

HEALTH AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

15th November 2021

Present: Councillor Louise Griffiths in the Chair

Councillors Denham (Vice-Chair), Ditta,
Mrs L. Hodgson, S. Hodgson, Johnson,
Mackay and Udall

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Roberts

Officers:

Mark Baldwin, Head of Finance
Shane Flynn, Corporate Director – Finance
and Resources
Lloyd Griffiths, Corporate Director –
Operations, Homes and Communities
Warwick Neale, Head of Community
Services

15 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor Barnes for Councillor Norfolk, Councillor Lamb for Councillor Riaz,
Councillor Allcott for Councillor Lawrance.

16 Declarations of Interest

None.

17 Public Participation

None.

18 Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 29th July 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

19 Maggs Day Centre - Presentation

The Committee received a presentation from Mel Kirk, Chief Executive, Maggs Day Centre. The presentation summarised activities and outcomes for 2020/21 and the work which will be undertaken by navigators and intervention transition workers going forward to assist rough sleepers at all stages of their journey. Mel Kirk explained that a new model has been developed from learning during the pandemic and the views of the people that Maggs serve. Funding is available for a further 2 staff using the City Council's Homelessness Prevention Grant. Once the pilot is completed then a full assessment will be made on the number of Transition Workers that are required in the future and any other changes made based on the learning of the pilot.

Mel Kirk responded to questions from Committee Members about the pilot scheme and the work of Maggs generally. The Chair thanked Mel for her presentation.

RESOLVED: That the Committee note the contents of this report and the associated presentation.

20 Active Travel Project

The Committee considered a report on establishing a potential role of Active Travel Officer. The Head of Community Services presented the report, which sought Members' views on whether such a role would be appropriate for Worcester City Council. He explained that a neighbouring district council employed such a post and the report summarised the role of that post.

The report also provided information on work undertaken by the Council following the declaration of a Climate Emergency in July 2019.

The report recommended that further work be undertaken to liaise with internal services, partner agencies, Worcestershire County Council Highways and charities to establish if there is section 106 funding, resources and opportunity to develop a similar Active Travel Officer role in Worcester City. If agreed, the further work would assist Officers in developing a business case, which would be presented to this Committee in February 2022 as part of Budget Setting for 2022/2023.

In the ensuing discussion, Members raised a number of points for consideration as part of the development of the outline business case:

- The extent to which there are existing Section 106 agreements which include provision for Active Travel, including County Council schemes.
- An outline of the job description/role profile for such a post.
- Information on how to measure success if this post is introduced, for example in terms of value for money, impact on the environment, what works for our neighbouring Council where there is a similar post in place.
- Any potential for duplication with the role of the post of Environmental Sustainability Officer.
- How we can encourage staff to support Active Travel including use of e-bikes.

In conclusion, Committee Members agreed that these points should be addressed as part of the development of a detailed business case.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- 1. agree to direct officers to undertake further work to develop an outline business case to support the recruitment of an Active Travel Officer; and**
- 2. note that a report detailing this business case will be presented to this Committee in February 2022.**

21 Update on the Delivery of the Child Poverty Recommendations

The Committee considered an update report on the delivery of each of the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group which was established in November 2019. The Group's final report and recommendations were considered and agreed by the Communities Committee on 17th March 2021.

The Corporate Director – Homes and Communities presented the report and summarised the main points. He highlighted that, as part of identifying the role that the City Council can play in tackling child poverty, it was proposed to work with the County Council Public Health Service to commission a Worcester City specific Child Poverty Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. This would help to establish what more can be done in respect of statutory services such as Housing and Council Tax, as well as non-statutory roles including grant support, leisure and community engagement.

Further update reports will be provided to this Committee on a bi-annual basis.

Officers responded to questions and comments from Committee Members.

