

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 24 May 2011 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 4.11 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: Councillor Janet Godden (Agenda Item 7)
Councillor Jenny Hannaby (Agenda Item 8)
Councillor Anne Purse (Agenda Item 10)
Councillor Charles Mathew (Agenda Item 10)
Councillor Jean Fooks (Agenda Items 13, 14 and 16)

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

Part of meeting:
Item Officer
6 Roy Leach
7 Meera Spillett, Director for Children, Young People & Families
8 Martin Tugwell, Deputy Director (Growth & Infrastructure); Guy Swindle, Head of Communications and Strategy; Alexandra Bailey, Corporate Performance and Review Manager
9 Adrian Saunders (Highways & Transport)
10 Martin Tugwell, Deputy Director (Growth & Infrastructure)
11 Dave Etheridge, Chief Fire Officer; Colin Thomas, Deputy Chief Fire Officer

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.

53/11 MINUTES

(Agenda Item. 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2011 were approved and signed.

54/11 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item. 5)

The following requests to address the meeting had been agreed:

6. Mr Andrew Churchill-Stone, Chair of
Governors of Culham Parochial
School,
7. Councillor Janet Godden, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children,
Education & Families
Sarah Good
Michael Ray
8. Councillor Jenny Hannaby - as local member
10. Councillor Anne Purse, Shadow Cabinet Member for Growth &
Infrastructure
Councillor Charles Mathew - local member
11. Rachel Dobson, Fire Brigade Union's Branch Representative for the
Control staff.
13. Councillor Jean Fooks, Opposition Deputy Leader
14. Councillor Jean Fooks for Opposition Leader
16. Councillor Jean Fooks for Opposition Leader

Councillor Anne Purse speaking in relation to Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework: Core Strategy - Preferred Strategy for Consultation welcomed the paper bringing together waste and minerals and acknowledged the large amount of work that had gone on. However she considered that the report raised more questions than it answered. In particular she highlighted the seeming conflict between addressing sustainability and climate change issues and the intention in paragraph 22 to allow waste imports from outside the County by road. The reference to Finmere on page 102 was to a site on the border of the County rather than being central. She sought clarity in respect of the MbE in Sutton Courtenay and whether this was interchangeable with the energy from waste policy. It was a matter that should have been looked at by the Scrutiny Committee. Finally she queried whether consideration could be given to using inert waste for aggregate.

55/11 CULHAM PAROCHIAL PRIMARY SCHOOL

(Agenda Item. 6)

Mr Churchill-Stone thanked officers for the balanced report produced and updated on the current position on the three conditions.

Responding to questions from Cabinet Members MR Churchill-Stone stated that he had no reason to doubt the commitment of the acting Headteacher to gain the relevant qualification once appointed. He had been ineligible to apply to the earlier advert for the job as he did not possess the qualification required.

The Cabinet Member for Schools Improvement referred to the presumption against the closure of rural schools. Culham was a strong community and she felt that sufficient progress had been made to keep the school open. There were risks around the appointment of an unqualified headteacher, school numbers and the budget and it was right to recognise those risks but she did not support the closure of the school. She suggested that a councillor be included on the Governing Body.

During discussion Cabinet Members supported the proposal from the Cabinet Member for Schools Improvement, feeling that the strong community effort deserved reward. However concerns did remain particularly over the appointment of an unqualified headteacher who had not applied for the job initially. The situation would require careful monitoring by the Council. It was important that the Governors and community did not relax as if a similar position was reached again where the viability of the school was at issue there would be an end to the options available.

RESOLVED: to:

- (a) agree not to seek the closure of Culham Parochial School;
and
- (b) that efforts be made to ensure that a councillor is a member of the school's Governing Body.

56/11 URGENT BUSINESS - THE FUTURE OF BBC OXFORD TV

(Agenda Item. 16)

Councillor Jean Fooks, Opposition Deputy Leader expressed her astonishment and anger at the threat to both local TV and radio. She noted that the report did not refer to radio but many people relied on it for local news, weather (particularly during severe conditions) and school closures. The closure of services was not in the spirit of localism and she supported the need to comment on the proposals and to get across the view that they were not a good idea.

The Leader commented that the recommendation to Council in June was appropriate to give all members an opportunity to debate this important issue.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Services was concerned at the impact on local people as the service had long provided a balanced view and a valuable local voice. The rise of community TV did not provide the same service.

