

## CABINET

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 17 September 2013 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.50 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 Hilary Hibbert-Biles

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillor Nick Hards, (Agenda Items 6 & 7)  
Councillor Gill Sanders, (Agenda Item 8)  
Councillor Liz Brighthouse, (Agenda Item 9)  
Councillor John Sanders, (Agenda Item 10)  
Councillor Val Smith (Agenda Item 12)  
Councillor Michael Waine, (Agenda Item 12)  
Councillor Laura Price, (Agenda Item 13)

### Officers:

Whole of meeting	Sue Whitehead (Chief Executive's Office)
Part of meeting	
Item	Name
6	Stephanie Skivington (Corporate Finance)
7 & 9	Sue Scane, Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer
8	Neil Darlington (School Organisation & Planning)
10 & 12	Huw Jones, Director for Environment & Economy
11	Debbie Rouget (School Organisation & Planning)
13	Ben Threadgold (Strategy Manager) & Lucy Butler

*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.*

### 94/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item. 1)

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillor Chapman and Councillor Fatemian.

## **95/13 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item. 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2013 were agreed and signed subject to the insertion of the word Shadow before the words Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care in the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph of Minute 62/13.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2013 were agreed and signed subject to the addition of Councillor Hards to the list of those present.

## **96/13 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

(Agenda Item. 4)

Councillor Roz Smith had given written notice of the following question to Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale:

"Could the cabinet member confirm that the works to install a disabled lift and access to the Headington Library in Bury Knowle House will start as planned in October 2013?"

Councillor Lindsay-Gale replied:

"I can confirm that orders for this work to be done at Headington Library in Bury Knowle House will be placed by the end of October and workers will be physically on site from November 11th."

## **97/13 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item. 5)

The following requests to address the meeting had been agreed:

Item 6 Councillor Nick Hards, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance

Item 7 Councillor Nick Hards, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance

Item 8 Councillor Gill Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families

Item 9 Councillor Liz Brighthouse, Opposition Leader

Item 10 Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment

Dr Mark Woodhall, Nuffield Department of Clinical Neurosciences

Dr Louisa Kent, John Radcliffe Hospital

Ed Wigzell, Travel Officer, Sustainability Team, Estates Services | University of Oxford

Alex Lalvani –local resident

Item 12 Councillor Val Smith, Shadow Cabinet Member for Business & Customer Services

Councillor Michael Waine, at the invitation of the Chairman as Chairman of the Schools Organisation Stakeholders Group

Item 13 Councillor Laura Price, Shadow Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Councillor Waine speaking on Item 12, Revised Space Standards for Schools expressed his thanks that the views of the group had been listened to and broadly welcomed the proposals. Councillor Waine asked that Cabinet

consider a change to recommendation (b) in that exceptions to the standards be agreed by the relevant Cabinet Member in a delegated decision session.

## **98/13 2013/14 FINANCIAL MONITORING & BUSINESS STRATEGY DELIVERY REPORT - JULY 2013**

(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet considered a report that focussed on the delivery of the Directorate Business Strategies which were agreed as part of the Service and Resource Planning Process for 2013/14 – 2016/17. Parts 1 and 2 included projections for revenue, reserves and balances as at the end of July 2013. Capital Programme monitoring is included at Part 3. Changes to Fees and Charges are included in Part 4.

Councillor Nick Hards, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, expressed concern at the level of overspend detailed in the report and highlighted the difficult decisions to be taken in balancing need and finances particularly in the area of care home placements. Councillor Tilley drew attention to the new children's homes being developed within the County that would bring young people back in County which was both generally considered to be better for them and an economic use of resources. The Leader in introducing the report responded to the comments made and commented that it was early in the year and that he disliked underspends as well.

Stephanie Skivington undertook to respond to all Councillors on a question from Councillor Heathcoat about foster care debt write off.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) note the report;
- (b) approve the virement requests set out in Annex 2a and the supplementary estimate requests set out in Annex 2e;
- (c) approve the bad debt write off as set out in paragraph 39;
- (d) note the updated Treasury Management lending list at Annex 7;
- (e) approve changes to the Capital programme set out in Annex 8c and to approve the increase to the Wheatley River Bridge scheme of £0.550m to be funded from the earmarked reserves of the capital programme as set out in paragraphs 56 and 57, and approve the inclusion of the grant funding set out in paragraph 58; and
- (f) approve the changes to charges at Hill End Outdoor Education Centre as set out in Part 4 and Annex 9.

## **99/13 SERVICE & RESOURCE PLANNING REPORT FOR 2014/15 - 2017/18 - SEPTEMBER 2013**

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet had before them the first report in a series on the Service & Resource Planning process for 2014/15 to 2017/18, providing councillors

with information on budget issues for 2014/15 and the medium term. The report presented the assumptions on which the existing Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is based, known and potential financial issues for 2014/15 and beyond which impact on the existing MTFP, and proposed a process for Service & Resource Planning for 2014/15 including a timetable of events.

