

## CABINET

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 10 November 2015 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.08 pm

**Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor Ian Hudspeth – in the Chair  
Councillor Rodney Rose  
Councillor Mrs Judith Heathcoat  
Councillor Nick Carter  
Councillor Melinda Tilley  
Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale  
Councillor David Nimmo Smith  
Councillor Lawrie Stratford  
Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles

**Other Members in Attendance:**

**Officers:**

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Whole of meeting | Peter Clark, Head of Paid Service; Sue Whitehead (Corporate Services)   |
| Part of meeting  |   |
| Item             | Name  |
| 6                | Mark Kemp, Deputy Director, Commercial; Alexandra Bailey, Service Manager Business Development Fleet Management |
| 7                | Lewis Gosling, Financial Manager (Treasury)   |

*The Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting, and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda, reports and schedule, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.*

### **101/15 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item. 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2015 were approved and signed subject to the following correction:

Minute 90/15 – Last sentence of the preamble to read: “Councillor Heathcoat added that no partner or agency would agree to funding a provision in perpetuity.”

## 102/15 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda Item. 4)

Councillor Pressel had given notice of the following question to Councillor Hibbert Biles

"Councillor Biles gave the following answer to a supplementary question from me in Council on 8 September (page 28 on the agenda of our last Council meeting):

"I think children's centres do promote oral health but in actual fact it is the responsibility of the NHS not this Council. We are a monitoring organisation." Please could you tell me if this is correct?

The latest Public Health Annual Report in its section on oral health says that the local authority "has an emphasis on prevention". It gives a long list (page 55 to 56) of what we do, with much of the work being in pre-school settings, so I'm puzzled by the Cabinet member's statement. I hope this work won't be lost if the children's centres are closed."

Councillor Hibbert Biles replied:

"On 1st April 2013 the statutory responsibility for the commissioning of commissioning dental epidemiology transferred from the NHS to local government.

The dental public health functions of LAs are described in regulations and include a statutory requirement to provide or secure provision of oral surveys. The statutory instrument states that:

*A local authority shall provide, or shall make arrangements to secure the provision of, the following within its area—*

*Oral health surveys to facilitate—*

- i. the assessment and monitoring of oral health needs,*
- ii. the planning and evaluation of oral health promotion programmes,*
- iii. the planning and evaluation of the arrangements for provision of dental services as part of the health service, and*
- iv. where there are water fluoridation programmes affecting the authority's area, the monitoring and reporting of the effect of water fluoridation programmes.*
- v. The local authority shall participate in any oral health survey conducted or commissioned by the Secretary of State under paragraph 13(1) of Schedule 1 to the 2006 Act (powers in relation to research etc.) so far as that survey is conducted within the authority's area.*

Domain 4 (Healthcare public health and preventing premature mortality) of the Public Health Outcomes Framework includes an indicator relating to "tooth decay in children aged 5." Continued local dental epidemiology survey provision will be required for the monitoring of this indicator.

Oxfordshire County Council have a requirement to provide a capacity to collect dental epidemiology (surveys) which help inform on the local oral health of the population. This information can help NHS England in understanding the need for dental services locally.

In April 2015 OCC let a contract to Community Dental Services CIC for the collection of dental epidemiology, thus meeting the Council's statutory requirement. The County Council collect data in line with the National Dental Intelligence Programme which provides a scientifically robust methodology and allows comparability of local data with regional and national data.

All Dental Services are commissioned by NHS England, which does include an element of oral health promotion in these contracts. Oral health promotion is on the same footing as providing dental services which is a clear NHSE responsibility.

OCC does not have a statutory obligation to deliver oral health promotion."

Supplementary: In response to a question concerning the outcome of the steps taken Councillor Hibbert Biles advised that the survey results were not yet available and she would let Councillor Pressel have this information once it was available.

Councillor Phillips had given notice of the following question to Councillor Hibbert Biles

"Does the Cabinet Member for Public Health and the Voluntary Sector share the Association of Directors of Public Health 'deep concern and disappointment' about the Tory governments' £200m cut to non-NHS public health budget which will result in a 6.2% reduction to Oxfordshire's budget and explain what this cut means for the county's Public Health services?"