Cabinet Members supported the recommendation to Council but in noting that some areas of the County did not receive Oxford TV considered that the debate should be widened to include the threat to local radio. The Deputy Leader recognised the severe financial pressures on the BBC and hoped that in looking at the consultation the Council could come up with alternative options.

Subject to the referral of the matter to Council including BBC local radio services in addition to BBC Oxford TV it was:

RESOLVED: to RECOMMEND to Council to:

- (a) Record that it believes that a cessation of service would deny the people of Oxfordshire a truly local and comprehensive television news service and those local communities could lose their voice and the council could lose an important channel of communication.
- (b) ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Chairman of the BBC Trust, the Director General of the BBC and to respond to any consultation on the proposals expressing the Council's concern and opposition.
- (c) ask the Leader of the Council to write to all six local MPs and the Culture Secretary to express these concerns and ask for their support against the proposals

57/11 OUTCOMES OF THE RECENT OFSTED INSPECTION OF SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SERVICES AND CONSEQUENTIAL ACTION PLAN

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet considered a report that summarised the outcome of the Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children's Services in Oxfordshire.

Councillor Janet Godden, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families paid personal tribute to Councillor Louise Chapman for her personal commitment to the positive engagement of children, the results of which were recognised by the inspection. Councillor Godden highlighted a two areas where it was important to ensure continued effort: the position with regard to the engagement of adult mental health care professionals in case conferences had been improved by work on both sides and she would be sad if this co-operation was drifting apart; the work on educational attainment of children in care was vitally important and the need to encourage all involved to ensure children were entered for exams should continue to be a focus of attention.

Sarah Good a young person who had taken part in the Safeguarding Inspection commented on how important it was to young people to be able to participate and help in the shaping of services they used.

Michael Ray, paid tribute to the support he had received from officers over a number of years that had helped him.

Meera Spillett, the Director for Children Education & Families in introducing the report paid tribute to the Participation Team and their user engagement that was recognised as excellent. Meera Spillett highlighted the positives in the report and paid tribute to the continuing hard work of staff and all the Council's partners.

The Cabinet Member for Children Education & Families responding to the point made by Councillor Godden agreed that it was right to continue to ensure the engagement of adult mental health workers and suggested that this was an area where scrutiny might wish to monitor the situation. In welcoming the inspection report she highlighted that the positive result reflected the hard work that was going on and that the work of the people involved changed lives. She paid tribute to the work of Meera Spillett and thanked the frontline social care staff.

RESOLVED: to

- (a) receive this report and acknowledge the findings of the inspection report (Annex 1).
- (b) note the recommendations in the inspection report, and
- (c) approve the proposed actions and timescales to address the recommendations in the report.

58/11 BIG SOCIETY FUND - MAY 2011

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet considered a report that set out the position with regard to young people's centres on school sites and where there were requests to transfer them to a number of schools.

Councillor Jenny Hannaby, speaking as a local member referred to local efforts to ensure the future of 'Sweatbox' and supported the transfer. She commented that the school had been supportive. She expressed her gratitude for the support of officers in putting a bid together and hoped that this would come forward in July.

The Cabinet Member for Police & Policy Co-ordination in welcoming the report referred to the positive cross Directorate working and the involvement throughout of local Councillors.

RESOLVED: to :

- (a) agree transfer of buildings to the school on the following sites:

- Sweatbox young people's centre at King Alfred's School east site and to include this building within the transfer of ownership to the school that is already underway;
 - Eynsham young people's centre at Bartholomew School;
 - Existing young people's centre space at Chipping Norton School on completion of the project;
- (b) request a sustainable business case to come forward for the future management and use of the Wheatley Young People's Centre led by the Children's Centre;
- (c) encourage proposals to come forward for the remaining young people's centres on school sites for Cabinet consider as part of the Big Society Fund.

59/11 DIDCOT PARKWAY STATION INTERCHANGE

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet considered a report that gave an update on progress with the project and sought authority to proceed with the award of a contract.

RESOLVED: to approve the detailed project appraisal.

60/11 OXFORDSHIRE MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: CORE STRATEGY - PREFERRED STRATEGY FOR CONSULTATION

(Agenda Item. 10)

Councillor Charles Mathew praised the hard work over several years that had gone into the report and stated that he did not intend to detail the impact on local people nor the shortcomings he felt were in the Atkins report. He highlighted what he saw as an unacceptable concentration of gravel extraction in West Oxfordshire, explained that he felt the figures for extraction were too high and that he awaited the updated figures. More focus was needed on secondary production and recycling.

The Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure noted that she had heard the comments from members and she too awaited the new figures referred to by Councillor Mathew. This was a full and important report and progress was needed. However she had only recently taken over the portfolio and felt that further consideration was needed on the waste element. She would like more time to discuss the matter further with officers and she asked that consideration be deferred to a future meeting. Following assurances that the delay would not compromise the position of the Cabinet and Council it was:

RESOLVED: to defer consideration to a future meeting.

61/11 FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CALL RECEIPT, MOBILISING AND INCIDENT MANAGEMENT FOR OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

(Agenda Item. 11)

Cabinet considered a report setting out proposals for future arrangements following the cancellation of the government project to regionalise Fire and Rescue Service call receipt, mobilising and incident management arrangements.

Rachel Dodson spoke in support of the retention of the current control centre arrangements. The control centre was a first point of contact for callers who were often distressed. All their skills were utilised to make an appropriate response and local knowledge was a vital part of that. They gave life saving fire survival guidance and were a part of the fire and rescue service team with a vital role to play. She explained the other duties undertaken and that they were open to the idea of increased duties but would not wish to see their operationality threatened. The partnership proposals could bring risks.

Responding to a question from the Deputy Leader Ms Dodson stated that it was not impossible that they could take over services in other areas but that ran the risk of diluting the service provided.

The Chief Fire Officer in introducing the report paid tribute to Councillors Rose and Heathcoat who had refused to sign a lease on the building for the Regional Project that had since been scrapped. This had saved the Council from being tied into a 25 year lease. He stated that the last few years had been challenging and commended the professionalism of staff that had meant that the ability to take calls and mobilise resources had not been diminished.

The Cabinet Member for Safer & Community Services added her thanks to that of the Chief Fire Officer to control room staff. She noted that Oxfordshire's Control Room had remained resilient thanks to Colin Thomas and the staff. However there was a risk to that resilience due to the IT system that was probably serviceable until 2014.

RESOLVED: to:-

- (a) endorse the progression of the collaborative scoping study and creation of the Strategic Outline Business Case being undertaken by Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Royal Berkshire FRSS
- (b) approve the above list (paragraph 18) of Oxfordshire requirements as benchmarks against which future options will be assessed
- (c) approve the list of options (paragraph 20) included within the options appraisal

- (d) require the Chief Fire Officer to instigate appropriate actions in relation to the asset management and capital strategy dependant on the outcomes of the scoping study
- (e) require the Chief Fire Officer to report back to the Cabinet Member for Safer & Stronger Communities on a regular basis covering:-
 - a. the CLG consultation response
 - b. progress on the scoping study and strategic outline business case
 - c. progress on other third party activities.

62/11 PROGRESS REPORT ON CLA AND LEAVING CARE

(Agenda Item. 12)

Cabinet considered one of a regular series of reports that came to Cabinet on its role as legal "Corporate Parent" to the Children and Young People Looked After by the Council, and those Leaving Care to live independently.

RESOLVED: to:

- (a) continue to support the Corporate Parenting Strategy and to work to the current objectives of the strategy; and
- (b) endorse the amended Placement Strategy.

63/11 ESTABLISHMENT REVIEW - MAY 2011

(Agenda Item. 13)

The heading to the table on page 171 was corrected.

Councillor Jean Fooks commented that the figures were going down but that an explanation giving the background would be helpful.

The Deputy Leader indicated that the trend information was straightforward and that detailed background information was available.

RESOLVED: to:

- (a) note the report;
- (b) confirm that the Establishment Review continues to meet the Cabinet's requirements in reporting and managing staffing numbers.

64/11 CABINET SCHEME OF DELEGATION

(Agenda Item. 14)

Councillor Jean Fooks expressed unhappiness at the proposal. She was concerned that decisions could be taken by a Cabinet Member not fully versed in the subject matter. She felt that the current option to take it to the

next cabinet meeting was sufficient. The Leader explained the context for the change and that it would be used infrequently.

RESOLVED: to recommend Council:

- (a) to amend Part 4.4 of the Council's Constitution to effect the changes to the 'Delegated Decisions by Individual Cabinet Members' referred to in paragraph 7 above; and
- (b) to agree that the website copy of the Constitution should be the master copy, that the routine circulation of hard copies should cease and that the Monitoring Officer be asked to amend the Constitution to make clear that the website copy is the definitive version.

65/11 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

(Agenda Item. 15)

The Cabinet considered a list of items (CA) 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 2011
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