The Leader commented that this was the last meeting for Sue Scane in her current role as Chief Finance Officer & Assistant Chief Executive before she took up her new role as Director Designate for Environment & Economy. He thanked her for all her hard work and recognised that she had built an excellent team and done a terrific job. His best wishes to Sue Scane in her new role were echoed by Cabinet Members and Councillor Hards.

Councillor Nick Hards, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance emphasised the difficult financial position and the constraints placed on the Council by central government. He stressed the importance of all parties working together to find the best way forward for the citizens of Oxfordshire.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) note the report; and
- (b) approve the Service and Resource Planning process for 2014/15.

## **100/13HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT - CONSULTATION**

(Agenda Item. 8)

It is proposed that the Council should undertake a consultation with the public, headteachers and other interested parties upon a range of possible changes to the Home to School Transport Policy.

Following the decision of the Cabinet on 16 July to consult again on the possible changes to the Home to School Transport Policy Cabinet had before them a report that sought approval to the proposed consultation process.

Councillor Gill Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families reiterated comments made at the previous Cabinet meeting that the Labour Group remained in favour of a policy looking to charge for home to school transport (statutory provision aside) in the current financial situation. However she hoped that consultation would be properly carried out with everyone receiving the information in a clear way. She suggested that consideration be given to solutions elsewhere and referred to Somerset that used Designated Transport Areas.

Neil Darlington responding to a question from the Leader indicated that there was no indication when the guidance would be reissued but it was expected late September/early October. Responding to a comment from Councillor

Heathcoat he undertook to publicise the consultation locally for the Grove & Wantage area.

During discussion Cabinet Members indicated that they would attend as many of the public meetings as was possible.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) agree the consultation arrangements for Home to School Transport;
- (b) agree, that Cabinet would attend as many of the public meetings as was possible.

## **101/13CITY DEAL STRATEGY OVERVIEW**

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet considered a report that set out an overview of the City Deal proposal and sought approval for the City Deal Negotiation Document prior to its submission and presentation to the Government.

Councillor Liz Brighouse, Opposition Leader, spoke in support of the recommendations. However she expressed disappointment that the proposal had been scaled back and concern that the County Council was not as well engaged as they should be. In particular she was concerned at the large amount of funding going to bodies that were not democratic. She stressed the need for development to grow within existing communities. The Leader in welcoming the co-operation of the labour Group gave assurances that as a member of the Local Enterprise Partnership he drew attention to the democratic voice provided by the County Council.

**RESOLVED:** to approve:

- (a) the approach and overarching strategy for the City Deal proposal; and
- (b) the County Council to act as the accountable body for the City Deal proposal.

## **102/13THORNHILL AND WATER EATON PARK & RIDES - INTRODUCTION OF SHORT TERM PARKING CHARGES**

(Agenda Item. 10)

Cabinet considered a report on proposed service changes to introduce new and to increase existing car park charging to the Thornhill and Water Eaton park & rides scheme after consultation.

Additional income which is anticipated from the introduction of short term parking charges is required to contribute to the savings set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

This report summarised the public consultation on the advertised Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for charging and recommended to Cabinet Members a proposed level of charging.

Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment spoke in support of the recommendations. Councillor Rose responding to comments from Councillor Sanders about the need to budget for a consultation on a controlled parking zone for Sandhills commented that there were other solutions across the County so that a CPZ was not the only alternative.

Dr Mark Woodhall, Nuffield Department of Clinical Neurosciences, spoke against the proposed removal of the exemption for hospital staff and indicated that patients could be put at risk by staff such as himself not being able to work the longer hours due to the parking charges they would face.

Dr Louisa Kent, John Radcliffe Hospital, spoke against the changes and suggested they would not assist congestion as originally envisaged by the park and ride scheme. She referred to concerns from the University about attracting and retaining top people and felt that the proposed charges would not help. She asked that if there were any season discount tickets available that information be circulated in advance of the introduction of charges. Responding to a query from Councillor Hibbert Biles about why the NHS should not cover the costs of their employees Dr Kent replied that the NHS could not afford to do so.

Ed Wigzel Travel Officer, Sustainability Team, Estates Services University of Oxford, indicated that he was speaking on behalf of a number of University staff who strongly opposed the charges. He believed that they would have a detrimental effect on the vibrancy of the City Centre and the ability to attract and retain skilled employees. The City Deal needed infrastructure support to support accessible employees and the charges were not a good foundation to allow competition in a global market. He referred to other cities that made Park & Ride part of their overall package to employees.

Alex Lalvani, a local resident, spoke against the charges and expressed concern that there would be displacement parking. There had already been issues raised with the police. There was no one for local people to talk to and no mechanism for their involvement to ensure impacts were minimised. As a daily user he added that the system of payment was not easy to use and was not a good impression for visitors to the City. The Leader gave assurances that local people could address concerns to their local Councillors or to himself.

Councillor Nimmo Smith in moving the recommendations highlighted the expansion of Thornhill, the introduction of the successful cycle hire and that the Park and Rides would remain cheaper than driving into Oxford and parking at The Westgate.

During discussion Cabinet welcomed the discount scheme and recognised the need to provide alternative payment methods so as not to disadvantage people through the use of technology. Cabinet agreed that although there

was to be a review in 6-12 months any immediate issues would be investigated earlier.

