

These notes indicate the decisions taken at this meeting and the officers responsible for taking the agreed action. For background documentation please refer to the agenda and supporting papers available on the Council's web site (www.oxfordshire.gov.uk.)

The decisions take effect at the time and date specified, unless before that time written notice is given in accordance with the Council's Scrutiny Procedure Rules requiring the decision to be called in for review by the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

If you have a query please contact Sue Whitehead (Tel: 07393 001213; E-Mail: sue.whitehead@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

CABINET - TUESDAY, 18 JULY 2017

<i>List published 19 July 2017 Decisions will (unless called in) become effective at 5.00pm on 26 July 2017</i>		
<i>RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED</i>	<i>DECISIONS</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
1. Apologies for Absence	Councillor Constance	DLG (A. Newman)
2. Declarations of Interest - guidance note opposite	None	DLG (A. Newman)
3. Minutes To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2017 (CA3) and to receive information arising from them.	Minutes agreed and signed subject to it being noted under Minute 43/17 that it was the first bid for transition funding that Aspire had been involved in.	SW
4. Questions from County Councillors	See attached annex.	
5. Petitions and Public Address	Item 6 – Councillor Helen Evans, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance Councillor Jamila Begum Azad, Item 8 –Barrie Finch, Oxfordshire NPC Group Phil Southall, Oxford Bus Co Graham Jones, ROX and the Oxford High Street Association Sara Fuge, Westgate Oxford Alliance Dan Levy, Cyclox Councillor Sajjad Malik Martin Sutton, Stagecoach at Oxfordshire Sajad Khan,	

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<i>RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED</i>	<i>DECISIONS</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
	<p>Councillor Paul Buckley, Councillor John Howson, Councillor John Sanders</p> <p>Item 9 - David Bullivant, Clare Bentata (petition) Christine Atkinson Moira Green, Headteacher at Chiltern Edge Councillor Liz Brighthouse Becky Crockett, South Oxfordshire District Committee of the Campaign to Protect Rural England Oxfordshire Branch</p> <p>Item 10 –Councillor John Sanders,</p> <p>Item 11 –Councillor Adrian Lloyd, Wallingford Town Council Councillor Lynda Atkins, Councillor John Sanders,</p> <p>Item 12 – Councillor John Howson Councillor Bob Johnston, Councillor Paul Buckley,</p>	
<p>6. 2017/18 Financial Monitoring & Business Strategy Delivery Report - May 2017</p> <p><i>Cabinet Member: Finance</i> <i>Forward Plan Ref: 2017/014</i> <i>Contact: Katy Jurczynszyn, Strategic Finance Manager (Finance, Strategy & Monitoring) Tel: 07584 909518</i></p> <p>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:</p> <p>(a) note the report;</p> <p>(b) approve the virement requests set out in Annex 2a;</p> <p>(c) note the Virements set out in Annex 2b;</p> <p>(d) approve the use of the £6.3m improved Better Care Fund ring-fenced grant funding detailed in paragraph 32:</p>	<p>Recommendations agreed.</p>	<p>DF (K. Jurczynszyn</p>

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<i>RECOMMENDATIONS CONSIDERED</i>	<i>DECISIONS</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1.2m Improving Flow • £1.7m Market Resilience • £0.6m Strategic Review of Home Support • £2.1m Additional Capacity • £0.7m balance to be allocated as required; <p>(e) note the Treasury Management lending list at Annex 3;</p> <p>(f) approve the updated Capital Programme at Annex 7 and the associated changes to the programme in Annex 6c;</p> <p>(g) delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Strategic Director for Communities, in consultation with the Leader of the Council to contractually commit to the construction of the Faringdon Community College two form entry expansion project, with a total budget of £6.290m; and</p> <p>(h) approve the capital funding allocation of £1.04m for the A4155 Henley Road (Flowing Springs) embankment repair works.</p>		
<p>7. Treasury Management 2016/17 Outturn</p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Finance <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2017/015 <i>Contact:</i> Donna Ross, Principal Finance Manager - Treasury Pension Tel: (01865) 323976</p> <p>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the report, and to RECOMMEND Council to note the Council's Treasury Management Activity in 2016/17.</p>	<p>Recommendations agreed.</p>	<p>DF (D. Ross) DLG (D. Miller)</p>
<p>8. City Centre Transport Improvements and Experimental Queen Street Closure</p>		

