

## CABINET

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 17 January 2012 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 4.05 pm.

### Present:

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

### Other Members in Attendance:

### Officers:

Whole of meeting Joanna Simons (Chief Executive); S. Whitehead (Chief Executive's Office)

### Part of Meeting

Item	Name
6	K. Wilcox (Corporate Finance)
7	M. Scott, Senior Policy & Improvement Manager
8	Sue Scane, Assistant Chief Executive & Chief Finance Officer; L. Baxter (Corporate Finance)
9	J. Disley (Transport Policy & Strategy)
10	S. Livadeas, Deputy Director Joint Commissioning
11	S. Livadeas, Deputy Director Joint Commissioning; A. Nursey (Joint Commissioning)
12	Steve Howell, Deputy Director Highways & Transport; J. Disley (Transport Policy & Strategy); Chris Spry (Public Transport Development)

*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.*

## 1/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Agenda Item. 2)

Councillor Arash Fatemian declared a personal interest as a frequent user of the No. 35 bus on which he commented as a successful example of RPI.

**2/12 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 December 2011 were approved and signed.

**3/12 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

(Agenda Item. 4)

No questions were received.

**4/12 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item. 5)

The following requests to address the meeting had been agreed:

Item 7 – Councillor Roz Smith, Shadow Cabinet Member for Police & Policy Co-ordination

Item 8 – Councillor Michael Waine, speaking as the Chairman of the Strategic Review Board for Formula Funding (at the invitation of the Leader).

Item 9 – Councillor David Turner, Shadow Cabinet Member for Transport  
Councillor Mrs Catherine Fulljames speaking as a local member with regard to HS2.

Item 11 – Councillor Zoé Patrick, Leader of the Opposition, in the absence of the Shadow Cabinet Member

Item 12 – Councillor David Turner, Shadow Cabinet Member for Transport

Item 13 – Cllr Zoé Patrick, Leader of the Opposition

Item 14 – Councillor Jean Fooks, Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Councillor Fooks, speaking on agenda item 14, recognised the role played by Appeal Panel members and welcomed the recommendations. She asked that they be written to with thanks for the job that they carried out. Councillor Mitchell replied that if the recommendation was agreed then he was sure that such thanks would form part of the notification of that decision.

**5/12 2011/12 FINANCIAL MONITORING & BUSINESS STRATEGY DELIVERY REPORT - NOVEMBER 2011**

(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet considered a report that set out the forecast position for each Directorate. This included the delivery of the Directorate Business Strategies which were agreed as part of the Service and Resource Planning Process for 2011/12 – 2015/16. Parts 1 and 2 of the report included projections for revenue, reserves and balances as at the end of November 2011. The Capital monitoring was included at Part 3.

**RESOLVED:** to:

(a) note the report and approve the virements as set out in Annex 2a;

- (b) agree the bad debt write off as set out in paragraph 33; and
- (c) agree the creation of the new reserve as set out in paragraph 39.

## **6/12 THE NEW COUNCIL PLAN**

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet considered the draft Council Plan before its submission to the full Council meeting.

Councillor Roz Smith raised a number of specific concerns and made the general point that the report assumed that the Council was in a comfortable position. Amongst the concerns raised were issues around the percentage of the workforce in Oxfordshire in the public sector; the rapidly growing population; the lack of proposals for cyclists and pedestrians; educational attainment; breaking the cycle of deprivation and concerns about cuts and the impact on staff morale and service provided. She looked forward to the measurement annex being added.

Responding to questions Councillor Smith accepted that some cuts were inevitable but the Liberal Democrat group would take a different approach with different priorities and a slowing or pausing in the rate of cuts.

Councillor Tilley responding to comments from Councillor Smith about the numbers of children undertaking long taxi journeys to school queried the numbers involved as the County Council had one of the best records in this regard. Councillor Smith was aware of 4 or 5 instances and could provide details.

The Leader in introducing the contents of the report commented that the report built on the existing Plan and he highlighted changes. During discussion Cabinet Members responded to the points raised. The Leader referred to the progress around deprivation and unemployment at a time of constraint of which the Cabinet was proud.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the Council's draft Corporate Plan going before Council on 7th February 2012.

## **7/12 BUSINESS STRATEGY AND SERVICE & RESOURCE PLANNING REPORT FOR 2012/13 - 2016/17 - JANUARY 2012**

(Agenda Item. 8)

The report by the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer was the final report to Cabinet in the series on the Business Strategy and Service & Resource Planning process for 2012/13 to 2016/17, providing councillors with information on budget issues for 2012/13 and the medium term. The report set out the latest information on the Council's financial position, included the Treasury Management Strategy for 2012/13 and considered the capital funding, including an updated Capital Programme.

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Property had prepared a separate report, which set out the basis for the Cabinet's proposals to Council for the 2012/13 budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to 2016/17. This took into consideration comments on the draft budget proposals from the individual Scrutiny Committees in December 2011 as well as the latest information on the Council's financial position. It also took account of the public consultation on the budget.

