

AT A MEETING of the Universal Services Select Committee of HAMPSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester on Monday, 15th January,
2024

Chairman:

* Councillor Rob Mocatta

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| * Councillor Jackie Branson | * Councillor Kim Taylor |
| * Councillor Lulu Bowerman | Councillor Rhydian Vaughan MBE |
| Councillor Rod Cooper | |
| Councillor Debbie Curnow-Ford | |
| * Councillor David Drew | |
| * Councillor Barry Dunning | |
| * Councillor Michael Ford | |
| * Councillor Tim Groves | |
| * Councillor Dominic Hiscock | |
| * Councillor Wayne Irish | |
| * Councillor Rupert Kyrle | |
| * Councillor Sarah Pankhurst | |
| * Councillor Stephen Parker | |
| * Councillor Stephen Reid | |
- * present

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were noted from Councillors Debbie Curnow-Ford, Rod Cooper and Rhydian Vaughan.

35. 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 at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in 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 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 whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code

36. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed.

37. **DEPUTATIONS**

Councillor Mark Cooper spoke on item 8 of the agenda, Traffic Management Policy Update: 20MPH Speed Limits and Zones, as the local Member.

38. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no formal announcements.

39. **UNIVERSAL SERVICES PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25, 2025/26 AND 2026/27**

The Chairman agreed to receive the presentation and allow questions and debate for items 6 and 7 of the agenda together under item 6.

The Director introduced the proposed capital programme for 2024-2027 and the Revenue Budget for 2024/25. Members heard that:

- The December settlement was broadly neutral, although slightly lower than forecasted expectations.
- The cash limit for Universal services had increased by 6%, predominantly to meet a £7m increase for inflation, primarily resulting from increases in the highway maintenance and waste disposal contracts.
- C.£1 had been added to the budget for the impact of the removal of charges for DIY waste at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) based on savings when charges were introduced, however the full impact was expected to be double this based on current costs.
- Income and recharges contributed approximately 45% of the overall revenue budget for Universal Services.
- £9.5m of T2021 and SP2023 savings were to be achieved throughout 2024/25, and Members were assured that should the projected savings not be delivered in year then any deficit would be met from the cost of change reserve.
- From 2025/2026 funds for capital investment would only be transferred from the revenue budget on an as needed basis, to avoid any unnecessary build up in the capital investment reserve.
- It was highlighted that the deterioration of the highways network, particularly following the winter of 2022 and unfavourable conditions during winter 2023/24, was a key challenge for the department and spending plans.
- Through the Stronger Roads Today Programme the County Council had secured additional resources to support maintenance of the network and taking this innovative approach had placed the Council in a more favourable position than others.

Staff retention, resilience and wellbeing was an ongoing focus, with the directorate recognising the importance of keeping staff motivated to deliver the best service for Hampshire residents. Members heard it had been a demanding year with staff supporting and embedding a new, large directorate coupled with development of SP25 proposals, but that officers had risen to the challenge and the Council's innovative approaches and

ways of working enabled it to be better placed than some other authorities and businesses in the private sector.

In response to Members questions it was heard that:

- Provision was made centrally for the annual staff pay award, and once the award level was confirmed the necessary budget would be transferred to individual directorates to meet any costs.
- Whilst income already represented 45% of the revenue budget, the directorate continued to look for opportunities to maximise and increase this. It was noted, as an example, Hampshire Transport Management was fully self-funding/sustaining.
- Allocation of central government funding for highway maintenance was based on network length, rather than usage, with those areas with higher classification roads receiving increased funding. It was considered that the formula was a reasonably fair method.
- The Council held extensive metrics around claims for damage caused by potholes. Data was not specifically held regarding the types of tyres damaged, although it was understood that lower profile tyres, which were increasing in use, were more susceptible to damage.
- No additional allowance had been made within the capital budget to provide for local communities and councils to bid for funding for automated crossings, as School Crossing provision was subject to the current public consultation.
- The Directorate worked closely with Hampshire 2050 to prioritise spend on those bus routes which were to form part of future strategic priorities. The strategy focussed on providing pump prime funding to bus service operators so routes could become self-sustaining in the future, rather than using resources to sustain services which were no longer financially viable.
- With costs for road maintenance increasing ahead of available income, the Directorate would be looking to deliver proactive approaches wherever possible, such as resurfacing roads, rather than reactive actions such as patching, to enable longer term sustainability.
- £106,000 was set aside in the budget to deliver the provision of flood defences, which would form part of the overall, partially grant funded, £24.9m programme. It was noted that, as a starts-based programme, the figures within the report did not include the value of schemes currently in design and delivery, but where works started in prior years. It was heard that £1.5m of this overall funding was set aside to develop future flood programmes beyond 2025.
- Income generated from recycling would no longer be passed onto to District and Borough Councils. Members heard that the Council were entitled to remove this funding several years ago and had identified this was the appropriate time to do so, following significant notice and engagement with District and Borough Councils. It was hoped that this considered approach would prevent any disruption to or reduction in recycling rates

