councillors bring different skills to the table and suggested that engagement needs to be at a deeper level. The Director of Public Health concurred that the local authority is a great agent for change and that similar communities and groups were the focus of engagement during the recent covid pandemic.

Cllr Jo Trigg, local member for Studley Green, Trowbridge welcomed the report, supporting the action being taken and expressed her anticipation for Studley Green and Bemerton Heath and what this could develop into for similar areas. She noted that building trust and engaging in conversations were very important. However, there were concerns about budgets and the pressure on small charities, especially during the current cost of living crisis. The Director of

Public Health indicated that timeframes will be held loosely and driven by the local community.

Resolved:

That Cabinet note the range of activity underway to support these communities and the ongoing opportunities for community activism and tailored support.

Reason for Decision:

Improving social mobility and tackling inequality is a guiding theme for the council's Business Plan. In everything we do, we consider the impact of the action on social mobility and ask how we can help to tackle the disparities in opportunities that exist within Wiltshire.

98 **New Term Highways Maintenance Contract - Results of Procurement Exercise**

Cllr Dr Mark McClelland, Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding presented a report which provided detail about the award of the Term Highways Maintenance contract.

Cllr Dr McClelland reminded Cabinet that in January 2022 they agreed for the Director of Highways and Transport to invite tenders for a new supplier to provide the Term Highway Maintenance Services, and to report the results of the procurement exercise back to Cabinet.

Cabinet noted that the new contract will include the provision of routine highways maintenance, Parish Stewards, pothole repairs, winter gritting, street lighting and the implementation of safety and Local Highway and Footway Improvement Groups (LHFIG) schemes. It also includes the provision for additional spend on works funded through external bids, and the option to allow other Wiltshire Council services to order works through the contract. The new contract will start on 1 April 2023. It is anticipated that annual expenditure through the contract is likely to be in the region of £15,000,000.

Cllr Jerry Kunkler, Chair of the Environment Select Committee confirmed that he, Cllr Bob Jones, Vice Chairman of the Environment Select Committee and Cllr Pip Ridout, Chairman of the Financial Planning Task Group received a briefing about Part 1 of this report on 7 October 2022. The briefing detailed the procurement process, and the new emphasis upon carbon reduction through the contract period was welcomed. They received reassurance that risks in relation to price and cost inflation had been identified and that actions are being undertaken to mitigate those risks. They welcomed the focus upon quality, and we heard about the quality assurance process. The Select Committee will continue to monitor this contract through the annual review of performance.

Cabinet noted that a list of three potential tenderers was prepared and evaluated by officers including detailed scoring and financial information. This information was contained in a Part II report considered at agenda item 14, with the press and public excluded.

Resolved:

See minute 102 below.

99 **Remobilisation of City Hall**

Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing presented a report which provided options and recommendations for the remobilisation of Salisbury City Hall as an arts, entertainment and cultural venue.

The Leader detailed the timelines for City Hall over the last few years, in particular, following Government direction on 20 March 2020, City Hall was closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in October 2020 Cabinet confirmed that the venue would remain mothballed until it was both financially viable and safe to reopen, in December 2020, City Hall was licenced to the NHS to be used as a Vaccination Centre, and the NHS have confirmed the venue will continue to be required as a vaccination centre until March 2023.

Cabinet noted that the council has applied to the Levelling Up Fund Round 2 seeking a substantial capital grant to deliver strategic improvements to Salisbury's Cultural offer, including improvement works to both City Hall and Salisbury Playhouse. If the bid is successful, the council and relevant partners will commit to contribute 'match' funding which will amount to over 10% of the grant award and would be subject to a capital funding bid. Works would be scheduled to commence in October of 2023 and to be complete in January 2025.

Cllr Jerry Kunkler, Chair of the Environment Select Committee confirmed that he and Cllr Bob Jones, Vice Chairman of the Environment Select Committee, received a briefing on this report on 4 October 2022. They welcome and endorsed the report following consideration of the options presented and with the commitment to address some of the building's structural issues. They noted that City Hall could be an important addition to Salisbury's visitor and night-time economy.

Cllr Tony Jackson commented on the capital grant and queried if there was such an opportunity for Warminster to bid for a similar grant. The Leader reminded the meeting that the Council has applied to the Government for the Levelling Up Fund Round 2 capital grant in line with the approved bidding process.

Cabinet noted that a pre-pandemic staffing structure was attached as a Part II appendix and was considered at agenda item 15, with the press and public excluded.

Resolved:

1. There are three options available to Wiltshire Council in order to remobilise City Hall:

Option	Description
1	Source a third-party organisation to operate City Hall as an entertainment venue on behalf of Wiltshire Council
2	Wiltshire Council to manage and operate City Hall internally, using same model as prior to the venues closure in 2020
3	Sell/Asset transfer venue to a suitable external organisation for us an entertainment venue

2. A key element of the 2020 Cabinet paper was that remobilisation should be undertaken when it was 'financially viable' to do so. Option 1 is the most likely to provide long-term financial sustainability in order for the venue to thrive in a manner that the other options may not.
3. It is recommended that Option 1 be agreed, and Wiltshire Council seek to source an external organisation to operate the venue.
4. It is recommended that future decisions relating to the remobilisation of City Hall are delegated to the Corporate Director Place in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

Reason for Decision:

Option 1 could:

- *retain an arts, entertainment, community, and cultural venue in Salisbury.*
- *potentially reduce the financial burden on the council as a third-party organisation will be asked to take on the running costs and operating risk.*
- *potentially retain a level of control over venue programming to include a community element.*

100 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

101 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

To agree that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified in Item Numbers 102 and 103 because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the

information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

102 **New Term Highways Maintenance Contract - Results of Procurement Exercise**

The Cabinet considered the detailed scoring and financial information contained in the confidential report in Part II of the agenda which was presented by the former Acting Director – Highways and Environment.

The former Acting Director confirmed the name of the preferred tenderer and responded to question which included:

- A positive step to include a value of 10% for Social Value within the tender assessment.
- Financial viability of the tenderers to withstand the current economic climate.
- The tenderers experience of working in Wiltshire was not a factor considered during the tender assessment and all tenderers were treated equally.
- Lessons from past tendering exercises and how these impacted the current tender process.
- The track record of the preferred tenderer within the industry.

Resolved:

(i) The Term Highways Maintenance Contract should be awarded to Contractor A.

(ii) Cabinet authorises the Director of Highways and Transport, in consultation with the Corporate Director Resources and Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding, to satisfy themselves as to the details regarding the Contract, and then to take all necessary steps to enter into the new Highways Contract.

Reason for Decision:

- (i) There is a need for a specialist contractor to deliver the Council's highways and related services when the existing contract ends on 31 March 2023.*
- (ii) Following a robust procurement exercise in accordance with the 'Restricted Procedure' tenders were submitted by three companies.*
- (iii) The tenders were assessed in terms of price, quality, carbon and social value and the most advantageous tender has been identified and recommended for acceptance.*

(iv) *The most advantageous tender for the Council, taking into account price, quality, carbon and social value, should be accepted in accordance with the procurement procedures. The detailed scoring and financial information are contained in a confidential report to be considered in Part 2 of this meeting.*

103 **Remobilisation of City Hall**

Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing presented the appendix to the report which provided detail about the pre-pandemic staffing structure at City Hall.

Resolved:

- 1. That the pre-pandemic City Hall staffing structure be noted.**

Reason for Decision:

To aid the decision made at minute 99 above.

(Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.15 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Stuart Figini of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718221, e-mail stuart.figini@wiltshire.gov.uk

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