

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 13 August 2020 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 1.15 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Liz Brighthouse OBE – in the Chair

Councillor Jenny Hannaby (Deputy Chairman)

Councillor Nick Carter

Councillor Mike Fox-Davies

Councillor Tony Ilott

Councillor Liz Leffman

Councillor Jeannette Matelot

Councillor Charles Mathew

Councillor Glynis Phillips

Councillor Judy Roberts

Councillor Michael Waine

Other Members in Attendance:

Councillor David Bartholomew, Cabinet Member for Finance

Councillor Ian Corkin, Cabinet Member for Council Business and Partnerships

Councillor Mark Gray, Cabinet Member for Local Communities

Councillor Steve Harrod, Cabinet Member for Children & Family Services

Councillor Judith Heathcoat, Deputy Leader of the Council

Councillor Ian Hudspeth, Leader of the Council

Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale, Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services

Councillor Lawrie Stratford, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Public Health

Councillor Liam Walker, Cabinet Member for Highways Delivery & Operations

Councillor Laura Price (Agenda Item 5)

Councillor Gill Sanders (Agenda Item 5)

Councillor John Sanders (Agenda Item 5)

Councillor Emma Turnbull, (Agenda Item 5)

Officers:

Whole of meeting

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive; Ansaf Azhar, Director of Public Health; Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance; Stephen Chandler, Corporate Director Adults & Housing Services; Paul Feehily, Corporate Director Place & Growth; Kevin Gordon, Corporate Director for Children's

Services; Steve Jorden, Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets & Investment; Jane Portman, Interim Corporate Director for Children's Services; Jason Russell, Corporate Director Communities; Claire Taylor, Corporate Director, Communications & Organisational Development

Part of meeting

Agenda Item

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Officer Attending

Celia Prado-Teeling, Team Leader Performance

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda and addenda for the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda reports and addenda are attached to the signed Minutes.

34/20 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda No. 3)

The Chairman had agreed the following requests to speak:

Item 5 Revised Budget 2020/21:

Councillor Laura Price, Opposition Deputy Leader

Councillor Emma Turnbull, Shadow Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services

Councillor Gill Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children & Family Services

Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment (including Transport)

35/20 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 1 (APRIL-JUNE) 2020

(Agenda No. 4)

Performance Scrutiny Committee considered a report (prior to its consideration by Cabinet on 18 August 2020) that set out Oxfordshire County Council's (OCC's) progress towards Corporate Plan priorities at 30 June 2020. A summary of overall performance and description of change was contained within the report. The report will be considered at Cabinet's 18 August meeting.

The report contained two annexes:

- Annex A showing current performance against targets and summarises progress towards overall outcomes set out in our Corporate Plan.

- Annex B setting out the Leadership Risk Register which has been developed as part of the Council's work to strengthen risk and opportunities management.

Celia Prado-Teeling, Team Leader, Performance gave a brief summary of the contents of the report. She advised that there was no financial update in this report as the following item was on a revised budget 2020/21. The information in this was based for the first time on the new outcomes framework.

During discussion Members:

- Expressed disappointment that they had not been given information on the current financial situation. Members were assured that the Revised Budget 2020/21 report included the latest financial position.
- Asked what was being done to ensure that delayed transfers of care cases which were on the rise did not reach pre-covid levels. It was **AGREED** that Members receive a briefing paper as an update to the earlier report received in February 2020.
- Asked that the issue of Personal Protective Equipment be included in the risk register given its importance and the risk of a second spike in covid 19 cases.
- Requested that the table in the covering report to the Committee on the RAG rating of performance include the two previous positions to give a better indication of the trend.
- Queried whether the camera information available on walking and cycling was used to inform the information in the report and urged greater use of technology to provide accurate information.
- Commended the improvement with regard to Education & Health Care Plans and asked for further details and an assessment of the sustainability of the improvements achieved. It was **AGREED** that a note be circulated to Performance Scrutiny Committee members addressing the points raised and also including information on the timeliness of CAMHS.
- Noted that the indicator 'Enhanced digital connectivity for residents and businesses' had moved from green to amber and requested information on the reasons for this. It was **AGREED** that a note be circulated to Performance Scrutiny Committee members.
- Highlighted the figures relating to children cared for by the local authority set out on page 9 of the report under Areas for Improvement and requested that the figures be broken down between in county and out of county placements. It was **AGREED** that a note be circulated to Performance Scrutiny Committee members.

