

AT A MEETING of the Cabinet of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle on 5 OCTOBER 2015.

**Chairman:
a Councillor Roy Perry**

Councillors:

p	Peter Edgar	p	Keith Mans (in the Chair)
p	Liz Fairhurst	p	Stephen Reid
p	Andrew Gibson	p	Patricia Stallard
p	Andrew Joy	a	Seán Woodward
p	Mel Kendal		

Also present with the agreement of the Chairman: Councillors J. Bennison, R Bolton, C. Carter, K. Evans, R. Humby, R. Huxstep, A. McNair-Scott, E. Still, J. Porter

172. BROADCASTING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Vice-Chairman announced that the meeting was being recorded for broadcast on the County Council's website and would be available for repeated viewing. The press and members of the public were also permitted to film and broadcast this meeting. Those remaining at the meeting were consenting to being filmed and recorded, and to the possible use of those images and recording for broadcasting purposes.

173. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Perry and Woodward.

174. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest and, having regard to Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered, having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

175. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

176. DEPUTATIONS

No deputation requests had been received.

It was noted that with the agreement of the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Porter would address the Cabinet on items 7a and 7b on the agenda.

177. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

It was explained that Councillor Perry had been unable to attend the meeting because he had been invited to join the Minister for Local Government in making a speech at the Conservative Party Conference.

178. ADULT SAFEGUARDING

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director Adult Services (item 6 in the Minute Book) presenting information on the current provision, developments and changes within adult safeguarding in Hampshire, since the last report in 2014.

The report was introduced and a number of key points were highlighted, in particular the context of changes arising from the Care Act and pressures in the system that were being felt nationally.

Cabinet welcomed the report, discussing elements relating to levels of risk in the system and the potential impact of the living wage.

The recommendations set out in the report were considered and agreed. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 1.

179. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE AND TRANSFORMATION TO 2017 SAVINGS PROPOSALS

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources – Corporate Services (item 7a in the Minute Book) presenting the detailed savings proposals from Departments as part of the Transformation to 2017 Programme and considering the medium term prospects for the County Council's finances to 2019/20. It updates Cabinet on the financial monitoring position for 2015/16, including specifically the impact of the Better Care Fund on the County Council's future financial position.

In introducing the report, it was highlighted that the proposals included consolidation of the cash limit to enable continued support for the programme of short breaks for disabled children, as well as for the allocation of £500,000 in relation to the secondary school strategy (item 7b in the Minute Book refers). Members noted that a number of work programmes had now reached the point where allocated reserves would be drawn upon.

A number of key points in the report were drawn to the attention of the Cabinet. It was noted that public consultation had revealed high level support for the overall financial strategy and direction of travel and the Equality Impact Assessments were acknowledged. It was explained that the 2016/17 budget setting was included in this report, although a further report would be presented in February 2016, at which point County Council would also need to consider the Council Tax precept. The medium term forecast element of the report was set out and Cabinet heard that a further spending gap was anticipated for the period beyond 2017 and that this would be dependent on a number of factors, therefore figures were only indicative at this stage.

With the agreement of the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Porter addressed Cabinet. She expressed her concern at the approach of reducing budgets equally across all departments, rather than considering individual requirements and starting points. To elaborate on these concerns, Councillor Porter highlighted differing situations across departments.

Cabinet were reassured that within each department there was the opportunity to achieve savings in the most appropriate way and therefore to deliver an overall departmental saving. Furthermore that historically, alongside a general reduction in departmental budgets, additional funding had been allocated to individual service areas in need of support, based on specific circumstances, such as the short breaks programme on this occasion. Members were supportive of this approach, recognising the need to achieve savings across all areas whilst protecting frontline services.

The recommendations within the report were proposed and agreed. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 2.

180. **HAMPSHIRE'S SECONDARY SCHOOL STRATEGY 2015 TO 2025**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Children's Services (item 7b in the Minute Book) regarding the potential options and solutions to meet the projected growth in secondary numbers across Hampshire.

The context of considerable change over recent years in the demand for school places was explained and it was noted that the County Council had achieved considerable success in the provision of places through planning ahead. An anticipated surge in demand for secondary school places was highlighted to Members and it was explained that the proposals in the report would enable the County Council to meet this increase. In particular, 17 schools would be expanded and five new schools built at an estimated cost of £400 million.

With the agreement of the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Porter addressed Cabinet, welcoming the report and expressing her confidence in the County Council's ability to deliver the places needed. She agreed that there was a positive link between high performing schools and strong communities. However Councillor Porter expressed some concern that children suffering mental health issues may be negatively impacted upon by larger school environments. She questioned

whether the number of children being home schooled was masking other issues and called for a further report on the role of sponsors in academy schools.

It was acknowledged that large schools experience some issues relating to their size, however it was explained to Cabinet that secondary schools smaller than four form entry were not economically viable. Members were also reassured that the County Council had had considerable success in providing support for children with additional needs within mainstream schools. Concerns around home schooling were part of a wider national issue and a report addressing this was being prepared for the Children and Young People Select Committee in the New Year.

Members discussed a number of other elements of the report, including the possible inclusion of a VI Form within the free school model, the difficulty of dealing with demand anomalies, particularly those associated with new housing developments and support for small village schools. It was explained that the report was working on cautious timescales and therefore should proposals be taken forward, it was likely these would evolve. Cabinet noted that particular attention was given to planning for the future of village schools, acknowledging their importance to local communities. Members also noted the important contribution that school expansion and building would have on economic development across the County.

The exempt appendix relating to the report (item 9 in the Minute Book) was acknowledged and Cabinet agreed that its contents did not require discussion.

The recommendations within the report were proposed and agreed. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 3.

181. RETIREMENT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Before closing the meeting, the Vice-Chairman noted that it was the final Cabinet meeting for the Chief Executive (Andrew Smith) before his retirement. Cabinet Members took the opportunity to recognise his achievements and contribution over a long career at the County Council and to thank him for all that he had done.