

AT A MEETING of the Cabinet of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester on Tuesday, 10th October, 2023

Chairman: \* Councillor Rob Humby

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|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| * Councillor Roz Chadd     | * Councillor Steve Forster       |
| * Councillor Liz Fairhurst | * Councillor Nick Adams-King     |
| * Councillor Jan Warwick   | * Councillor Russell Oppenheimer |
| * Councillor Edward Heron  | * Councillor Kirsty North        |

Also present with the agreement of the Chairman: Councillors Latham, Penman, Porter and Withers.

**143. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

All Members were present and no apologies were noted.

**144. 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.

**145. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 July were reviewed and agreed.

**146. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

He acknowledged the recent events in Israel/Gaza, and his thoughts were with all those affected, including those in Hampshire.

He highlighted World Mental Health Day and reminded Members that Councillor Zoe Huggins had recently become the Member Champion for mental health and wellbeing. He also reported that over 5700 attendees had been hosted at Chat About sessions, which aim to support community wellbeing.

Referring to the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Savings Proposals report, later on the agenda, which set out proposals to close the funding gap of £132m by 2025, he reinforced the message from Cabinet members during recent Decision days. The County Council had been clearly communicating the huge financial pressures expected by 2025 with budgets stretched to breaking point. The County Council had reduced its spending by over £600m since austerity began, despite rising costs and growing demand for core services.

Thanks to the strength of reserves, the County Council's budget was stable to April 2025 but projections beyond told a different story. With government not stepping in to provide short term additional funding, or a longer term sustainable funding solution, the County Council must take action to meet the budget shortfall itself. These were incredibly difficult decisions, however it was vital the County Council maximised the impact of its limited resources to continue to help people who were most in need.

Outcomes from the public consultation on budget proposals held during the summer showed it was clear residents expected central government to properly fund local services for residents. He had lobbied government on this point since becoming Leader of the County Council and would continue to campaign for funding and legislative reforms that local authorities needed to keep delivering quality public services for residents in the medium to long term.

He had recently attended Long Service events recognising long standing County Council employees of 25 and 40 years service. It had been an opportunity for celebration and thanks for the dedication and passion in working for the organisation.

He welcomed government announcements regarding funding for stop smoking support and a ban on young people purchasing vapes.

Finally, he advised that Farnborough Exhibition and Conference Centre would host the Hampshire Business Awards on 30 Nov. Nominations had closed and he was looking forward to beginning shortlisting.

#### 147. **DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations on this occasion.

#### 148. **DRIVING TOWARDS ECONOMIC STRENGTH**

Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Hampshire 2050 and Assistant Chief Executive regarding long-term economic strength for Hampshire and proposals regarding the integration of Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) functions.

The Chairman clarified that the guidance from government had been clear regarding upper tier local authority responsibility for the integration of LEP functions from April 2024. He acknowledged the need to progress alongside key stakeholders, including existing LEPS, businesses, education and skills colleges and other local authorities.

Cabinet noted that following the announcement in the summer, the County Council wrote to all district and borough leaders regarding its ambition to work collaboratively. The report also highlighted opportunities to progress a pan-Hampshire solution for the combined area with Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight which was supported by business. However, the local unitary authorities' position was to progress a separate solent only solution in respect of the LEP integration. The County Council respects its neighbours' position and would therefore move forward with governance arrangements for the administrative area of Hampshire, and would continue to work together with its neighbours where it was in the common interest to do so.

Cabinet discussed a number of economic benefits in Hampshire and heard that the value of the cruise industry to the local economy was around £2.7m per visit, which was linked to jobs and the food chain industry among others. Also of huge benefit to the area was the geographical situation of Farnborough Airport, the only business airport in the region and with its good links to London provided unique connectivity for Hampshire. The airport itself was a major employer for its area and the siting of the Gulfstream service centre at Farnborough was hugely beneficial economically for the area.

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

149. **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE AND SAVINGS PROGRAMME TO 2025 REVENUE SAVINGS PROPOSAL**

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 2025/26 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, Councillor Jackie Porter addressed Cabinet. She was concerned that of the savings proposals around 50% were proposed service reductions and that the council tax increases would fall more heavily on smaller households in council tax bands A-D. She made suggestions regarding easing the pressure on school transport such as encouraging more children, who are able, to walk or cycle to school. She was disappointed that government did not provide a longer term funding solution to enable long term planning for councils, and she acknowledged the ongoing work of officers to reduce costs.

In response, it was confirmed that new invest to save opportunities would be considered as appropriate. In terms of school transport, it was reported that existing legislation did not allow flexibility for local authorities to enforce longer walking distances.

During the discussion and in response to questions, it was noted that the funding settlement for 2025/26 was unconfirmed and that any additional funding received in the past had been a maximum of £25m which was not sufficient to alleviate the budget pressures. It was confirmed that council tax increases were capped

by government. There was some benefit from the County Council's investments, half of which were in high yielding accounts, which would help fund the pressure in school transport. Cabinet discussed a number of reviews which could redesign delivery models and help reduce costs without adverse impact to residents and in some cases improve outcomes.

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

**150. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Hampshire 2050 on proposed updates to the adopted Hampshire Statement of Community Involvement (2017) for planning matters.

With the agreement of the Chairman, Councillor Jackie Porter addressed Cabinet and made some suggestions regarding mechanisms for public consultations and engagement generally and was thanked for her feedback.

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

**151. ADULTS' HEALTH AND CARE DIRECTORATE 5 YEAR STRATEGY REFRESH**

Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Adults' Health and Care regarding the refreshed 5-year strategy for Adults' Health and Care linked to a reaffirmed Vision focused on maximising independence and quality of life. Cabinet welcomed the report and thanked the Director.

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

**152. CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT**

Cabinet considered a report of the Director of People and Organisation on further development of the risk management arrangements across the organisation and progress against the Corporate Risk Management Strategy 2022-2025.

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

**153. MANYDOWN NORTH, BASINGSTOKE - UPDATE**

Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Hampshire 2050 regarding the continued progress of the Manydown North project. It was noted that a number of financial and legal matters required conclusion prior to draw down of the land.

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

154. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:

That the public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business, as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the cases, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the exempt report.

155. **EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 18 July were reviewed and agreed.

156. **CORPORATE STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER ANNUAL REPORT (EXEMPT)**

Cabinet received a report of the Director of People and Organisation regarding the Corporate Strategic Risk Register, and it was confirmed that recorded risks were periodically reviewed through established review mechanisms.

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

157. **MANYDOWN NORTH, BASINGSTOKE - UPDATE (EXEMPT APPENDIX)**

Cabinet received and noted the exempt appendix to the Manydown North, Basingstoke – Update report.

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Chairman,