

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on 21 July 2009 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.52 pm.

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Keith R Mitchell CBE – in the chair

Councillor David Robertson
Councillor C.H. Shouler
Councillor Jim Couchman
Councillor Ian Hudspeth
Councillor Louise Chapman
Councillor Michael Waine
Councillor Rodney Rose
Councillor Mrs J. Heathcoat

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Alan Armitage (for Agenda Item 6)
Councillor Jean Fooks (for Agenda Item 11)
Councillor Janet Godden (for Agenda Item 12)

Officers:

Whole of meeting: S. Whitehead (Legal & Democratic Services).

Part of meeting:

Agenda Item	Officer Attending
5	L. Baxter (Financial Planning), T. Chapple
6	L. Baxter and Kathy Wilcox (Financial Planning)
7	Director for Environment & Economy, Howard Cox (Sustainable Development)
8	Director for Environment & Economy, Ian Walker (Sustainable Development)
9	A. Milward (Children, Young People & Families)
10	Head of Partnership Working

The Cabinet 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 and schedule, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

68/09 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor David Robertson declared a personal interest in Item 9, Madley Brook Primary School as Chair of Governors. He took no part in the discussion or voting thereon

69/09 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2009 were approved and signed.

Matters Arising

Minute No 66/09 – The School Organisation Stakeholders Group had been omitted from the original annex and the Cabinet confirmed that appointment to that Group be on the basis of political proportionality.

70/09 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

The following requests to address the meeting had been agreed:-

Request from	Agenda Item
Mr Hugh-Jones	11

Mr Hugh Jones speaking on agenda item 11, Implementing the Manifesto Pledges, expressed concern at the impact of the pledge to freeze Council tax on those people who relied on council services. He queried why no mention had been made of the 10% efficiency savings before the election. He referred to a number of possible savings and in referring to the improvements in the services for older people questioned what was to be done for people with disabilities who did not fit into that category.

At this point Councillor John Tanner sought permission for parents attending the meeting to address it on a matter not on the agenda. The Chairman referred to the rules in relation to addressing the Cabinet meeting as set out in the constitution and ruled the request out of order.

71/09 TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN (Agenda Item 5)

The Cabinet considered a report (CA5) which set out the Council's Treasury Management Outturn financial position for the 2008/09 financial year.

The report fulfilled the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2001 requirement for the receipt of an annual report summarising the Treasury Management activity within 6 months of year-end.

The Council's external debt had increased from £392.38m on 1 April 2007 to £402.38m on 31 March 2009. All new long-term debt had been arranged through the Public Works Loans Board. The weighted average rate of interest paid on long-term debt during 2008/09 was 4.9578%.

Security and liquidity of cash had been prioritised over returns and the council had adopted a cautious approach to lending to financial institutions, temporarily suspending those on ratings watch negative from the lending list. The council had also imposed a maximum lending limit of 3 months in the latter half of the financial year.

The council had achieved an in-house deposit return of 5.16% and continued to use 2 external fund managers, Investec and Scottish Widows Investment Partnership (SWIP). Investec had earned an average return of 7.78% and SWIP 5.43%.

The Strategic Measures interest on balances outturn was £7.516m compared to a budget of £4.935m. It was noted that the additional net interest earned was as a result of higher temporary cash balances, due to capital programme slippage and higher than budgeted interest received as a result of the 'credit crunch'.

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Property referred to the difficult financial situation in the last year and gave credit to the Assistant Chief Executive & Chief Finance Officer and her team for achieving the best possible outcomes.

RESOLVED: to note the Council's treasury management activity carried out in 2008/09

72/09 FINANCIAL MONITORING (Agenda Item 6)

The Cabinet considered the second financial monitoring report (CA6) for the 2009/10 financial year that covered the period up to the end of May 2009 for both revenue and capital budgets.

An in-year overspend for the Directorates was forecast to be £2.743m.

The year-end forecast of general balances showed a forecast of £14.326m. After taking into account the forecast Directorate outturn, the consolidated revenue balances forecast was £11.538m.

Councillor Armitage, speaking as Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance & Property commented on the report. In particular he noted that he would be monitoring the position with regard to Shared Services and expressed some surprise at the late discovery of the savings referred to in part 4 of the report.

Cabinet Members responded to the individual points made. The Cabinet Member for Finance & Property explained the background to the need for

efficiency savings referred to in part 4. He drew attention to the additional recommendation set out in the addenda asking Directors to prepare proposals.

