

Public Document Pack

AT A REMOTE MEETING of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held on
Thursday, 16th July, 2020

Chairman:

* Councillor Melville Kendal

- * Councillor Marge Harvey
- * Councillor John Bennison
- * Councillor Fred Birkett
- * Councillor Martin Boiles
- * Councillor Ray Bolton
- * Councillor Jackie Branson
- * Councillor Ann Briggs
- * Councillor Zilliah Brooks
- * Councillor Graham Burgess
- * Councillor Adam Carew
- * Councillor Fran Carpenter
- * Councillor Christopher Carter
- * Councillor Roz Chadd
- * Councillor Peter Chegwyn
- * Councillor Charles Choudhary
- * Councillor Daniel Clarke
- * Councillor Adrian Collett
- * Councillor Mark Cooper
- * Councillor Rod Cooper
- * Councillor Tonia Craig
- Councillor Roland Dibbs
- * Councillor Alan Dowden
- * Councillor Peter Edgar MBE
- * Councillor Keith Evans
- * Councillor Liz Fairhurst
- Councillor Steve Forster
- * Councillor Jane Frankum
- * Councillor Andrew Gibson
- * Councillor Jonathan Glen
- * Councillor Judith Grajewski
- * Councillor David Harrison
- * Councillor Pal Hayre
- * Councillor Edward Heron
- * Councillor Dominic Hiscock
- * Councillor Geoffrey Hockley
- * Councillor Keith House
- Councillor Rob Humby
- * Councillor Gary Hughes
- * Councillor Roger Huxstep
- * Councillor Wayne Irish
- * Councillor Gavin James
- * Councillor Andrew Joy
- * Councillor David Keast
- * Councillor Mark Kemp-Gee
- * Councillor Rupert Kyrle
- * Councillor Peter Latham
- * Councillor Keith Mans
- * Councillor Alexis McEvoy
- * Councillor Anna McNair Scott
- * Councillor Derek Mellor
- * Councillor Floss Mitchell
- * Councillor Rob Mocatta
- * Councillor Kirsty North
- * Councillor Russell Oppenheimer
- * Councillor Neville Penman
- * Councillor Roy Perry
- * Councillor Stephen Philpott
- * Councillor Jackie Porter
- * Councillor Roger Price
- * Councillor Lance Quantrill
- * Councillor Stephen Reid
- * Councillor David Simpson
- * Councillor Patricia Stallard
- * Councillor Elaine Still
- * Councillor Robert Taylor
- * Councillor Bruce Tennent
- Councillor Tom Thacker
- * Councillor Michael Thierry
- * Councillor Mike Thornton
- * Councillor Martin Tod
- * Councillor Rhydian Vaughan MBE
- * Councillor Malcolm Wade
- * Councillor Jan Warwick
- * Councillor Michael Westbrook
- * Councillor Michael White
- * Councillor Bill Withers Lt Col (Retd)
- * Councillor Seán Woodward

*Present

206. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Steve Forster and Rob Humby and from Honorary Alderman Phrynette Dickens.

207. 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 2 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.

208. MINUTES

The Council considered the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 29 May 2020. Subject to clarification that the meeting was held remotely, the Minutes were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising:

Minute 204 regarding the County Council's deputation procedure. It was agreed that the Leader would respond to Councillor Collett in due course.

209. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations on this occasion.

210. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

It was with sadness that the Chairman reported the passing of the following former County Councillors:

- Frank Rust who represented the Aldershot East division from 2013 to 2017
- Brian Palmer who represented the Romsey division from 1973 to 1977
- Ray Cobbett who represented the Emsworth and St Faith's (East) division from 1993 to 1997
- Honorary Alderman Philip Merridale CBE who represented the Baddesley division from 1973 to 1989.

The following Members paid tribute to their former colleagues:

Councillors Adam Carew, Roz Chadd, Charles Choudhary, Adrian Collett, Mark Cooper, Roger Huxstep, Andrew Joy, Alexis McEvoy, Roy Perry and Jan Warwick.

The Council observed a 30 second silence as a mark of respect.

It was with pleasure that the Chairman reported that the County Council's Property Services team has been shortlisted for the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Awards 2020 for the Oakmoor School at Whitehill and Bordon, as part of a wider regeneration project in the area. The new school replaces existing school buildings on the Mill Chase Road site which were in poor condition and coming to the end of their useful life. Significant funding contributions were received from the Department for Education and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation and the County Council also worked closely with the University of Chichester Academy Trust, East Hampshire District Council, and the Whitehill & Bordon Regeneration Company on the delivery of the new school. The Chairman was particularly pleased to see energy efficiency and consideration of climate change included into the design.

