

## Cabinet

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### **MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2021 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, BYTHESEA ROAD, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 8JN.**

#### **Present:**

Cllr Richard Clewer (Chairman), Cllr Jane Davies, Cllr Phil Alford, Cllr Nick Botterill, Cllr Pauline Church, Cllr Dr Mark McClelland and Cllr Ashley O'Neill

#### **Also Present:**

Cllr Clare Cape, Cllr Gavin Grant, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Peter Hutton, Cllr Tony Jackson, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Dr Brian Mathew, Cllr Stewart Palmen, Cllr Horace Prickett, Cllr Pip Ridout, Cllr Rich Rogers, Cllr Ian Thorn, Cllr David Vigar and Cllr Suzanne Wickham

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#### **88 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Laura Mayes and Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling.

#### **89 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2021 were presented.

#### **Resolved:**

**To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2021.**

#### **90 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **91 Leader's announcements**

The Leader reported that Bath and North East Somerset Council were proposing to include the Cleveland Bridge area of Bath in an extension to the Clean Air Zone. There was concern of the impact on Wiltshire roads and Air Quality Management Areas. The Leader explained that he was formally opposing the proposal and called on Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Sarah Dobson and the Westbury and Bradford On Avon Area Boards to support the opposition to the proposal.

## 92 **Public participation and Questions from Councillors**

General questions were submitted from the following members of public:

- Daniel Kronenberg – Cycling
- Julie Wheeler – Future Chippenham
- Mel Boyle – Future Chippenham
- Colin Gale – Disposal of Upavon Primary School

The Leader explained that the above questions had received written responses which were published on the Council's website prior to the meeting in the agenda supplement, which can be accessed [here](#).

A supplementary question was received from Colin Gale in relation to the disposal of Upavon Primary School. The Leader confirmed that a written response would be provided.

In addition to the above public questions, a number of questions and comments were received from:

- Cllr David Vigar about the NPPF

The above question and comments received verbal responses at the meeting, which are also available on the recording of the meeting [here](#)

## 93 **Procurement of water and wastewater supply services**

Cllr Pauline Church, Cabinet member for Finance, Procurement, Commissioning, IT, Digital and Commercialisation presented the report seeking (i) approval of the recommended framework provider as the method by which the Council will procure water and wastewater services for a period of 3 years from 20 June 2022; (ii) to delegate authority to the Director of Assets & Commercial Development to proceed with award through the framework from 20 June 2022 for 2+1-year term; and (iii) to delegate authority to the Director of Assets & Commercial Development to utilise a 1-year extension option subject to adequate supplier performance and mutual agreement by both parties.

Cllr Church commented on the deregulation of the water and wastewater supply market that took place in 2017 and explained that the Council spent around £700,000 on water and wastewater services for its operational buildings. The report detailed a number of issues with the current supplier framework, which had a considerable resource impact on the Council managing the contract as well as a reputational impact. The market has been researched for a Framework provider who can deliver an experienced procurement process focussing on cost and quality of provision, with a range of retailers to choose from.

The Cabinet noted that the current contract ended on 20 June 2022 and a procurement exercise to procure a new contract through a framework would

take about 15 weeks followed by a transfer window between suppliers before January 2022.

Cllr Pip Ridout, Chair of the Financial Planning Task Group, informed Cabinet that the Task Group had considered the report at its meeting held on 10 December 2021. Cllr Ridout confirmed that the Task Group were brought up to date about the reasons for the procurement process and agreed with the need to find a new supplier. They particularly considered issues within the new framework, including the annual fees and how they compared and how the flat rate fee might be offset by savings and efficiencies, and confirmed that the Task group would continue to track the performance of the contract through the quarterly financial update. The report was welcomed by the Task Group who supported the proposals and commended it to the Cabinet for approval.