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<p><i>Cabinet Member: Environment</i> <i>Forward Plan Ref: 2017/064</i> <i>Contact: Martin Krafft, Principal</i> <i>Infrastructure Co-ordinator Tel: 07920</i> <i>084336</i></p> <p>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:</p> <p>(a) consider the contents of this report, including the consultation responses received, in the context of the statutory framework as set out in Annex 5;</p> <p>(b) approve the proposal for an experimental TRO restricting bus, taxi and private hire access to Queen Street as advertised, subject to approval by the Secretary of State for Transport;</p> <p>(c) instruct officers to develop a monitoring framework for the experimental closure of Queen Street, in consultation with (amongst others) the bus operators, city council, and Cabinet Member for Environment;</p> <p>(d) instruct officers to continue to develop options for city centre bus routeing – including options for Queen Street – in partnership with Oxford City Council and bus operators and drawing on monitoring of the experimental closure when available;</p> <p>(e) approve the retention of the existing cycle access arrangements in Queen Street (cycling permitted 18:00 – 10:00);</p> <p>(f) approve the proposal for zebra crossings in St Aldate's, Speedwell Street, New Road, Park End Street</p>	<p>Recommendations agreed.</p>	<p>SDC (M. Krafft)</p>

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<p>and Worcester Street as advertised;</p> <p>(g) approve the proposal for changes to loading, waiting and stopping in High Street and St Aldate's as advertised;</p> <p>(h) approve the changes to bus stop clearways as advertised;</p> <p>(i) note that design changes may be made to the published proposals to deal with concerns raised in the consultation and as part of the safety audit process. Certain changes may require further consultation.</p>		
<p>9. The Future of Chiltern Edge School</p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Public Health & Education <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2017/057 <i>Contact:</i> Diane Cameron, School Organisation Officer Tel: 07795 301254</p> <p>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:</p> <p>(a) <u>not</u> proceed at this time with the publication of a statutory notice proposing the closure of Chiltern Edge School;</p> <p>(b) commission, ideally from Ofsted, an external review of the progress made by October 2017 towards addressing the weaknesses identified by Ofsted and the construction of an in-year balanced budget;</p> <p>(c) consider a further report on the progress identified by the external review at its November meeting.</p>	<p>Recommendations agreed.</p>	<p>DCS (D. Cameron)</p>
<p>10. Transition Fund for Community Initiatives for Open Access Children's Services</p>		

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<p><i>Cabinet Member: Local Communities</i> <i>Forward Plan Ref: 2017/083</i> <i>Contact: Sarah Jelley, Senior Policy & Performance Officer Tel: 07554 103437</i></p> <p>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to</p> <p>(a) Approve for funding the following bids:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><i>a. St Mary's Church, Chipping Norton</i></p> <p>(b) Defer the decision until September Cabinet for the following bids:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><i>a. Aspire & The Nature Effect (Florence Park Children's Centre)</i></p> <p>(c) Defer the decision until September Cabinet for the asset transfer for the following proposal:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><i>a. Aflah Nursery (Florence Park Children's Centre)</i></p>	<p>Recommendations agreed.</p>	<p>ACE (S. Jelley)</p>
<p>11. Minerals and Waste Local Plan, Part 1 (Core Strategy)</p> <p><i>Cabinet Member: Environment</i> <i>Forward Plan Ref: 2017/058</i> <i>Contact: Peter Day, Minerals & Waste Policy Team Leader Tel: 07392 318899</i></p> <p>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to</p> <p>(a) recommend to Council to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. adopt the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1 – Core Strategy with the main modifications recommended by the Inspector in his final report (Appendix B) at Annex 3B and such additional modifications as are required, in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 section 23(3) (as amended);</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">ii. authorise the Director for Planning & Place to carry out the steps required</p>	<p>Recommendations agreed (5 votes for with 3 abstentions)</p>	<p>DPP (P. Day)</p>

