

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE CABINET PANEL
WEDNESDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 10:00AM**

**INTEGRATED PLAN 2020/21 – 2023/24: COMMENTS FROM SERVICE CABINET
PANELS**

1. Highways & Environment Cabinet Panel – 3 February 2020

[Officer Contact: Faisal Mir (Assistant Director Finance and Business Support, Environment and Infrastructure (Tel: 01992 555692)]

M D M Muir declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item 3 as he is a member of North Herts District Council and Hertfordshire County Council. In accordance with the dispensation provided to all Members who have a disclosable pecuniary interest arising from an allowance from the County Council, another local authority in Hertfordshire, or a body to whom they have been appointed by the County Council, he remained in the room and participated in the debate and vote on the Integrated Plan.

E H Buckmaster declared a declarable interest as he is a Board Member of the Hailey Centre in Sawbridgeworth, his daughter works for the Library Service, his wife is a volunteer for the Community Library in Sawbridgeworth, his son is an apprentice at East Hertfordshire District Council and he is also chairman of Sawbridgeworth Young Peoples Recreation Centre which hosts YC sessions; he remained in the room and participated in the debate and vote on the Integrated Plan.

The Panel received a report which provided a high-level overview of the County Council's financial position (the Integrated Plan (IP)) in order to consider those issues relating to the Highways and Environment portfolio.

Officers highlighted the positive nature of this budget review for the Highways and Environment portfolio, with additional revenue funding of £1m for maintenance of gullies and trees, no new revenue policy choices, and efficiencies with respect to generating more money from developers and the utility companies. The outlook in terms of capital funding was also positive with an additional £9m for maintenance for safety barriers, street lighting and traffic signals.

In relation to the portfolio's review of its effectiveness / value for money in delivering the service outcomes (Page 158 of the IP) a member challenged that (i) potholes measuring 300mm wide and 50 mm deep were dangerous to cars, motorcyclists and cyclists, consequently the intervention response time for 'Cat 1' potholes should not be location dependent; (ii) the lack of clarification in the table on page 158 on how the Council's response times compared with other authorities was misleading to the public. Officers clarified that a risk-based approach was used to categorise the most severe potholes. 'Cat 1' potholes with depths of 40mm on cycle

lanes and 50mm on other routes on 'A' class roads were considered the most severe pothole defects and were responded to within 24 hours; those with these dimensions on unclassified roads were considered lower risk and were responded to within 20 working days. Officers emphasised that the comparison table of Authorities' response times referred to only the severest pothole defects; it did not provide the breakdown of the risk-based approach for the different road categorisations for the authorities. It was suggested that the heading of the table did make it clear that the quoted response times were for the most severe faults, and not all.

The Liberal Democrat Group requested that their disagreement to the explanation of the Cat 1 default was minuted.

Regarding the revised capital bids – annual programme (Page 166) a Member suggested that in view of the growth programme and associated infrastructural growth, for energy saving and to reduce CO₂ emissions, consideration be given to free standing solar panel streetlights. Engagement should also be undertaken with the Development Management Team and developers on roads that were likely to be adopted in the future.

During discussion of the traffic signal refurbishment / replacement programme, a Member expressed concern that in refurbishments where the safe to cross indicator, originally positioned in front of the pedestrian, was replaced with one at the side, sight of the indicator could be obscured by other pedestrians. Officers clarified that to compensate for this at busy locations a secondary indicator was installed above head height. It was emphasised that the policy was to replace Pelican crossings with Puffin crossings unless it was necessary to retain the former.

In terms of the capital programme Members across all sides of the panel highlighted that the Highways Locality Budget (HLB) of £90k per Member had not increased since its inception and, due to inflation over time, Members were able to commission less with it. Members suggested that capitalisation of £780k of additional funds from the council's £146m in reserves would enable a rise in the HLB to £100k. The panel were reminded that the HLB amounted to a reduction in officers' budget of £7m to spend as necessary on the portfolio, that it enabled members to tailor spending of this amount from the portfolio to their local priorities, and that the opportunity for planned spending up to 2 years in advance made best economic use of it.

During discussion of **key budgetary movements – pressures** officers clarified that the additional £652k of funding per year to *support additional tree maintenance work, including inspection and safety related work*, would be spent on tree inspections and follow-on works. It was emphasised that this would not be a regular routine tree maintenance programme, but continuation of cyclical inspections and resultant follow-on works. Officers further clarified that Highways endeavoured to replace felled trees, but the outcomes of tree inspections and resultant works, within the finite budget available can affect how many new trees can be planted.

