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AT A MEETING of the Cabinet of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester on Tuesday, 12th October, 2021

Chairman:

* Councillor Keith Mans

Councillor Rob Humby	* Councillor Edward Heron
* Councillor Roz Chadd	* Councillor Russell Oppenheimer
* Councillor Liz Fairhurst	* Councillor Stephen Reid
* Councillor Steve Forster	* Councillor Jan Warwick

Also present with the agreement of the Chairman: Councillors Carpenter, Glen, Hayre, House, Latham, Philpott, Porter, Tod and Withers.

15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Humby

16. 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.

With regards to the County Deal elements of the "Recovery from and learning to live with Covid-19" item, Councillor Heron declared a personal interest as Leader of a District Council.

17. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and agreed.

18. DEPUTATIONS

No deputation requests had been received for the meeting, however it was noted that a number of non-executive Members would speak on items on the agenda with the agreement of the Chairman.

19. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Chairman's announcements on this occasion.

20. **RECOVERY FROM AND LEARNING TO LIVE WITH COVID-19**

Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive regarding the County Council's continuing responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was noted that since publication of the report a meeting with Council Leaders in Hampshire regarding the proposed County Deal had highlighted areas requiring further discussion. For that reason, discussion by Cabinet would be deferred to a future meeting.

The report was introduced with reference to the economic impact and recovery, rates of infection, staffing and the return to office working, support for Afghan refugees, the return of children to school in September and safeguarding and a number of other service specific impacts.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor House addressed Cabinet, highlighting that there were a number of unknowns relating to the County Deal and therefore caution should be exercised. He welcomed further consideration being given to proposals, and confirmed his support for an outcome based on genuine partnership and devolution of power.

Cabinet discussed the latest statistics for Hampshire relating to Covid-19 infections, noting the success of the vaccination programme and higher rates of infection in younger, unvaccinated age groups. It was confirmed that data on the booster vaccine was still emerging and Cabinet heard that the flu vaccine was being rolled out earlier than normal.

The increase in child protection plans was considered and it was explained that this was likely a short term increase, however the number of referrals to children's social care was now constantly raised by around 20% reflecting heightened professional concern. This increase in referrals was part of the national picture and the cost pressure of responding to it had been raised with government.

The recommendations set out in the report were considered and noting that the County Deal proposals were subject to discussion at a future meeting, the recommendations were agreed. A decision record is attached to these minutes.

21. **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE AND SAVINGS PROGRAMME TO 2023 SAVINGS PROPOSALS**

Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Finance Officer and Director of Corporate Operations regarding the overall financial strategy for dealing with the budget gap to 2023/24 in light of the various options available to the County Council and the high level outcomes from the public consultation exercise on balancing the budget.

With the agreement of the Chairman, Councillors Porter and House addressed Cabinet. Councillor Porter expressed her concern about specific reductions to the Children's Services budget, in particular in the areas of fostering, home to school transport, school funding and the youth offending team.

Councillor House welcomed no further changes to HWRC or school crossing patrol budgets, but noted that previously agreed budget reductions had not yet been achieved and expressed concern about Council Chamber refurbishment costs, a reduction in spending on vulnerable adults and an increasing dependence on volunteers to deliver services. He called on Cabinet to meet with Hampshire MPs to lobby for fair funding to support local services.

With reference to the report, key details of the MTFs and SP23 proposals were highlighted to Cabinet, including investment recommendations and proposed recommendations to the County Council.

Cabinet welcomed the report and heard that the Leader held regular meetings with Hampshire MPs to make the case for the importance of fair funding, furthermore service specific issues were brought to government attention via professional networks. It was noted that the Council Chamber was a listed building and provided accommodation for the coroner which would otherwise require alternative facilities, therefore the proposed maintenance was both necessary and cost effective. It was recognised that reductions in the youth offending budget were in combination with initiatives to reduce youth crime and therefore the demand on the service. The benefits of Extra-Care both in terms of cost reduction and the customer experience were set out and noted. Cabinet also discussed the current limitations on home to school transport, which are bound by national legislation, and the potential benefits of being able to control this locally to achieve better alignment with need and the use of more sustainable transport methods.

The recommendations in the report were considered and agreed. A decision record is attached to these minutes.

