

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 15 September 2015 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 4.08 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

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Brighthouse (Agenda Item 7)
Councillor Nick Hards (Agenda Item 7)
Councillor Suzanna Pressel (Agenda Item 7)
Councillor Gill Sanders (Agenda Item 7)
Councillor John Christie (Agenda Item 9)

Officers:

Whole of meeting	Peter Clark, County Solicitor & Monitoring Officer; Sue Whitehead (Chief Executive's Office)
Part of meeting	
Item No	Name
6	Lorna Baxter, Chief Finance Officer
7	Jim Leivers, Director for Children's Services
8	John Jackson, Director of Adult Services
12	Bev Hindle, Deputy Director Strategy & Infrastructure Planning.

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.

74/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Hibbert Biles and Councillor Stratford.

75/15 MINUTES

(Agenda Item. 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2015 were approved and signed as a correct record.

76/15 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda Item. 4)

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

‘Would the Cabinet member tell me what she believes the likely impact will be on children, parents and the wider community if the Donnington Doorstep Family Centre and/or the Grandpont Children’s Centre (in my Isis division in Oxford) lose their County Council funding and are forced to contract or close in future years?’

Councillor Tilley replied:

“Whatever the outcome of the consultation in relation to the future shape of children’s social care referred to in today’s Cabinet paper, we are determined to support vulnerable children and their families, but can no longer necessarily directly support universal services. I would draw attention to wording in today’s Cabinet paper which makes the point that“.. some universal serviceswill no longer be provided directly by the county council. The council is however committed to helping local communities develop or retain their universal provision for children. It is proposed that work will be undertaken to ascertain whether local communities would wish to deliver these services and if so how this could be best achieved.”

Supplementary: Councillor Tanner asked whether the cabinet member accepted the need for some universal services as raising a child was difficult and needed a “village” which was provided by the Children’s Centres. Councillor Tilley agreed that bringing up a child was difficult but commented that the problem faced by the County Council was that it had to find the savings.

77/15 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item. 5)

The following requests to address the meeting had been agreed:

Item 6 – Councillor Hards, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance
Item 7 – Emma Burnett, Cultivate Oxfordshire Ltd
Dr Sonia Bues – member of the public
Jo Lovell, member of the public
Claire El Mouden, member of the public
Charlie Payne – member of the public
James Kirkham, service user

Jill Huish – member of the public
Eleanor Pritchard, member of the public
Yan Wong, governor of a local nursery and children's centre
Katherine Harloe, service user
Juliet Corbett. Service user
Jenny Pawsey, service user
Marchelle Farrell, member of the public
Councillor Gill Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families
Councillor Nick Hards, local councillor
Councillor Suzanna Pressel, local councillor
Councillor Brighthouse, local councillor
Item 8 – Clive Hill,
Item 9 – Councillor John Christie, Opposition Deputy Leader

At this point Cabinet agreed to vary the order of the agenda.

78/15 FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS IN CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

(Agenda Item. 7)

In common with councils across England, Oxfordshire County Council have to make savings across all service areas as a result of reductions in government funding, pressures on all services and restrictions on ability to raise Council Tax. The Children, Education and Families Directorate need to find savings of £8 million.

The Council has developed a preferred model for a new 0-19 service based on integrating the services provided by Children's Centres, Early Intervention Hubs and Children's Social Care. This approach was recommended by the cross-party Cabinet Advisory Group set up to look at new ways of working.

The new service will focus on supporting children on child protection plans, children in need and those identified as vulnerable through Oxfordshire's Thriving Families programme. Cabinet had before them a report setting out options for approval for public consultation.

Emma Burnett, Cultivate Oxfordshire Ltd, spoke in support of the work of children's centres and illustrated their value by reference to her and her family's experiences. She suggested that the Council should use reserves to keep the centres open even if in a streamlined fashion so that buildings and staff were not lost. She asked that the Council give users and the voluntary sector a couple of years to find solutions.

Dr Sonia Bues, as a clinical psychologist commented that she dealt with people with entrenched problems and that early intervention was vital. Children's Centres provided this support. It was important that this was easily accessible, universal and non-stigmatising. She referred to press reports detailing how scores of children had been let down and asked that more children not be failed by the closure of the children's centres.

Jo Lovell, spoke both as a user and then a helper at a children's centres and referred to the help and support she had received at a difficult time.

Claire El Mouden, as a user of a children's centre highlighted, by reference to her own experience, why universal access was important.