Finally, the Chairman, on behalf of all Members, thanked the Chief Executive and his team for the sterling work they were doing in very difficult circumstances to keep the County Council's services to the public running so well during the crisis.

211. **LEADER'S REPORT**

Firstly, the Leader added his tribute to former Councillors Frank Rust and Philip Merridale CBE.

The Leader reported on the Covid-19 pandemic and the clear focus from the outset to reduce the spread of the virus by working together and to look after each other. The Leader extended thanks to the Chief Executive, officers and all those working for the County Council for their hard work during the crisis. In addition, he also extended his thanks to those outside the County Council who worked in partnership to fight the virus, and in particular commended all of those voluntary groups and those communities who have done so much to look after the elderly and the vulnerable. Sadly, despite all the efforts made there have been over 1,000 deaths in Hampshire connected to the virus, of which over 400 have been in care homes. All efforts had been made to support care homes during this difficult time by passing on to them all of the finance provided by the Government for this sector in a timely manner despite the County Council's finances being significantly stretched during the crisis and which is reflected in the Medium Term Financial Strategy Update later on the Agenda.

The County Council is now moving into the recovery phase. The objective remains the same – to control the spread of the virus, with the focus now being containing local outbreaks. The Leader had chaired the first meeting of the Local Outbreak Engagement Board on 14 July to assist with controlling the spread of the virus and thanked Councillor House for agreeing to sit on the

Board. Assisting economic recovery is also another key area of focus and to this end the Rt. Hon. Maria Miller, MP for Basingstoke has agreed to join the Cabinet Sub-Committee for Economic Growth and Recovery.

Finally, the Leader commented on Black Lives Matter following the death of George Floyd in the United States. The Leader was proud of the vibrancy and diversity of Hampshire's communities and the County Council's track record of committing to reduce inequality and advancing inclusion and cohesion. The County Council had significantly refreshed its equality objectives and strengthened its arrangements to prevent and tackle all forms of discrimination and hate crime especially through the organisation's Inclusion and Diversity strategy and action plan. The Leader reported he had been in regular discussion with the Chief Executive about these issues and supported the Chief Executive and CMTs commitment to progress plans further, in partnership with the BAME staff network. A lot of hard work had been carried out on these issues and the Leader confirmed that more can and will be done.

212. **QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 16.1.1**

Executive Members responded to questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.1 as published with the exception of question 10 for which a full written answer would be circulated in accordance with Standing Order 16.1.5.

213. **APPOINTMENTS**

The Council considered the report of the Chief Executive (Item 8 in the Minute Book), and presented by the Leader, proposing a number of appointments to the County Council's committees.

RESOLVED:

- a) That Julie Kelly and Carson Elday be appointed as main representatives of the Teachers' Liaison Group replacing Susannah Burns and Patrizia Timms Blanch respectively and that Rachel Jackson and Jon Hamer become deputies for the Teachers' Liaison Group on the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education.
- b) That Councillor Cal Corkery (Portsmouth City Council) be appointed as his Council's Employer Representative as the full co-opted member on the Hampshire Pension Fund Panel and Board for the municipal year 2020/21.

214. **2019/20 END OF YEAR FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Council considered the report of Cabinet (Item 9 in the Minute Book) setting out the year end position for the financial period 2019/20 and seeking approval of the County Council's treasury management activities and prudential indicators (Appendix 2 of the Annex). The Leader presented the report and drew Members attention to the year end position of coming in slightly under budget which indicated that up until the Covid-19 crisis, the County Council was on budget and on time for savings targets. The Leader handed over to Councillor Stephen Reid, Executive Member for Commercial Strategy, Human Resources and

Performance who confirmed that his comments would be directed at this report and Item 10 on the Agenda – Medium Term Financial Strategy Update as together the reports provided a good illustration of what has been happening.

The Executive Member reported that due to the economic shutdown caused by the pandemic, it might be necessary for the County Council to draw on all of its reserves to be able to continue to provide services during this time of crisis. Some reserves had already been drawn on ahead of receiving Government funding to enable the County Council's partners to continue providing services. At this point, the unfunded costs and losses stand at £100m and rising, which is the position after receiving a share of two tranches of central Government funding for the crisis. The importance of recognition that some of the County Council's need arises from loss of operational income as a direct result of the crisis was highlighted and that the crisis has stopped the County Council pursuing savings which has set back the two-year programme of productivity improvements. The Executive Member confirmed that scenarios have been investigated and set out in the report at paragraph 22 (Cabinet Annex), which painted a difficult picture. Government made some very difficult lockdown decisions to protect the country's residents and the NHS, and the County Council had stepped up and helped deliver on those decisions but in doing so had weakened its financial position. The County Council would likely use up all of its buffer funds and the medium term financial projections, as set out in the report (Item 10), are at the moment uncertain. The Executive Member concluded that announcements were awaited as to how local government will be funded back to a position of sustainability.