Cllr Brian Mathew commented on the efficiency of water use in Council buildings especially during the pandemic and whether any metrics had been gathered and monitored during this time. The Leader and Cllr Church confirmed that water blades had been rolled out across the Council's estate, therefore reducing the amount of water used, and the impact of the pandemic on water use. The new framework would allow operational metrics to measure water usage and provide efficiencies.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To approve the recommended framework provider as the method by which we procure water and wastewater services for a period of 2+1 years from 20th June 2022.**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Director of Assets & Commercial Development, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Finance, Procurement, Commissioning, IT, Digital and Commercialisation to proceed with award through the framework from 20th June 2022 for 2+1-year term.**
- 3. Delegate authority to the Director of Assets & Commercial Development, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Finance, Procurement, Commissioning, IT, Digital and Commercialisation to utilise a 1-year extension option subject to adequate supplier performance and mutual agreement by both parties.**

*Reason for Decision:*

*The current water and wastewater purchasing arrangement expires on 19th June 2022 and needs to be replaced to enable the council to continue to deliver cost effective water provision to the corporate and housing portfolios.*

Cllr Pauline Church, Cabinet member for Finance, Procurement, Commissioning, IT, Digital and Commercialisation presented the report seeking permission to re-procure, by competitive process, the Microsoft licences agreement needed to operate Council ICT systems for the next 2-3 years. This would also include software support for the smooth operation and fault finding.

Cllr Church explained that the Council uses Microsoft software across the organisation for end user computing and the ICT infrastructure. This required a licence and support through an Enterprise Agreement, usually for 3 years.

The Cabinet noted that the cost was in the region of £2.7m per annum; £2.1m for licensing and £0.6m for software support. The current 3 year agreement ended in June 2022 and reprocurement needed to be considered in order to continue using and supporting these licences

The Leader and Cllr Church confirmed that the proposals had been considered by the Commercial Board and were considered to be the best possible value for money.

Cllr Pip Ridout, Chair of the Financial Planning Task Group, informed Cabinet that the Task Group had considered the report at its meeting held on 10 December 2021. Cllr Ridout confirmed that the Task Group recognised the Council needed to procure a Microsoft licence with necessary support and considered the benefits of using the proposed tender process. They also considered whether the two elements of licensing and support could be progressed separately. The Task Group were reassured that the proposal was the most cost-effective way of continuing the licence and support. The report was welcomed by the Task Group who supported the proposals and commended it to the Cabinet for approval.

Cllr Jon Hubbard expressed his support for the proposals and suggested as part of the process that the Council consider the suite of Microsoft 365 products did not appear to be utilised. Cllr Church confirmed that officers undertook an annual assessment of the products available, and the number of licences used, and this was monitored on a regular basis.

**Resolved:**

- 1. Approval to enter into a competitive procurement process for a Microsoft Licence Re-seller agreement for licences and support, contracted for up to 3 years**
- 2. Delegated permission to the Corporate Director for Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Finance, Procurement, Commissioning, IT, Digital and Commercialisation to award a contract for both software licences (Enterprise Agreement) and support following competitive process**

*Reason for Decision:*

- 1. Microsoft licensed software is used throughout the Council and is pivotal to virtually all computer services. If we were not licensed much of the work of the Council would grind to a halt.*
- 2. Our licence re-seller contract expires in June 2022 and we need to start work now to ensure we have a replacement contract ready. Suitable competitive routes are available to use.*
- 3. The complex software needs a support agreement to ensure best use and rapid remediation of faults when they occur.*
- 4. We have not previously competed both provision of licences and support and not via an aggregated Crown Commercial route. It is hoped this may deliver a best value solution.*

95 **Melksham House**

Cllr Phil Alford, Cabinet Member for Housing, Strategic Assets and Asset Transfer presented the report which provided detail about the refurbishment of Melksham House to meet the Council's obligation to fulfil the Melksham Community Campus planning conditions; the requirement to demolish Melksham Blue Pool; and an overview of a broader objective to establish a Place Board for Melksham and to work in partnership with Melksham Town Council to agree a strategy that realises the potential value of the publicly owned assets in the town.

Cllr Alford explained that the re-development of Melksham House is linked to Melksham Community Campus and that planning consent for the occupation of the Campus is conditional on an approved scheme and timescale for the refurbishment of Melksham House. It was noted that the first part of this condition is complete.

The report indicated that a budget of £4.2m was included in the capital programme for Melksham House however this was subject to a Levelling up bid being successful. Unfortunately, the bid was not successful and a further £2.2m included in the capital programme for Melksham House is required to complete the works. This would be funded by borrowing. In addition to this borrowing, a further £0.600m was required to demolish Melksham Blue Pool.

The Leader acknowledged that the works were necessary as part of the planning conditions and there was a need to complete the works.