Councillor Michael Waine, speaking as the Chairman of the Strategic Review Board for Formula Funding (at the invitation of the Leader) thanked Bob Wintringham as Chairman and members of the Project Group for the work they had undertaken which had focussed on Special Needs. This was a contentious area and with consultation on a proposal being inconclusive no action was recommended to the School Forum. However schools were being encouraged to come forward as pathfinders and the Review Board would continue. Councillor Waine also welcomed the people's premium.

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Property moved the recommendations highlighting overall progress against the Business Strategy and achievements and key issues in each of the Directorates. He emphasised that the challenging financial environment would continue in the next and future years

Sue Scane, Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer referred to the additional information contained in the addenda and that the final grant settlement and figures on the collection fund was awaited.

Councillor Chapman thanked officers for all the work involved.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) (in respect of revenue) **RECOMMEND** Council to approve:
  - (1) a budget for 2012/13 and a medium term plan to 2016/17, based on the proposals set out by the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance;
  - (2) a council tax requirement (precept) for 2012/13;
  - (3) a council tax for band D equivalent properties;
  - (4) virement arrangements to operate within the approved budget;
- (b) (in respect of treasury management) **RECOMMEND** Council to approve:
  - (1) the Treasury Management Strategy Statement ;
  - (2) Prudential Indicators from April 2012;
  - (3) that in relation to the 2012/13 strategy any further changes required be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance.
- (c) **RECOMMEND** Council to approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Methodology Statement as set out in paragraphs 10 to 13 of Annex 7.

- (d) (in respect of capital) **RECOMMEND** Council to approve:
  - (1) the updated Capital Strategy, Corporate Asset Management Plan and Transport Asset Management Plan;
  - (2) a Capital Programme for 2011/12 to 2016/17;
  - (3) Prudential Indicators from April 2012.
- (e) to delegate authority to the Leader of the Council, following consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, to make appropriate changes to the proposed budget.

## **8/12 RAIL STRATEGY FOR OXFORDSHIRE**

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet considered a report that set out the proposed Rail Strategy for Oxfordshire, to cover the period up to 2034 which included the next four rail 'control periods' for investment.

Councillor David Turner, Shadow Cabinet Member for Transport welcomed the Rail Strategy designed so that the County would have a chance of achieving its rail priorities. He made a suggestion for a change to the Strategy by the addition of the word holidays in the first paragraph of the executive summary after the words 'and for leisure days out'. He commented that reference to working with the Department of Transport, Network Rail and train companies in recent years was misleading as the improvements to Cotswold line had taken great efforts over 16 years. He welcomed the aim of gaining the long overdue Grove/Wantage rail head and the recognition of the importance of the Culham station to the science park. He expressed disappointment that no consideration seems to have been given to extending the Henley branch line to Oxford.

Councillor Mrs Catherine Fulljames, as local member for the Division affected by the proposed High Speed 2, spoke against the proposals on the grounds of cost, impact on residents affected and lack of environmental assessment. She raised concerns about the practical operation of the service and suggested that should the proposals go ahead then a Community Forum be set up covering the 4 villages affected. Responding to a question from a cabinet member she indicated that she had had no time to look at HS1 and the impact it had had 10 years on. The Leader emphasised the position taken by the Council to oppose HS2 on business case and cost.

The Cabinet Member for Transport in moving the recommendations highlighted the main issues and opportunities recognised in the Strategy. He thanked John Disley and his team for the work involved in producing the draft Strategy.

During discussion Cabinet welcomed the Strategy and raised a number of points that included: the need for parking at Hanborough Station; that the Strategy needed to be considered along side the Local Transport Plan and

the Minerals and Waste Development Framework; the importance of raising the quality of rail services and the leadership role of the County Council in ensuring a proper focus on place.

**RESOLVED:** to

- (a) approve for stakeholder consultation the draft Rail Strategy for Oxfordshire as set out in Annex 2 of this report, subject to the inclusion of the statement on HS2 as set out in the addenda being included in the draft Strategy under the heading High Speed 2; and
- (b) propose that a final version of this Strategy is brought back for approval by Cabinet (and incorporated into an updated LTP3 for Oxfordshire), taking into account views expressed.

## **9/12 JOINT STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING ARRANGEMENTS WITH NHS BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND OXFORDSHIRE CLUSTER PCT**

(Agenda Item. 10)

Cabinet considered a report setting out proposals relating to the Section 75 NHS Act 2006 Mental Health Pooled Commissioning Budget Agreement between Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust (OPCT) and Specialist and targeted Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

**RESOLVED:** to

- (a) approve the proposals: to widen the scope of the Mental Health strategy as set out in paragraph 12; to extend the current s75 to April 2013 to transfer the Council's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAM funding for specialist and targeted HS) into the section 75 agreement; and
- (b) to grant delegated powers to Directors and s151 officers to develop and sign off the section 75 agreement.

## **10/12 RIDGEWAY PARTNERSHIP MERGER/ACQUISITION**

(Agenda Item. 11)

Cabinet considered a report that outlined the process and progress to date on a decision to include the services purchased from Ridgeway Partnership by Oxfordshire County Council in the NHS merger/acquisitions process and seeking confirmation of its intention to continue to include the services purchased by the Council in the acquisitions process.