**RESOLVED:** to :

- (a) approve the making of the Oxfordshire County Council (Park and Ride Parking Places - Thornhill and Water Eaton) Order 201\* as advertised;
- (b) confirm the timing of the introduction of charges as identified in paragraphs 9-13 using option i. from paragraph 11 which removes the Hospital exemption; and
- (c) instruct officers to undertake a review between 6 and 12 months of commencement of charging but that issues that arise in the meantime will be investigated.

### **103/13 EDWARD FEILD NURSERY SCHOOL - PROPOSAL TO CLOSE AND PROVIDE ALTERNATIVE EARLY YEARS PROVISION**

(Agenda Item. 11)

The Headteacher and Governors of Edward Feild Nursery School have proposed closure of the Nursery and re-provision of alternative high quality early years places on the same site by expansion of the playgroup. A Stage 1 consultation was carried out in April 2013 which resulted in one objection to the proposal. Cabinet on 21 May 2013 agreed that a Statutory Notice for the proposed closure should be published. During the 6 week statutory period for representations, one objection was received and Cabinet considered a report asking them to determine whether to agree the closure of Edward Feild Nursery School.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the closure of Edward Feild Nursery School with effect from 31 December 2013 subject to the following conditions:-

- That a lease for Robin Playgroup's use of the school premises be in place by the Nursery closure date.
- That as long as Edward Feild Primary School remains a maintained school the authority will retain an arbitration role to ensure that the lease remains equitable and sustainable for both parties.
- That any surplus in the Edward Feild Nursery School budget at closure is transferred to the Edward Feild Primary School budget and that the funds be spent to maintain or improve the parts of the premises occupied by or shared with the Robin Playgroup.
- The Nursery is to transfer any resources bought for nursery age children from public funds to Robin Playgroup without charge.

### **104/13 REVISED SPACE STANDARDS FOR SCHOOLS**

(Agenda Item. 12)

Cabinet considered a report that proposed revisions to space standards for the design and construction of new school buildings and subsequent amendments to policy documents (The Primary and Secondary School Briefs).

Councillor Val Smith, Shadow Cabinet Member for Business & Customer Services congratulated Cabinet on not accepting to the letter the James Review. Although parents would focus on teaching spaces outdoor space was important as were corridors, kitchens and libraries. She hoped that the revised standards would be used to enhance the school estate.

Councillor Tilley in moving the recommendations thanked Councillor Waine and Councillor Smith for their support and indicated that she supported Councillor Waine's suggestion that exceptions go to the Cabinet Member for decision.

**RESOLVED:** to approve:

- (a) adoption of the space standards contained with Annex 2;
- (b) that delegation of approval of further reductions on an exceptions basis be to the relevant Cabinet Member in delegated decision session; and
- (c) that in the case of new schools that are developer funded the County Council will seek a fixed sum to cover the set-up costs.

## **105/13 CONTRIBUTIONS POLICY**

(Agenda Item. 13)

Cabinet had before them a report seeking approval to the Contributions Policy for Adult Social Care The purpose of the Adult Social Care Contributions Policy is to outline a fair approach to the financial contributions made by individuals towards the social care services they receive.

Councillor Laura Price, Shadow Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care hoped that the pricing policy would be clear and understandable. She also urged that where people faced an increase in charges they be engaged in the process in a timely way.

Councillor Heathcoat in introducing the report commented that all the recent strategies were aimed at supporting strong communities with people living their lives as independently as possible. She corrected an error on page 186 noting that the correct number was 27 as referred to earlier in the report.

**RESOLVED:** to agree the Contributions Policy for Adult Social Care, for implementation with effect from 5<sup>th</sup> January 2014.

## **106/13 STAFFING REPORT - QUARTER 1 - 2013**

(Agenda Item. 14)



Cabinet received a report that gave an update on staffing numbers and related activity during the period 1 April 2013 to 30 June 2013. It gave details of the agreed staffing numbers and establishment at 30 June 2013 in terms of Full Time Equivalents. In addition, the report provided information on vacancies and the cost of posts being covered by agency staff.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) note the report; and
- (b) confirm that the Staffing Report meets the Cabinet's requirements in reporting and managing staffing numbers.

## **107/13 DELEGATED POWERS OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE - OCTOBER 2013**

(Agenda Item. 15)

Cabinet noted the following executive decision taken by the Chief Executive under the specific powers and functions delegated to her under the terms of Part 7.4 of the Council's Constitution – Paragraph 1(A)(c)(i). It is not for scrutiny call in.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Reasons for Urgency</i>
11 April 2013	Support services for homeless people and substance abusers	Approved an exemption from the full tendering requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules	The extension of the contract to January 2015 to give continuity of provision to take account of changes in the welfare benefit system and a new approach to rough sleepers.
31 July 2013	Contract East Oxford School and LFB Educational Consultancy Limited	Approved an exemption from the full tendering requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules	To provide an interim head teacher for up to a full academic year to provide stability whilst a permanent head teacher is recruited.

## **108/13 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS**

(Agenda Item. 16)

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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

2013