Councillor Hibbert Biles replied:

"Yes, the cut to the non-NHS public health grant is disappointing. Our Government has to make difficult choices in all areas of public spending. Prudent management of the Public Health grant by the County Council means that we plan to make this reduction without impact on front-line services."

Supplementary: Councillor Phillips referred to a further 10% cut in the medium term to the non-NHS public health grant and whether this would impact on front-line services. Councillor Hibbert-Biles replied that it was not certain what future funding would be and the Council had to wait and see what it was.

Councillor Howson had given notice of the following question to Councillor Tilley:

“To ask the cabinet member the cost of non SEN home to school transport contracts in Oxfordshire for the summer and autumn terms of 2015 compared with the same periods in 2014 and the same figures for SEN transport? Within these figures, how much is due to in-year pupil arrivals that could not be placed within statutory walking distance of a school?”

Councillor Tilley’s response is set out in the attached annex to these minutes.

Supplementary: Councillor Howson noted that some of the information was awaited and explained that his concern was over whether the expected savings would be delivered and if not whether representation should be made to government over funding. Councillor Tilley confirmed that the additional information would be sent to Councillor Howson.

Councillor Smith had given notice of the following question to Councillor Carter:

"Delays with the start of the building project at Windmill School are well documented. Would the cabinet member agree that lessons have been learnt regarding the lack of early communication from Carillion, and continuing communication that lead to unnecessary stress and wasted time?"

Councillor Carter replied

As with all our building projects we are always learning lessons and seeking to improve the way they are taken through from inception to completion. Schools provide an added complexity due to;

1. the fact that there is an additional link between the school and its governors and the council and;
2. the delivery timetable is more rigid due to school term dates.

The council is working closely with Carillion to improve communications with schools and they have changed their structure to reflect this need.

Supplementary: Councillor Carter undertook to look into concerns raised by Councillor Smith that materials were being ordered and not used. However he commented that if additional materials were having to be specified then this was likely to be as a result of changes made to the original specification not just by Carillion.

## **103/15 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item. 5)

The following requests to speak had been agreed and the following petition received:

Item 6 – Mr Barry Finch, Oxfordshire Action for Transport Group  
Councillor Roy McMillan, Chairman of South Stoke Parish Council

Mr Hugh Jaeger, Chair of Bus Users Oxford and a Director of Bus Users UK  
Councillor Roz Smith, local councillor for Headington & Quarry  
Councillor Susanna Pressel\*, local councillor for Jericho & Osney  
Mrs Margaret Donaldson, local resident  
Councillor Kieron Mallon, local councillor for Bloxham & Easington  
Councillor Laura Price, local councillor for Witney South & Central  
Councillor Steve Curran, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment  
Cllr Liz Brighouse, Chairman of Performance Scrutiny Committee  
\* submitted a petition in support of the No 17 bus route

## **104/15 PUBLIC CONSULTATION REPORT - SUPPORTED TRANSPORT (SUBSIDISED BUSES AND DIAL-A-RIDE)**

(Agenda Item. 6)

On 26th May 2015, the Cabinet approved the launch of a full public consultation on proposed changes to subsidised bus services and Dial a Ride. Cabinet had before them a report that detailed the consultation process that was followed and which summarised the main themes that arose throughout the consultation. Finally it offered a number of recommendations for cabinet to consider.

Barry Finch speaking on behalf of the Oxfordshire ATG spoke against the proposal which would affect the most vulnerable. It would affect people's ability to transfer between transport nodes. The report suggested only limited extra money to support alternative provision at a time when such resources were already over stretched. He highlighted the County Voluntary Drivers Scheme which depended on volunteers, often retired people. The use of cars would increase congestion and mini buses were expensive to run. He queried whether the proposals met the requirements of the, Disability Discrimination and Equality Acts to provide no lesser services for elderly and disabled people.

Councillor McMillan whilst recognising the difficulties faced by the County Council, highlighted the importance of continuing the subsidy for the 139 route. No other public service served the route between Wallingford and Goring. Without it people would be locked into the village without access to services. The route has proved successful, tripling its use and halving its subsidy. He accepted that there was scope for reduction. He asked that the Council advise quickly on specifics in order to bring clarity on the effects and timing. He welcomed the offer of pump priming and advice on mitigating the worst effects.