22. CLIMATE CHANGE ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment setting out the Climate Change Annual Report 2020-21.

With the agreement of the Chairman, Councillors Porter and Tod addressed Cabinet. Councillor Porter noted the emphasis on engaging with young people in the findings of the Hampshire 2050 Commission and highlighting the role that young people will play in progressing climate change initiatives, expressed concern that the climate change programme was not engaging enough.

Councillor Tod highlighted the links to climate change in the County Council's Strategic Plan (2021-2025). With reference to inconsistent wording between the Plan and covering Cabinet report (from the July Cabinet meeting), he noted that "sustainable" had been removed from Outcome 1 and felt that a clearer ambition for recycling was needed. Councillor Tod also proposed areas where the climate change programme could develop further, relating to local energy generation, solar PV, tree planting and carbon reduction.

One year into the Climate Change programme, key areas of progress were highlighted to Cabinet, as was the focus for the second year. Actions to embed the programme within the organisation were drawn to Members' attention, as was extensive partnership and engagement work. It was noted that the Covid-19 pandemic had limited progress in some areas.

Cabinet welcomed the report and the success and ambition of the climate change strategy. In particular initiatives such as "walktober", the promotion of staycations, the use of bio-fuels and electric machinery, the greening campaign and the recycling of asphalt were recognised.

In response to Councillor Tod's comments, it was clarified that the wording of the Strategic Plan as adopted by the County Council took precedence over any covering reports. An additional recommendation was proposed by Councillor Warwick and seconded by Councillor Oppenheimer that:

Cabinet recognise the importance of waste minimisation through promotion of the circular economy as a key element of the climate change strategy and accordingly recommends that County Council amend Outcome One of the "Serving Hampshire's Residents – Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025" to reflect this, as detailed in the extract from the Strategic Plan attached to the Decision Record.

The recommendations in the report, along with the additional recommendation were considered and agreed. A decision record is attached to these minutes.

23. NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment regarding the New Forest National Park Partnership Management Plan 2021-2026.

The key purpose of the Management Plan was set out and Cabinet welcomed the report, noting in particular sections on climate change and nature recovery.

The recommendations set out in the report were considered and agreed. A decision record is attached to these minutes.

24. PROPOSALS REGARDING BUSINESS EFFICIENCY & REVIEW OF FINANCIAL THRESHOLDS

Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive regarding business efficiency and a review of financial thresholds.

With the agreement of the Chairman, Councillor House addressed Cabinet expressing concern about a reduction in transparency should more decisions be taken in private. He also noted that the increase in the Key Decision threshold was not in line with inflation.

The report was presented and it was highlighted in particular that the increase in the Key Decision threshold to £2 million reflected the substantial change in significance of contractual value to departmental budgets since the previous review. It was furthermore noted that the alternative “significant impact” criteria for a Key Decision remained and was regardless of monetary value. It was explained that the revision to tendering procedures created an efficient alignment between any waiver decision and the decision maker.

Cabinet welcomed the report, noting that recommendations were based on lessons learned, that there must always be a balance between transparency and efficiency and that these changes didn’t preclude Cabinet Members from making a decision on a matter that could be decided by officers where it was appropriate to do so.

The recommendations set out in the report were considered and agreed. A decision record is attached to these minutes.

Chairman,

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Date:	12 October 2021
Title:	Recovery from and learning to live with Covid-19
Report From:	Chief Executive

Contact name: Carolyn Williamson, Chief Executive

Tel: 01962 845252

Email: Carolyn.williamson@hants.gov.uk

1. The decision:

That Cabinet

- 1.1 Note that the initial County Deal proposal was subject to further discussion with partners and therefore consideration would be deferred to a future meeting of Cabinet.
- 1.2 Note that through the implementation of the COVID vaccination programme the link between infection rates and hospitalisation and deaths has been largely broken. Nevertheless, as a society and in our role as the public health authority there is a need to manage rates of infections.
- 1.3 Note the contents of the report as a further summary of the exceptional events and recovery actions taken by the County Council concerning the COVID-19 crisis, bearing in mind that this remains a high-level analysis of what continues to be such a substantial and potentially fast changing crisis.
- 1.4 Note that the County Council's operational crisis management arrangements are dismantled with a full return to ordinary operational governance arrangements.
- 1.5 Note the fuller analyses contained in the report of continued recovery work, through the Collective Wisdom project related particularly to the return to the office.
- 1.6 Continue to recognise the on-going exceptional commitment and flexibility of the staff of the County Council as the crisis has progressed.