Charlie Payne, showed Cabinet photos of a children's centre session and shared with them comments of the parents there which expressed how much they valued the service provided.

James Kirkham, as a father had used the baby cafes and found them welcoming and without the children's centre he was not sure that he would have built his confidence as a father. He and his daughter felt part of a community and the parenting course he had taken had helped with his step son.

Jill Huish, a user of the service, expressed sadness and dismay at the proposed models all of which she felt to be wrong. The short term savings would be offset by more costly knock on effects. She referred to the wide range of services available through children's centres. She shared with Cabinet her experience highlighting the courses she had taken. She felt that the support from highly trained staff had avoided social worker intervention.

Eleanor Pritchard, informed Cabinet that she had used her local children's centre when she had felt alone and isolated. The centres were more than the sum of their valuable services and the economic case was only a partial picture. If the centre had not been available she would have had to go to her GP.

Yan Wong, governor of a local nursery and children's centre, stressed the importance of a universal service which was able to identify children in need of help. He did not feel that a referral service would do that. He suggested that the County Council should be joining with other local authorities to lobby central government to secure the long term future of centres.

Katherine Harloe, a service user detailed how her local children's centre had helped her and that she had been able to get to her local centre when she was unable to access other support. She feared that the proposals would mean that more families like hers would slip through the cracks in available support.

Juliet Corbett, spoke in support of the Children's Centres referring to the support provided to her and that she had used the Centre's often when she would not qualify for targeted support. She highlighted the economic case for the provision of the support provided by Children's Centres and referred to the strong evidence base for universal/targeted services.

Jenny Pawsey, highlighted the support she had received from the breakfast café which was a safe, welcoming and supportive space. Help was provided not just from professionals but from other attendees and there was a real community feel. A large number of people would be worse off if the centres

closed and given the time it had taken to build them up it would be tragic to lose that infrastructure now.

Marchelle Farrell, as a member of the public, had attended one of the listening events and she stated that the meeting had been told that no cost analysis had been carried out. It was irresponsible to make decisions without secure analysis. She added that the County Council had a new public health remit and that children's centres provide excellent public health services. She queried the wisdom of shutting them and then having to re-establish something to provide the necessary services.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to all the public speakers who had shown considerable courage in sharing their personal stories at a public meeting.

Councillor Gill Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families, commented that the central government cuts and the pressure on other services put the Council in an impossible position. She was saddened by what was proposed and labour councillors would be working to salvage what they could. She hoped that there would not be a need for further cuts and would want to ensure that the most deprived continued to receive the support they needed. The value of professionals could not be over-estimated. She added that labour councillors would be working with local groups to try and ensure that no children's centres close and that no children or families lost access to the valuable services provided by them. However it was necessary to be realistic about what could be provided and consultation was vital. She referred to her role on the Cabinet Advisory Group and stated that she had been glad to be a member and to contribute to the debate.

Councillor Nick Hards, speaking as a local councillor for Didcot West stated that reducing the number of Centres in Didcot from 3 to 1 would make access difficult. He referred to concentrations of families under the thriving families programme in places such as Farringdon, Wantage, Wallingford and Berinsfield and queried the ability of staff to manage from just 8 centres. He was concerned that the proposals would lead to children and families being stigmatised and queried what could be done to prevent this happening. The consultation was vital and there was a need to think about how the building could be used to be available to groups willing to provide services.

Councillor Suzanna Pressel, speaking as a local councillor for Jericho & Osney, referred to the moving stories that had been heard today and the points made such as there being no costed assessment of the impact of closures. She called on Cabinet Members to lobby the Prime Minister and to consider their position as a member of the ruling parliamentary party. She wanted to see all the centres remain open and more detail was needed on the proposals.

Councillor Brighouse, local councillor for Churchill & Lye Valley stated that the Labour group was committed to protecting the most vulnerable children, young people and families. As Chairman of Performance Scrutiny Committee

she asked that the Committee be allowed to look at the outcome of the consultation before it was considered by Cabinet. She commented that children's centres were all very different with varying funding and different ranges of services. It was clear that they had made an enormous difference to the parents speaking today who all had a story to tell. She asked that they go back to their communities and be involved through the consultation in coming back with suggestions that would make a difference. The Leader agreed that he was happy for the outcomes to be considered by Performance Scrutiny Committee before it came back to Cabinet.