RESOLVED: to:

- (a) note the report;
- (b) approve the virements as set out in Annex 2a; and
- (c) approve the supplementary estimate request as set out in Annex 2f and paragraph 13;
- (d) That, on the basis of planning ahead of setting the next Medium Term Financial Plan, Directors prepare proposals for addressing the new savings targets, referred to in part 4 of the report.

73/09 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS TO SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE
(Agenda Item 7)

The Cabinet considered a report (CA7) which presented a summary of the developer contributions secured by the county council through the planning process for 2008/09, identifying the financial contributions negotiated, received and spent throughout the year.

The report showed that 102 planning obligations were completed in 2008/09 securing the largest annual financial contributions to the county council for future infrastructure provision. The total secured was £72.69M. The report showed the actual amount of contributions received in the year to be £5.611M with £5.884M expended.

RESOLVED: to note the information reported on the developer contributions negotiated and received through the planning process in 2008/09.

74/09 PLANNING FOR SPACES FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE (PARTIAL REVIEW OF THE SOUTH EAST PLAN)
(Agenda Item 8)

Cabinet was advised that the Government was consulting on the number of new pitches that each local authority should provide by 2016 for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (GTTS) as recommended to it by the former South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) as a partial review of The South East Plan (adopted May 2009). Cabinet considered a report (CA8) that outlined the new policy (H7) that was being recommended for inclusion in the South East Plan, what it meant for Oxfordshire and advised how the County Council should respond.

RESOLVED: to support new Policy H7 and supporting text as the County Council's response to the consultation on the South East Plan.

75/09 MADLEY BROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL
(Agenda Item 9)

Cabinet considered a report (CA9) that detailed a proposal to increase the Madley Brook Primary School admission number from 30 to 45, which had been the subject of an informal consultation in Witney. A decision was sought as to whether to proceed to issuing a statutory notice to expand the school, in accordance with The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended by The School Organisation and Governance (Amendments) (England) Regulations 2007 which came into force on 21 January 2008).

RESOLVED: to approve the publication of a statutory notice for the expansion of Madley Brook Primary School, Witney.

76/09 PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE
(Agenda Item 10)

Cabinet considered a report (CA10) setting out the findings of a review of the governance arrangements of the partnerships responsible for delivery of the targets in the Oxfordshire 2030 Delivery Plan that had been commissioned by the Public Service Board.

During discussion the following points were made:

- (1) Reference to the Executive Member in relation to Oxfordshire County Council to be changed throughout the document to Cabinet Member.
- (2) Spatial Planning & Infrastructure Partnership – it was proposed that the County Council have two places – the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Growth & infrastructure.
- (3) Health & Well Being Partnership :
 - it was proposed that the Independent Chairman of the Safeguarding Adults Board be given a place.
 - it was noted that clarification was needed of County Council membership to make it clear that the Deputy Leader was on the Partnership.

RESOLVED: subject to the above comments to agree the governance principles and membership.

77/09 IMPLEMENTING THE MANIFESTO PLEDGES
(Agenda item 11)

The Cabinet considered a report (CA11) which set out the way in which the election manifesto pledges made will be taken forward by the new administration in the short and medium term.

Councillor Fooks, speaking as the Opposition Deputy Leader, raised a number of issues on the report, including the lack of detail in relation to climate change and reducing emissions. She also expressed concern at the impact of the pledge on Council tax.

Cabinet Members responded to the comments made.

RESOLVED: to endorse the report and to receive further reports on the specific items for information.

78/09 SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES IN OXFORDSHIRE: AN UPDATE FOLLOWING LORD LAMING'S REVIEW

(Agenda Item 12)

The Cabinet considered a report (CA12) which provided Cabinet with a summary of the findings of Lord Laming's review of Safeguarding and Child Protection services, commissioned following the death in Haringey, in 2007, of Baby Peter.

It set out the actions taken to improve safeguarding services in Oxfordshire, including a new and comprehensive Quality Assurance Framework.

Councillor Janet Godden made a number of observations relating to working more closely with schools; welcoming reference to mentoring; noting that the framework was more about process than outcomes and welcoming the additional funding for social workers.

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Families responded to the points made. She commented that a report was needed on the ICT reporting.

RESOLVED: to:

- (a) note the content of the report, including the increased County Council investment
- (b) approve the proposed framework for providing Quality Assurance of the Council's Safeguarding and Child Protection activity

79/09 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS
(Agenda Item 13)

The Cabinet considered a list of items (CA13) for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet together with changes and additions set out in the schedule of addenda.

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

.....in the Chair

Date of signing.....2009