

CABINET

14 September 2016

Present:-

Councillors J Hart (Chairman), B Parsons, S Barker, R Croad, A Davis, A Leadbetter, J McInnes, J Clatworthy and S Hughes

Members attending in accordance with Standing Orders 8 and 25

Councillors Biederman, Brazil, Connett, Greenslade, Hannan, Hook, Hosking, Julian, Radford, Randall Johnson, Squires, Way and Westlake

* 62

Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2016 be signed as a correct record.

* 63

Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

* 64

Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman reported that this would be the last meeting of the Council's Cabinet to be attended by Mrs Heather Barnes the Strategic Director (Place) and, on behalf of the Cabinet, wished her well for the future.

* 65

Petitions

There was no petition received from a Member of the Public or the Council.

* 66

Question(s) from Members of the Council

There was no question from a Member of the Council.

KEY DECISIONS

* 67

Call-in of Cabinet Decision: Post 16 Education Policy Transport 2017/18 (Minute 51/31 July 2016)

(Councillors Biederman, Brazil, Connett, Greenslade, Julian and Westlake attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

(Councillor Davis declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in this matter by virtue of being a parent of a child in receipt of County Council post 16 transport and withdrew from the meeting during its consideration).

The Cabinet noted that, in accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the requisite number of Scrutiny Committee Members had invoked the call-in procedure in relation to the decision of the Cabinet (Minute 51, 13 July 2016) approving the Post 16 Education Travel Policy for 2017/18 on the grounds that *'The Cabinet has failed to consider the potential impact of this decision on discouraging young people from rural areas and/or families on low incomes from continuing in education'* and that *'the decision failed to consider the ability of colleges to make funding available for Post 16 student transport to 'plug the gap' created by the council*

decision, the proposed is vague and unclear what the benchmark is for students or their families to evidence there is no suitable transport for college and as the policy states it will not provide transport even where, for example, where inconvenience is caused to the family, it fails to consider the potential economic and social impacts of each applicants own circumstances and is, therefore, unreasonable'.

The People's Scrutiny Committee had considered the 'call-in' at its meeting on 5 September 2016 (Minute *12) and had endorsed the Cabinet's decision which had consequently been implemented, with immediate effect.

The Scrutiny Committee had, however, also urged Cabinet to continue lobbying Government for funding to reflect the sparsity of areas like Devon - in addition to the representations already agreed under Minute 51(b) on *'the financial impact upon Councils, parents and students of the Government not having increased funding for post 16 education travel consistent with the increase in the school leaving age...'*, and the Cabinet noted also that the Leader had subsequently raised the issue of funding with Devon MPs at meetings on 12/13 September 2016.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hughes, and

RESOLVED that the People's Scrutiny Committee being satisfied with the Cabinet's decision at Minute *51 it be noted the original decision had been implemented with immediate effect and that representations on funding also include reference to sparsity.

[NB The Report of the Head of Education & Learning previously considered by the Cabinet was available at <http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=134&Year=0>].

* 68

Call in of Cabinet Member Decision: Closure of Compass House Creche

(Councillors Biederman, Connett, Hannan, Julian, Randall Johnson and Westlake attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet noted that, in accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the requisite number of Members of the Council (Cllrs Hannan, Westlake, Hannaford, Hill and Owen) had invoked the call-in procedure in relation to the decision of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Services (Decision Notice and accompanying documentation attached) on the proposed closure of Compass House Crèche on the grounds that the decision *'fails to take sufficient account of the fact that women suffering from post-natal depression are routinely in need of on-site care for their children, as is available at Chestnut Children's Centre where Depression and Anxiety Service sessions are run alongside childcare provision. The existence of this arrangement other than at Compass House is actually denied in the Impact Assessment'*.

The People's Scrutiny Committee had considered the 'call-in' at its meeting on 5 September 2016 (Minute *13) and had resolved that *'the Cabinet be recommended to retain the Crèche for the present and that the Devon Partnership Trust be asked (i) to look at the possibility of it providing those therapy and counselling services (currently provided at Compass House) in premises elsewhere in the City of Exeter which had an Ofsted Registered Crèche and (ii) report back [to Cabinet] within a period of 3 months'*.

The Cabinet was required to reconsider the matter in the light of the Scrutiny Committee's views and could either amend or adopt the Cabinet Member's decision, which would then be implemented with immediate effect.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Barker, and

RESOLVED that the suggestion of the Scrutiny Committee be noted and a further Report be made to the next meeting of the Cabinet and the Cabinet Members decision be therefore not now actioned.

[NB The Cabinet Member's Decision Notice and accompanying documentation was circulated previously with the People's Scrutiny Committee Agenda and is available at: <http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=134&Year=0>].

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Cross-Boundary Strategy and Plan Making - Greater Exeter, Plymouth & South West Devon and Northern Devon

(Councillors Biederman, Connett, Greenslade, Julian, Squires and Westlake attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation & Environment (PTE/16/42) on the County Council's involvement in the development of new cross-boundary strategy and planning, incorporating proposed governance arrangements.

The Head of Service's Report outlined the new cross-boundary planning strategy and policy arrangements that were emerging in Devon reflecting housing markets, travel to work areas and economic geographies. These functional areas crossed Local Planning Authority administrative boundaries and it was axiomatic that Council should work in partnership when developing strategy and policy. The three urban, economic functional geographies, shown in Appendix B to the Report now submitted, were:

- Greater Exeter: East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge;
- Plymouth Area: Plymouth, South Hams and West Devon; and
- Northern Devon: North Devon and Torridge.

The Head of Service emphasised that in order to reflect these functional geographies, joint Plans were currently being prepared for each area, which would be statutory planning documents setting out long term planning policy.

The County Council had an important strategic role to play in the development of these Plans and had been invited to engage with the various plan-making processes. This more collaborative role, albeit differing in detail from one area to another, offered the County Council greater influence over the planning process, helping to ensure that policy in each area specifically reflected the County Council's corporate priorities. The Report summarised the developing administrative and organisational arrangements to support this new approach.

The Head of Service and the Cabinet Member for Economy, Growth and Cabinet Liaison for Exeter indicated their willingness to ensure that all Members of the Council would be kept informed of progress with this process and any emerging strategies and policies through regular briefings or other means considered appropriate in due course, affording Members an opportunity to contribute thereto.

