

## Cabinet

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### **MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 18 AUGUST 2020 AT ONLINE MEETING.**

#### **Present:**

Cllr Philip Whitehead (Chairman), Cllr Richard Clewer (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Cllr Pauline Church, Cllr Simon Jacobs, Cllr Laura Mayes, Cllr Toby Sturgis and Cllr Bridget Wayman

#### **Also Present:**

Cllr Jane Davies, Cllr Steve Oldrieve, Cllr Ruth Hopkinson, Cllr Alan Hill, Cllr Ian Thorn, Cllr Graham Wright, Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Jerry Kunkler, Cllr Gavin Grant, Cllr Sven Hocking, Cllr Chuck Berry and Cllr Carole King

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#### 89 **Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence.

#### 90 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2020 were presented, Cllr Clewer requested an amendment to the minutes to confirm he had declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Stone Circle item.

#### **Resolved:**

**To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2020, subject to an amendment to Minute 72 to confirm the nature of Cllr Clewer's interest as non-pecuniary.**

#### 91 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 92 **Leader's announcements**

There were no announcements from the Leader.

93 **Public participation and Questions from Councillors**

Questions not relating to items on the agenda were received from members of the public and councillors as detailed below:

Mr Benji Goehl about Western Gateway Strategic Transport Plan;  
Dr Gill Anlezark about Western Gateway Strategic Transport Plan;  
Mrs Margaret Wilmott about Western Gateway Strategic Transport Plan and Carbon Impact;  
Cllr Steve Oldrieve about the 5 year land supply;  
Mr Chris Caswill about Chippenham HIF;  
Mr Ian James about Chippenham HIF;  
Anne Henshaw about the Local Development Scheme.

The questions above had received responses which were available in the Agenda Supplement. Additional questions were submitted in relation to particular agenda items, and these were received when each item was considered by the Cabinet.

Cllr Oldrieve requested confirmation of when Cllr Sturgis was made aware of problems with the 5 year land supply. Cllr Sturgis confirmed he was informed of the issues when the Inspector's report was received.

In response to supplementary questions from Mr Caswill it was confirmed the Government consultation on Planning for the Future was not a matter for Full Council to determine, however updates would be provided to Cabinet if necessary. It was also confirmed that Aktins were employed by the council on all highways matters and no specific consultants were currently working on the Future Chippenham project.

In response to questions from Cllr Ian Thorn, the Leader advised there may be changes to the library service in the future as the council was looking to improve the service. A written response to a question about potential reductions in library funding would be provided. The Leader confirmed he would respond to a letter from the Mayor of Malmesbury in relation to neighbourhood planning. And would take advice on whether it was feasible for Full Council to consider the issues raised by the Planning for the Future government consultation. The Leader confirmed it was not appropriate to record and publish minutes of informal meetings around the HIF bid, and that formal arrangements for recording the necessary decision-making meetings were in place. In response to questions about resumption of Scrutiny meetings, the Leader confirmed this was a matter for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and the current situation was that meetings of the Select Committees were deferred until after the Management Committee meets in late September.

**Recovery Update**

Questions had been received from Mr Ben Pilley in relation to the Climate Emergency and Mr Chris Caswill in relation to the Climate Strategy, Health Scrutiny and Public Health Care Homes. Responses had been provided in the Agenda Supplement.

In response to supplementary questions from Chris Caswill, Cllr Clewer advised that whilst the Climate Task Group had not finalised a report, the council had taken action straight away following declaration of a climate emergency, investing £1.5m to improve the council's buildings and taken additional steps since. In response to questions about care home testing it was confirmed officers were working closely with care homes to support all to implement testing, and that the test and trace system was a responsibility of national rather than local government.

Terence Herbert, Chief Executive, advised in response to a question from Cllr Grant that a Task Group was being formed to support the community following the Dyson announcements and Dyson had confirmed the current situation does not affect their wider growth plans.

