

## CABINET

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 25 April 2017 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.13 pm

**Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor Ian Hudspeth – in the Chair  
Councillor Rodney Rose  
Councillor Mrs Judith Heathcoat  
Councillor Nick Carter  
Councillor Melinda Tilley  
Councillor Steve Harrod  
Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale  
Councillor David Nimmo Smith  
Councillor Lawrie Stratford  
Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillor Brighthouse (Agenda Item 6)  
Councillor Nick Hards (Agenda Items 6 & 7)  
Councillor Gill Sanders (Agenda Item 8)

**Officers:**

Whole of meeting	Peter Clark (Chief Executive); Sue Whitehead (Resources Directorate)
Part of meeting	
Item	Name
6	Sarah Jelley (Resources Directorate)
7	Katy Jurczynszyn (Resources Directorate)
8	Hannah Farncombe, Deputy Director Children's Social Care
9	Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance
10	Ian Dyson, Assistant Chief Finance Officer (Assurance)

*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.*

**30/17 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item. 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2017 were approved and signed as a correct record.

**31/17 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

(Agenda Item. 4)

Councillor Howson had given notice of the following question to Councillor Harrod:

“How many ofsted inspections of schools in Oxfordshire have taken place since August 2016 and what were the outcomes by maintained and academy/free school status?”

Councillor Harrod replied:

“There have been 46 published inspections of state-funded schools in Oxfordshire since August 2016 (not including monitoring inspections).

The outcomes have been as follows:

	<b>Type of school</b>	maintained	academy	Free school
<b>Overall effectiveness of school</b>				
Outstanding		2	2	0
Good		25	8	0
Requires Improvement		3	3	0
Inadequate		1	2	0
<b>total</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>

Total Inspections: 46.”

Supplementary: Councillor Howson referred to the 4 outstanding and 3 inadequate schools and in light of the information provided asked the Cabinet Member whether he agreed that the thousands having to be spent in relation to the car parking levy and discussions about the future governance of Oxfordshire by the Labour controlled city council could have been better spent on addressing the educational needs of Oxfordshire children? Councillor Harrod agreed with this view.

### **32/17 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item. 5)

The Leader of the Council has agreed the following requests to address the meeting:-

Item 6 – Councillor Nick Hards, local councillor for Didcot West;  
Councillor Liz Brighthouse, Opposition Leader

Item 7– Councillor Nick Hards, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance

Item 8 – Councillor Jean Fooks (not present), Liberal Democrat Spokesperson at the invitation of the Leader; Councillor Gill Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children’s Services

### **33/17 COMMUNITIES FUND**

(Agenda Item. 6)

In February 2017 as part of the budget papers council agreed £250k 'one off' funding for a pilot communities fund. Cabinet had before them a report outlining the proposed approach and options for a locally managed grant scheme and the draft grant guidance and criteria.

Councillor Nick Hards, local councillor for Didcot West, highlighted paragraphs 6 and 7 of the report expressing concerns over the need for matched funding that could cause bids difficulty in terms of timing. He suggested that approvals could be subject to matched funding being gained throughout the year not just at the time of the bid. It was important that Councillors be able to club together in an area to support a larger project. Finally he suggested that there was a potential disparity in fixing funding to a fixed proportion for each division rather than looking at the needs of areas. Councillor Hudspeth replied that match funding was strongly encouraged but not a key criteria. Members were to be encouraged to pool resources as necessary.

Councillor Brighthouse, Opposition Leader, highlighted a number of matters. Firstly, she would have liked it to be made very clear that the funding was being made available to mitigate some of the issues of austerity. She would have preferred to see greater targeting of disadvantaged groups. Councillor Brighthouse supported the concerns expressed by Councillor Hards over match funding. It may have been better to focus on the funding as seed corn for projects to get them off the ground. She would have liked the allocation to have taken into account some element of the levels of disadvantage across the County. Councillor Brighthouse highlighted what she saw as an anomaly that would allow fee paying schools in Oxfordshire to apply for funding as they all carried charitable status. She strongly believed that organisations with substantial reserves should not receive money from the fund. It was a small pot and we must ensure it goes to those people who need it. Finally Councillor Brighthouse commented that she was against councillors being put into a position of having to engage in getting funds for local groups.

Councillor Hudspeth, in moving the recommendations noted that the fund allowed local councillors to make local decisions for their local areas.

Cabinet during discussion supported the recommendations noting that lessons would be learnt from the recent Transitions Fund process.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the Grant Guidance, Grant Application and Locality Meeting Terms of Reference.

### **34/17 2016/17 FINANCIAL MONITORING & BUSINESS STRATEGY DELIVERY REPORT - FEBRUARY 2017**

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet considered the penultimate report in a series for the 2016/17 financial year reporting on revenue and capital spending against budget allocations, including virements between budget heads and capital programme approvals.

Cabinet also had before them an addenda correcting references to paragraph number in the recommendations set out in the report.

Councillor Nick Hards, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, analysed the position as set out in the report commenting that it was much as he would have expected at this point. The final outturn was getting better as the result of a great deal of effort. However he had some concern that some actions were a blunt tool, for instance the freeze on recruitment. He highlighted the underspend in E&E and queried whether in part it was because the staff were not there to carry out the work and whether this was counter productive for residents. Councillor Hards highlighted a number of areas of overspend and noted the use of reserves that could not continue indefinitely.

Cabinet Members responded to the detailed points made.

