

AT A MEETING of the Universal Services Select Committee of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester on Monday 18th September, 2023

Chairman:

\* Councillor Rob Mocatta

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

Also present with the agreement of the Chairman: Councillor Nick Adams-King, Executive Lead Member for Universal Services and Councillor Russell Oppenheimer, Executive Member for Countryside and Regulatory Services

**18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Kim Taylor and Councillor Rupert Kyrle. Councillors Alex Crawford and Martin Tod attended as deputies.

**19. 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 Non-Pecuniary 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.

**20. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed.

**21. DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations for the meeting.

## 22. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no formal announcements.

## 23. SAVINGS PROGRAMME TO 2025 - REVENUE SAVINGS PROPOSALS

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Universal Services and Director of Corporate Operations (item 6 in the minute book), which detailed the £19,279 million of savings across 16 proposals for SP25.

The officers summarised the report confirming that £105 million had been saved since 2010, with the majority being saved through the highways, engineering and transport areas of the Directorate. It was also highlighted that the consultation undertaken earlier in the year had been widely promoted to residents and stakeholders, who had provided views on a range of high-level options that could help to address the shortfall, so that the County Council could take residents' needs in to account when considering the way forward.

During questions on the report, Members learned the following:

- HWRC's were currently separate from the budget proposals, but this would be looked at again going forward. Savings around the new Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) had been included in the previous savings programmes.
- The Council would continue to wait for further funding from central government towards highways maintenance.
- Paragraph 31 in the report discussed the School Crossing Patrols (SCPs) and officers confirmed that the £1.1 million savings was a maximum, and would enable there to be a full review of where these services were still needed. The County Council would always look to provide a safe provision for school travel, but this could include various options as well as SCPs.
- Energy contracts were being looked at, but energy had always been sourced in an economic way. Energy use was being looked at in terms of reduction and utilising solar panels and grants.
- The highway network would be reassessed to help prioritise roads for winter maintenance, as an assessment hadn't been done since 1999 and there were a lot of legacy roads from old bus routes and previously heavily used roads that were no longer considered a priority.
- A pilot would take place looking at enforcement and patrol of highway signs in 2024, the results of which would likely go to a Member Briefing.

During debate, Councillor Stephen Reid proposed recommending that the allocated maximum of £1.1 million savings from the review of the SCP service be removed from the Executive Member report. It was felt that the amount quoted would cause residents to fear losing a significant number of SCP's across the County and this proposal was seconded by Councillor Alex Crawford. Officers reassured Members that the amount stated was a maximum and meant that the service could be reviewed to see whether better alternatives (like automated

pedestrian crossings or built-out kerbs) would be more suited in some areas. Other Members on the Committee acknowledged the concerns around the public perception of the proposed savings, but agreed that overall a review would be beneficial and the £1.1 million was a maximum saving subject to further review. The Committee voted on Councillor Reid's proposal to remove the stated £1.1 million, but this was not supported.

Councillor Nick Adams-King thanked the Committee for looking at the proposals, accepting that no-one wanted to have to reduce services, but it was an opportunity to look at how some services were provided and see whether there was a better alternative.

RESOLVED

The Universal Services Select Committee supported the recommendations being proposed to the Executive Lead Member for Universal Services in paragraph 2 of the main report.

#### 24. **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members looked at the Work Programme (item 7 in the minute book), and it was agreed that an item would be added to look at utility companies and highway works and how the relationship could be strengthened for efficiency on work taking place.

Councillor Crawford proposed looking at the bus station closure in Aldershot, but it was confirmed that Hampshire County Council had little input and influence over what was happening at the present time and it was not something the Select Committee could scrutinise.

RESOLVED

The Universal Services Select Committee discussed and agreed potential items for the work programme to be prioritised and allocated by the Chairman of the Universal Services Select Committee in consultation with the Director of Universal Services.

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Chairman,