Councillor Melinda Tilley, Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families introduced the contents of the report explaining the process followed to produce the proposals. She stressed that this was about moving to a consultation and that no decisions were being taken and that she welcomed good ideas coming forward. Jim Leivers, Director for Children's Services reiterated that Cabinet was being asked to agree a consultation but added that the decision to reduce the budget by £6m had already been taken as part of the Council budget setting. There were no simple options and use of reserves was not a viable option as a long term solution was needed to meeting the Council's statutory responsibilities.

During discussion Cabinet expressed sympathy for the views expressed today and the personal stories which could not fail to touch them. Several members referred to the support they had given to children's centres. Responding to a question from a Cabinet Member, Councillor Tilley advised that the majority of referrals to the MASH came from the police. Referrals to the County Council came from schools, GPs and then from children's centres. However Cabinet recognised the need to reduce the budget and supported the proposals as ensuring that the most vulnerable are reached. Cabinet would welcome working with local communities and for community solutions to come forward.

A Cabinet Member welcomed comments from Councillor Brighouse but was saddened that other councillors took up a political position.

Councillor Tilley in moving the recommendations commented that the Council still have the buildings and urged anyone wishing to run those universal services to come forward.

On a show of hands it was:

RESOLVED: (by 7 votes for to 0 against)to agree:

- that the options identified in the report be put forward for public consultation during the Autumn of 2015
- a further report outlining the outcome of the consultation along with detailed proposals for the future shape of services be produced for consideration by Performance Scrutiny Committee prior to Cabinet consideration in early 2016.

79/15 SERVICE & RESOURCE PLANNING REPORT - 2016/17 - SEPTEMBER 2015

(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet had before them the first in the series of reports on the Service & Resource Planning process for 2016/17 which will culminate in Council setting a budget for 2016/17 in February 2016. The report set the context and the starting point for the process, including:

- the assumptions on which the existing Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is based,
- known and potential financial issues for 2016/17 and beyond which impact on the existing MTFP, and
- a proposed process for Service & Resource Planning for 2016/17 including a timetable of events.

Councillor Nick Hards, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance expressed concern at the implications of the County Council being expected to cope with an un-costed commitment to a national living wage. He referred to a nursing home that had an efficient business model but would be adversely affected by the proposals and queried how the Council would cope if it or others changed hands or closed and asked that Councillor Heathcoat give it some consideration. Councillor Heathcoat asked that he write in with this request and commented that a lot of work was going on. He also commented on the difficulties faced within Children, Education & Families and noted that roads and highways was still of concern to the public. He was concerned at the effects of modelling cuts of 25 and 40%.

The Leader in moving the recommendations commented that there would be hard decisions to be made to deliver a balanced budget on 6 February. Lorna Baxter updated the expected timing of the spending review and settlement which did not change the planned approach.

RESOLVED: to:

- (a) note the report;
- (b) approve the Service and Resource Planning process for 2016/17; and
- (c) approve a four year period for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Programme to 2019/20.

80/15 CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE PROVISION OF INTERMEDIATE CARE IN NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet considered a report on a proposal for public consultation on the future of the way Intermediate Care is provided in North Oxfordshire. Intermediate Care is services which support people to avoid going into hospital or help people get back home as quickly as possible. The consultation was to ask for people's views on Intermediate Care continuing

to be provided through a bed-based service in Chipping Norton and on the development of home-based Intermediate Care.

The report outlined a proposal for public consultation on the future of the way Intermediate Care is provided in North Oxfordshire. Intermediate Care is services which support people to avoid going into hospital or help people get back home as quickly as possible. The consultation is asking for people's views on Intermediate Care continuing to be provided through a bed-based service in Chipping Norton and on the development of home-based Intermediate Care.

Clive Hill, Chipping Norton Hospital Steering Group, spoke to ask Cabinet to reconsider plans for Chipping Norton Hospital. He considered that the process was fatally flawed. He felt that comments by John Jackson were meant to intimidate local people by suggesting that they would lose everything by not agreeing to the plan.

He was increasingly confident that local people would be successful at a judicial review both on process and the outcome reached. He highlighted a number of reasons why the Steering Group believed that the plan should be suspended until what they would consider a proper review of healthcare in Oxfordshire had been carried out. This included issues on bed blocking; that the beds at Chipping Norton Hospital were sub-acute beds which means they should be providing a higher level of care than was planned; there should be no downgrade from the current very successful NHS staffed service provided by Oxford health. He added that he had heard that there had been discussions on turning the beds into a ward for geriatric patients which if true was an indication that local people were not being told everything. He went on to raise concerns about the use of the ISIS Centre as the model for the Chipping Norton service. Mr Hill stated that as the beds were sub-acute beds and as such should be commissioned by the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group. What was needed in Chipping Norton was a fully functioning Community Hospital.

