

# Minutes



To: All Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Chief Executive, Chief Officers, All officers named for 'actions'

From: Legal, Democratic & Statutory Services  
Ask for: Michelle Diprose  
Ext: 25566

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## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 24 JANUARY 2018 AND THURSDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 2018

### ATTENDANCE

#### MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

D Andrews (Chairman), J Bennett-Lovell (Vice-Chairman), F Button, R C Deering, K M Hastrick (Vice-Chairman), T Howard, J S Kaye, N A Quinton, I M Reay

#### OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

D A Ashley, N Bell, P Bibby, J Billing, E Buckmaster, T L F Douris, M A Eames-Petersen, S J Featherstone, B A Gibson, S Gordon, J M Graham, J S Hale, D Hart, T C Heritage, D J Hewitt, C K Hogg, T Hone, T R Hutchings, S K Jarvis, J R Jones, P V Mason, G McAndrew, R M Roberts, A F Rowlands, R Sangster, R H Smith, A Stevenson, R G Tindall, A S B Walkington, M A Watkin, A D Williams, T J Williams, C B Woodward, C B Wyatt-Lowe, W J Wyatt-Lowe, P M Zukowskyj

#### PARENT GOVERNOR / CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES (VOTING)

\*J Cameron, \*A Charlwood

*\*denotes members appointed for education scrutiny matters only.*

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting on Wednesday, 24 January 2018 and Thursday, 1 February 2018 as circulated, copy annexed, conclusions were reached and are recorded below.

*A conflict of interest was declared in relation to the Scrutiny of the Integrated Plan 2018/19 – 2021/22 and is recorded at 2.1 below.*

### PART I ('OPEN') BUSINESS

#### 1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 19 December 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**2(A) SCRUTINY OF THE INTEGRATED PLAN 2018/19 – 2021/22  
(INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND FINANCIAL  
CONSEQUENCES AND THE TREASURY MANAGEMEN STRATEGY– 24  
January 2018**

[Officer contact: Natalie Rotherham, Head of Scrutiny Tel: 01992 558485]

- 2.1 M A Watkin – by virtue of his wife being employed as a part-time teacher in the music service in Hertfordshire. He has been granted a dispensation by the Standards Committee to participate, debate and vote in business in which this Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is mentioned provided that the business to be considered does not directly affect his financial position or that of his wife; which he considered it did not.
- 2.2 The Chairman welcomed all Members and officers present to the Committee’s scrutiny of the Integrated Plan proposals for 2018/19 – 2021/22.
- 2.3 Members received an introduction to the scrutiny; a summary by the Head of Scrutiny reminding Members of the format for the Committee’s scrutiny; and an oral report from the Director of Resources who provided the Committee with the context within which the integrated plan proposals had been prepared.
- 2.4 The Director of Resources outlined the contents of the IP pack. He informed Members there were two errors in the IP pack relating to the following and updates to the relevant portfolios would be issued;
  - 1. driver training that related to Highways had been included in the Environment, Planning and Transport portfolio papers in error. It appeared on the “portfolio on a page” and “key budget movements; and
  - 2. reference to Libraries and Museums & Archives, the savings have been included in the Key Budget Movements statement for Resources, Property and the Economy (p179 of the IP pack). These should have been included in the Education, Libraries and Localism Portfolio.
- 2.5 Members were informed that £3.3m which equated to approximately 15% of efficiency savings had been proposed within the IP this was mainly due to policy change in certain service areas. It was acknowledged that significant savings were already being delivered and there was significant capital investment to Highways over the next four years.
- 2.6 The Committee then adjourned to gather its evidence.

**CHAIRMAN’S  
INITIALS**

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2.7 At the end of the evidence gathering process the session closed.

**2(B) SCRUTINY OF THE INTEGRATED PLAN 2017/18 – 2021/22: REPORT TO CABINET – 1 February 2017**

[Officer contact: Natalie Rotherham, Head of Scrutiny Tel: 01992 558485]

2.8 The Committee reconvened on Thursday, 1 February 2018 to consider a draft of its report to Cabinet, prepared by the Head of Scrutiny and the Democratic Services Officer, following the evidence gathering session on 24 January 2018.