The Head of Service's Report also incorporated an Impact Assessment relating to the possible impacts of the proposal, which had been circulated previously for the attention of Members at this meeting in order that as part of its determination of the next steps in the process the Cabinet might have full regard to the responsibilities placed upon it to exercise its Public Sector Equality Duty, under s149 of the Equality Act 2010, where relevant. The Assessment recognised that, given the nature of the decision required of the Cabinet, there were unlikely to be any direct equality impacts and any marginal or tangential impacts would, it was felt, be positive and beneficial to the Council, to staff and to the community as a whole; no unmanageable impacts had been identified.

The matter having been debated and the options and/or alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial, environmental, risk management, equality and legal considerations and Public Health impact) set out in the Head of Service's Report and/or referred to above having been considered:

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Leadbetter, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

RESOLVED

(a) that Cabinet note and endorse the evolution of the local planning process and the involvement of County Council Officers in the development of cross-boundary planning policy in Devon;

(b) that the emerging governance structures for joint cross-boundary planning policy in each of the following three key urban, economic areas be also endorsed and approval be given to the Member representation for the emerging Member governance structures shown, with any future changes being made under delegated powers in the usual way (County Council Minute 125/14 May 2105 refers):

Greater Exeter:	Councillor Hart
Plymouth Area:	Councillor Leadbetter
Northern Devon:	Councillor Parsons

[NB: The Impact Assessment referred to above may be viewed alongside Minutes of this meeting and may also be available at: <http://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/>].

* 70

Transport Capital Programme 2016/2017

(Councillors Biederman, Connett, Greenslade, Hook, Julian, Squires, Way and Westlake attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment (PTE/16/43) on the revised transport capital programme for 2016/17, excluding maintenance.

The Head of Service reported that while the Cabinet had, in September 2015, previously approved a two year programme for capital transport schemes for 2015/16 and 2016/17 it was now necessary to revise and update the 2016/17 programme to reflect changes in some scheme costs, funding sources and timing. The programme contained a substantial number of schemes in many areas, each developing at different rates dependent on engineering and environmental constraints. The revised programme provided the necessary flexibility to respond to opportunities such as the purchase of land, achieving matched funding and obtaining additional partner and developer funding contributions. The focus of the 2016/17 programme remained substantially unchanged from that approved in September 2015, supporting economic growth alongside Local Plans and Appendix I to Report PTE/16/43 set out the revised 2016/17 programmes.

Members acknowledged that funding pressures remained tight with the Local Transport Plan Integrated Block settlement from Government now at an annual level of around £3,600,000 compared to over £6,000,000 in previous year and over £10,000,000 in 2009/10. Other local contributions such as s106 or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) were also under significant pressure. External funding sources continued to support a major part of the capital programme.

The Head of Service's Report affirmed that an Impact Assessment relating to the transport capital programme had been completed at the time the programme had initially been determined and that individual schemes would necessarily be the subject of formal assessments presented to the Cabinet or the relevant Highways & Traffic Orders Committee at the appropriate time.

The matter having been debated and the options and/or alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial, environmental, risk management, equality and legal considerations and Public Health impact) set out in the Head of Service's Report and/or referred to above having been considered:

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Leadbetter, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hughes, and

RESOLVED

(a) that approval be given to the enhancement of the Place 2016/17 capital programme by £837,000 (being £718,000 from developer contributions and £119,000 external contributions);

(b) that of the enhancements at (a) above, £275,000 be committed to enable schemes to proceed in advance of full funding being received;

(c) that the revised allocations for Local Transport Plan (LTP) schemes set out in Appendix I to Report PTE/16/43 be approved;

(d) that the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highway Management and Flood Prevention or Cabinet Member for Economy, Growth and Cabinet Liaison for Exeter, be authorised to make any consequential amendments to the Integrated Block allocations;

(e) that Report PTE/16/43 be also circulated, for information, to Highways & Traffic Orders Committees.

[NB: The Impact Assessment referred to above may be viewed alongside Minutes of this meeting and may also be available at: <http://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/>].

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Extension of Exe Estuary Walking and Cycling Route: Dawlish Warren to Dawlish

(Councillors Connett, Hook and Westlake attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation & Environment ([PTE/16/44](#)) seeking approval to two schemes to complete the Exe Estuary walking and cycling route from Exeter via Dawlish Warren to Dawlish Town Centre, for which deemed planning consent would be required for the Council's Development Management Committee.

Members acknowledged that following the extension of the Exe Estuary trail between Turf Lock and Powderham, Hazelwood Drive in Dawlish Warren and Exeter Road in Dawlish, the proposed schemes would provide a safe and attractive link into Dawlish Town Centre, making it more attractive and accessible for both local people and visitors, to walk or cycle to the Town Centre and Railway Station, and benefitting the local economy. The schemes would complete the route between Dawlish Warren and Dawlish Town Centre, which had formed part of the successful application for CCF (Coastal Communities Fund) of £1,300,000 approved in January 2015.

The Cabinet noted representations from Members present on the need to address and implement proposals for further improvements at Powderham and Starcross to facilitate and manage the number of people using the cycle/walkway.

The Head of Service's Report also incorporated an Impact Assessment relating to the possible impacts of the proposal, which had been circulated previously for the attention of Members at this meeting in order that as part of its determination of the next steps in the process the Cabinet might have full regard to the responsibilities placed upon it to exercise its Public Sector Equality Duty, under s149 of the Equality Act 2010, where relevant. While the environmental aspects of proposals would be fully assessed through the separate Environmental Impact Assessment process, the Assessment concluded that the scheme would make a positive impact on the communities involved, provide a more attractive and safer route for users, accessible to all, and prove to be a beneficial addition to the County's cycle network.

The matter having been debated and the options and/or alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial, environmental, risk management, equality and legal considerations and Public Health impact) set out in the Head of Service's Report and/or referred to above having been considered:

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hughes, **SECONDED** by Councillor Clatworthy, and

RESOLVED

(a) that approval be given to the scheme designs shown in Appendix I to Report PTE/16/44 (drawing numbers B15014_12 and 13), at an estimated cost of £760,000;

(b) that the Head of Planning, Transportation and the Environment be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highway Management and Flood Prevention and the local County Councillor, to make minor amendments to the scheme design.

