

## CABINET

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 20 September 2011 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.30 pm.

### **Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor Keith R. Mitchell CBE – in the Chair  
Councillor David Robertson (Deputy Chairman)  
Councillor Arash Fatemian  
Councillor Jim Couchman  
Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale  
Councillor Kieron Mallon  
Councillor Mrs J. Heathcoat  
Councillor Melinda Tilley

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillor David Turner (Agenda Item 8)  
Councillor Roy Darke (Agenda Item 10)

### **Officers:**

Whole of meeting	Joanna Simons Chief Executive; Sue Whitehead, Chief Executives Office
Part of Meeting	
Item	Officer
6	Kathy Wilcox, Corporate Finance
7	Lorna Baxter, Corporate Finance
8	Mark Copping and Andrew Fairweather, Oxfordshire Customer Service
9	Colin Thomas, Deputy Chief Fire Officer
10	Alexandra Bailey, Corporate Performance & Review Manager
11	Alexandra Bailey, Corporate Performance & Review Manager,
12	Steve Munn, Head of Human Resources

*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.*

### **101/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

(Agenda Item. 1)

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillor Louise Chapman and Councillor Rodney Rose.

## **102/11 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2011 were approved and signed.

## **103/11 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

(Agenda Item. 4)

Councillor Roy Darke had given notice of the following two questions to the Cabinet Member for Finance & Property

1. "Given the large number of changes in prospect for local government finance and the serious implications that these will have on the County Council's budget will the Cabinet Member ensure that all members are fully briefed about the changes and their impacts?"

Councillor Couchman replied:

"We are planning to include any updates on Local Government Resource Review (LGRR) on the planned Member briefings which happen throughout the budget process, although we have also added in another one, 29th September - following on after Strategy & Partnerships Scrutiny Committee - to ensure that members are informed of the consultation details in plenty of time before the required response on 24th October."

2. "The 2011/12 Financial Monitoring and Business Strategy Delivery report includes substantial carry forwards and virements. Are the current arrangements for reporting and discussing these fit for purpose? Surely the relevant scrutiny committees should be where these are discussed rather than solely by the Cabinet?"

Councillor Couchman replied:

"Virements are regulated under the Constitution Part 3.3 which is updated as part of the Budget process – please see Council Agenda for 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011 Agenda item 8 (annex 7) Service & Resource Planning 2011/12 – 2015/16 Virement Rules 2011/12.

Virements for approval or noting are reported to Cabinet in the Financial Monitoring & Business Strategy Delivery Report each month. If a virement is permanent and involves a major change of policy or is a temporary virement of more than £500,000, then Council's approval is required. In the case of the virements approved by Council on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2011, the sums for Carry Forward for CEF, S&CS and E & E were all of more than £500,000 and represented the outturn carry forward sums from 2010/11. The details of these virements had been considered by the Strategy & Partnerships Scrutiny Committee meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> July 2011 at agenda item 6 – Provisional Outturn Overview, commentary by the Cabinet Member for Finance. The

Strategy & Partnerships Scrutiny Committee also considers the Financial Monitoring Reports on a Quarterly basis.

Of course there is nothing to stop any Scrutiny Committee deciding to examine virements pertinent to its responsibilities but I do not consider that it would be a good use of its valuable time.”

## **104/11 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item. 5)

A petition was submitted to the meeting on behalf of Mr M Madden protesting against the new Health & Safety regulations at Redbridge Recycling Centre.

The following requests to address the meeting had been agreed:

Item 8 – Councillor David Turner – Shadow Cabinet Member for Transport.

Item 9 – Rachel Dobson, Green Watch, Fire Control FBU Brigade Organiser & Control Branch Representative, Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service.

Item 10 – Councillor Darke, local Member

## **105/11 2011/12 FINANCIAL MONITORING & BUSINESS STRATEGY DELIVERY REPORT - JULY 2011**

(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet considered a report that covered the period to the end of July 2011 for both revenue and capital budgets and which focussed on significant issues and risks around the delivery of the Directorate Business Strategies which were agreed as part of the Service and Resource Planning Process for 2011/12 – 2015/16.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Property introduced the report highlighting a number of elements in the report including the slippage in the business strategy and the overspend in pooled budgets. He also referred to the savings achieved through the closure of Cricket Road and changes to the capital programme to maximise spend.

During discussion the Leader commented that there was no longer reference to the impact of school reorganisation as this had been written off and the cost borne successfully.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- a) note the report;
- b) approve the virement requests set out in Annex 2a and Supplementary Estimate requests to allocate the Performance Reward Grant set out in Annex 2e and paragraphs 40 to 43;
- c) approve the changes to the Capital Programme set out in Annex 9c.

## **106/11 BUSINESS STRATEGY AND SERVICE & RESOURCE PLANNING REPORT FOR 2012/13 - 2016/17**

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet considered a report that gave background and context to the service and resource planning process for 2012/13 – 2016/17.

Cabinet recognised the opportunities to grow income provided by the changes to business rates and welcomed the Enterprise Zone.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) note the report;
- (b) adopt the Summary of the Corporate Plan Proposals at Annex 2 to inform preparation of the Corporate Plan; and
- (c) approve the Service and Resource Planning process for 2012/13.

## **107/11 OXFORDSHIRE CONCESSIONARY FARES SCHEME - APPLICATION AND PASS ISSUING**

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet considered options for operating and managing the scheme from April 2012 including the approach to the application process for and issuing of Concessionary Travel passes for residents who qualify on age or disability grounds following the end of the current agency agreement with District and City Councils. Cabinet noted that the Deputy Leader was the responsible Cabinet Member and recommendation (b) was amended to reflect this.