Councillor Stratford, Cabinet Member for Finance highlighted the contents of the report and moved the recommendations noting the corrections set out in the addenda.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) note the report;
- (b) approve the 2017/18 virements set out in Annex 2b;
- (c) approve the debt write off in paragraph 41;
- (d) note the impairment of the debt detailed in paragraph 42;
- (e) note the Treasury Management lending list at Annex 3;
- (f) approve the Fees and Charges set out in Annex 6;
- (g) approve the changes to the Capital Programme set out in Annex 7b and 7c;
- (h) approve the contractual commitment for construction of the Didcot Great Western Park Primary School (Chalkhill), with a total budget of £7.150m as set out in paragraph 65; and

- (i) approve the £3.3m National Productivity Investment Fund Programme set out in paragraph 67 for inclusion in the capital programme.

### **35/17 ADOPT THAMES VALLEY**

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet considered a report that sought approval for plans for Oxfordshire County Council to join and host the Regional Adoption Agency (Adopt Thames Valley) as a shared service with the other partner authorities.

Councillor Fooks was unable to attend due to another commitment and Councillor Hudspeth read a statement from Councillor Fooks to say how much she has enjoyed her time on the Corporate Parenting panel and how very impressed she has been with the work of officers on the panel. In particular the Oxfordshire Adoption service had an excellent reputation and it was very good news that this expertise would be shared with the other partners in the new Thames Valley Adoption service.

Councillor Gill Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children's Services, echoed Councillor Fooks comments about the excellent officers noting their excellent work with adopted and foster children. It was best that the County Council take a leading role and would be a good outcome for the children but also financially for the Council. However she noted that the funding details were not yet confirmed and she expressed concern that in subsequent years the County Council not incur unreasonable expenses. Councillor Sanders also She commended the work of Councillor Tilley as Cabinet Member for Children & Family Services in looking after the needs of children and hoped that her successor would do an equally good job.

Councillor Tilley, in introducing the report and moving the recommendations paid tribute to the work of Hannah Farncombe. She praised the low breakdown of placements rate and highlighted the importance of keeping the Adoption Support System.

Hannah Farncombe responded to the concerns raised over the financial costs noting that under the transition arrangements there was additional funding over the next couple of years and that the intention was that to ensure that the County Council funding remained no more than currently. However this had to be balanced against the desire to see an increase in adoption. Hannah Farncombe confirmed that there would be no reduction in adoption support. In response to a question from a Cabinet member Hannah Farncombe gave an assurance that the County Council could continue to monitor its own performance within the larger partnership.

During discussion Cabinet welcomed the recommendations but stressed the need for careful monitoring to ensure a strong performance. It was suggested that Oversight Board reports be shared with Cabinet members and Corporate Parenting Panel members.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) agree to join and host Adopt Thames Valley; and
- (b) if not concluded by 25 April Cabinet meeting, Cabinet are asked to give delegated approval for the transitional budget arrangements to the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Lead Member.

### **36/17 FIT FOR FUTURE PROGRESS REPORT**

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet had before them an update on the Council's new transformation programme, Fit for the Future. It set out the structure of the programme, progress on the programme to date and the investment funding to deliver the programme.

Councillor Rose moved the recommendations. Cabinet stressed the importance of working alongside councillors and Councillor Lindsay Gale advised that with regard to property aspects it was early days and that the intention was to fully engage with all councillors following the elections. The important beneficial effect for County Council customers was highlighted the internal transformation would deliver savings and an efficient and effective service with the positive effects felt externally.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) note the report;
- (b) note the use of the £3m Transition Fund and £0.4.m from Children's Services to support the Fit for the Future Programme; and
- (c) approve the creation of a £3m budget provision in the Capital Programme to support the Fit for the Future Programme.

### **37/17 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT & MONITORING REPORT FOR QUARTER 3 - APRIL 2017**

(Agenda Item. 10)

Cabinet had before them a report providing details of performance for quarter three 2016-17 for the Cabinet to consider. The report is required so that the Cabinet can monitor the performance of the Council in key service areas and be assured that progress is being made to improve areas where performance is below the expected level.

Councillor Rose moved the recommendations. Cabinet commended the generally positive position in 20 out of the 24 indicators and noted that those in the red were moving in the right direction. I

**RESOLVED:** to note the performance set out in this report, and the ongoing work to improve business management and reporting.

### **38/17 DELEGATED POWERS - APRIL 2017**

(Agenda Item. 11)

Cabinet noted the following executive decisions taken under the specific powers and functions delegated under the terms of Part 7.2 (Scheme of Delegation to Officers) of the Council's Constitution – Paragraph 6.3(c)(i).

It is not for scrutiny to call in.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Reasons for Urgency</i>
23 February 2017	Sapling Project, Recovery Based Supported Accommodation	Approved an exemption from the tendering requirements under OCC's Contract Procedure Rules for the grant of a further 12 month contract until 2 October 2018 to Oxford Homeless Pathway Limited to provide drug and alcohol recovery-based support services to the Council for Service Users to help maintain their abstinence from drugs and/or alcohol dependency ("the Sapling Project Contract") at a cost of £41,590.00.	To ensure continuity of service provision while the new service is being procured.
3 March 2017	Provision of Care Services for People with a Learning Disability provided by the Camden Society	Approved an exemption from the tendering requirements under OCC's Contract Procedure Rules for the grant of an extension to the current contract to 16 January 2018 to Camden Society to provide Care Services for People with a Learning Disability at a cost of £465,014.	To ensure that there is service continuity and provision for the residents during the improvement/re-provision programme
10 April 2017	Provision of	Approved an	To ensure

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	<p>Learning Disability Respite Services – Saxon Way</p>	<p>exemption from the full tendering requirements under OCC's Contract Procedure Rules for the grant of an award of contract from 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017 to 9<sup>th</sup> May 2018 to Brandon Trust to provide respite services for people with a Learning Disability from premises in Saxon Way in Oxford City at an estimated cost of £518,000</p>	<p>continuity of service provision while the new service is being procured.</p>
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**39/17 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS**

(Agenda Item. 12)

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

2017