2. Reason(s) for the decision:

2.1. To provide Cabinet with an update on the Covid crisis as it is affecting the County Council, as an organisation and for the residents of the county.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

3.1. None.

4. Conflicts of interest:

4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker:

4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted:

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: none.

6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.

7. Statement from the Decision Maker:

Approved by:	Date:
-----	12 October 2021
Chairman of Cabinet Councillor Keith Mans	

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Date:	12 October 2021
Title:	Medium Term Financial Strategy Update and Savings Programme to 2023 Savings Proposals
Report From:	Chief Finance Officer and Director of Corporate Operations

Contact name: Rob Carr

Tel: 0370 779 2467

Email: Rob.carr@hants.gov.uk

1. The decision:

That Cabinet

- 1.1. Notes the latest position in respect of the financial resilience monitoring for the current financial year.
- 1.2. Confirms the current planning assumption that council tax and the social care precept will increase by the maximum permissible without a referendum, in line with government policy, will continue.
- 1.3. Approves the recommended approach to dealing with the anticipated £80m budget deficit, as set out in paragraphs 185 to 187.
- 1.4. Approves, subject to further consultation and executive decision making where necessary, the savings proposals in Appendix 3; after taking due regard of the consultation feedback and Equality Impact Assessments.
- 1.5. Approves further service specific consultations, where necessary, on the savings proposals set out in Appendix 3, prior to final decisions being made by Executive Members.
- 1.6. Restates and reinforces the requirement that should any savings proposal be rejected that alternative options to the same value will need to be developed by the appropriate department.
- 1.7. Notes the requirement for further essential health and safety and maintenance works within the older persons residential portfolio and the initial plan to prioritise a programme of full asset management plan surveys at a cost of £120,000 to be funded from the AHC cost of change reserve.
- 1.8. Notes the revised Commercial Strategy at Appendix 10 which includes an analysis of the Council's income generation.

1.9. Recommends to County Council that:

- a) The mid-year report on treasury management activity at Appendix 2 be approved.
- b) The savings proposals in Appendix 3 be approved, subject to further consultation and executive decision making where necessary.
- c) Recurring funding of £7m is approved from 2022/23 to provide additional resources for the overall Highways Maintenance budget, with the flexibility for the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment to allocate this between Operation Resilience and the reactive maintenance budget as required.
- d) Investment of £1.7m in 2021/22, £2.4m in 2022/23 and £3.2m per year from 2023/24 onwards in Children's Intensive Workers be approved, to be met from existing corporate growth funding allocations for Children Looked After.
- e) Capital investment of up to £22m is added to the capital programme in respect of younger adults extra care and the Woodcot Lodge discharge to assess facility to be funded by prudential borrowing with repayments accounted for within the proposed saving.
- f) Capital investment of £786,000 is added to the capital programme in respect of improvement works to the Formal Meeting Chamber, to be funded from cost of change reserves.

2. Reason(s) for the decision:

- 2.1. To consider the overall financial strategy for dealing with the budget gap to 2023/24 in light of the various options available to the County Council and to receive the high level outcomes from the public consultation exercise on balancing the budget.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

- 3.1. None.

4. Conflicts of interest:

- 4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker:
- 4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted:

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: none.

6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.

7. Statement from the Decision Maker:

Approved by:

Date:

12 October 2021

**Chairman of Cabinet
Councillor Keith Mans**

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Date:	12 October 2021
Title:	Climate Change Annual Report
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

Contact name: Chitra Nadarajah

Tel: 03707 797514

Email: chitra.nadarajah@hants.gov.uk

1. The decision:

- 1.1. That Cabinet approves the first annual update on progress on Climate Change over the last 12 months (July 2020-July 2021) and agrees the focus for the year ahead on the “Year of Climate Resilience”.
- 1.2. That Cabinet recognise the importance of waste minimisation through promotion of the circular economy as a key element of the climate change strategy and accordingly recommends that County Council amend Outcome One of the “Serving Hampshire’s Residents – Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025” to reflect this, as detailed in the extract from the Strategic Plan attached to this Decision Record at Annex 1.