Mr Hugh Jaeger spoke on Option 2 and referred to the types of route receiving subsidy. There were: those routes receiving only a small subsidy; those routes that linked strategic points along busy roads and those routes that serve villages such as Stanford-in-the-Vale. There was a need to ensure these buses were better co-ordinated to encourage use and therefore reduce the need for subsidy. He supported revising option 2 to include peak travel.

Councillor Roz Smith thanked the ORCC for collating the high number of responses and spoke in support of the local service linking Sandhills to Headington. This was the only available local service and although off peak was highly regarded and valued. The service was due to end in June next year. She accepted that it may run for less days each week. She was pleased to see the pump priming funding and queried how the decision on successful schemes would be made.

Councillor Pressel and Margaret Donaldson, a local elderly resident, submitted a petition and spoke in support of the No. 17 bus service. Margaret Donaldson spoke of the impact on elderly people if the service did not run with them becoming isolated and unable to access services such as the hospital. Children too would be affected as they used the bus to get to Cutteslowe School. Mrs Donaldson queried the use of the older persons buss pass if there was no bus to catch. Councillor Pressel emphasised that this would affect 100s of people in her area who depended on the bus. She asked that the subsidy be reduced if necessary but not removed entirely.

Councillor Mallon whilst highlighting the importance of the B1 service to his local area suggested that meetings be held with Stagecoach looking at connectivity, the needs of the elderly, options for use of S106 money in the light of housing developments and the possible merger of routes B1 and B2.

Councillor Laura Price thanked officers for their work and spoke in support of the No. 215 service. This would be at risk even under the revised methodology for Option 2. The service provided a vital service for the Smiths Estate many of whose residents were elderly and unable to walk to access alternative services. She warned that the picture of use was a snapshot in time and might not be the current position. It was therefore important to maintain communication.

Councillor Steve Curran commented that many of the responses were opposed to any cuts and only 2% agreed with option 1. He referred to the Aspire service and whilst accepting it was a good service in Oxford stated that it was not established that it would work County wide. He highlighted that many would be willing to see charges rise and he raised the suggestion that council tax rise. He expressed concerns that: the data was old; the consultation was inadequate failing to engage with some users. In particular he highlighted the lack of response from dial-a-ride users and queried the lack of specifics in relation to comments that users were able to walk 400m. He suggested that the comments on vulnerable users set out on pages 50 and 84 had not been adequately tested.

Councillor Brighouse, Chairman of Performance Scrutiny Committee referred to the note of the Committee's deliberations and highlighted a number of points raised by the Committee. She noted that the Committee had supported the £2.3m reduction already in the MTFP and also supported the revised methodology for determining priority. There had been a lot of discussion on Dial-a-Ride and the Committee felt it was important to look very carefully at the Council's responsibilities for those elderly people who

used the service. She emphasised the role for Adult Social Care in taking any proposals forward. The Committee had discussed alternative means of funding the services including the possibility of people paying more. Whilst accepting the difficult decision faced by Cabinet Councillor Brighthouse stressed that much more work was needed to be done with the bus companies to ensure more integration and the Committee supported future market testing.

Councillor Nimmo Smith, Cabinet Member for Environment in introducing the proposals thanked ORCC for their help with the consultation. He briefly outlined the two bus options and indicated that it was no longer possible to provide Dial-a-Ride as a County wide service. He commented that Aspire was a model of what could be done going forward and it was working well in Oxford. He was well aware of the value of the subsidised services but in the context of the current economic climate with funding reduced year on year it was no longer possible to protect bus subsidies has had been done in previous years. He noted that 9/10 buses ran without subsidy and that the Council would continue to discuss how buses could continue to run.

The Chairman reminded everyone that this was about the £2.3m saving included in the MTFP. The recommendation about the withdrawal of all bus subsidies would be subject to the full budget process. He drew attention to the note of the Performance Scrutiny Committee and the concerns highlighted by Councillor Brighthouse. Cabinet had heard the concerns raised over concessions and payments and the concerns raised about the consultation that had taken place.