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<p>by The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Regulation 26 for making the plan and other documents and information publically available and notifying specified persons as soon as reasonably practicable after the plan is adopted;</p> <p>(b) authorise the Director for Planning & Place to finalise the additional modifications that are required, for recommendation to Council, to include the additional modifications published by the Council for public comment on 3 February 2017 subject to any necessary amendments and any further additional modifications now required.</p>		
<p>12. East West Rail Western Section Phase 2: Public Consultation</p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Environment <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2017/042</p> <p><i>Contact:</i> John Disley, Policy Strategy Manager Tel: 07767 006742</p> <p>Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:</p> <p>(a) Reconfirm the Council's strong support for the East West Rail scheme set out in the consultation proposals, as a strategic investment priority;</p> <p>(b) Submit a response to the Western Section Phase 2 consultation, based on the points outlined in paragraph 21 above, with the final response to be agreed by the Cabinet Member for the Environment in consultation with the Director for Planning & Place;</p> <p>(c) For this response to include a</p>	<p>Recommendations agreed</p>	<p>SDC (J. Disley)</p>

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<p>schedule of detailed points, as per the addendum circulated to this report.</p>		
<p>13. Section 75 Agreement - Update 2017</p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Adult Social Care <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2017/077 <i>Contact:</i> Eleanor Crichton, Strategic Commissioner (Older People) Tel: 07774 335652/Natalia Lachkou, Strategic Commissioner (Vulnerable Adults) Tel: 07881 500344</p> <p>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:</p> <p>(d) approve the outline proposed pooled budget arrangements with Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, including the creation of two pooled budgets for Adults with Care and Support Needs and for the Better Care Fund;</p> <p>(e) delegate responsibility for approving the detail of the schedules for 2017/18, including the final contributions and risk share arrangements, to the Director for Adult Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care;</p> <p>(f) approve the proposal to hold two joint management groups.</p>	<p>Recommendations agreed.</p>	<p>DAS (N. Lachkou)</p>
<p>14. Delegated Powers - July 2017</p> <p><i>Cabinet Member:</i> Leader of the Council <i>Forward Plan Ref:</i> 2017/017 <i>Contact:</i> Sue Whitehead, Principal Committee Officer Tel: 07393 001213</p>	<p>Noted.</p>	
<p>15. Forward Plan and Future Business</p>		

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<p><i>Cabinet Member: All</i> <i>Contact Officer: Sue Whitehead,</i> <i>Committee Services Manager (01865</i> <i>810262)</i></p> <p>The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.</p>	Noted.	

ITEM 4 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Questions received from the following Members:

1. Councillor Howson to Councillor Hibbert-Biles

“During the general election campaign, and also subsequently, there have been statements that no school would lose out under the new National Funding Formula. This included a manifesto pledge to “make sure no school has its budget cut as a result of the new formula. Schools will, of course face other funding cuts. However, I can find no mention of how the High Needs funding block will be treated in terms of this extra funding. Can the Cabinet Member explain how the children of Oxfordshire funded through the High Needs block will benefit from the extra funding identified by the government?”

Answer:

“To date I have seen no firm commitments from the government to address the High Needs Block in Oxfordshire. I have written to Robert Goodwill, MP requesting a meeting with him at his earliest convenience and I will add the High Needs Block to the other matters I intend to raise with him, including the excessive time it takes to secure school places for our Looked After Children who are placed outside of Oxfordshire.”

Supplementary: In response to reference to the recent funding announcement from Government Councillor Hibbert-Biles undertook to respond directly to Councillor Howson on the effect in Oxfordshire.

