

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Mid Sussex District Council Cabinet
held on 9 July 2018
from 4.00 p.m. to 4.44 p.m.**

Present: Councillors: Jonathan Ash-Edwards, Judy Llewellyn-Burke, Andrew MacNaughton, Gary Marsh, Garry Wall (Leader), Mandy Thomas-Atkin and Norman Webster.

Officers: Judy Holmes, Tom Clark, Peter Stuart, Simon Hughes, Kate Wilson, Terry Stanley, Alison Hammond and Hamish Evans.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

2. APOLOGIES

None.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

4. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

5. BUDGET MANAGEMENT 2017/18 – PROGRESS REPORT APRIL TO MAY 2018.

Peter Stuart, the Head of Corporate Resources introduced the report which outlined the forecast revenue outturn position for 2018/19 at the end of May which was showing a projected net overspend of £12,000 against the original estimate, which relates to on-going pressures from 2017/18 which will be built into the 2019/20 budget. He noted that as it is early in the financial year it is only a very early indication of the year to come.

He highlighted the increase in Treasury Management returns and the increased funding for Disabled Facility Grants available – some £1.3m in the year.

The Cabinet Member for Community commented that he was supportive of the Disabled Facility Grants which are part of a wider project to help residents improve their lives.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Finance was encouraged to see the budget was on track and that there was a robust project management system in place to cover the capital programme.

The Cabinet Member for Service Delivery queried whether the funding for the Disabled Facility Grants could all be spent in the year.

Tom Clark, Solicitor to the Council informed the Cabinet that on the Council expects to spend the money this year and that additional staff have been employed to help process the referrals and the Council is receiving support from West Sussex County Council to get referrals through to the team in a timely way.

The Leader then moved to the recommendations which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

Cabinet recommended to Council for approval:

- (i) that £221,981 grant income relating to Flexible Homelessness Support Grant be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 22;
- (ii) that £26,266 grant income relating to Preventing Homelessness Grant be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 23;
- (iii) that £3,791 be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 24;
- (iv) that £970 be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 25;
- (v) that £34,051 be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 26;
- (vi) that £19,353 be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 27;
- (vii) the variations to the Capital Programme contained in paragraph 33 in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure rule B4.

Cabinet noted:

- (viii) the remainder of the report.

6. PERFORMANCE OUTTURN 2017/18.

Kate Wilson, the Business Unit Leader for Community Services, Policy and Performance introduced the report which set out the Council's outturn performance for the year 2017/18. It provided the Cabinet with an analysis of performance over the past year using the suite of performance indicators previously agreed by the Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Resources and Economic Growth. It also set out an end of year assessment of progress with the flagship activities for 2017/18, together with the first progress report for the new flagships for 2018/19.

Performance across the Council had been good overall with 67% of targets being met or exceeded and a further 21% close to reaching target despite sustained levels of demand in many service areas. For the small number of exceptions where performance was 10% or more off target, corrective measures were in place to address the issues.

The Leader noted that the Council was operating in a challenging environment however it was still performing well. Where the Council was underperforming there were processes in place to improve the performance.

The Cabinet Member for Community noted that through responsible fiscal behaviour the Council has been able to aid worthwhile schemes across the local community. He informed Cabinet that the Council had contributed £655,000 to not-for-profit organisations within the District. He added that £300,000 had been awarded as Facility Grants through the collection of S106 agreements and he commended the wellbeing service for offering appointments of up to 45 minutes in GP surgeries.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Growth observed that the performance outturn is very positive and in particular relating to the Councils flagship priorities. He drew attention to the high level of performance relating to grants awarded to the voluntary sector and the sheer breadth and scale of the work done by the organisations.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance informed the Cabinet that a new Business Unit Leader had been employed for the Revenues and Benefits department to lead the service through and beyond the transition period.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning noted his disappointment that only 98 affordable homes had been built out of the targeted 200. He believed that this was unfortunately out of the Council's control as developers had chosen only to build the 98 units. He informed the Cabinet that the Council had granted planning permission on 1265 affordable housing units however they had not been started by developers.

The Cabinet Member for Customer Services noted that the Customer Services department had exceeded targets and was performing well. She also thanked the website team for their work in launching the new website which had received many compliments internally and externally. She informed the Cabinet that it had been her pleasure to award several 'Make a Difference' awards to Customer Services Officers.

The Leader thanked Officers for the report and said that the Council had learnt from the past and had grown to be a fiscally responsible authority but one that also funds worthwhile community projects. The Leader then moved to the recommendations which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Cabinet;

- (i) Noted the Council's performance and progress with flagship activities in 2017/18 and identify any areas where it requires further reporting or information;
- (ii) Noted the monitoring arrangements and initial progress with the Council's flagship activities for 2018/19.

7. THE PROVISION OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FOR MSDC.

Judy Holmes, the Assistant Chief Executive introduced the report which set out a proposal to purchase 20 properties and lease 10 properties to place

homeless families to minimise the Council's reliance on bed and breakfast and guest house accommodation. Appendix 1 provides the contextual background. The funding of £4m for this proposal was agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on the 8th May 2018.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning noted that the provision is possible thanks to the sound management of the Council's finances. He also said that they are not expecting to spend the allocation all at once. The case for this proposal was not just a financial one but a moral one as well.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Growth praised the report as it is an important scheme to assist those who find themselves in temporary accommodation. The provision would allow for continuity in people's lives especially regarding schools and jobs.

The Cabinet Member for Community thanked the Economic Development team for their hard work and the launch of the Economic Development Strategy, as the Council needed to encourage more jobs as well as houses.

The Cabinet Member for Customer Services noted that this provision would enable children's support networks to be sustained.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance observed, that it has the ability to spend £4m on such a worthwhile project was a testament to the Council's prudent financial performance.

The Cabinet Member for Service Delivery noted that it made both financial and moral sense to proceed with the project.

The Leader of the Council stated that projects like this make him proud to be the Leader of this Council as they are safeguarding the most vulnerable in the community. He noted that MSDC was a local authority setting a good example. The Leader then moved to the recommendations which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet agreed;

- (i) that the Council acquires a portfolio of up to 20 units and leases up to 10 units to provide temporary accommodation within Mid Sussex District, using the reserves of £4m approved by Cabinet on the 8th May 2018.

Chairman.