John Bright, ORCC responded to the concerns over consultation. All registered users of Dial-a-Ride had been written to. There were about 150 regular users and 49 had completed the survey. All disabled groups had been contacted and a special meeting of stakeholders had been held with some representatives from disabled groups. John Bright stated that a focus group may not have been the right way forward. A number of users rang ORCC and had conversations about their concerns, with some of those conversations lasting an hour. Speaking on the phone to address individual concerns was seen as a better service than a focus group offered to users dispersed over the whole county.

Mark Kemp, Deputy Director, Commercial advised that the proposals took into account the advice of legal colleagues and considered both the needs of users and the needs of the wider community. Alexandra Bailey added that the assessment concerning how far users of Dial-a-Ride were able to walk was based on their own assessment when they registered for the service.

During discussion Cabinet was encouraged that speakers were indicating a willingness to look at new ways of moving forward. Cabinet recognised the need to be careful in moving forward and to be making sure that the Council was bringing in all the extra funding possible. Returning to one of the concerns of the Performance Scrutiny Committee it was noted that there would be every opportunity to work with operators going forward.

With regard to recommendation (e) as set out in the report Cabinet considered that it would be better not to allocate the £500k reserve but to wait for the future funding position to be clearer. It was proposed by the Chairman and agreed that Cabinet would then establish a broader pump priming fund (along the lines of the Big Society Fund) that could include community transport along with other similar initiatives.

**RESOLVED:**

**Delivery of the agreed Medium Term Financial Plan savings**

In order to deliver the savings required in the MTFP, the Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- (a) Consider the consultation feedback regarding subsidised bus services;
- (b) Proceed with reducing bus subsidies by £2.3 million and:
  - 1. Having considered the consultation feedback regarding subsidised bus services to prioritise off peak services
  - 2. To update the methodology used for ranking services in the following ways:
    - i. Include additional criteria which ensure that rurally isolated and deprived areas are also prioritised.
    - ii. Agree to continue to pay for (i.e. protect in the methodology) subsidised bus routes which are used to take entitled students from home to school, where on the whole it is cheaper for us to do so, instead of paying for separate dedicated school transport. (This will vary routes available on a year by year basis as school cohorts change).
    - iii. Ensure a consistent methodology by treating all providers in the same way, whether they are external providers, OCC fleet or community transport providers.

*N.B. If cabinet approves this request, then approximately two-thirds of the subsidies due to be withdrawn would cease in April 2016, and the remaining third would cease in June 2016. The £2.3m savings under option 2 would be realised in financial year 16/17, assuming notice was served in November / December 2015.*

*The exact details cannot be finalised at this stage due to variables including whether contract renewal renegotiations are required, which could alter costs.*



- (c) Cease funding the Dial a Ride service as of April 2016.

### **Delivery of further savings subject to Council approval**

Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (d) to note the delivery of further savings to deliver the full £3.7m savings by the withdrawal of all bus subsidies, subject to full council's approval in February 2016 to further reduce the Supported Transport budget and to note that the full £3.7m savings, would be realised once all contract termination processes have been completed.

*N.B. If Council approves this request, then the subsidies would cease at the following time:*

- *50% of subsidies (59/118 services) require 17 weeks' notice and could terminate on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016, assuming notice was served on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016.*
- *31% of subsidies (37/118 services) require 16 weeks' notice but also require 16 weeks to modify the "Authorised Change Date". This means they would take 32 weeks to terminate. They could therefore terminate on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016, assuming notice to change the "Authorised Change Date" was served on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016, and notice to terminate the contract was served 16 weeks later on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016.*
- *9% of subsidies (11/118 services) require 16 weeks' notice and could terminate on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016, assuming notice was served on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016. These are services operated by Oxfordshire County Council.*
- *9% of subsidies (11/118 services) will expire naturally on or before the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.*

*Annex E to the report shows which routes fall into each category.*

### **Allocation of one-off, pump-prime funding**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** not to allocate the £500K reserve but instead noted that once the council's future funding position is clearer Cabinet would establish a broader pump priming fund (along the lines of the Big Society Fund) that could include community transport along with other similar initiatives.

### **Exploring a new approach to Transport**

The Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- (e) approve the suggested implementation approach, including the request to explore the option of undertaking a larger scale

commissioning exercise which includes a range of supported transport services, in addition to subsidised bus services.