During discussion of **Revised Capital Bids- Projects** officers clarified that the increase in funding of £2,790k for the New River Bridge Scheme would be provided

by the LEP plus Section106 funding.

An opposition Member welcomed the increase in revenue and capital but felt that there was insufficient funding in place to support ongoing requirements.

Conclusions:

The Panel commented as above on the proposals relating to the Integrated Plan in respect of Highways and Environment.

2. Children, Young People & Families Cabinet Panel (4 February 2020)

[Officer Contact Faisal Mir, Assistant Director Finance and Business Support, Children's Services, Tel: 01992 555143]

All Members who have a disclosable pecuniary interest arising from an allowance from the County Council, another local authority in Hertfordshire, or a body to whom they have been appointed by the County Council, have received a dispensation to allow them to participate in debate and vote on the Integrated Plan.

All Members have been granted a dispensation to participate in debate and vote in any business of the County Council relating to setting the council tax or precept when they would otherwise be prevented from doing so in consequence of having a beneficial interest in land which is within the administrative area of Hertfordshire or a licence (alone or jointly) to occupy such land.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

M A Watkin – by virtue of his wife being employed as a part-time teacher in the music service in Hertfordshire. He had 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 did not directly affect his financial position or that of his wife; which he considered it did not.

Declarable Interest

N Bell is on the Chessbrook Education Support Centre Management Committee.

T Howard – as she is a Director of Community Action Dacorum and chairs the Training and Quality Committee which receives funding from HAFL's.

M A Watkin – Chairman of SACRE which receives funding from the Council. He is also Governor of Chessbrook Education Support Centre.

The Panel received a report highlighting the areas of the Integrated Plan which related to Children, Young People & Families order for Panel to consider these and provide

comment on.

Members heard there had been an £11m revenue budget rise in 2020/21 in recognition of current demand for vulnerable children, this budget related as £8m for Independent Placements and £3m for Special Education Needs (SEN) home to school transport. It was also noted there had been a significant amount of Capital funding for the Placement Residential Strategy.

In response to a Member question in relation to the Adoption Support Fund and the uncertainty of the budget continuing in 2019 the Panel were informed this budget had been agreed for a further year. It was also noted the Government were looking to conduct a care review and it was hoped the funding for Adoption Support would continue after 2021.

The Panel were pleased to hear of the positive work which had been carried out in relation to Residential Placement Strategy and were given a brief overview of three strands of work which were taking place to achieve improvements to this service area.

Conclusions:

The Cabinet Panel were invited to:

- 1 note and comment on the proposals relating to the Integrated Plan in respect of Children, Young People & Families. The Panel made no further comment.
- 2 identify any issues it felt Cabinet Panel should consider in finalising the Integrated Plan proposals. The Panel raised no issues.

3. Education, Libraries and Localism Cabinet Panel (5 February 2020)

Simon Newland, Operations Director – Education
Taryn Pearson-Rose, Assistant Director, Customer Engagement & Libraries]

All Members who have a disclosable pecuniary interest arising from an allowance from the County Council, another local authority in Hertfordshire, or a body to whom they have been appointed by the County Council, have received a dispensation to allow them to participate in debate and vote on the Integrated Plan (IP).

All Members have been granted a dispensation to participate in debate and vote in any business of the County Council relating to setting the council tax or precept when they would otherwise be prevented from doing so in consequence of having a beneficial interest in land which is within the administrative area of Hertfordshire or a licence (alone or jointly) to occupy such land.

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.

M B J Mills–Bishop – by virtue of his wife being employed as a teacher in Hertfordshire. He had 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 did not directly affect his financial position or that of his wife; which he considered it did not.

T J Williams – by virtue of his wife being employed at Kingswood Nursery School, Watford.

J Billing – by virtue of her daughter being employed at Whitehill Primary School in Hitchin.

The following Members have declared Declarable Interests under the County Council's Code of Conduct for Members:-

T L F Douris – as he is a trustee of the Hertfordshire Community Foundation which contracts with the County Council for the delivery of training and also for the distribution of the Hertfordshire Community Funds scheme. His grand-daughter is employed by the County Council as a teaching Assistant at Belswains Primary School.

T L F Douris, J R Jones, M B J Mills–Bishop, A Plancey and M A Watkin – as members of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) Hertfordshire, which, receives funding from the County Council.

A P Brewster and J R Jones – as Local School Governors.