2.9 As a result of its discussions, a report and suggestions for Cabinet's consideration were agreed, copies of this report can be viewed at [OSC Report 2\(B\)](#)

2.10 Members noted that Cabinet would consider the Committee's report and recommendations at its meeting on 19 February 2018; Cabinet's recommendations on the Integrated Plan proposals would then be presented to the County Council on 20 February 2018, when the Council would agree the Integrated Plan for forthcoming period.

Natalie  
Rotherham  
/ Michelle  
Diprose

**Conclusions**

2.11 The Committee agreed the draft report to Cabinet subject to its comments and suggestions being revised to read:-

## Committee Recommendations to Cabinet

That Cabinet gives consideration to the following:-

1. That the Council proactively engages with contractors to monitor contracts and contractor resilience; further, that risks that impact on the Authority, including staff shortages are identified; and contingency planning is sufficient to achieve IP proposals;
2. To prioritise working with district/borough councils to develop a more collaborative, co-ordinated and mutually beneficial approach to infrastructure planning for the medium and long term (e.g. waste disposal, a highways structure capable of accommodating driverless cars);
3. To work with the district/boroughs to develop more holistic services, in reference to the remodelling of YC Herts;
4. To revisit and further develop the workforce strategy for both specialist job roles (e.g. planners, educational psychologists, mental health nurses and CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services) support) and hard to recruit/retain posts (e.g. paid carers) via in-house training and apprenticeship programmes;
5. To progress and resolve the issues relating to capability, capacity and skills that impact on delivering quality and appropriate solutions related to the digital strategy;
6. That the Highways savings identified will be realised; and that Highways will work with contractors to identify any additional savings during 2018/19.

### **Information provided to County Council by 20 February 2018**

Information on the digital strategy to be circulated to all members.

### **Identified Risks - to be passed to the Risk Manager**

1. Future budget implications to the Authority if the Energy Recovery Facility at Ratty's Lane is not approved
2. Numbers of children and young people with multiple needs (physical and mental health) currently unknown to Children's Services and Adult Care Services (ACS) requiring Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) services in the future
3. That more time and budget is required than planned for targeted

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groups to engage with YC Herts

4. Reliance by Public Health and Libraries on external parties (volunteers, third parties) to achieve planned savings and deliver services
5. Retention and recruitment of planning staff, especially at a senior level, leading to reliance on consultants and the impact on an already highly pressured budget. This is the second year that this has been raised.
6. Ability of the capital funding budget to support both new development initiatives and asset maintenance
7. The continued de-delegation of secondary schools budgets and the risk to education funding and consequential impact on the portfolio budget
8. Academy failure and the responsibility of the Authority to educate the affected pupils in view of current pressures on school places.
9. Libraries ability to realise the £500,000 saving for 2018/19 in light of the failure to achieve the full £500,000 savings for 2017/18
10. A failure to develop an alternative delivery model to meet further savings required in 2019/20 will result in significant service delivery implications for libraries i.e. opening hours.
11. Difficulty of recruiting and retaining paid carers against a background of increased demographic pressure affects
  - ability of ACS to meet its improvement targets
  - ability to safeguard vulnerable residents
  - budget implications
12. The lack of housing for low-paid workers such as care staff and that this may affect staffing levels in the care sector
13. The impact of the fragility of the care provider market on the ACS budget and vulnerable residents
14. Reliance of the digital strategy to achieve stated outcomes and savings given the current skills shortage within this area.
15. Effectiveness of current monitoring to ensure financial stability of partners and providers following the collapse of Carillion and the creation of Herts Living
16. The impact of TfLs (Transport for London) unwillingness to commit to

the extension of the Metropolitan line.