36/20 REVISED BUDGET 2020/21

(Agenda No. 5)

The Performance Scrutiny Committee considered the Revised Budget for 2020/21.

Councillor Ian Hudspeth, Leader of the Council, Councillor Judith Heathcoat, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members: Councillors David Bartholomew, Ian Corkin, Mark Gray, Steve Harrod, Lorraine Lindsay-Gale, Lawrie Stratford, and Liam

Walker and CEDR officers attended to present the information and respond to questions.

Councillor Laura Price, Opposition Deputy Leader, Councillor Emma Turnbull, Shadow Cabinet Member for Education, Councillor Gill Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children & Family Services and Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment (including Transport) commented on the revised budget for consideration by the Performance Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee considered the savings and revisions to the revenue budget and commented as follows:

General points:

A number of Committee members and speakers expressed concern that the proposed savings identified would not be re-instated and may result in poorer delivery of services, particularly where this related to vacant staffing posts

Committee members asked for an equalities impact assessment to be prepared on the budget proposals as it was felt that there was not clear enough evidence that any potential negative impacts on equalities had been fully considered

The following points were raised in relation to specific Directorates savings proposals:

Children, Education and Families:

The Committee noted that there is likely to be an increase in demand for Children, Education and Family service once schools re-open in September and the Committee remained concerned that the proposed savings may make it difficult if there is a rise in demand. In particular, given that the SEND Inspection had highlighted where the Council still needed to make improvements, the Committee was particularly concerned to see any savings proposed in this area.

Strong concerns were expressed about the proposed £175,000 reduction of the Youth Fund that was agreed by Council in February. Members noted that this funding had been agreed in order to undertake a feasibility study to re-establish Council run youth services. Whilst the Cabinet Members advised that the assessment would still be undertaken at a reduced cost, this was not in line with the wishes of Councillors in relation to the funding agreed by Council in February and Members expressed concern that the work would not deliver the vision for youth services that had been anticipated.

In relation to the proposed Family Safeguarding Model transformation savings the Committee noted that the service had only recently been reconfigured and questioned why these figures were not identified as part of the last budget setting process.

Adult Social Care:

The Committee queried the rationale behind reconfiguring the Didcot Area Community Support Service and sought reassurances that this would not lead to unmet demand or a wider reconfiguration of Community Support Services.

The Committee also sought reassurances that care homes and care providers would be involved in any fair cost of care exercises in relation to savings in demand management.

Public Health:

In relation to vacancy management proposals, the Committee queried whether this would potentially result in a lack of capacity within the Directorate in the event of a second peak or moving into the winter flu season. The Committee were reassured that the saving related to the first six months of the year and that the vacancies were being recruited to.

The Committee also noted that the Council is due to receive additional grant in relation to Test and Trace and has requested a report about how this funding will be used to create resilience across the public health system.

The Committee AGREED that there be a report to a future meeting on the process to be used to identify activities outside of public health that were delivering public health related outcomes. The Committee was advised that the public health grant could only be used for relevant activities in line with public health grant terms and conditions.

Community Operations:

Councillors questioned the rationale behind delaying the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement. Parking enforcement is often reported as an issue of concern by the public and as such the Committee do not wish to see any delay on the overall project timescales.

The Committee also sought a number of reassurances that local road maintenance programmes and vegetation cutting programmes would not be delayed or have funding diverted in order to support the implementation of the Emergency Active Travel schemes.

The Committee sought to understand whether there was likely to be an increase in Home to School Transport costs from September onwards with staggered school start times and the need to maintain appropriate social distancing measures. The Committee were pleased to hear that the government has pledged an extra c£500,000 for home to school transport costs in the Autumn Term.

Place and Growth:

Concerns were expressed by a number of Committee members about the delay in implementing Local Cycling Walking and Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs). For the proposed scheme at Didcot, the Committee sought assurances that officers would continue to work closely with partners as it was closely linked to HIF funding applications.

Community Safety:

The Committee queried whether the proposal to delay recruitment to the traffic enforcement team would potentially impact on HGV inspections and enforcement and noted that there may be a reduction in impact, but the Council still intends to carry out enforcement activity.

Customers and Organisational Development:

There were no specific concerns raised in this particular Directorate, but clarity was sought over terminology used in the Museums proposal around contributions to the British Museum.

Commercial Assets and Development:

The Committee expressed concerns over delays in implementing the Climate Action plan and requested that a report on the future of remote working and making more effective use of Council assets post-COVID-19.

The Committee **AGREED** that their comments be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration at their meeting on 18 August 2020.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 2020