[NB: The Impact Assessment referred to above may be viewed alongside Minutes of this meeting and may also be available at: <http://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/>.]

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Budget Monitoring 2016/17

(Councillors Biederman, Brazil, Connett, Greenslade, Julian and Westlake attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the County Treasurer ([CT/16/72](#)) on the position at Month 4 outlining those areas where there were specific pressures on budgets, potential under- and over-spending in the current financial year and on management action being taken where individual budget lines were experiencing pressures.

The Cabinet noted that, overall, the forecast for revenue spending at year-end showed a projected overspend of £7,900,000 arising in the main from potential overspending of £7,300,000 in People's Services and in particular Adult Social Care. Children's Social Work and Child Protection showed an overspend of £1,300,000 while Education & Learning had projected a net overspend of £721,000. Place Services were currently indicating an overspend at outturn of £572,000 and while a balanced outturn was forecast for Corporate Services there were pressures in those areas that would require careful management.

The County Treasurer's Report outlined the causes of the potential overspending and the action being taken to bring spending back in line with budget provision at year-end including regular meetings with relevant Cabinet Members to review forward financial forecasts and consider management action to minimise identified financial pressures.

Cabinet Members also acknowledged representations at the meeting that the pressures faced by the County Council were exacerbated by rising demand and other external factors and a shortfall of Government funding, suggestion also that all-party representations to Government might prove beneficial. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health also referred to representations made by him to the Department of Communities & Local Government - on behalf of all South West Council's with responsibility for adult services - on the underfunding of that service area, generally.

In relation to capital expenditure, spending was estimated at £144,700,000 with slippage of £14,500,000 in a number of schemes including the South Devon Link Road, A39 Roundswell Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge, Marland School and Marsh Barton Railway station.

The matter having been debated and the options and/or alternatives and other relevant factors set out in the County Treasurer's Report and/or referred to above having been considered

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Clatworthy, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

RESOLVED that the position based on Month 4 be noted.

STANDING ITEM

* 73 Question(s) from Members of the Public

The Chairman having exercised his discretion to vary the order of business to enable this item to be considered at this point in the meeting, and in accordance with the Council's Public Participation Rules, the Leader and relevant Cabinet Member(s) responded to 6 questions from members of the public on State Pension Arrangements and Okehampton Railway Line/Station and would respond direct to one question on state pension arrangements from a member of the public who was not present at the time this item was taken.

The Leader and relevant Cabinet Member(s) also responded orally to supplementary questions arising from the above.

[NB: A copy of the questions and answers are appended to these minutes and are also available on the Council's Website at <http://www.devon.gov.uk/dcc/committee/minifigs.html> and any supplementary questions and answers may be observed through the webcast of this meeting – see Notes below].

MATTERS REFERRED

74 Notices of Motion

The Cabinet considered the Report of the County Solicitor (CS/16/27) relating to those Notices of Motion set out hereunder submitted to the County Council by the Councillors shown incorporating any factual briefings or position statements on each prepared by the relevant Head of Service to facilitate the Cabinet's discussion of each Notice of Motion.

(a) State Pension Arrangements for Women

[All Members of the Council had been granted a dispensation to allow them to speak and vote in any debate on this matter by virtue of being in receipt of or affected by any changes to the state pension provision]

(Councillor Connett attended in accordance with Standing Order 8 and Councillors Biederman, Julian and Westlake in accordance with 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The following Notice of Motion submitted to the County Council by Councillor Connett had been referred to the Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 8(2), for consideration or referral to another committee and to subsequently make a recommendation back to the Council:

"The Council calls upon the Government to make fair transitional state pension arrangements for all women born on or after 6th April 1951, who have unfairly borne the burden of the increase to the State Pension Age (SPA) with lack of appropriate notification.

Hundreds of thousands of women had significant pension changes imposed on them by the Pensions Acts of 1995 and 2011 with little/no/personal notification of the changes. Some women had only two years notice of a six-year increase to their state pension age.

Many women born in the 1950's are living in hardship. Retirement plans have been shattered with devastating consequences. Many of these women are already out of the labour market, caring for elderly relatives, providing childcare for grandchildren, or suffer discrimination in the workplace so struggle to find employment. Women born in this decade are suffering financially. These women have worked hard, raised families and paid their tax and national insurance with the expectation that they would be financially secure when reaching 60. It is not

the pension age itself that is in dispute - it is widely accepted that women and men should retire at the same time. The issue is that the rise in the women's state pension age has been too rapid and has happened without sufficient notice being given to the women affected, leaving women with no time to make alternative arrangements.

The Council calls upon the Government to reconsider transitional arrangements for women born on or after 6th April 1951, so that women do not live in hardship due to pension changes they were not told about until it was too late to make alternative arrangements."

The Mover of the Notice of Motion having spoken to his proposal the matter was subsequently debated having regard to the aforementioned, the relevant Head of Service's factual briefing/position statement on the matter, the relevant Cabinet Members' willingness to endorse appropriate representations being made and action already taken so to do and any suggestions or alternatives or other relevant factors (e.g. public health, financial, environmental, risk management and equality and legal considerations and Public Health impact) and:

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Clatworthy, and

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Standing Orders 6 & 8, the County Council be recommended to approve the Notice of Motion and make representations to the Secretary of State for Work & Pensions and advise Devon Members of Parliament accordingly.

*[NB: Devon's MPs had been asked at meetings with the Leader of the County Council on 12/13 September 2016 to make appropriate representations to Government. See also responses to Questions referred to at Minute *73 above and representations incorporated therein from members of the public]*

(b) Term Time Leave and Fines for Parents

(Councillor Greenslade attended in accordance with Standing Order 8 and Councillors Biederman, Brazil and Hannan in accordance with 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The following Notice of Motion submitted to the County Council by Councillor Greenslade had been referred to the Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 8(2), for consideration or referral to another committee and to subsequently make a recommendation back to the Council:

"County Council expresses concern at the incidences of fines being levied on parents who take their children out of school during term time. Accordingly County Council requests the People's Scrutiny Committee to consider current guidelines used to decide whether a fine is appropriate. In the meanwhile no new fines should be levied until this review is completed!"