17. The impact that tree pests and diseases will have on Highways and Environment, Planning & Transport budgets. This is the second year this has been raised

### **Portfolio Observations**

The Committee also requested that Cabinet and Cabinet Panels note its comments / observations below:-

#### **1. Adult Care & Health**

- Strong working relations are needed between the NHS and Adult Care Services (ACS) as an inability to work together could negatively impact service users (i.e. delayed discharge due to a lack of social care). Reassurance was provided that this relationship is currently strong.
- A proposal for ACS to work with school transport to save costs by using the same buses for transport to both day services and schools would be difficult as both services require vehicles at the same time.
- Sufficiency of the revenue budget for mental health. Members were assured that compared to other counties, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) is investing satisfactorily in mental health.
- Concern was raised with regard to ACS' aim to reduce reliance on residential care and whether this would increase the costs incurred by ACS. The department is working to help people remain in their own homes for as long as possible and out of residential care. This is the preferred option for people and will help the department make savings.

#### **2. Children's Services**

- There are major challenges but the Children's Services' leadership team have proved in the past that they have been able to combat these pressures and deliver efficient services.
- Concern about services being impacted due to partners being affected by external factors beyond their control (e.g. CCGs) or partner sustainability. Relations with the CCGs have improved and have reflected on lessons learnt. The County Council is focusing on prevention and is being transparent with sharing budgets and pressures in order to plan for challenges.
- Effective planning is needed to mitigate future demographic pressures. Early intervention and partnership working and

calculating growth based demographic data is required.

- Remodelling of the YC Herts service is set against a challenging background of a forecasted rise in children aged 10-19 and a proposed 20% reduction in funding. There is continued work with the voluntary sector to offset costs. Members were also assured that Hertfordshire is still continuing to provide services albeit at a reduced volume.
- Recruitment and retention is being addressed by offering packages to attract and retain staff. The department is also working to train current workers and staff in partner agencies in specific services i.e. recognising and responding to Child Sexual Exploitation and gang culture cases.
- The budget implications for SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities) and the increased diagnosis of autism. This is a national concern and the Executive Member and officers will continue to express concerns to central government to encourage funding for future years.
- Members were pleased that funding for the Thriving Families programme has been confirmed until 2020.
- Following the recent Carillion collapse reassurances were given that in-house financial checks are in operation for external partner agencies. The Family Centre recommissioning procurement process had taken place and it was confirmed how these will be regularly monitored.
- Pressure of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children entering the county was identified again this year. It is a challenge; however, the Authority is currently under its threshold number. This number is likely to grow and more work is needed to see an increase in central government funding
- Placement stability especially 3+ placements when the child is over the age of 11. This brings associated transport costs.

### **3. Community Protection & Waste Management**

- Uncertainty arising from outstanding PCC decision with regard to the move of Fire & Rescue to the Police & Crime Commissioner
- Potential of SMART Digital to improve efficiencies across the directorate
- Potential for Herts Waste Partnership to work more effectively and learn from best practice
- The significant risk implications of the Energy Recovery Facility at

Ratty's Lane not going ahead were discussed

#### **4. Education, Libraries & Localism**

- Concern arose around the succession planning and management capacity within the Library Service however, officers were able to evidence the mitigations that have been put in place.
- Members were happy with the responses from officers with regard to the savings proposals and future storage requirements of HALS (.Hertfordshire Archive & Local Studies). This includes digitalisation and a purpose built archive building.
- The Home to School Transport (HTST) emerging overspend was noted however, only briefly as not to duplicate discussion that took place earlier in the Children Service portfolio.

#### **5. Environment, Planning & Transport**

- Members discussed the limited progress reported in the Total Transport section of the portfolio (including Home to School Transport) and the Executive Member and officers were unable to identify significant progress in the area. With a £50m budget, even a small saving would be significant.
- Environment, Planning & Transport are awaiting guidance to fully understand the implications of the Bus Act
- Viability of planning and development will be dealt with by the new Growth & Infrastructure Team.
- The impact that issues around retention and recruitment has on planning, budget and services.
- More work is need on Hertfordshire Infrastructure & Planning Partnership (HIPP) to ensure it works to its optimum capacity. This needs to be a visionary service.
- The merger of the Rights of Way service and Countryside Management Service will see a slight restructure of the teams. Savings will be achieved through increasing income received from districts/boroughs and efficiency savings.