Cllr Pip Ridout, Chair of the Financial Planning Task Group highlighted that the Task Group had considered the report at their meeting held on 10 December 2021 and confirmed that they were reassured of the options and estimates were sound. The Task Group considered the contingencies, were satisfied that the figures were robust and supported the proposals. Cllr Gavin Grant Vice-Chair of the Task Group commented generally about challenging timelines for the Task

Group to consider reports, he requested that the Task Group be given plenty of time to give the necessary scrutiny for future reports.

Cllr Ian Thorn commented on the establishment of a Place Board and its potential membership. The Leader confirmed that the Place Board was established so that Melksham Town Council and Wiltshire Council can steer the strategic development opportunities via a town centre masterplan to ensure the long-term sustainability of the town centre and obtain the maximum return from all publicly owned assets. It was noted that local MPs had been appointed at other Place Boards and this process had proved to be very successful in the smooth running of the Place Board.

Cllr Tony Jackson was concerned about the project exceeding previous budget estimates and suggested that consideration be given to the option of separating from the site and using receipts for another location. Cllr Alford and the Leader agreed with Cllr Jackson that the project was very challenging, although establishing the Place Board would help move the project forward to a successful conclusion.

Cllr Gordon King commented on the levelling up agenda and the recent unsuccessful bid. He asked if the additional borrowing was affordable and questioned whether it would impact other projects. Cllr Church confirmed that the £2.2m borrowing requirement was in the budget. The Leader re-confirmed that the works required were part of the planning conditions and time limited. He also noted that borrowing interest rates were currently very low and this was an opportune moment to agree the additional funds.

Cllr Jon Hubbard welcomed the concept of a Place Board and encouraged the Cabinet to support the proposals.

Cllr Stewart Palmen welcomed the establishment of the Place Boards and suggested that they elect the Chair of the Board. The Leader explained that other Place Boards had elected the local MP to be Chair and this had proved to be very successful.

**Resolved:**

- (a) To note the overview of the consented scheme to redevelop Melksham House for both flexible office, meeting room space and community use;**
- (b) To approve use of the existing £2.2m budget for Melksham House to deliver the required refurbishments;**
- (c) To approve an increase to the Capital Receipt Enhancement Budget of £0.6m in 2022/2023 to fund the demolition of Melksham Blue Pool. This will be financed from future capital receipts. This approval will be subject to a valuation to evidence that the asset value would be enhanced by undertaking the demolition.**

- (d) To approve that a Place Board is established for Melksham town centre;**
- (e) To approve that Wiltshire Council works with Melksham Town Council to agree a strategy for the publicly held assets within Melksham town centre;**
- (f) To delegate to the Director for Assets and Commercial Development, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Strategic Assets and Asset Transfer to take all necessary steps to implement the refurbishment of Melksham House**

*Reason for Decision:*

*In considering the establishment of the Community Campus in the grounds of Melksham House, the future use of the Grade II listed building is important, both in planning and estate management terms.*

*A pre-occupation planning condition for Melksham Community Campus requires that Melksham House has a consented scheme with a works timescale.*

*Design development and cost analysis together with condition surveys has revealed that the House requires significant repairs. The consented scheme cannot be delivered within the £2m budget envelope approved by Cabinet in 2019. The additional capital will ensure that the building can be occupied and is accessible.*

*The consented scheme includes sustainability technologies to aid carbon reduction and reduced running costs. These costs are included in the current forecast.*

*Approval to access of the additional budget allocation of £2.2m, and therefore approving of a total budget of £4.2m for Melksham House, will ensure that the Community Campus is able to open as planned by Autumn 2022.*

*Procurement of the main refurbishment contractor is due to commence in January 2022, requiring confirmation of the additional capital.*

## 96 **Care Homes Block Contract Procurement**

Cllr Jane Davies, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, SEND, Transition and Inclusion presented the report which provided detail about the procurement of nursing and residential care capacity on the Wiltshire Care Homes Alliance (WCHA) platform; and an update on the outcome of the previous tender on the WCHA, considered by Cabinet on 5 January 2021.