Members were presented with an overview of the full structure and detail of the County Council's Integrated Plan for 2020/21 -2023/24 before discussing the detail of the section relating to Education, Libraries and Localism. Members noted that there were not any new policy changes for the Education portfolio within the IP. It was noted that the biggest change was in relation to capital for new school developments. Officers advised that the issue was due to cash flow and that funding would be recovered.

There was some discussion of the division of responsibility for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) as between Education and Children's, Young People and Families Cabinet Panel, and the importance of an overview being maintained of their educational needs by Education Panel. Officers advised that whilst elements of SEND fell within the remit of another Panel, the Education, Libraries and Localism Cabinet Panel remained the relevant panel for matters relating to schools, for example the expansion of Special Schools.

In response to a Member question regarding SEND funding, Officers advised that the pressure for SEND funding was a national issue and that other County Council's had gone into a deficit. Members noted that the number of children with statements or an Education, Health and Care plans was rising rapidly and putting pressure on the budget for future years. It was noted that due to the way the National Funding Formula was partly based on historic spend, Hertfordshire received amongst the lowest level of funding per-capita of 31 County Councils and that it was important to lobby and advocate to Government to change the way the National Funding Formula was applied so as better to align with needs. Officers advised that in terms of managing the existing budget, the service would work as effectively as possible e.g. by providing the right provision locally to reduce more expensive out of county provision. Members heard that a whole spectrum of activity was being progressed as part of the SEND strategy and SEND transformation, in addition to extra support being made available to support SEND pupils in mainstream schools.

The Panel discussed the increase in numbers of pupils who were home educated (as set out on page 113 of the IP) and were interested to know how many children were now being taught at home and which division the children were based in. Officers advised that there were now just under 1500 children receiving elective home education and that a report on this topic was to be brought to the Panel.

In relation to Libraries and Localism, Members heard that the IP focussed on a continuity of policy choices. It was noted that £1 million remained of the inspiring libraries capital and that the money agreed for archives remained.

Members queried if the £179,000 in-year saving due to the delay of the library service transferring to Libraries for Life impacted on the IP. Officers advised that this was a proposed in-year saving for this year and would be met by the contingency budget, with a full year of savings due to be made next year.

Conclusion

The Panel commented on the proposals relating to the Integrated Plan in respect of Education, Libraries and Localism.

The Panel identified issues that it felt that the Cabinet should consider in finalising the Integrated Plan proposals.

4. Public Health and Prevention Cabinet Panel (6 February 2020)

[Officer Contact: Joanne Doggett, Head of Programme Delivery and Resources, Tel: 01992 556358]

All Members who have a disclosable pecuniary interest arising from an allowance from the County Council, another local authority in Hertfordshire, or a body to whom they have been appointed by the County Council, have received a dispensation to allow them to participate in debate and vote on the Integrated Plan.

All Members have been granted a dispensation to participate in debate and vote in any business of the County Council relating to setting the council tax or precept when they would otherwise be prevented from doing so in consequence of having a beneficial interest in land which is within the administrative area of Hertfordshire or a licence (alone or jointly) to occupy such land.

M B J Mills–Bishop – by virtue of his wife being employed as a teacher in Hertfordshire. He had 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 did not directly affect his financial position or that of his wife; which he considered it did not.

S Gordon - by virtue of her having a beneficial freehold interest in the premises of her former veterinary practice and contiguous land lying south of Tilekiln Farm, Standon Road, Little Hadham. She had 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 did not directly affect her financial position; which she considered it did not.

The following Members have declared Declarable Interests under the County Council's Code of Conduct for Members:-

M B J Mills–Bishop – as a member of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) Hertfordshire, which, receives funding from the County Council.

Members were presented with an overview of the full structure and detail of the County Council's Integrated Plan for 2020/21 -2023/24 before discussing the detail of the section relating to Public Health and Prevention. Members noted that the exact amount of Public Health funding had yet to be confirmed neither had when it would be or the conditions attached in terms of statutory duties. Members noted that the IP did not feature many changes and set out the key priorities with promising work ahead around health policies.

Members expressed disappointment in the recommendations for Public Health and Prevention recorded from the Overview and Scrutiny process (report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 30 January 2020). Members would have like to have seen a recommendation regarding Health in All Policies in relation to the prevention agenda. It was noted that Appendix A requested information on the services funded by Public Health and that the information was being put together. In addition, it was noted Appendix 2 referred to ring-fenced funding and efficiency savings and that a report was being prepared for Full Council.

Members advised that part of the discussions during the Overview and Scrutiny process were around looking at Public Health initiatives which also benefitted the NHS. Officers advised that they could put together a report around outcomes, however it would be difficult to quantify savings to the NHS.