Cllr Graham Wright, Chair of the Wiltshire COVID-19 Response Task Group, updated on the Task Group meeting of the 12<sup>th</sup> August and the report presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee. Cllr Wright also updated on the Climate Change Task Group and confirmed the Task Group was considering a significant amount of evidence to form recommendations in due course.

The Leader introduced the report which provided a further update on Wiltshire Council's response to the pandemic and its plans for recovery, thanking local residents for their commitment to keeping their communities safe.

Terence Herbert, Chief Executive, advised the Council was working in a systems approach to recovery, sharing learning with partners and other authorities, and this approach was proving effective. Other key updates included that work with care homes was on-going and testing had been rolled out and prioritised where necessary. The Chief Executive also advised that Local Outbreak Management Plans were in place and exercises had been developed. It was also noted the council's climate strategy would feature into recovery plans. At present, a key priority for the council was supporting schools to prepare for return in September and public health officers were monitoring the Covid-19 situation in Devizes closely.

In response to questions from councillors, the meeting heard the council was expecting a full opening of schools, and schools had successfully developed plans to ensure the health of pupils in line with government advice. The Leader confirmed the governance of the council had not changed and decisions would continue be made in the proper way and involving all members in recovery. Area Boards would be key to recovery, and plans were currently under way for a Wiltshire Assembly.

Comments arising from the discussion included that contingency plans were place for schools in response to local outbreaks and the council wanted parents to feel confident to get their children back to school. The Council was preparing additional support for school transport. In relation to the recovery of Trowbridge town centre, it was noted parking/access arrangements would be included in the Trowbridge Future High Street project. Cllr Clewer invited Cllr Oldrieve to submit ideas around local tree planting schemes, following a discussion of how this linked to the climate agenda.

**Resolved:**

**To note the government's new Contain framework and additional enforcement powers available to Wiltshire Council;**

**To note the additional chapter to the government's Roadmap to Recovery and associated timescales;**

**To note the work underway within the four Recovery Coordinating Group themes and on organisation recovery.**

*Reason:*

*Implementation of the multi-agency Recovery Coordinating Group's Recovery Plan is successfully underway. Wiltshire Council continues to work closely with partners to deliver this in a rapidly changing environment.*

95 **Financial Year 2020/2021 - Quarter One Budget Monitoring**

Cllr Pauline Church presented the Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring Report which included the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Key updates included the council had received approximately £20m funding from government and the government was also allowing local authorities to recover lost council tax and business rates (approximately £22m) over three years instead of one. The Cabinet member highlighted £160m had been passed out to business and external parties in Wiltshire to support their Covid-19 response. It was confirmed that savings target delivery for the council was a focus on part of the recovery.

Cllr Graham Wright, Chair of Wiltshire Covid-19 Response Task Group, had provided feedback from Scrutiny under the previous agenda item.

In response to questions it was confirmed that the impact of Covid-19 on business rates was likely to be felt harder in future years and the shortfall in income would have to be managed by the council. Cllr Church expressed confidence in the council's forecasting during these difficult times and highlighted the importance of regular reporting to Cabinet. It was confirmed that references in the report to savings in the libraries service were previous years' targets. The Cabinet member clarified further support from government would

be required to support the ongoing loss of council revenue due to the lock down and long-term economic impacts. It was agreed the issue of town and parish councils having pre-bought parking to allow free parking in their communities would be given further consideration.

**Resolved:**

**To note:**

- a) the **Section 151 officer's summary of the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's 2020/21 budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy;**
- b) the **current revenue budget is forecast to overspend by £5.9m by the end of the financial year;**
- c) the **current savings delivery performance for the year;**
- d) the **forecast level of reserves;**
- e) the **current capital budget movements and spend as at 30 June 2020**

**To approve:**

- f) the **budget virements in the capital programme, as per Appendix B.**
- g) a **recommendation to Full Council to approve additions to the capital programme of £0.464m per Appendix D.**

*Reason for decision:*

*To inform effective decision making and ensure a sound financial control environment.*

96 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.35 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Libby Johnstone of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718214, e-mail [libby.johnstone@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:libby.johnstone@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115