Cllr Davies reminded Cabinet that they had agreed proposals to develop and implement a new commissioning and procurement platform for nursing and residential beds in Wiltshire. At that time, it was also agreed to run a Mini-Competition for the provision of block and framework nursing care beds, and

framework residential care beds under the WCHA. The Council was not able to award contracts due to the prices offered by the market being considered unaffordable. To mitigate this, existing contracts were extended to support a new tender timeline to deliver contracts from 1 April 2022.

Cllr Gordon King, Vice-Chair of the Health Select Committee confirmed that officers had provided a briefing on 23 November 2021 to him and Cllr Kidney, Chair, who were satisfied with the procurement approach being followed and have been invited to a briefing in April 2022 to discuss the outcomes of the procurement. Cllr King and Cllr Kidney recognise that work has taken place by the team following the exercise in the spring, when the market response was above budget, and we look forward to meeting again in April 2022.

Cllr Ian Thorn recognised how critical the report content and proposals were, there was a need to reduce costs and make the mini-competitions more successful; he commented on the number of care homes involved in the Care Home Alliance and how this number can be increased. Cllr Davies confirmed that a variety of changes were being taken including changes to the length of the contract, co-production with providers to enable the most accurate prices possible whilst minimising commercial risk; working in partnership with the Wiltshire Care Partnership to promote the alliance, alongside better engagement and development of relationships between officers and providers.

Cllr Pip Ridout confirmed that the Financial Planning Task Group had been involved in reviewing the report as she and Cllr Gordon King, Vice-Chair of the Health Select Committee and member of the Task Group had received a briefing on the report and provided feedback. Cllr Ridout reported that the Task group would need to undertake a very stringent look at the financial information once available.

Cllr Tony Jackson highlighted the growing demand for Care Home places in a time of an increasingly aging population and suggested that investigations should be undertaken in relation to the cost of providing support at home. The Leader indicated that this was an issue of national importance. Cllr Davies confirmed that the Council were obliged to meet the level of demand, and indeed were investigating the issue raised, with a report coming to Cabinet in March 2022 on this very issue.

**Resolved:**

- 1. That the content of this report is noted.**
- 2. That Mini-Competitions are conducted under the WCHA to award contracts for the provision of nursing block beds and nursing and residential framework beds in accordance with the indicative timeline in this report, to establish contracts commencing on 1st April 2022.**
- 3. To delegate authority to make decisions connected with the procurement and award new contracts and all associated**

**documents to the Director Procurement & Commissioning in consultation with the Corporate Director Resources & Deputy Chief Executive and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, SEND, Transition and Inclusion.**

*Reasons for Decision:*

*The Council's current block and framework arrangements for nursing beds in Care Homes expire on 31st March 2022. Following a compliant tender process, the Council was not able to award contracts due to the prices offered by the market being considered unaffordable. This paper proposes changes to the previous process following feedback from the market and consideration of a pricing model.*

97 **Home from Hospital**

Cllr Jane Davies, Cabinet Member for Adult Social care, SEND, Transition and Inclusion presented the report outlining proposals which support the successful tender and contract award for a new Home from Hospital Service.

Cllr Davies explained that the resulting contract will deliver services commissioned under the Better Care Fund and within scope of Section 75 arrangements between Wiltshire Council and the NHS, through Bath & North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group. The report detailed the proposals on the governance arrangements to ensure clear and timely decision making between the organisations.

Cllr Gordon King, Vice-Chair of the Health Select Committee confirmed that officers provided a briefing for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Select Committee, alongside the Chair of the Financial Planning Task Group on 23 November 2021 . Cllr King reported that the Select Committee were supportive of the process and recognised the importance of going out to market and securing a contract. The opportunity to encourage collaboration with community groups and the new Prevention and Wellbeing Service was particularly welcomed.

Cllr Jackson welcomed the report and proposals and commented on whether any other organisations had bid for the contract; the relocation of a ward from Warminster Community Hospital to St Margaret's, Bath, due to refurbishment, which would make it more difficult for people to visit; and a former proposal to appoint a joint Director for Health and Social Care. Cllr Davies confirmed that great interest was received in relation to the contract; the CCG would be able to comment on the relocation of the Ward to St Margaret's, Bath; and the appointment of a Director did not proceed.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To support a three-month extension to existing contractual arrangements with Age UK through the Council's normal governance routes, with a revised expiry date of 30 June 2022**
- 2. Note the proposed governance arrangements with BSW CCG in section 3 of the report**
- 3. That officers continue to undertake the tender programme, award and implement a new contract for a new Home from Hospital (HfH) service for a new contract to start on 1st July 2022**
- 4. Delegate authority to award a new contract and all associated documents to the Director of Procurement and Commissioning, in consultation with Director of Locality Commissioning for BSW CCG (Wiltshire Team), the Corporate Director for Resources and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, SEND, Transition and Inclusion and the Cabinet Member for Finance & Procurement, Commissioning, IT, Digital and Commercialisation**