The Mover of the Notice of Motion having spoken to his proposal the matter was subsequently debated having regard to the aforementioned, the relevant Head of Service's factual briefing/position statement on the matter and any suggestions or alternatives or other relevant factors (e.g. public health, financial, environmental, risk management and equality and legal considerations and Public Health impact) and:

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Clatworthy, and

RESOLVED that while it is not necessary for Cabinet to specifically endorse any Members' suggestion or request for a Scrutiny Committee to undertake any particular piece of work or activity, the Cabinet (i) is content for the People's Scrutiny Committee to look at this matter, (ii) endorse the current practice (outlined in Part (b) of Report CS/16/27) until such time as the law is clarified and (iii) advise the Council that by dint of so doing the Notice of Motion has been effected and the views of the Scrutiny Committee will necessarily be considered by the Cabinet in due course.

(c) Planning Advice from Council Officers

(Councillor Greenslade declared a personal interest in this matter by virtue of being a Member of North Devon Council, the Devon and Somerset Fire Authority and relatives working and living in the area. Councillor Biederman also declared a personal interest in this matter by virtue of being a Member of North Devon Council and its Planning Committee).

(Councillor Greenslade attended in accordance with Standing Order 8 and Councillors Biederman, Brazil, Connett, Julian and Westlake in accordance with 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The following Notice of Motion submitted to the County Council by Councillor Greenslade had been referred to the Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 8(2), for consideration or referral to another committee and to subsequently make a recommendation back to the Council:

“County Council expresses the view that in giving planning advice DCC Officers should give priority to providing balanced advice rather than the advice being given to “facilitate development”.

The Mover of the Notice of Motion having spoken to his proposal the matter was subsequently debated having regard to the aforementioned, the relevant Head of Service's factual briefing/position statement on the matter and any suggestions or alternatives or other relevant factors (e.g. public health, financial, environmental, risk management and equality and legal considerations and Public Health impact) and:

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Clatworthy, and

RESOLVED that in accordance with Standing Orders 6 & 8, the County Council be recommended to take no further action on the Notice of Motion recognising that within the context of the County Council's planning-related functions and national planning policy, it was appropriate for the Council to provide planning application consultation responses which aim to facilitate development identified in the Local Plan (i.e. deemed by an independent Inspector as appropriate) and potentially other sustainable development sites recognising the need also to continue to give full weight to the individual and cumulative impact of proposed development.

* 75

People's Scrutiny Committee: Small Schools Task Group

(Councillors Connett, Hannan, Julian and Randall Johnson attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet noted that the People's Scrutiny Committee had, at its meeting on 5 September 2016 (Minute *18), considered the Report of the Task Group undertaken ([CS/31/16](#)) examining the issues faced by small schools, outlining proposals to help them meet the challenges facing them in the future, which it had commended to Cabinet.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor McInnes, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

RESOLVED that the Task Group be thanked for its excellent Report and the proposals therein be endorsed and the Head of Education & Learning take appropriate action to give effect thereto.

STANDING ITEMS

* 76

Minutes

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Clatworthy, and

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Devon Authorities Strategic Waste Joint Committee held on 29 June 2016 and any recommendations to Cabinet therein be approved:

[NB: Minutes of County Council Committees are published on the Council's Website at:
http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/your_council/decision_making/cma/index_exc.htm .]

* **77** **Delegated Action/Urgent Matters**

The Registers of Decisions taken by Members under the urgency provisions or delegated powers were available for inspection at the meeting in line with the Council's Constitution and Regulation 13 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; a summary of decisions taken since the last meeting had been published with the Agenda for this meeting. Decisions taken by Officers under any express authorisation of the Cabinet or other Committee or under any general authorisation within the Council's Scheme of Delegation set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution may be viewed at <https://new.devon.gov.uk/democracy/officer-decisions/>.

* **78** **Forward Plan**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet reviewed the Forward Plan and determined those items of business to be defined as key and framework decisions and included in the Plan from the date of this meeting onwards reflecting the requirements of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 (at <http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=133&RD=0>).

KEY DECISIONS

* **79** **Provision of the Youth Service for Devon (Minute 401/14 October 2016)**

(Councillors Biederman, Connett and Hannan attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Strategic Director, Place ([SPL/16/2](#)) on the background to, process for and evaluation of offers for procuring and/or awarding a contract for the future delivery of the Youth Service in Devon. In accordance with the Council's previous decisions, invitations to tender had been sought in June 2016 year for an employee-led public service mutual or other social enterprise from organisations able to demonstrate their objective was the pursuit of a public service mission linked to the delivery of the service; that profits would be reinvested and/or distributed on participatory considerations and that ownership of the organisation was based on employee ownership/participatory principles or required the active participation of employees, service users or stakeholders. The Report summarised the responses to the invitation to tender and the process of their evaluation leading to a formal recommendation for the award of a contract.

Members noted that the Council would retain responsibility for the Youth Service while commissioning the new organisation to deliver it on the Council's behalf. Young people had been consulted upon the proposed changes and the options for its future through a variety of means, fora and representative groupings. The Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee had also been afforded an opportunity to comment on the draft specification and the mandatory questions for tenderers.

The Head of Service's Report also incorporated an Impact Assessment relating to the possible impacts of the proposal - and, in particular, of divesting the youth service for Devon to an employee-led public service mutual or other social enterprise - which had been circulated previously for the attention of Members at this meeting in order that as part of its determination of the next steps in the process the Cabinet might have full regard to the responsibilities placed upon it to exercise its Public Sector Equality Duty, under s149 of the Equality Act 2010, where relevant. The Assessment highlighted the potential for any such

divestment to increase social value as the provider of the youth service would be well placed to develop new, innovative partnerships - thereby increasing the social value it delivered. In addition, opportunities for staff to engage with community and voluntary organisations would increase levels of volunteering across Devon, the sense of community ownership of the youth service for Devon would increase and all these elements would lead to a growth in social capital. The Assessment therefore recognised the positive impact of the Strategy and that no unmanageable impacts had been identified.