Councillor Rose stated that he found it offensive that Mr Hill referred to threats and intimidation when the officer had been merely stating the position in a factual way.

Mr Hill responding to a question from the Leader confirmed that he was suggesting that the County Council transfer commissioning to the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

Councillor Heathcoat, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, in introducing the report and moving the recommendations referred to an email that she and all Cabinet Members had received from Mark Taylor, a director from Banbury Heights Nursing Home in Banbury. She added that she had written to Mr Taylor to explain about the consultation. Councillor Heathcoat explained that intermediate care was about keeping people out of hospital and returning people to independent living after a spell in hospital. She detailed the facilities and management arrangements in relation to Chipping

Norton Hospital. She stressed that status quo was not an option and could not be supported. The facilities were not just for Chipping Norton but for the county as a whole. There had to be equality of service provision coupled to value for money. Options had to be both affordable and sustainable in the long term.

John Jackson, Director for Adult Social Services added that the proposals were about making sure that the outcomes for patients were right and also achieving a value for money service. The suggestion that the NHS could take over commissioning of the site ignored the financial challenge that faced that organisation. He commented that he had acknowledged at the Oxfordshire Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee in July that the current service provision was not well understood by people. However it was the case that Chipping Norton Hospital had not offered a sub-acute beds since 2011 and what was under discussion was intermediate care. The service was registered by CQC for intermediate care. In all discussion he had been very clear about the options and what was feasible.

Cabinet supported the recommendations with Cabinet Members recognising that Chipping Norton Hospital was not a community hospital.

RESOLVED: to agree that there is a public consultation on the way Intermediate Care is provided in North Oxfordshire in the future as set out in the report.

81/15 STAFFING REPORT - QUARTER 1 - 2015

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet considered the report that gave an update on staffing numbers and related activity during the period 1 April 2015 to 30 June 2015. It gave details of the actual staffing numbers at 30 June 2015 in terms of Full Time Equivalent. These were shown by directorate in the Annex. In addition, the report provided information on the cost of posts being covered by agency staff.

Councillor John Christie, Opposition Deputy Leader, welcomed the reduction in agency staffing and in querying whether the reduction was likely to continue asked whether more detail on agency staffing could be included in future. Councillor Rose commented that August will generally see a reduction in agency staffing. There was a cost to getting additional information and Councillor Christie agreed to discuss what was available outside the meeting.

RESOLVED: to note the report

82/15 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

(Agenda Item. 10)

The Cabinet considered a list of items for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet together with the following two additional items notified at the meeting:

- Devolution
- Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy

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

83/15 EXEMPT ITEM

(Agenda Item. 11)

RESOLVED: that the public be excluded during the consideration of the Annexes since it is likely that if they were present during that discussion there would be a disclosure of "exempt" information as described in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 and specified below the item in the Agenda.

PUBLIC SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS HELD IN PRIVATE

84/15 DIRECT DELIVERY BY DEVELOPERS OF MAJOR OFF-SITE HIGHWAYS WORKS

(Agenda Item. 12)

The information contained in the annex is exempt in that it falls within the following prescribed category:

5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings

and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, in that disclosure would prejudice the position of the authority in the process of the negotiations, to the detriment of the Council's ability properly to discharge its fiduciary and other duties as a public authority.

In June 2013 Cabinet resolved, with respect to major infrastructure requirements associated with new developments, to approve the principle that direct delivery of such major infrastructure by the developers was acceptable; subject to adherence to specific key principles. Following the introduction of the approved processes the report sought approval of changes to the key principles with regards to Highways infrastructure in order to provide added flexibility and speed up the process of completing S106 agreements.

During discussion Cabinet was assured that the Council would retain control as the legal agreements and monitoring would be in place. They received information about the transfer of financial risk as referred to at paragraph 15 of the report.

RESOLVED: to:

Approve:

- The substitution of the key principles of direct delivery obligations to be integrated within S106 agreements (for Transport) as set out in Annex 2, in place of those approved by Cabinet on 18th June 2013.

Revoke:

- The previous determination of the content of the key principles in relation to Transport as contained in Annex 1: Key Principles of Direct Delivery Obligations to be Integrated within S106, taken by Cabinet on 18th June 2013.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 2015

1 FIELD_TITLE
(Agenda Item. FIELD_AGENDA_NUMBER)

FIELD_SUMMARY