*Reasons for Decision:*

- 1. These proposals will improve the outcome of the tender process and value for money delivered through the new contract*
- 2. These proposals support evidence that Wiltshire requires a non personal care hospital discharge support service to effectively respond to avoidable hospital admissions and delayed discharges. The proposal will reduce the pressures on the health and social care sector. The Council is currently having to purchase homecare when non personal care support is required, because there is no alternative.*

**98 Integrated Care System**

Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing presented the report outlining the developing arrangements for Bath and NE Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW) Integrated Care System (ICS) and the role Wiltshire Council should play in them.

The Leader reported on the development of place based collaboration between Wiltshire Council and NHS partners through the Wiltshire Alliance, and commented on the detail of the governance arrangements. The arrangements would ensure clarity in decision making structures and increase local accountability.

Cllr Gordon King, Vice-Chair of the Health Select Committee confirmed that the Committee considered a report at their meeting held on 2 November 2021. The Committee were supportive of the work being progressed and looked forward to

considering the memorandum of understanding being developed by the council and partners, which will be key in formalising the governance around the Integrated Care Alliance.

Cllr Ian Thorn welcomed the new decision making structures and commented on responsibilities for the delivery of social care, the opportunities for greater integration between the NHS partners and Council staffing structures, funding of the proposals, and understanding the split in Cabinet responsibilities in relation to Health & Wellbeing. The Leader explained that the existing working relationships between the NHS partners and Council were working well and provided assurance for future collaboration and the delivery of an efficient service. In relation to funding issues, the expectation is for pooled budgets, although this would be determined in due course. The Leader confirmed that he Chaired the Health & Wellbeing Board, demonstrating the critical relationship required between his role as Leader and the Board. In addition, a number of other Cabinet members were also members of the Health & Wellbeing Board indicating the need to continually work together, rather than in silos.

Cllr Clare Cape explained that she had worked for the NHS for many years and supported the need for collaborative nature and necessary culture change detailed in the proposals. Cllr Jackson supported these comments.

**Resolved:**

- 1. Endorse the development of place-based working through the Wiltshire Alliance**
- 2. Agree to the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (including a collaboration agreement) together with new Terms of Reference for the proposed statutory structures (for subsequent agreement by cabinet)**

*Reasons for Decision:*

*To support the Wiltshire Alliance in moving towards a new structure and working in a different way, it is proposed to develop and agree a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which includes a Collaboration Agreement.*

99 **DfE Recovery Fund**

Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing presented the report advising Cabinet of the successful outcome of the South West Regional Improvement and Innovation Alliance (RIIA) bid to the DfE through the Children's Social Care Covid-19 Regional Recovery and Building Back Better Fund.

The Leader reported that during the summer of 2021, the Department for Education (DfE) initiated a bidding round for grant funding under a Regional

Recovery Fund. The fund was designed to bring together three existing programmes, detailed in the report, to enable local authorities to work together on a regional basis to identify priorities where a regional approach would be beneficial. A bid across all three strands of the funding available, totalling £1,536,200 had been awarded in full by the DfE. It was noted that the update was retrospective as the grant awards would not be publicised until after the parliamentary recess ended on 18 October 2021.

Cllr Jon Hubbard Chair of Children's Select, and in a personal capacity, congratulated officers for achieving the funding, although he observed that important funding of this nature should not come through a competitive bidding process. The Leader echoed these comments, particularly about the competitive bidding process.

Cllr Ian Thorn welcomed the funding and congratulated officers for their contributions in the bidding process.

**Resolved:**

**(a) Note the successful outcome of the Regional Recovery Funding bid across the South West**

**(b) Approve the acceptance of the receipt of funding of £1,536,200**

*Reasons for Decisions:*

*In line with the Council's constitution, to allow the acceptance of the funding associated with DfE Regional Recovery Fund.*

100 **Adoption West Contract Extension**

Cllr Peter Hutton, Portfolio Holder for Safeguarding presented the report seeking agreement for the original Commissioning Agreement to be extended for a period of up to 5 years commencing on 1 March 2022.

