

**Thursday, 18 November 2010,
County Hall, Worcester (10.00am)**

Minutes

Present:

Mrs M L Drinkwater
(Chairman)
Mr R C Adams
Mr M Ahmed
Mr A T Amos
Mrs S Askin
Mr R W Banks
Mr T J Bean
Mr A N Blagg
Mrs S L Blagg
Mr M H Broomfield
Mr S Brown
Mrs J A Brunner
Mr R A A Bullock

Mr R M Udall declared a prejudicial interest in Item 14(a) and withdrew from the Chamber during discussion of that item.

Messrs A N Blagg, P M McDonald, S R Peters and C B Taylor declared a personal interest in Item 14 (a) due to their membership of Bromsgrove District Council.

**1197. Public Participation
(Agenda item 2)**

One petition was presented.

Mr J Parish presented a petition on behalf of residents of Litchfield Street, Stourport on Severn concerning a road

**1202. West Mercia Police
Authority
(Agenda item 7)**

The Council received the report of the West Mercia Police Authority.

Mrs Blagg answered questions relating to the work of the Police Authority, and Mr West answered further questions which related to operational police work.

While the review was also informed by the (hugely varied) management structures in other County Councils, the Chief Executive's main priority was to determine what was right for Worcestershire County Council at this particular time.

The report set out that this Review had found widespread support for the deletion of the post of Director of Financial Services. The only caveat expressed was that consequent structural changes needed to recognise that strong financial management would be at a premium during the next few years. There was similar support for the creation of a 'Resources' Directorate, combining the present Financial Services functions and Corporate Services. However, it had also been generally recognised that this produced a very wide span of control for a single Director, with a consequent desirability to re-balance workload by transferring some Corporate Services functions elsewhere other than into a new Resources Directorate.

The report continued by stating that following discussion with Directors, the Chief Executive was proposing that an appropriate balance of responsibilities could be achieved by the transfer of the following four functions and staff from the existing Corporate Services Directorate to the Planning, Economy and Performance Directorate:

- Property Services
- HUB/Customer Services
- Consumer Complaints
- WETT (Worcestershire Enhanced Two-Tier programme).

Consequently the new Resources Directorate would be responsible for the following areas:

- Financial Services functions
- Human Resources and Organisational Development
- Legal and Democratic Services
- Information and Business Services
- Procurement
- BOLD Programme.

Both the Director of Planning, Economy and Performance and the current Director of Corporate Services and proposed Director of Resources, were content with such proposals. Given this the report suggested that it would be sensible for the Chief Executive to be authorised to settle the details of the revised officer structure and its implementation. The Chief Executive would keep the new

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A discussion ensued during which the following principal points were made:

also those paid to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council) by 10% with effect from April 2011.

We also call on the Leader of the Council to reduce the number of Cabinet Members by at least 10% in order to achieve a further saving.

We do this in recognition of the severity of the budget cuts that the Council must make and the consequences this will have for Council staff and for services to the public. We therefore call for a speedy report from the Independent Remuneration Panel so its advice can be considered within this context and a formal decision taken."

The motion was moved and seconded and the Council agreed to deal with it on the day.

A discussion ensued during which the following principal points were raised:

that members ought to share, and be seen to share, with staff and service users the results of the cuts being imposed in the public sector. Other members felt that scope already existed for the allowances bill to be reduced by individual members refusing to accept all or part of their allowance

that a suggestion could be made to the IRP along the lines suggested in the motion. Other members claimed that this was not appropriate and did not follow previous practice

further reductions could be made in the size of the Cabinet. It was pointed out that the new Leader had, in fact, just announced a reduction in Cabinet posts by 10%

that a report from the IRP should be sought and that it could be considered by Council either in January, or more likely at the February meeting when the budget would be decided and any amendments to the Scheme could be considered.

On a named vote the Notice of Motion was lost.

Those voting in favour of the motion:

Mrs S Askin, Mr T J Bean, Mr S Brown, Mrs P J M Morgan, Ms B A Nielsen, Mrs F M Oborski, Mr C T Smith, Mrs E B Tucker and Mr T A L Wells (9).

Those voting against the motion:

Mrs M L Drinkwater, Mr R C Adams, Mr M Ahmed, Mr A T
Amos, Mr R W Banks, Mr A N Blagg, Mrs S L Bl. ~~7752~~

1211. Reports of Cabinet Matters which require a decision by Council Notice of Motion Regional Development (Agenda item 14(a))

(b) Directorate cash limits be adjusted to reflect the additional Area Based Grant for 2010/11.

The Council had before it a report from Cabinet about a Notice of Motion referred from the June meeting of Council. The Cabinet's role was to advise Council on how to deal with the Notice of Motion.

The Cabinet report contained its recommendation that that in the light of Government's clear intention to abolish Regional Development Agencies, the Council does not adopt the motion and awaits the Government's response to the Council's Local Enterprise Partnership proposals.

The report set out that the following Notice of Motion standing in the names of Ms B A Nielsen, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr S Brown, Mrs P J M Morgan, Mrs F M Oborski, Mr T J Bean, Mrs S Askin, Mr T A L Wells and Mr C T Smith had been duly moved and seconded at Council on 24 June 2010 and stood referred to the Cabinet for advice before returning to Council:

"This Council recognises the strategic importance that AWM has played in delivering major investment opportunities for the region and Worcestershire in particular. We urge the Coalition Government to recognise the need for a strategic body to continue to bring together and champion economic development across all parts of the West Midlands.

In addition this Council identifies Warwickshire as a key partner for collaborative working, both in ensuring a strong voice for the south of the West Midlands and in developing the potential for joint service delivery."

The Cabinet had been provided with details of the significant role Advantage West Midlands (AWM) had played in supporting economic development and economic regeneration initiatives in Worcestershire. This included the provision of direct funding from the Agency as well as helping the Council to access European Union Regional Development funding (ERDF).

AWM funding and support had been provided through a variety of programmes including:

Grants for Business Investment
Selective Finance for Industry
Central Technology Belt
Tourism and Support for Destination
Worcestershire

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