It was then **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hughes and

RESOLVED that the press and public be now excluded from the meeting during subsequent discussion on this matter under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act namely, the financial or business affairs of tenderers for the provision or supply of council goods or services and of the County Council itself, and in accordance with Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, by virtue of the fact that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

[NB: The following part of the Cabinet's proceedings on this matter took place, as summarised below, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 and, with the consent of the relevant Scrutiny Committee Chairman, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during which the press and public were excluded; no representations having been received to such consideration under Regulation 5(5) of the aforementioned Regulations].

The Cabinet then received the Report of the of the Strategic Director, Place ([SPL/16/3](#)) on the award of contract, recommending the acceptance of the highest scoring tender, capable of acceptance, for the provision of the Devon Youth Service.

Following discussion of Report SPL/16/3 and having had regard to the information therein, the Cabinet was of the view that the press and public need no longer be excluded from the meeting during its final determination of the matter and:

It was then **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hughes, and

RESOLVED that the press and public be now readmitted to the meeting.

Following further comment and discussion and in replying formally to the debate the Cabinet Member for Performance & Engagement commended the recommendations now before the Cabinet.

The matter having been fully debated and the options and/or alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial, sustainability, equality and legal considerations and Public Health impact) set out in the Head of Service's Report and/or referred to above having been considered, and balancing all of those factors and comments made at the meeting:

It was then **MOVED** by Councillor Parsons, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

RESOLVED

(a) that approval be given to the contract award for the Council's Provision of Youth Service in Devon (Contract (CP1311-16) in accordance with the Report SPL/16/2;

(b) that, following expiry of the mandatory standstill period, Contract CP1311-16 – Provision of Youth Service in Devon be awarded to DYS Space Ltd; and

(c) that the County Solicitor be authorised to execute all necessary legal agreements required to be entered into by the Council in respect of this contract.

[NB: The Impact Assessment referred to above may be viewed alongside Minutes of this meeting and may also be available at: <http://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/>].

* **80 Highways Term Maintenance Contract 2017/27 (Minute *340/13 May 2015)**

(Councillors Brazil, Connett, Julian and Westlake attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Head of Highways, Capital Development & Waste ([HCW/16/67](#)) on the background to, process for and evaluation of tenders for procuring and/or awarding a new Highways Term Maintenance Contract. The Council's current Highways Term Maintenance Contract was being provided by South West Highways and was due to expire in March 2017.

The Head of Services' Report referred to the decisions previously made relating to continued delivery of the service and outlined the procurement process leading to this stage to secure the best overall tender and his recommendation that the next Highways Term Maintenance Contract should be awarded to the successful tenderer for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2024, with extension options to 2027. Independent assurance had been received to confirm that the procurement process had been robust and that current procurement regulations for selecting tenderers, compiling contract documents, negotiating with tenderers and tender evaluation had been strictly adhered to, to ensure best value.

The Head of Service reported that the new contract had been designed to reflect research on industry best practice and experience and learning over recent years so as to ensure that the new contract provided both value for money and a good service to Devon's communities and users of the local highway network. In producing the contract documents, use had also been made of documentation from the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme, a Department for Transport funded and sector led transformation programme.

The Cabinet had previously decided that, to benefit from collaborative working, the Term Maintenance Contract should be jointly procured with Plymouth City Council and Somerset County Council. Whilst joint authority working had therefore been an essential part of the new contract, it had also been agreed that to enable partner authorities to work together without any loss of autonomy, procurement should be for three separate lots resulting in three separate but aligned contracts - one for each Council's administrative area - rather than a single combined contract. Tenderers were therefore permitted to submit bids for one or more than one lot, resulting in one or more possible multi-lot bids. Each Council would however, ultimately, have its own specific contract. Moreover, any multi-lot bid could ultimately only be awarded if all affected Councils were to independently agree to award such a contract and, in line with the principles agreed at the outset of the process, that any such 'multi-lot' bid could only be accepted where it would place a Council in a better position than it could have achieved on its own.

Members were advised that the three Councils had chosen to follow the procurement procedure known as '*Competitive Procedure with Negotiation*' which would enable individual Councils to award the contract for its area after initial tenders had been received, if each so chose. This process had been followed as it was well suited to meeting the needs of highway authorities in procuring complex, long term maintenance contracts, enabling optimisation of tenders with ideas and initiatives being explored in negotiations involving the client and tenderers, before making changes to the final contract documents. This process enabled Councils to talk directly to each tenderer, which had ultimately proven beneficial in refining the contract and achieving best value.

The Cabinet acknowledged that the Place Scrutiny Committee had also been closely involved with the overall process and had considered relevant issues on a number of occasions particularly in relation to timescales for the procurement, the Procurement procedure itself and the evaluation methodology.

The Head of Service's Report also incorporated an Impact Assessment relating to the possible impacts of the proposal, which had been circulated previously for the attention of Members at this meeting in order that as part of its determination of the next steps in the process the Cabinet might have full regard to the responsibilities placed upon it to exercise its Public Sector Equality Duty, under s149 of the Equality Act 2010, where relevant. That Assessment recognised that potential equality issues had been addressed through mitigation measures within the contract and that, consequently, there were no particular equality issues arising from the impact assessment. The successful contractor would be bound by standard equality clauses in the contract to ensure it did not discriminate against staff or service users unlawfully. The nature of the Cabinet's decision – which was simply to select the tenderer to provide the service – would not have any impact on service levels or policies, for which a separate Impact Assessment would be required/produced. Members endorsed the view that there were no foreseeable negative impacts arising from the proposed award.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Cabinet and Members of the Council, publicly stated his appreciation of the efforts of all those staff involved in the undertaking of and completion of this major procurement exercise.

It was then **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hughes, and

RESOLVED that the press and public be now excluded from the meeting during subsequent discussion on this matter under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act namely, the financial or business affairs of current providers, tenderers for the provision or supply of council goods or services and of the County Council and partner organisations, and in accordance with Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, by virtue of the fact that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

[NB: The following part of the Cabinet's proceedings on this matter took place, as summarised below, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 and, with the consent of the relevant Scrutiny Committee Chairman, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during which the press and public were excluded; no representations having been received to such consideration under Regulation 5(5) of the aforementioned Regulations].

The Cabinet then considered the Report of the Head of Highways, Capital Development & Waste ([HCW/16/68](#)) on the proposed award of contract, outlining all relevant financial issues, and recommending the acceptance of the highest scoring tender capable of acceptance for the new Highways Term Maintenance Contract, which was welcomed by all Members present.