Councillors Bowerman, Drew, Kyrle and Mocatta declared a personal interest, as Cabinet Members within their own local authorities with responsibility for waste disposal and recycling.

- The Directorate were considering a number of infrastructure proposals, to drive maximum efficiency out of the waste system and looking to mitigate costs through working collectively with Portsmouth and Southampton.
- It was further noted that Hampshire was the first authority in the UK to use household technology to identify if upholstery contained specific chemicals which would require a separate disposal process, allowing those which did not to be disposed of through the standard waste process and generating significant savings.

Through debate it was heard that funding for the rapid transport link in Basingstoke would form part of the Highways Planning process through Hampshire 2050.

Members acknowledged the challenging future ahead, with a need to meet to statutory legal provision, whilst delivering a proactive programme of work to keep Hampshire fit for the future, against a reduction in available funding. The Committee offered their thanks to officers for bringing forward a balanced budget for 2024/25 and for the proposals presented which would make good use of the resources available.

RESOLVED:

That the Select Committee Supports the recommendations being proposed to the Executive Lead Member for Universal Services in paragraphs 2 to 14 (page 1) of the attached report.

40. **2024/25 REVENUE BUDGET REPORT FOR UNIVERSAL SERVICES**

RESOLVED:

That the Select Committee Supports the recommendations being proposed to the Executive Lead Member for Universal Services in section B of the attached report.

The Chairman called a 10 minute adjournment at this point.

41. **TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT POLICY UPDATE: 20 MPH SPEED LIMITS & ZONES**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Universal Services outlining the recommendations of a review of the existing position on 20mph speed limits for pre-scrutiny ahead of consideration by the Executive Lead Member for Universal Services.

In response to Members questions it was heard that:

- Flexibility in location for Speed Indication Devices (SID) was needed, and the County Council could provide sockets and posts to support local councils to place these in locations where 20mph limits were being considered.

- Driver compliance would be key in delivering any 20mph speed limit changes without significant demand on police enforcement measures.
- An initial £175 application assessment fee was proposed, to be met by the applicant, to allow any unsuitable application to be ruled out before significant investment in time or financially was made by local councils and residents.
- The Council would continue to work with developers to identify where it would be appropriate to include 20mph speed limits at the planning stage.
- The Directorate would, wherever possible, look to batch Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) to reduce costs, however it was noted that this was unlikely to be appropriate where there were multiple locations applied for.
- Six areas had been identified which were non parished and therefore the County Council would work with the appropriate District Council, if the scheme was approved, to look at how applications from residents in these areas could be supported.
- Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding could be considered to support applications.
- The scheme was proposed to operate on a full cost recovery basis and to meet demand the Council would draw in additional capacity as needed from consultants and public sector partners.

Through debate it was suggested by the Committee, if the proposal was agreed by the Executive Lead Member that:

- The Committee receive a report in 12 months, to review the procedure and the use of the scheme and that this be added to the Committee's work plan. Whilst it was proposed that the scheme be reviewed by the Committee after a year, any issues should be brought before that time if necessary.
- That self-assessment documentation be created, including an outline of potential costs, to enable potential applicants to de-select themselves if their application would not be eligible. Through this the Committee would suggest that there would be a reduction in demand on the workload of the Directorate and would allow applicants to avoid unnecessary costs.

The Executive Lead Member welcomed the Committee's views and discussion, which would be taken into consideration when reviewing the decision to be taken.

RESOLVED:

That the Universal Services Select Committee supports the recommendations being proposed to the Executive Lead Member for Universal Services in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the attached report.

42. WORK PROGRAMME

It was noted, as per discussion under item 8 of the agenda, that a review of the Traffic Management Policy Update: 20 mph Speed Limits & Zones would be added to the work programme for January 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the Universal Services Select Committee discuss and agree potential items for the work programme that can be prioritised and allocated by the Chairman of the Universal Services Select Committee in consultation with the Director of Universal Services.

Chairman, 11 March 2023