Councillor Zoé Patrick, Leader of the Opposition acknowledged that the Council could not do much but was pleased that it was included in the Commissioning process. She was acutely aware of the vulnerable nature of the clients of the service and that often they were not able to speak for themselves. Going forward good monitoring was essential. She asked that in

view of the risk set out in paragraph 16, the final decision be considered jointly with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Property.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Services in moving the recommendations referred to the robust process outlined in the report and that he was happy to accept the suggestion from Councillor Patrick about the final decision.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) to confirm that, on the basis of the processes so far, the Council is willing to continue with the services it purchases from Ridgeway Partnership being included as part of the business to be acquired; and
- (b) that the final approval to proceed with the transfer of the services the Council purchases to the preferred bidder be delegated to the Cabinet Members for Adult Services and Finance & Property.

## **11/12 RENEWAL OF REAL TIME INFORMATION (RTI) SYSTEM CONTRACT**

(Agenda Item. 12)

Cabinet considered a report that sought approval for continuation of the Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) services currently provided by Oxfordshire County Council and its project partners, Oxford Bus Company, Stagecoach in Oxfordshire and Thames Travel Ltd, for bus users throughout Oxfordshire.

Councillor David Turner, Shadow Cabinet Member for Transport clarified that he no longer had any interest to declare as he had not worked in this sector for five years. In supporting the use of RTPI he stressed that it was particularly effective at increasing passenger usage in rural areas where buses were less frequent. It increased passenger confidence that a bus was on its way and therefore use increased leading to a more robust service requiring fewer subsidies. He noted the lack of proposals to expand the use of RTPI bus traffic light priority systems and hoped that more advantage could be taken of the benefits to be gained from such systems in future. He queried the information contained in Annex 1 that RTPI information was available between Garsington and Watlington and asked what progress had been made in the integration of software systems between one supplier and another.

In response Steve Howell advised that between Garsington and Watlington the RTPI was in the form of a text messaging service. Work was ongoing to resolve issues around the differing software used. Responding to a query from Councillor Fatemian, Chris Spry explained that the use of full RTPI or text messaging was often the result of requests from Parish Councils or public demand. It was confirmed that the choice of service was not based on any technical reason.

**RESOLVED:** to

- (a) authorise the Deputy Director (Highways & Transport), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, to award the contract for RTPi based on the recommendations contained in this report to Cloud Amber Ltd;
- (b) authorise the use of Highways & Transport budgets for the continued maintenance of RTPi services as detailed in section 22 of this report until 30th March 2016; and
- (c) authorise the Deputy Director, Highways & Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport to approve up to two years contract extension with suitable budgetary provision, subject to the contractor achieving appropriate standards of service delivery.

## **12/12 MILITARY CHAMPIONS**

(Agenda Item. 13)

Cabinet considered a report seeking the appointment of military champions focusing on each of the military bases in Oxfordshire. Cabinet noted that reference to Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure against Councillor Fatemian's name in paragraph 1 of the report was incorrect and should be deleted.

Councillor Zoé Patrick, Leader of the Opposition, supported the proposals and suggested that Councillor David Turner fill the vacancy shown in the report.

Cabinet Members responding to comments made confirmed that the quarterly reports were written by the Champions themselves. The Leader highlighted the nature of the role and the experience of the Councillors proposed for it. He moved the recommendations with the addition of Councillor Bill Service in respect of RAF Benson.

**RESOLVED:** to appoint the following Councillors as Military Champions:

- 1. Bicester Garrison : Cllr Kieron Mallon
- 2. RAF Brize Norton: Cllr Donald Robert Seale
- 3. Abingdon Station: Cllr Sandy Lovatt
- 4. Vauxhall Barracks: Cllr Tony Harbour
- 5. RAF Benson: Councillor Bill Service
- 6. Defence Academy Shrivenham: Cllr Keith Mitchell  
(as Leader of the Council)



**13/12 INDEPENDENT ADMISSION APPEALS - PANEL MEMBER ARRANGEMENTS**

(Agenda Item. 14)

Cabinet considered a report that reviewed the present panel members' allowances and asked the Cabinet to make recommendations to the full Council to determine rates and arrangements for their payment.

The Leader emphasised that the statutory role was both voluntary and demanding and that he thought it appropriate to keep the existing rates.

**RESOLVED:** to **RECOMMEND** the Council:

- (a) to approve, for school admission and exclusion appeal panel members, the same travel and subsistence allowances as are payable to members of the Council, subject to the same requirements as to the submission of claims and the supply of evidence except that the rate for the first 10,000 miles claimed for car travel be set at 40p per mile and not 35p per mile;
- (b) to continue to pay £100 per day as the maximum amount payable to a school admission or exclusion appeal panel member for financial loss necessarily incurred as a result of attendance at an appeal panel hearing, subject to sufficient documentary evidence being produced to identify actual loss; and
- (c) that the revised allowances and rates be effective from 1 April 2011.

**14/12 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS**

(Agenda Item. 15)

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 .....