Following discussion of Report [HCW/16/68](#) and having had regard to the information therein, the Cabinet was of the view that the press and public need no longer be excluded from the meeting during its final determination of the matter and:

It was then **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hughes, and

RESOLVED that the press and public be now readmitted to the meeting.

Following further comment and discussion and in replying formally to the debate the Cabinet Member for Highway Management & Flood Prevention commended the recommendations now before the Cabinet.

The matter having been fully debated and the options and/or alternatives and other relevant factors (e.g. financial, risk management, equality and legal considerations) set out in the Head of Service's Report and/or referred to above having been considered, and balancing all of those factors and comments made at the meeting:

It was then **MOVED** by Councillor Hughes, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hart, and

RESOLVED

(a) that approval be given to the contract award for the Council's new Highways Term Maintenance Contract;

(b) that the County Council's Highways Term Maintenance Contract be awarded to Skanska Construction UK Limited, as a single lot bid for the County Council (for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2024, with extension options to 2027);

(c) that the County Solicitor be authorised to execute all necessary legal agreements required to be entered into by the Council in respect of this contract;

(d) that collaborative work continue with Plymouth City Council and Somerset County Council and their contractor(s).

[NB: The Impact Assessment referred to above may be viewed alongside Minutes of this meeting and may also be available at: <http://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/>].

NOTES:

1. These Minutes should be read in association with any Reports or documents referred to therein, for a complete record.
2. Notice of the decisions taken by the Cabinet will be sent by email to all Members of the Council within 2 working days of their being made and will, in the case of key decisions, come into force 5 working days after that date unless 'called-in' or referred back in line with the provisions of the Council's Constitution.
3. The Minutes of the Cabinet are published on the County Council's website.
4. A recording of the webcast of this meeting will also be available to view for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting, at <http://www.devoncc.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 1.46 pm



QUESTION(S) FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC Wednesday, 14 September 2016

1. **QUESTION FROM MS PALETHORPE** **Re: State Pension Arrangements**

Would the Cabinet recognise and agree that the unexpected rise in SPA will have a negative impact on Devon's economy with the loss of up to 6 years pension income (an approx. loss of up to £42,000) for each of these women?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

The Cabinet will, later in this meeting, consider the Notice of Motion on this topic referred from the last Council meeting in July when a significant number of public and members of the WASPI campaign attended ... and those present today (or watching on the webcast) will no doubt listen intently to these latest discussions.

State Pensions are of course determined and regulated by HM Government and not local Councils who nonetheless, I accept, may also have to deal with the consequences of problems people may face as - exemplified by this and subsequent questioners. While recognising the difficult decisions necessarily made by Governments to address the severe financial problems the country has faced - and continues to face - the Council equally understands the genuine concerns of people at the impact of the change to state pension arrangements made by this and previous Governments and I have already raised these issues, personally, with Devon MPs, when I met them earlier this week in support of the campaign.

In the particular circumstance posited, were an individual receiving no income other than state pension in the intervening period then I can confirm that the 'shortfall' would be in the region of £40,000 per annum but, taking a balanced view, it is equally not possible to say what proportion of those affected would be able, or choose, to continue working and therefore receive an income which would of course would have a positive impact and negate the loss of any pension.

2. **QUESTION FROM MS COLCLOUGH** **Re: State Pension Arrangements**

Does Devon County Council recognise and acknowledge the very real difficulties of women in this age range in finding employment?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

I would refer Ms Colclough to the answer I gave to the previous question, recognising the impact of any pension changes on individuals' future employment.

3. **QUESTION FROM MS SALTER** **Re: State Pension Arrangements**

Does the Council recognise and agree the negative impact on childcare provision in Devon, of 'granny', not being able to offer family support because she is still working or looking for work?

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REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

Again, I would refer Ms Salter to my previous answers on this matter. While I recognise that, undoubtedly, informal childcare arrangements are made with relatives, including grannies, across Devon - the extent of that is unknown. While the County Council has a role to play in actively encouraging providers to expand the number of places available where a need for more childcare places can be demonstrated, it [the Council] has no way of knowing the extent of those existing informal arrangements which also means it is not possible to quantify the impact of such support not being available in future.

All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to 570 hours a year of funded early education and this will double for working families from September 2017, so that they can access 1140 hours of childcare a year free of charge. This will, I am sure, be welcome news for many families across the county and the Council is planning to ensure that all parents who want childcare can access a place. I understand also that some two year olds may also be eligible for 570 hours of funded early education and those children will be sent a 'Golden Ticket' which they can take to an early years provider to take up a place.

4. QUESTION FROM MS COXON

Re: State Pension Arrangements

Does Devon County Council recognise and acknowledge the negative impact on social housing due to the unexpected rise of SPA?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

I would refer Ms Coxon to my previous answers but would also point out in this case that housing is a District Council function to whom the question should perhaps more properly be addressed.

5. QUESTION FROM MS EDWARDS

Re: State Pension Arrangements

It is common practice for voluntary services to support Council or NHS services in key areas such as mental health provision, children, education and learning, does the Council recognise and acknowledge the negative consequences of increases to SPA on voluntary service?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

I would refer Ms Edwards to my previous answers and while acknowledging the valuable contribution that volunteers and volunteering makes in and to our communities it is again the case that the neither the Council nor, I suspect, the voluntary sector has any way of quantifying the impact of such support not being available in future.

6. QUESTION FROM MS BROADBENT

Re: State Pension Arrangements

Will the Council support the motion to help Devon's 1950's women by calling upon the government to make fair transitional arrangements to those affected?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

I would refer Ms Broadbent to my answer to Question 1 and am confident she will be pleased with the outcome of the debate on the Notice of Motion later in this meeting.

7. QUESTION FROM HON. ALDERMAN MARSH
Re: Okehampton Railway Line/Station

Can the Cabinet Member please confirm the County's current policy and position in respect of the £250,000 which was allocated to the development of a new Okehampton East Station (in line with the previous decision of the Cabinet (Minute 480/11 April 2012), reproduced below) and it is hoped that the Cabinet Member would also meet with the OkeRail CIC members to confirm the County Council's continuing support.