Cllr Hutton reminded Cabinet that Adoption West was created as a wholly owned local authority company, limited by guarantee, for the delivery of adoption services on behalf of the six participating authorities (Wiltshire Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council, Bristol Council, Gloucestershire County Council, North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council). It is unique in being the only regional adoption arrangement using this vehicle as its delivery model. The original Commissioning Agreement (as defined) provides an option to extend its term for a period of up to 5 years commencing 01 March 2022, subject to the agreement of the participating local authorities. Cllr Hutton confirmed that all six participating Local Authorities were supportive of the proposals and were seeking agreement from their respective Executives.

Cllr Jon Hubbard, Chair of Children's Select and in his role as Chair of Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel commented generally on the report and although he

had some initial reservations about the establishment of the Regional Adoption Agency (Adoption West), was pleased with the progress made to improve standards and the role of the Scrutiny Panel in supporting the work of Adoption West.

**Resolved:**

- 1. Approves the extension of the Commissioning Agreement with Adoption West for the delivery of services as per the original contractual specification, by 5 years until 28 February 2027; and**
- 2. Directs the Director Families and Children in consultation with the Directors of Finance, and Legal and Democratic Services and in consultation with the Cabinet member for Children's Services, Education and Skills to agree in writing, in accordance with clause 3.2 of the Commissioning Agreement, a five year contract extension and execute any and all related documents required to implement that extension.**

*Reasons for Decision:*

*The existing arrangements and contract with Adoption West is delivering services as statutorily required, performance is good, and our adoption scorecard is favourable. There is a robust body of evidence to demonstrate this arrangement is both effective in terms of practice and the desired outcomes for children being achieved; as well as financially advantageous in terms of the regional approach and alliance to delivering services (as set out in the original paper agreeing the commencement of a Regional Adoption Agency in May 2017).*

101 **Wiltshire Council Adoption Service: 2020-2021 Year End Report**

Cllr Peter Hutton, Portfolio Holder for Safeguarding presented the report which provided a year-end report to Cabinet about the performance of the Council's Adoption Service within Wiltshire Council for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The report also informed Cabinet about the effectiveness of Adoption West.

Cllr Hutton explained that the Council retains overall responsibility for the adoption of children whilst other functions are undertaken by Adoption West. The Cabinet were reminded that Adoption West is a Local Authority Trading Company that is owned by the six partner Local Authorities and commissioned by them to provide defined adoption services.

The Cabinet noted that Wiltshire Council's adoption work was inspected by Ofsted in June 2019 as part of a wider inspection of Families and Children's Services, with an overall inspection judgement of Good. It was noted that Cllr Jon Hubbard was the Chair of Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel that scrutinised information from Adoption West. Cllr Hutton and the Leader thanked

all the staff involved in the Adoption Service for their hard work in achieving excellent outcomes for the children in Council care.

Cllr Jon Hubbard, Chair of Children's Select and in his role as Chair of Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel commented generally on the report and whilst acknowledging that the report and performance was very positive, highlighted some areas for improvement, including the journey of a child through the system and the impact of Covid on current and new procedures. Cllr Hutton, in recognising there was always a need for continual improvement, he confirmed only safe and stable placements were made for looked after children, which in certain circumstances took longer to achieve.

Cllr Ian Thorn welcomed the very positive report.

**Resolved:**

**That the report is noted and accepted, and its contents are considered against the Corporate Parenting Strategic Priority for children looked after to have a loving home, good relationships, and respect.**

*Reasons for Decision:*

*Wiltshire Council is an Adoption Agency registered with Ofsted. The 2014 Adoption Minimum Standards (25.6) and 2013 Statutory Guidance (3.93 and 5.39) describe the information that is required to be reported to the executive side of the local authority, on a six-monthly basis, to provide assurance that the adoption agency is complying with the conditions of registration whilst being effective and achieving good outcomes for children.*

*Adoption West is subject to separate scrutiny arrangements through its own Joint Scrutiny Panel, the current Chair being Cllr Jon Hubbard.*

102 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.35 am)

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