

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 27 February 2018 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 2.14 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Ian Hudspeth – in the Chair
Councillor Mrs Judith Heathcoat
Councillor Lawrie Stratford
Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale
Councillor Yvonne Constance OBE
Councillor David Bartholomew
Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles
Councillor Mark Gray

Other Members in Attendance:

Officers:

Whole of meeting Peter Clark (Chief Executive); Sue Whitehead (Resources Directorate)

Part of Meeting
Item Name
6 Ben Threadgold, Policy and Performance Service Manager

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.

18/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Steve Harrod.

19/18 MINUTES

(Agenda Item. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2018 were approved and signed as a correct record.

ERRATUM

Cabinet agreed an annex containing the questions from Councillors and responses from Cabinet Members which was omitted in error from the

minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2018 and is now attached to the relevant minutes. The annex contains corrected information in respect of question 2.

20/18 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda Item. 4)

Councillor Cherry had given notice of the following two questions to Councillor Constance:

1. Has there been any progress in recruiting more road gangs to repair potholes by Council highways contractors Skanska

Councillor Constance replied:

Skanska have allocated additional gangs to respond to the increase in reported pothole numbers, this equates to one gang in the North and similarly in the south. In addition to this where resources permit weekend working is being undertaken

2. After a Banbury Guardian article on Thursday 15th February 2018, can I be assured that the FixMyStreet depth and width for fixing potholes has not been changed this includes highways officers inspecting potholes that have been reported by FixMyStreet or directly by local councillors.

Councillor Constance replied:

Official intervention levels for footway and carriageway defects have not changed, however, a small element of discretion has been introduced for the inspectors to reduce the 'pothole next to a pothole not being fixed' type of enquiry

Councillor Howson had given notice of the following question to Councillor Hibbert-Biles

Following this comment from Ofsted in a recent report on a visit to a maintained primary school in London:

'The local authority has provided some support to the school in managing the manipulative and sometimes abusive correspondence and comments made by email and across social media. However, considering the position the school found itself in, and the fact that some correspondence appears to have been coordinated, the local authority's approach has been perfunctory at best, stopping short of supporting the school in its policy position. Instead, the local authority has positioned itself as a moderator to manage relationships between the school, councillors and community groups. The expected level of emotional care and public support for school staff from the local authority has been too limited and, as a result, ineffective.'

What mechanisms does this local authority have available to deal with any contentious issues affecting a maintained school in Oxfordshire?

Councillor Hibbert-Biles replied:

“Through ‘Workforce Steering Group and the ‘Oxfordshire County Council and Teachers Joint Committee’ a new social media policy is in the process of being agreed. This will apply to all maintained schools and will be available to academies to adopt or adapt as they see fit. The policy will include clear guidance about how school staff should deal with cases of ‘cyber bullying’ including the importance of retaining evidence. Where schools buy into the Council’s legal services they can access support where there may have been a potentially criminal act or, if short of this, perpetrators could be written to requiring them to desist. In principle this would be the same approach as adopted in the case of a vexatious parent or member of the public who could be barred from a school site. Ultimately the Council could take legal action on behalf of its employees, including head teachers.”

Supplementary: Councillor Howson queried how far the Cabinet Member believed that it was the duty of local authorities to provide emotional care and public support for school staff when a school faces unexpected challenges beyond its expertise to deal with under the present arrangements for the governance of schooling. Councillor Hibbert-Biles indicated that there was a responsibility to help and they did help.

Councillor John Sanders had given notice of the following question to Councillor Constance:

"I am aware that the implementation of Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) in Oxford is a matter of controversy and that the issue is being actively considered by this Council and Oxford City Council. However, County Councillors in the City are frequently being pursued by residents wishing to know what the Council is doing to ameliorate the problem of on-street parking in Oxford and when this will be addressed. Will the Cabinet Member provide a timetable for CPZ implementation and when would this be published?"

Councillor Constance replied:

I am aware of the concerns about on-street parking in residential areas in the city. A number of new controlled parking zones are already in the pipeline, and updates on the progress of these has been provided through the Oxford locality briefing papers, which all Oxford locality members will have received.

However there are also a number of zones across the city which are not currently being progressed, but where we know there is concern about on-street parking. Officers have prepared a draft programme setting out how and when all the remaining zones in the city could be progressed, but some discussion with local city and county members (including some prioritisation) will be required before anything is published. I have asked officers to ensure

these discussions happen as quickly as possible. Funding will need to be identified for any zones which are not already funded.

Supplementary: In response to a question about the need for a timetable covering funded schemes, those where funding was still to be found and plans for the wider area, Councillor Constance agreed that such a timetable is the ideal and that they were working towards that but that it needed to take into account that partial Zones created problems as the parking issues moved to adjacent areas. As soon as more information was available she would share it with Councillor Sanders. Councillor Hudspeth added that the County would be having discussion with the City Council about a contribution to the funding of such schemes.

21/18 CORPORATE PLAN - FEBRUARY 2018

(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet considered a report setting out next steps in developing and finalising the Corporate Plan, following comments from Council on 13th February 2018.

Councillor Liz Brighouse, Opposition Leader, spoke at the invitation of the Leader of the Council. Councillor Brighouse welcomed the recommendations as eminently sensible as the production of the Prospectus allowed time to get the Corporate Plan right and she thanked Cabinet for listening to the comments of Scrutiny and Council.

Councillor Heathcoat, Deputy Leader of the Council, in moving the recommendations commented that the Prospectus had been well received. Cabinet had taken on board comments on the Corporate Plan from full Council, Performance Scrutiny Committee and others and the Corporate Plan would be coming back again. Councillor Bartholomew drew attention to a third document that would be circulated with Council Tax Bills and give details of services provided by the County, District and Parish Councils respectively. Cabinet welcomed the opportunity for others to further engage.

RESOLVED: to agree to receive a final version of the corporate plan once work on the performance outcomes and measures, and to engage fully with Councillors, has been completed.

22/18 STAFFING REPORT - QUARTER 3 - 2017

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet had before them a report that gave an update on staffing numbers and related activity during the period 1 October 2017 to 31 December 2017. In addition, the report provided information on the cost of posts being covered by agency staff and an Agency Trend analysis.

Councillor Judith Heathcoat, Deputy Leader of the Council introduced the contents of the report and moved the recommendations. Councillor Heathcoat responded to comments about a press article on agency and

consultancy staff and explained that need to ensure that services continued despite staff illness and vacancies. Figures always increased during winter due to illness. Councillor Stratford, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, paid tribute to a successful campaign to recruit social workers.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

23/18 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

(Agenda Item. 8)

The Cabinet considered a list of items for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet together with the following addition notified at the meeting:

Area Highway Operations in the City Council Authority Boundary – Agency Agreement (Ref 2017/134) - To seek approval for new Highways Management Agency agreement with Oxford City Council.

RESOLVED: to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 2018