RESOLVED: That the Committee agree to:

- 1. note the contents of this report; and**
- 2. direct officers to engage Worcestershire County Council Public Health Service with a view to preparing a Worcester City Child Poverty Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.**

22 Setting of the Budget for 2022/23 and MTFP to 2026/27

That the Committee considered any potential changes in the budgets for the areas that fall under its remit. The Head of Finance presented the report and summarised the main points. Members were invited to submit suggestions of potential service improvements that could be included in the services' Income and Efficiency Plan plans in order to continue to achieve service objectives and to deliver the relevant aims of the City Plan.

It was highlighted that any actions arising from the Child Poverty Task and Finish group Action Plan will be carried forward as recommendations from the Committee as part of the budget-setting process. It was noted that there is also a budget of £25k for the Community Recovery Plan.

In the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the Household Support Fund. The Corporate Director – Finance and Resources explained that there had not yet been any discussion about the distribution of funding between the Worcestershire authorities. Information can be circulated to Members in due course.

RESOLVED: That the Committee note the report.

23 **AccessAble Contract Update**

The Committee considered a report on the operation of the Accessible service (Formerly known as Disabled Go). The Corporate Director – Operations, Homes and Communities presented the report and explained that the Council had previously approved funding enabling the Council to sign up to the service. This contract would come to an end on 31st December 2022 and there was no provision to extend. The current contract required a set up budget of £25,000 plus ongoing costs of £6,000 per year.

Further review of the current service was required before a recommendation can be made about renewing the contract term, the provider and the budget implications. There was a need to invest time in promotion and management of the service to allow for a more comprehensive review to be undertaken prior to the end of the contract.

In response to questions, the Corporate Director advised that a further report will be brought to this Committee in 2022, although Officers are unlikely to be in a position to be able to do so as part of the 2022/23 budget setting process. The Corporate Director – Finance and Resources added that the Committee can consider putting forward a recommendation for a supplementary estimate.

RESOLVED: That the Committee agree to note:

- 1. the contents of this report and in particular that the Access Able Contract is due to conclude in December 2022;**
- 2. the work to be undertaken to investigate alternative options for publicising and advertising the Access Able Service to maximise uptake; and**
- 3. that officers will undertake a review of the Access Able Service in order to bring a report to this Committee in Spring 2022 setting out options for continuing with such a scheme from January 2023 onwards.**

24 **Corporate Parenting Briefing**

Further to a discussion at the last meeting, the Committee considered a briefing from the Corporate Director – Operations, Homes and Communities which discussed the purpose of the Worcestershire Corporate Parenting Board and how the City Council helps looked after children and young people access Council services.

The report made reference to reviewing the eligibility criteria for the Advance 50 concessionary scheme, in order to allow access for Kinship Carers and Care Leavers across the Council's three leisure facilities. It was proposed that discussion should take place with Freedom Leisure about this.

In the ensuing discussion, in response to a question about access to leisure facilities by children who have kinship carers from outside Worcestershire, Officers will investigate this further and provide written confirmation.

Councillor Johnson, in his capacity as the Council's representative on the Corporate Parenting Board, offered to take the Council's model for reduced leisure fees to the Board with a view to encouraging the other Worcestershire local authorities to do the same.

RESOLVED: That the Committee agree to:

- 1. note the contents of this report and in particular the work being undertaken across the Council's services supporting the Corporate Parenting agenda; and**
- 2. direct Officers to engage Freedom Leisure with a view to exploring further options for Kinship Carers and Care Leavers to benefit from reduced fee memberships to access the Council's 3 Leisure Facilities.**

25 Covid-19 Community Recovery Plan - Progress Report

The Committee considered a bi-annual update report on progress against each of the priority areas of the Council's COVID-19 Community Recovery Plan. The Corporate Director – Operations, Homes and Resources presented the report and summarised the main points. Officers responded to questions and comments from Committee Members on the report.

A further update will be brought to this Committee during May 2022.

In response to questions, the Corporate Director stated that more details can be provided on the number referrals received by Worcester Community Trust via West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Service.

RESOLVED: That the Committee note the contents of the report.

26 Any Other Business

None.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00p.m. – 9.15p.m.

Chairman at the meeting on
7th February 2022

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