

## Notice of a Meeting

### **Children's Services Scrutiny Committee** **Wednesday, 16 February 2011 at 10.00 am** **County Hall**

#### **Membership**

Chairman - Councillor Ann Bonner  
Deputy Chairman – Councillor Dave Sexon

<i>Councillors:</i>	Janet Godden	M. Altaf-Khan	Don Seale
	Neil Owen	Marilyn Badcock	Val Smith
	Alyas Ahmed	Anda Fitzgerald- O'Connor	Nicholas P. Turner

<i>Co-optees:</i>	Mr Chris Bevan	Mrs Galina Kildyushova	Mrs Sue Matthew
	2 Vacancies		

#### **Notes:**

***Date of next meeting: 18 May 2011***

#### **What does this Committee review or scrutinise?**

- Services for children, young people and families; preventative services; child protection; family support, educational policy; youth service; youth justice;
- Primary & secondary schools; special education; pupil services; school transport; music service

#### **How can I have my say?**

We welcome the views of the community on any issues in relation to the responsibilities of this Committee. Members of the public may ask to speak on any item on the agenda or may suggest matters which they would like the Committee to look at. **Requests to speak must be submitted to the Committee Officer below no later than 9 am on the working day before the date of the meeting.**

#### **For more information about this Committee please contact:**

Chairman	-	Councillor Ann Bonner E.Mail: ann.bonner@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Committee Officer	-	Roger Edwards, Tel: (01865) 810824 roger.edwards@oxfordshire.gov.uk



Peter G. Clark  
County Solicitor

February 2011

## About the County Council

The Oxfordshire County Council is made up of 74 councillors who are democratically elected every four years. The Council provides a range of services to Oxfordshire's 630,000 residents. These include:

schools	social & health care	libraries and museums
the fire service	roads	trading standards
land use	transport planning	waste management

Each year the Council manages £0.9 billion of public money in providing these services. Most decisions are taken by a Cabinet of 9 Councillors, which makes decisions about service priorities and spending. Some decisions will now be delegated to individual members of the Cabinet.

## About Scrutiny

Scrutiny is about:

- Providing a challenge to the Cabinet
- Examining how well the Cabinet and the Authority are performing
- Influencing the Cabinet on decisions that affect local people
- Helping the Cabinet to develop Council policies
- Representing the community in Council decision making
- Promoting joined up working across the authority's work and with partners

Scrutiny is NOT about:

- Making day to day service decisions
- Investigating individual complaints.

## What does this Committee do?

The Committee meets up to 6 times a year or more. It develops a work programme, which lists the issues it plans to investigate. These investigations can include whole committee investigations undertaken during the meeting, or reviews by a panel of members doing research and talking to lots of people outside of the meeting. Once an investigation is completed the Committee provides its advice to the Cabinet, the full Council or other scrutiny committees. Meetings are open to the public and all reports are available to the public unless exempt or confidential, when the items would be considered in closed session

**If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting**

**A hearing loop is available at County Hall.**

## AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**
2. **Declarations of Interest - see guidance note on the back page**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 10)

To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 9 November 2010 (**CH3a**) and 20 December 2010 (**CH3b**) and to note for information any matters arising on them.

4. **Speaking to or petitioning the Committee**

### SCRUTINY MATTERS

To consider matters where the Committee can provide a challenge to the work of the Authority

5. **Service and Resource Planning**

10.15

An overview of the services provided by the Children's Services Directorate and the challenges which will need to be addressed in the future (**CH5**).

*The Committee is invited to receive the presentation which will be followed by a question & answer session.*

6. **Budget meeting 20 December 2010** (Pages 11 - 12)

10.45

A short item to remind members of what was agreed at the budget meeting in December 2010 and what was consequently added to the work programme. A paper setting out what was agreed is attached (**CH6**).

### REVIEW WORK

To take evidence, receive progress updates and consider tracking reports

7. **Anti-Bullying Strategy - update** (Pages 13 - 14)

11.00

In February 2010 the Committee was addressed by the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator and colleagues who were about to review the anti-bullying strategy with the County Council's multi-agency partners. The Committee made a number of comments and recommendations which were set out in a letter to the Director. A copy of the letter is attached for information (**CH7**).

The Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator, Jo Brown, and colleagues will present a paper (to follow) and bring the Committee up to date on the strategy. Members will be able to see how their comments have been taken into account in the strategy and ask questions.

Members of the Committee will then be invited to comment on what they have heard and, if they wish, to forward any comments to the Director for Children, Young People & Families.

## **8. Free Schools** (Pages 15 - 20)

**12.00**

Under the Government's plans for schools it will be much easier for charities, universities, businesses, educational groups, teachers and groups of parents to start new schools. In addition the government plans to increase the number of academy schools by allowing all schools judged to be outstanding to become academies.

The attached paper (**CH8**) explains the latest position in Oxfordshire. A representative of CYP&F will attend the meeting to answer questions and bring members up to date on any further developments.

## **BUSINESS PLANNING**

### **To consider future work items for the Committee**

## **9. Educational Attainment at Key Stage 1- proposal for a select committee review** (Pages 21 - 24)

**12.30**

The Chairman will propose that the Committee should undertake a review of attainment throughout Oxfordshire at Key Stage 1. Creighton Muirhead, Joint Interim Head of the Raising Achievement Service, will present the information contained in the attached paper (**CH9**).

**Members should then decide whether they wish to undertake a select committee style review and agree a possible date in July.**

## **10. Youth Centres Admittance Policy** (Pages 25 - 34)

**12.45**

In September the Committee agreed to nominate members to participate in a joint working group with members from the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee that would consider a management report on current policy and procedure for the admittance of young people to youth centres. This followed on from concerns that had arisen following an incident at The Sweatbox in Wantage. The members nominated by this committee were Councillors Nicholas Turner, Dave Sexon and Val Smith.

The management report was published in November 2010 and is attached (**CH10a**). The working group met in December with the officers responsible for youth centres in Oxfordshire. A short paper comprising the notes of that meeting and identifying the main issues raised by the working group is also attached (**CH10b**).

Members of the working group **AGREED** that, having reviewed the procedures they

would recommend that they should be endorsed.

**Members are requested to AGREE the recommendation of the working group.**

## **11. Forward Plan**

**12.55**

The Committee is asked to suggest items from the current Forward Plan on which it may wish to have an opportunity to offer advice to the Cabinet before any decision is taken, together with details of what it thinks could be achieved by looking at any items.

## **13.00 Close of Meeting**

## Declarations of Interest

This note briefly summarises the position on interests which you must declare at the meeting. Please refer to the Members' Code of Conduct in Part 9.1 of the Constitution for a fuller description.

### **The duty to declare ...**

You must always declare any "personal interest" in a matter under consideration, ie where the matter affects (either positively or negatively):

- (i) any of the financial and other interests which you are required to notify for inclusion in the statutory Register of Members' Interests; or
- (ii) your own well-being or financial position or that of any member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association more than it would affect other people in the County.

### **Whose interests are included ...**

"Member of your family" in (ii) above includes spouses and partners and other relatives' spouses and partners, and extends to the employment and investment interests of relatives and friends and their involvement in other bodies of various descriptions. For a full list of what "relative" covers, please see the Code of Conduct.

### **When and what to declare ...**

The best time to make any declaration is under the agenda item "Declarations of Interest". Under the Code you must declare not later than at the start of the item concerned or (if different) as soon as the interest "becomes apparent".

In making a declaration you must state the nature of the interest.

### **Taking part if you have an interest ...**

Having made a declaration you may still take part in the debate and vote on the matter unless your personal interest is also a "prejudicial" interest.

### **"Prejudicial" interests ...**

A prejudicial interest is one which a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would think so significant as to be likely to affect your judgment of the public interest.

### **What to do if your interest is prejudicial ...**

If you have a prejudicial interest in any matter under consideration, you may remain in the room but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter under consideration, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

### **Exceptions ...**

There are a few circumstances where you may regard yourself as not having a prejudicial interest or may participate even though you may have one. These, together with other rules about participation in the case of a prejudicial interest, are set out in paragraphs 10 – 12 of the Code.

### **Seeking Advice ...**

It is your responsibility to decide whether any of these provisions apply to you in particular circumstances, but you may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer before the meeting.