REPLY BY COUNCILLOR LEADBETTER

I can confirm that the funding remains allocated to the Okehampton East station as part of the Invest in Devon fund. However, a station cannot be built until there is certainty about a future regular rail service through one of the two franchises serving the area. The County Council is a member of the OkeRail group and continues to provide it with technical support and advice. Officers are also liaising with Dartmoor Railway CIC, the current leaseholders of the line, on the technical and operational aspects of the station and the related rail service.

I would be happy to meet with CIC members to offer this reassurance in person, if so desired.

***480 Opportunity Okehampton Development and Station (Minute 370/13 July 2011)**

(Councillors Greenslade, Way and Westlake attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item).

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Economy Enterprise (EE/12/6 - [text only](#) | [pdf](#)  EE/12/6) on the pattern of development on the eastern side of Okehampton to promote employment growth and support sustainable transport and seeking approval to the necessary planning consents being sought for those schemes being promoted by the County Council.

It was MOVED by Councillor Mumford, SECONDED by Councillor Hughes, and

RESOLVED that approval be given to the submission of:

(a) a revised outline planning application for mixed use commercial development at the Opportunity Okehampton site; and

(b) a planning application for a new Okehampton East station on the Opportunity Okehampton site together with a pedestrian and footpath link joining the site with Hambledown Road and the provision of an initial station car park.

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[NB: Questioners have provided background information in the form of case studies or personal histories as to how SPA changes may/have affected individuals which are, exceptionally, also circulated as representations made to Cabinet in relation to the Notice of Motion on this topic (to be) considered at today's meeting.

A Personal Story

'Over 50,000 women in Devon were born in the 1950's. This is the story of one of them (Mrs B, from West Devon) I understand that you may have received a great deal of information regarding the history of WASPI, however, I thought I would write to let you know how the SPA changes have personally affected me and my family.

I was born in July 1954 and worked as a registered nurse for the NHS all my working life in total around 37 years with only two short breaks for maternity leave.

In 2009 my husband took early redundancy so with his "works pension" secured we took the opportunity to move to France. I was aware that the women's SPA had changed and was under the impression I would receive my state pension at the age of 62. Of course this loss of my pension was a consideration in our plans but we thought we could manage to plug the gap for 2 years by using our savings.

However the second changes made in 2011 to the age I would receive my pension were a much more serious blow to our finances. I was never informed personally of these changes the first information I came across was via the online petition which led to the WASPI campaign. In 2012 I contacted the DWP and received confirmation that this was indeed true my pension age would now be 65.5 years. I was 59 and there was no way I could start a private pension scheme or due to living in France find suitable work.

Due to various family circumstances we have now returned to the UK, to Devon.

Whilst we are not destitute our finances are tight and our savings are dwindling, this of course affects our spending power and our financial contributions to local shops & charities.

I have looked into returning to work as a nurse but as my 'registration' lapsed whilst living in France I find this is not straight forward, it involves a period of study in a university and a long period of supervised practice, which I agree is quite right to ensure good patient safety. However this would not guarantee me a suitable job at the end of this re training compounded by several factors including living in a rural community with no public transport to get me to & fro, my age and my stamina.

I have looked at claiming benefits but find I am not eligible for any.

Depending on my husband financially has affected my self esteem, for the first time in my adult life I am financially dependent on someone else which is difficult for me as a previously independent woman. It saddens me we can not help our children or grandchildren financially.

I truly worry for our health in the future, for example dental and eye care or should we need a care home we will have no savings left to pay for 'them.

Thank you for taking time to read "my story".'

The experiences of a Mrs C from South Devon demonstrating how difficult it is to find work when in or approaching your 60's.

"For myself and my husband who is approaching his 67th birthday this situation is not what we planned or envisaged.

I didn't have the luxury of employment with private pension until my last child became a teenager. This is when I could find employment outside of office cleaner, shop assistant, oven cleaner in superstore etc., and became a Teaching Assistant at a Comprehensive College where the local education authority had a private pension plan.

This was something I embraced for 12yrs before leaving in 2012 due to health issues.

I was then 58 years and found out my pension age was going to be 65 years 4 months 23 days. I'm a 1954 baby and am appalled at the steep rise in the amount of time added from the previous birth year to wait for my pension.

My health issues are, to a degree, being sorted; an MRI in 2012 showed degenerative lower spine that is irritated by walking up stairs, carrying anything over a certain weight. It is something I have to personally manage alongside a degenerative bone in my neck I believed caused by a fall I had at home in 2011. Treatment for neck is ongoing at present, some five years later. I also had minor bowel surgery in 2013.

What employer would employ me? I could be retrained I suppose, maybe a receptionist but what about the days I wake up with whiplash headache from the fall I had at home?

I'm now 63 years on my next birthday in February! I also help out when I can - being with our grandson, collecting him from nursery (soon to be school this September), while his parents are busy working (thankfully) enabling this country's economy to thrive, and pay their mortgage.

Surely paying 1950's ladies their State Pension is socially more prudent than making the young people of this country go onto benefits, take their skills elsewhere or, heaven forbid, feel so worthless that their mental and emotional health becomes a burden to the system."

A Real Life Situation - 'Ms S from South Devon explains how one family's childcare arrangements have been affected by SPA changes

'I am 61 years and have now worked for over 45 years, paying National Insurance Contributions.

I had hoped to retire at 60 years of age (in 2015) to be able to spend more time with my 3 young grandchildren before they grow up. My granddaughter has just been diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at 7 so I have tried to help my family as much as I can. I was notified in 2012 by a short letter that I my new State Retirement date has been increased by 6 years. I will now retire in 2021. This also affects my family as grannie to 3 young grandchildren as my children struggle to find childcare during school holidays and I can't help out. I spend all of my work holidays helping out with childcare as it helps my family who have to work.

I will explain a little about my circumstances and why I want to be well when I retire, I brought up my two children as a single parent. I worked all through their childhood as I wanted a good future for them, (they are both successful and work full time). I also cared for my mother who had a dense stroke and was in nursing care before she died in 2013.

I was diagnosed with a rare type of cancer in 2009 and was very lucky to have fantastic care at my local hospital. I now know to value each day and want to spend time with my family while I am still well and healthy. My health is good at present but I am not sure what is around the corner (my father died at 66 years of age of cancer, a year after receiving his pension).