#### **6. Highways**

- Members highlighted how there was no specific reference to how new infrastructure development will support the proposal outlined in Local Transport Plan (LTP4) that there will be a push for a modal shift in current transportation used by the general public.
- Members highlighted a concern over the increasing numbers of road casualties in Hertfordshire. Officers stressed that whilst the



number of serious road accidents had increased the number of road incidents had fallen. Officers went on to reiterate that this increase in serious road traffic incidents was due to a change in the way incidents were logged by the Police.

- Members were concerned about the reduction of driver training income to the budget. Officers were equally concerned but stressed this was due to driver safety initiatives that had reduced the number of speeding offences in Hertfordshire.

## **7. Public Health, Prevention & Performance**

- The risk associated with cutting drug and alcohol services and whether this could have an adverse effect on crime rates.
- A risk of increased cost in future years if Public Health services, such as school nursing and health visitors, are not proactive in putting in place preventative measures for CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services).
- There was concern at the Integrated Plan proposal to changes in provision of sexual health services and the impact on infertility and increased STI (sexually transmitted infections) transmission. Executive Member and officers were able to provide assurance.
- The members were concerned that the cost tree indicated much lower expenditure on Public Health by Hertfordshire County Council when compared to the group average. This is due to Hertfordshire generally having less need than the other areas. The service has been successful in finding cost-effective alternatives.
- Public Health capacity was raised and it was admitted to being heavily reliant on other services. The service has large training costs for staff that are necessary and cost effective.

## **8. Resources, Property & the Economy**

- The effectiveness of support services in continuing to support the organisation.
- Realism of the digital strategy to achieve savings given the skills shortage within digital.
- Partnerships/Property – monitoring the performance and substance of partners relating to Property, and wider partners such as Serco. The risks involved in increasing our borrowing.

The Committee would consider the following proposed future scrutinies and seminars at its next meeting in April.

1. Review the Herts Waste Partnership
2. To investigate how more cost effective alternatives to the current transportation model for children around the county could be provided
3. The continued ability of the voluntary sector to provide services equitably across Hertfordshire.
4. Scrutiny of the working relations between Public Health and the NHS
5. Highways' Performance Management Initiative, seeking evidence that Highways is proactively managing its contracts and preparing for potential future pressures.
6. Infrastructure preparedness with regards to supporting future technological developments e.g. self-driving cars.
7. SEND (Special Education Needs & Disabilities) proposals, when published, to be scrutinised prior to implementation of any proposals.
8. Review care staffing levels at one- and two-year intervals to ensure improvement targets are met.
9. Review the savings made as a result of the Investment to Transform bid to ensure Adult Care Services (ACS) targets are met.
10. To complete an update/review on the skills and funding needed for the new Growth and Infrastructure Team, alongside their priorities after the Herts Infrastructure and Planning Partnership (HIPP) scrutiny.
11. Following the collapse of Carillion confidence in partners' financial stability and ability to deliver services. The quality of current partners presents a risk if the County Council does not maintain vigilance on their performance, and overall health of the company.

#### **Proposed future seminars**

- SEND (Special Education Needs & Disabilities) proposals [Executive Member and officers are keen to support]
- To cover the '25 by 20' initiative, and the related property strategy, or report for all county councillors

#### **Proposed future bulletins**

- None requested

#### **Proposed future Chief officer attendance at Overview & Scrutiny**

**Committee**

- Deputy Director Environment in relation to timelines and outcomes across the portfolio of Environment, Planning and Transport

**Proposed future site visits**

- None requested

**3. OTHER PART I BUSINESS**

3.1 There was no other business.

**REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL**

A summary of item 2 will be reported to the County Council at its meeting on 20 February 2018.

Michelle  
Diprose/  
Deborah  
Jeffery

**KATHRYN PETTITT,  
CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER**

**CHAIRMAN** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHAIRMAN'S  
INITIALS**

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