*N.B. Depending on the Cabinet's decision on whether to withdraw all bus subsidies and subject to Council's decision on the Supported Transport budget this commissioning exercise will either include the remainder of the subsidy budget, or exclude it if cabinet decides to withdraw all funding*

### **105/15 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID TERM REVIEW (2014/15)**

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet considered a report that set out the Treasury Management activity undertaken in the first half of the financial year 2015/16 in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice. The report included Debt and Investment activity, Prudential Indicator monitoring and forecast interest receivable and payable for the financial year. Lewis Gosling attended for this item.

Councillor Stratford introduced the contents of the report. In moving the recommendation he thanked the Treasury Management Team for their work. A view endorsed by cabinet who appreciated the careful approach that also gave decent returns

***The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the report, and to RECOMMEND Council to note the Council's Mid-Term Treasury Management Review 2015/16.***

### **106/15 STAFFING REPORT - QUARTER 2 - 2015**

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet considered an update on staffing numbers and related activity for the period 1 July 2015 to 30 September 2015.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to note the report.

### **107/15 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS**

(Agenda Item. 9)

The Cabinet considered a list of items for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet.

**RESOLVED:** to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.

.....in the Chair

Date of signing.....2015

ROUTE EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME  
HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT CONTRACTS: NUMBER OF STUDENTS CARRIED AND DAILY COST PER STUDENT

| ALL STUDENTS |                            |                          |                              | MAINSTREAM STUDENTS |                            |                          |                              | SEN STUDENTS |                            |                          |                              |
|--------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Month        | Number of students carried | Overall cost per day (£) | Cost per student per day (£) | Month               | Number of students carried | Overall cost per day (£) | Cost per student per day (£) | Month        | Number of students carried | Overall cost per day (£) | Cost per student per day (£) |
| Apr-13       | 10227                      | 79957                    | 7.82                         | Apr-13              | 9231                       | 45254                    | 4.90                         | Apr-13       | 996                        | 34703                    | 34.84                        |
| Jul-13       | 10279                      | 86566                    | 8.42                         | Jul-13              | 9107                       | 45654                    | 5.01                         | Jul-13       | 1172                       | 40912                    | 34.91                        |
| Oct-13       | 10174                      | 82757                    | 8.13                         | Oct-13              | 9087                       | 45782                    | 5.04                         | Oct-13       | 1087                       | 36975                    | 34.02                        |
| Jan-14       | 10266                      | 87862                    | 8.56                         | Jan-14              | 9066                       | 45613                    | 5.03                         | Jan-14       | 1200                       | 42249                    | 35.21                        |
| Apr-14       | 10348                      | 85817                    | 8.29                         | Apr-14              | 9242                       | 45739                    | 4.95                         | Apr-14       | 1106                       | 40079                    | 36.24                        |
| Jul-14       | 10308                      | 86910                    | 8.43                         | Jul-14              | 9144                       | 45332                    | 4.96                         | Jul-14       | 1164                       | 41578                    | 35.72                        |
| Oct-14       | 10215                      | 85906                    | 8.41                         | Oct-14              | 9170                       | 43560                    | 4.75                         | Oct-14       | 1045                       | 42346                    | 40.52                        |
| Jan-15       | 10215                      | 91252                    | 8.93                         | Jan-15              | 9017                       | 44481                    | 4.93                         | Jan-15       | 1198                       | 46771                    | 39.04                        |
| Apr-15       | 10126                      | 93124                    | 9.20                         | Apr-15              | 8837                       | 43306                    | 4.90                         | Apr-15       | 1289                       | 49818                    | 38.65                        |
| Jul-15       | 10064                      | 94198                    | 9.36                         | Jul-15              | 8778                       | 43364                    | 4.94                         | Jul-15       | 1286                       | 50834                    | 39.53                        |
| Oct-15       | 9594                       | 93737                    | 9.77                         | Oct-15              | 8368                       | 42553                    | 5.09                         | Oct-15       | 1226                       | 51184                    | 41.75                        |

Source: Transport contract data recorded in ONE system, report TCON001  
Data is for month end, except July which is at month start  
Prepared by James Drew, Nov 2015