By working another 6 years I will have lost at least £35,000 in pension payments, for someone who has lived on a low income throughout my working life I feel this is unfair treatment. I had hope to retire and take up voluntary work in schools teaching children to read.

Mine is one of many stories of how women who have worked hard throughout their life, supported family and continue to support parents, children and grandchildren but now find they have to continue to work for another 6 years before they can retire. I do wonder how many women of my age will not live to receive their pension although they have contributed all their life"

A Mrs H demonstrates how many 1950's women are facing the possibility of selling their homes to live until their SPA is finally reached

'This is my story of how the movement of the State Pension Age has drastically affected my life. I was born in 1954 (June). I was medically retired from Royal Mail in 2004, at 50 years of age, with a preserved pension payable from my 60th birthday in 2014.

I had received a letter from DWP informing me the state pension age was to be increased, that my pension would commence on 6th September 2018, however in Feb 2012 (just 2 years before I was originally due to retire) I received another letter informing me that I would now not be entitled to my pension until 6th March 2020.

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In March 2013 my husband was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, at the time I was working at a local caravan park where the owners allowed me to bring my husband along to work so that I could keep an eye on him while I worked, I knew though it was only a matter of time before his condition progressed to a level that would mean I would have to give up work , which I did at the end of May 2014.

Of course in the expected run of things, I would have now been entitled to begin collecting my state pension, instead I found myself having to give up work to care for my husband with only his state pension, attendance allowance and a small occupational pension my carer's allowance and a small preserved pension. We have just about managed to get by, but this is not how we expected and planned for it to be.

This summer we found that my husband's condition had progressed to a level that made it necessary for him to spend 2 days a week in day care at a local care home. We had to have a complete a financial assessment (this was not done until he had been going to day care for 8 weeks) they found that my husband was liable for the whole of his respite care. The unfairness of the assessment and the total disregard for the fact that his income has largely to keep us both (in the absence of my state pension) has meant that we have had to cancel his day care and of course the 'rest days' for me (the first I have had since my husband's diagnosis 3.5 yrs ago).

In all probability the time will come when I can no longer manage my husband's care at home and I know that when that happens they will take all his income to pay for his care. With no state pension of my own until 2020, I will no longer be able to afford to stay in our home, or have to rely on benefits or both'.

Women in their early 60's often volunteer to help good causes in their communities but have been unable to do so due to the need to work or find work: Mrs S from East Devon says.

'The lack of notice of changes to my SPA has caused utter chaos in my life. My dreams for my retirement have crumbled. I am left trying to scrape a living together.

It was my intention to spend a lot of my time and energy supporting the Air Ambulance service. I really value the work they do in terms of assisting with emergencies but also the important work they do offering work experience and other community work. I would dearly love to assist their fund raising activities but instead I have to spend my time keeping a roof over my head and food on my table.'

The Report of the Works and Pension Committee concluded
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmworpen/899/89902.htm>

"We will never know how many women did not know, or could not be reasonably expected to know, that their state pension age was increasing. What is apparent with hindsight is that previous governments could have done a lot better in communicating the changes. Well into this decade far too many affected women were unaware of the equalisation of state pension age at 65 legislated for in 1995. While the last and current Governments have done more to communicate state pension age changes than their predecessors, this has been too little too late for many women, especially given increases in the state pension age have been accelerated at relatively short notice. Many thousands of women justifiably feel aggrieved." Communication of state pension age changes. Paragraph 29 (2015)

This lack of notice has left 1950's women with no time to prepare for a loss of expected income of up to £40,000. The impact of this is very dependent upon individual and family circumstances but few can stand to lose this amount of income with ease and many are in dire financial circumstances.

We appreciate that this is a national issue but one with massive implications at a local level. Fair transitional arrangements would do much to mitigate these implications.

A Personal View

I qualified as an Allied Health Professional (AHP) in 1977 and have worked in the Health Service since then except for maternity leave. In all those years I have never claimed sickness benefit or job seekers allowance.

I am now 62 and at present working 14.5 hours a week, fixed term contract until November 2016. Prior to December 2015 I was working full time as a specialist AHP in Oncology. My present role is based in the community and involves lifting & transporting heavy equipment, for weighing people in wheelchairs in their own home or in nursing homes. Working as an autonomous practitioner is very stressful job emotionally and physically, involving supporting patients, relatives and carers. This does not only apply to my present post in the community, but also to my previous post in Oncology based in the Acute hospital setting, where in addition to my specialist role, I had team management responsibilities.

I have osteoarthritis in my knees & hands and the heavy lifting aggravates these problems. 5 years ago I was unable to walk for 6 weeks and was advised that due to the loss of cartilage in my knee and advancing osteoarthritis (due to my age) I would need a knee replacement in the future. I have through physiotherapy and low impact exercise, mainly swimming, managed to maintain my mobility and avoid surgery so far. I am concerned that continuing with this type of work will affect on my health and my mobility. I have been advised to swim to reduce the need for a knee replacement, following a period of time when I was unable to walk or drive, as stated above. I cannot see how I will be able to afford to continue my regular exercise/swimming when my contract ends.

2 years ago I was advised by Occupational Health at work that due to the stress of my job unless the stress levels could be reduced I would "burn" myself out in 6 months. Some changes were made but my health still suffered and I had frequent throat/ chest infections and high blood pressure. Changing my job to the temporary part time post has reduced my blood pressure and I do not have repeated throat infection. I am struggling at work because of ongoing my health problems and this is not helped by the high stress levels both in my job and the stress of not being able to retire when I expected.

My husband has taken early retirement due to ill health. So that I can stop work and we can spend some quality time before our health deteriorates further, we have had to take the decision to drawdown extra income from his private pension, alongside my small NHS pension to ensure that we can manage to meet all our financial commitments until we reach State pension age in 2020. The consequences of this will reduce our spending into the local economy and will curtail our hobbies and leisure activities, because we will not be able to afford them. It will also reduce our income long term due to the additional drawdown from my husband's personal pension provision.

I worry all the time now how we will be able to manage until I receive my SPA at 65 years and 10 months and 11 days!, however I cannot continue to work in an environment which is causing additional health problem and adversely impacting on our quality of life.