Councillor David Turner, Shadow Cabinet Member for Transport commented that the meeting clashed with the Liberal Democrat Party Conference and that requests had previously been that Cabinet avoid a clash. With regard to the report Councillor Turner referred to duplication of provision in some areas of Oxfordshire and asked that Thame Library be considered as a location for the face to face service. He also sought some clarification of the religion and belief section of the full Social & Community Impact Assessment. He also queried the use of existing tokens.

Responding to a question from the Leader, Councillor David Turner indicated that he himself held no strong view on the wearing of the burkha for bus pass photographs but sought clarity on the policy.

Officers undertook to respond in writing to the queries raised.

Cabinet underlined the importance of communicating the changes to the public.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) agree that the Oxfordshire Customer Services Centre should now undertake an appropriate procurement process to select the most suitable supplier(s), and engage with said supplier(s) to provide a system for managing Concessionary Travel Pass applications and the production and issuing of the travel passes;
- (b) delegate authority to the Deputy Director Customer Services, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to agree any detail in relation to the management of all aspects of the Concessionary Fares Scheme Application & Pass Issuing processes during 2012/13;
- (c) agree that a permanent budget of £0.422m be vired to the Customer Service Centre in 2012/13 to manage the scheme;
- (d) agree that efficiency savings made by the CSC in subsequent years to be attributed to the CSC overall programme savings set out in the medium term financial plan; and
- (e) agree that a number of selected libraries and Oxfordshire County Council building receptions are equipped to provide a face-to-face service for those residents who will find it difficult or impossible to use an online system.

## **108/11 FIRE CONTROL ROOM 999 CALL RECEIPT AND MOBILISING OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

(Agenda Item. 9)

Following the termination of the Department for Communities and Local Government national FiReControl project, Cabinet approved Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service joint working with Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Authorities to create a Strategic Outline (business) Case for the provision of their collective Fire Control functions. This work has been concluded and the report set out the results and future options.

Rachel Dobson, Green Watch, Fire Control FBU Brigade Organiser & Control Branch Representative, Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service expressed disappointment at the recommendation to proceed with the joint Thames Valley facility. In particular she expressed concern at the resilience if partners pulled out part way through the process and asked that contingency plans be put in place. She urged the retention of the local control rooms with better communication and integration.

During discussion Cabinet congratulated Colin Thomas and the Cabinet Members for Transport and Safer & Stronger Communities on their stance on the FiReControl project which saw Oxfordshire being a beneficiary of the project whilst avoiding the financial penalties of the failed project.

The Cabinet Member for Safer & Stronger Communities proposed an amendment to the recommendations taking into account the possibility that any of the partners might choose not to proceed.

**RESOLVED:** subject to the approval by Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Authorities of the further progression of the Joint Thames Valley Approach to:

- (a) endorse the progression of phase 1 of the joint Thames Valley programme (Improved Resilience)
- (b) Approve the necessary expenditure to create the Full Business Case which will be subject to further approval by the Cabinet in February 2012
- (c) Require the CFO to report back to the Cabinet Member for Safer and Stronger Communities on a regular basis concerning:
  - (1) progress with the joint DCLG bid for the resilience grant funding
  - (2) progress with Thames Valley partnership working arrangements
  - (3) progress on the creation of a suitable governance structure

If either Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes or Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Authorities fail to approve the further progression of the Joint Thames Valley Approach in their Fire and Rescue Authority Meetings on the 28 September 2011 or if due to any parties subsequent choice not to enter into the Thames Valley arrangement in February 2012 Cabinet RESOLVED: to:

- (d) require the Chief Fire Officer to instigate appropriate actions to progress an alternative contingency plan, based on options 3 or 4 as identified in paragraph 21 in the report, subject to the approval of the Cabinet Member for Safer & Stronger Communities.

## **109/11 SAXON CENTRE - BIG SOCIETY FUND/ASSET TRANSFER POLICY**

(Agenda Item. 10)

Cabinet considered a report on a second bid to the Big Society Fund for the asset transfer of the Saxon Centre.

Councillor Darke, speaking as a local Member, regretted the loss of the youth service locally and emphasised that his concern was that any provision at the Saxon Centre should have a strong local focus for young people. He requested Cabinet to consider asking the Oxford Boxing Academy to make strenuous efforts to provide sessions at the Saxon Centre for local young people. He added that office space was being provided to One-eighty in the local community centre.

The Leader commended the local efforts to support One-eighty. He recognised the value of the One-eighty bid but overall local councillors had felt that the Oxford Boxing Academy was the stronger bid. There was no need to amend the recommendations as discussions with Oxford Boxing Academy were explicit about wanting youth provision.

**RESOLVED** to

- (a) uphold the decision to sell the Saxon Centre to the Oxford Boxing Academy; and
- (b) encourage One-eighty to work with the community centre in Northway and reconsider its application to the Big Society Fund in a future round of bidding.

### **110/11 CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR THE FIRST QUARTER 2011**

(Agenda Item. 11)

**RESOLVED:** to note the report.

### **111/11 ESTABLISHMENT REVIEW - SEPTEMBER 2011**

(Agenda Item. 12)

Cabinet received an update on activity since 31 March 2011. It gave details of the agreed establishment figure at 30 June 2011 in terms of Full Time Equivalents, together with the staffing position at 30 June 2011. In addition, the report provided information on vacancies and the cost of posts being covered by agency staff.

The Deputy Leader highlighted the reduction in staffing numbers and congratulated Human Resources and senior managers on the way in which the process was being handled. He recognised that many members of staff who were no longer with the Council through the need to implement the business strategies had performed well over many years

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) note the report;
- (b) confirm that the Establishment Review continues to meet the Cabinet's requirements in reporting and managing staffing numbers.

### **112/11 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS**

(Agenda Item. 13)

The Cabinet considered a list of items 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 .....