It was noted that 3.10 of the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 30 January 2020 referred to prevention and Members agreed that they would like to see the role of Public Health expanded across the whole of the County Council.

In relation to School Nursing Services (as detailed on p.187 of the IP), Members queried how a national shortage was impacting on recruitment and retention. Officers advised that Hertfordshire was lucky to have a provider and staff wanting to work in the area and therefore there was not a shortage currently.

Conclusions:

The Panel commented on the proposals relating to the Integrated Plan in respect of Public Health and Prevention.

The Panel identified issues that it felt that the Cabinet should consider in finalising the Integrated Plan proposals.

5. Adult Care & Health Cabinet Panel (7 February 2020)

Officer Contact:

Helen Maneuf (Assistant Director Planning & Resources, Adult Care Services)

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

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All Members have been granted a dispensation to participate in debate and vote in any business of the County Council relating to setting the council tax or precept when they would otherwise be prevented from doing so in consequence of having a beneficial interest in land which is within the administrative area of Hertfordshire or a licence (alone or jointly) to occupy such land.

N Bell is on the Chessbrook Education Support Centre Management Committee.

D J Hewitt- as he is a trustee CHECKXS Charity, Cheshunt

F R G Hill – as she is the Council's representative on the Old Barn Day Centre which receives funding from the County Council.

T Howard as she is the Director: CAD (Community Action Dacorum) and a Trustee of Centre in the Park.

R M Roberts as he is a trustee of Community Action Dacorum.

R G Tindall as he is on the management committee of the Dacorum Educational Support Centre.

William Wyatt Lowe is an honorary trustee of Adeyfield Neighbourhood Associated, which provides room hire to various Council departments

Members considered a report outlining areas of the Integrated Plan relating to Adult Care and Health. The Integrated Plan brings together the financial impact of service plans and the available funding to resource these over the next four years. Strategic Direction summaries have been produced for each Portfolio, which set out the future direction of services.

In response to a Member question, it was explained that at present there was no further detail on the Business Rates Retention, as outlined at point 2.5 of the report. It was confirmed that this was being considered separately to any decisions coming as a result of the green paper on the future of social care.

Members welcomed the 2% social care precept for social care, allowing the Council to increase the pay rate for care workers, as illustrated on page 35 of the IP pack. It was confirmed that officers were working with care providers to ensure that the full increase was implemented in care worker salaries. Members noted that the increase would also be beneficial in increasing employment in this sector, which they noted had been raised as a significant challenge in previous meetings.

Further to discussion, it was established that it was unknown whether the outcomes of the Domestic Abuse Act would result in any future funding stream.

Further to a Member challenge, it was explained that a budget pressure regarding self funders had not yet been detailed beyond 2021/22, due to the fact that the initial sharp increase in self funders had now lessened, and the outcomes of the green paper on the future of social care may provide further guidance in this area. Members were assured that this was an issue that officers were closely monitoring, and mid year or future year pressures would be considered if required.

In response to a Member question, Members received assurance that the Council were confident of achieving the efficiencies with regards to mental health residential provision, as outlined at NE1 at page 44 of the report, as the Council and the Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust (HPFT) were working closely together on plans to deliver this.

CONCLUSION:

The Panel commented and approved the proposals relating to the Integrated Plan in respect of Adult Care and Health.

The Panel considered any issues that it felt that the Cabinet should consider in finalising the Integrated Plan proposals.

6. Growth, Infrastructure, Planning & The Economy Cabinet Panel (7 February 2020)

[Officer Contact: Faisal Mir (Assistant Director Finance and Business Support, Environment and Infrastructure
(Tel: 01992 555692)]

All Members who have a disclosable pecuniary interest arising from an allowance from the County Council, another local authority in Hertfordshire, or a body to whom they have been appointed by the County Council, have received a dispensation to allow them to participate in debate and vote on the Integrated Plan.

All Members have been granted a dispensation to participate in debate and vote in any business of the County Council relating to setting the council tax or precept when they would otherwise be prevented from doing so in consequence of having a beneficial interest in land which is within the administrative area of Hertfordshire or a licence (alone or jointly) to occupy such land.

The Panel considered a report which provided a high-level overview of the County Council's financial position (the Integrated Plan (IP)) in order to consider those issues relating to the Growth, Infrastructure, Planning and The Economy (GRIPE) portfolio.