In response to a request for clarification, the Chief Executive confirmed that figures in the table at paragraph 1.3 of the Part I report and paragraphs 2.3 and 3.1 of the Annex should be displayed in millions, rather than in thousands.

The main focus of the Council's ensuing debate was the appropriate level of funding from central government.

In summing up, the Leader commented that the small surplus arising from the year end position had been very helpful in coping with some of the pressures of the pandemic.

RESOLVED:

That the report on the County Council's treasury management activities and prudential indicators, as set out in Appendix 2 of the Cabinet report annexed to this Part I Council Report, be approved.

215. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE

The Council considered a report of Cabinet (Item 10 in the Minute Book) providing an update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the County Council following Cabinet's consideration at their meeting on 14 July 2020. The report provided an update in the context of uncertainty presented by the Covid-19 crisis, the absence of any settlement figures beyond the current financial year and a further delay to the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). It outlined what is considered to be as realistic a medium term financial

scenario as possible and assesses the County Council's ability to agree a strategy to at least ensure continued financial sustainability until the end of 2022/23.

The Leader confirmed that the pandemic had significantly affected the County Council's MTFs. The caution the County Council had taken in regard to its investments and to ensure that the level of reserves were adequate for unforeseen events had helped to deal with the costs of the pandemic. Nonetheless, as detailed in paragraph 14 of the report (Annex) the County Council has £100m of unfunded costs and income losses covering three main areas: i) the considerable direct costs of the pandemic itself, ii) lost income from such activities as country parks, outdoor centres, registration services and iii) the loss of income from the County Council's investments. In addition, the effect the reduction of GDP will have on the County Council's ability to collect the estimated amount of revenue from council tax and business rates is still unclear. The Government has provided some funding but as indicated in the debate of the last item, more help is required. The Leader reported he was in contact with several other councils and with Ministers to highlight the County Council's position and what is required in the future as set out in the three scenarios in paragraph 22 of the report (Annex).

As with the previous report, the main focus of the Council's ensuing debate was the appropriate level of funding from central government.

RESOLVED:

- a) That a capital underwriting of up to £5m to be met from capital receipts to enable existing schemes to continue where there may be increased costs and to delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources to allocate this funding as appropriate be approved.
- b) That the timetabling options for a successor savings programme as set out in paragraph 163.
- c) That the Departmental savings targets as set out in paragraph 165 of the Cabinet Report annexed to this Part I Council Report be approved.

216. **TRANSPORT FOR THE SOUTH EAST (TFSE)**

Council considered a report of Cabinet (Item 11 in the Minute Book), presented by the Leader, seeking approval of recommendations to endorse the establishment of a sub national transport body for the South East called Transport for the South East (TfSE) together with constitutional arrangements and functions. In presenting the report, the Leader highlighted that this important body would be focussing on strategic transport infrastructure across the South East, which will mirror what is already in place in the Midlands and the North of England and hoped this would attract a higher proportion of funding.

During the course of debate, walking as a method of transport for inclusion in the Transport Strategy was raised. It was also noted that the proposals were an excellent example of power being devolved down to the lowest possible level.

RESOLVED:

That the County Council:

- a) Endorse Cabinet's consent to the establishment of a sub national transport body for the South East, to be known as Transport for the South East (TfSE).
- b) Endorse Cabinet's approval for the proposed constitutional arrangements and functions for TfSE, as set out in its Proposal to Government (Appendix 1).
- c) Adopt the TfSE's Transport Strategy into the County Council's policy framework.

217. HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY / SHADOW HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

- a) Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority - Questions
No questions had been received in accordance with Standing Order 16.3.
- b) Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority - Report
The Council received and noted the report of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority as presented by Councillor Chris Carter in his capacity as Chairman of the Fire Authority.
- c) Shadow Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority
The Council received and noted the report of the Shadow Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority as presented by Councillor Chris Carter in his capacity as Chairman of the Shadow Fire Authority.

219. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE

The Council received the Annual report of the Policy and Resources Select Committee summarising the work carried out by the Council's Select Committees during 2019/20.

220. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SELECT COMMITTEE

The Council received the Annual report of the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee summarising the health scrutiny work carried out by the Committee during 2019/20.

221. EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a) The Leader/Cabinet
- The County Council's response to the Covid-19 Crisis
 - Hampshire Local Outbreak Control Plan and Local Outbreak Engagement Board
 - Regulation 11 (Key Decisions)

Chairman,