2. Reason(s) for the decision:

- 2.1. The County Council committed to reporting on progress against the Action Plan and Strategic Framework on annual basis as set out in the attached Annual Report.
- 2.2. The Annual Report also sets out the focus for second year of delivery on the “Year of Resilience” to support the County Council’s target for resilience and National priorities on this.
- 2.3. To recognise the importance of waste minimisation through promotion of the circular economy as a key element of the climate change strategy and propose an amendment to Outcome One of the “Serving Hampshire’s Residents – Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025” reflect this.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

- 3.1. None.

4. Conflicts of interest:

- 4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker:

4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted:

5. **Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: none.**

6. **Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.**

7. **Statement from the Decision Maker:**

Approved by:

Date:

12 October 2021

**Chairman of Cabinet
Councillor Keith Mans**

Annex 1 – Updated extract from “Serving Hampshire’s Residents – Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025”.

Outcome one: Hampshire maintains strong resilient and **sustainable** economic growth and prosperity

Our priorities are:

- Promoting a green economic recovery across Hampshire,
- Ensuring Hampshire has the right conditions for economic innovation to flourish
- Enhancing our competitiveness as an international gateway and globally connected economy
- Maximising opportunities for employment and inclusion by equipping people with the right skills to support, and benefit from, economic growth
- Promoting Hampshire’s assets and opportunities as an excellent place to work, visit, live and do business
- **Promoting the circular economy to minimise waste and use of natural resources**

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Date:	12 October 2021
Title:	New Forest National Park Authority Management Plan
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

Contact name: James Potter

Tel: 03707 790212

Email: James.potter@hants.gov.uk

1. The decision:

- 1.1. That the New Forest National Park Partnership Management Plan 2021-2026 be endorsed.

2. Reason(s) for the decision:

- 2.1. To set out the background to the New Forest National Park Authority Partnership plan and the revised Partnership plan that the Park Authority is now seeking an endorsement of.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

- 3.1. None.

4. Conflicts of interest:

- 4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker:
4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted:

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: none.

6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.

7. Statement from the Decision Maker:

Approved by:

Date:

12 October 2021

**Chairman of Cabinet
Councillor Keith Mans**

Annex 1 – Updated extract from “Serving Hampshire’s Residents – Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025”.

Outcome one: Hampshire maintains strong resilient and **sustainable** economic growth and prosperity

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- **Promoting the circular economy to minimise waste and use of natural resources**

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Date:	12 October 2021
Title:	Proposals Regarding Business Efficiency & Review of Financial Thresholds
Report From:	Chief Executive

Contact name: Barbara Beardwell
Belinda Stubbs

Tel: 03707 793751
01962 846235

Email: barbara.beardwell@hants.gov.uk
belinda.stubbs@hants.gov.uk

1. The decision:

That Cabinet recommend to full Council:

1. An increase of the current financial threshold for a Key Decision (£1 million) to £2 million.
2. The revised approvals required in the case of STAs, authority levels and purchasing / tendering procedures and thresholds as proposed at Paragraphs 15 - 21 of this report, and consequential revisions to Contract Standing Orders as indicated at Appendix 1.
3. Increases in the approval limits relating to Capital Expenditure contained in Financial Regulations as proposed at Paragraph 22 of this report.
 - 3.1 Agree the submission to full Council on Cabinet on 4 November 2021 for approval to make the necessary changes to the Constitution, Contract Standing Orders, and Financial Regulations, in order to give effect to the recommendations proposed at Paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of this report.

2. Reason(s) for the decision:

- 2.1. To propose to Council an increase of the current financial threshold for a Key Decision (£1 million) to £2 million as well as a number of changes to Contract Standing Orders.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

- 3.1. None.

4. Conflicts of interest:

4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker:

4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted:

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: none.

6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.

7. Statement from the Decision Maker:

Approved by:

Date:

12 October 2021

**Chairman of Cabinet
Councillor Keith Mans**