Officers highlighted the positive nature of this budget review for the (GrIPE) portfolio. In revenue terms this comprised no new policy choices, growth resourcing of £200k per annum for consultancy and public enquiry costs, alongside £270k per annum for strategic planning in Hertfordshire. New capital monies included an extra £9m for bus priorities and measures, and £150k in relation to the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) systems which brought together the Council's delivery of transport, to make better, more efficient use of routes and fleets.

To Member challenge at the location of Sustainable Herts within the GrIPE portfolio, since the environmental areas could not make the greatest contribution to it and the issue should be visible across the Authority, officers clarified that its current placement was pragmatic.

Members welcomed the wider package of measures for buses the government had announced on 6 February, particularly as it was the first element of growth in Local Government since for a number of years. Officers highlighted that the funding came with different timescales, criteria and processes for bidding, some of which excluded Hertfordshire. From a preliminary assessment one of the criteria was towns/cities with poor quality air; in Hertfordshire this applied only to Broxbourne and a bid would be considered. Funding was also available for new fleet of electric buses; the winning town would be used as model by the government. In relation to the grant for bus services operators, for a trial of demand responsive transport for rural areas where bus services were less frequent, a £400k bid was being prepared for next year.

Responding to a Member challenge officers clarified that the £9m for the Intalink Enhanced Partnership Highways Scheme would involve improvements to bus infrastructure and the highways network, e.g. bus lanes and gates to prioritise bus movements over other traffic, particularly in congested areas. This would enable buses to become a more reliable and attractive option thus reducing congestion. However, the cooperation of the Local Planning Authorities on parking which often impeded the passage of buses would be required.

A Member challenged the modest expenditure on the ITU systems, bearing in mind the expectation that with these tools the ITU was expected to find savings in the Council's transport delivery. Officers highlighted that savings should be possible from the £30m transport budget and to progress this a Head of Transport Unit was being recruited. The results would be reported back to the GrIPE cabinet panel.

With Members' agreement to suggestions from the chairman the recommendations were changed to those in paragraph 4.8.

The Panel:

1. Recommended to Cabinet that the Integrated Plan 2020/21-2023/24 for Growth, Infrastructure, Planning and the Economy is agreed.
2. Welcomed the £9m investment in the Intalink Enhanced Bus Partnership, thanking the bus companies and the Department for Transport for their work in supporting the Council to bring this forward, and welcomed the investment in the Integrated Transport Unit.

3. Welcomed the ongoing investment in growth, enabling the Council to continue to support the delivery of good growth and engage in proactive place leadership in Hertfordshire.

CONCLUSION:

The panel agreed unanimously to recommendations 2 and 3, but voted as follows on recommendation 1:

8 in favour : 4 abstentions – all 4 opposition members present abstained

7. Community Safety & Waste Management Cabinet Panel (10 February 2020)

[Officer Contact: Faisal Mir, Assistant Director Finance and Business Support, Environment & Infrastructure, Tel: (01992) 555143]

It was noted that all Members who had a disclosable pecuniary interest arising from an allowance from the County Council, another local authority in Hertfordshire, or a body to whom they have been appointed by the County Council, had received a dispensation to allow them to participate in debate and vote on the Integrated Plan.

All Members had been granted a dispensation to participate in debate and vote in any business of the County Council relating to setting the council tax or precept when they would otherwise be prevented from doing so in consequence of having a beneficial interest in land which is within the administrative area of Hertfordshire or a licence (alone or jointly) to occupy such land.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:

No Member disclosed a pecuniary interest.

Declarable Interests:

F R G Hill – she is the Council's representative on the Royston Old Barn Day Centre which receives funding from the County Council. She is a member of Royston and South Cambs Homestart. She is also a member of Crouchfield Trust and Friends of Royston and District Healthcare.

The Cabinet Panel were given an overview of the Council's financial position and noted there were no new policy choices in relation to the Community Safety & Waste Management revenue budget and there was a good news story in relation to savings to the waste management budget. Members were informed there was £1.9m for the waste compaction equipment and additional money in the Community Protection budget for the joint project at Longfield Training Centre.

The Executive Member for Community Safety & Waste Management stated this portfolio had challenges to face in the future especially in relation to future waste management and the Fire & Rescue Services pension contributions which was still under consultation.

Conclusions:

1. The Cabinet Panel were invited to note and comment on the proposals relating to the Integrated Plan in respect of Community Safety and Waste Management. The Panel made no further comment.
2. The Cabinet Panel were invited to identify any issues it felt Cabinet Panel should consider in finalising the Integrated Plan proposals. The Panel raised no issues.
3. The Cabinet Panel recommended to Cabinet that the Integrated Plan, in respect of Community Safety & Waste Management, was approved.