2. Councillor Roz Smith to Councillor Constance

I'd like to draw the County Council's attention to the DfT's "[Local cycling and walking infrastructure plan guidance](#)"; the Department invites local authorities to express their interest in technical support for the development of local cycling and walking infrastructure.

“Recognising that preparing LCWIPs may take time and resources not readily available to all local authorities, a comprehensive programme of technical cycling and walking support has been developed. This programme makes available technical expertise to local authorities wishing to develop local plans, through an expression of interest process. It also offers advice on how to integrate LCWIPs into local policies and strategies, and develop the local strategic and economic case for investment.”

Has the council started work on preparing it's LCWIP and will it be using advice and the resources offered by the DfT to help shape the plan?

Answer

“The Council is looking to progress work on developing [local cycling and walking infrastructure plan guidance](#), and as such has submitted a bid for technical support on offer from the DfT, referred to in Councillor Smith's question. The submission was made at the end of June and we are awaiting the outcome.”

3. Councillor Dr Johnson to Councillor Constance

Many villages in Wheatley Division are suffering because of the cut in bus subsidies. Elderly and vulnerable people are isolated; younger people cannot get to college and apprenticeships; those who relied on buses for work are now using cars and increasing the traffic on our already congested roads. Does the member agree with me that saving up to £4 million pounds from cutting bus subsidy was a false economy, and will she work with me to find room in our forthcoming budget to reinstate bus subsidies?

Answer

“At the budget setting meeting in February 2016, all Liberal Democrat councillors present voting for the budget including withdrawing the bus subsidy grant. It is interesting to note that of the 118 bus services affected there were solutions found for 54 of the routes. Rather than reinstating the subsidies we should be looking to more imaginative ways of providing services in areas affected. For instance in my division there is a project called ‘Our Bus’ that is a successful volunteer organisation that is providing a service that was withdrawn by the bus companies prior to the February 2016 being taken, I am working with the group so that it can continue to provide such services, I would be more than happy to give you the group’s details so that you could start a similar project in your division to help those that have been affected by the February 2016 budget decision.

Although the county council has been forced by the financial crisis affecting local government to make difficult decisions - notably to withdraw funding from non-commercial bus services - we remain committed to working in partnership with bus operators to safeguard and develop the commercial bus network. In fact, Oxfordshire has a long history of doing this and as a result we have some the best bus services and highest levels of patronage of any shire county, particularly in the South East.

However, in addition to commercial bus services there are two further ways in which the county council is supporting bus passengers. One is through our innovative Comet initiative and the other is through the use of developer contributions to "pump prime" new or enhanced bus services where there is substantial development with a view to them becoming commercially viable in the longer term.

Comet

We have over 151 registered members, about 75% of whom regularly use the service. We are covering a large majority of the county. At least two buses are used in each district area every day. We have 8 parish groups running regular bus-replacement type routes, mainly in the south of the county - all of which have got large enough passenger numbers to sustain them and recoup their costs. We also have about a dozen care homes and schools using the service for trips out.

Sub Bus continued Commercially

The council purchased season tickets for the following routes / schools, involving approximately 290 students overall.

Route Number and Operator	Schools served	Outcome
94, Thames Travel	Didcot Girls School, St Birinus School Didcot	Operator wanted to withdraw service as was no longer considered viable. S106 funding has been used to postpone this withdrawal until Easter 2018 at which point there may be further options available to secure its continuation.

114, Thames Travel	Larkmead School Abingdon, John Mason School Abingdon, Fitzharry's School Abingdon	Service being withdrawn as no longer considered viable by the operator. OCC has increased the size of its private school transport buses that were running alongside this route. This will ensure transport still exists for children to Abingdon schools from Berinsfield (children who would previously caught the 114). This solution however will only be viable for one further year.
136, Thames Travel	Wallingford School	New arrangement of purchasing season tickets
X8, Pulham's Coaches	Chipping Norton School	Continuation of purchasing season tickets
X9, Pulham's Coaches	Chipping Norton School	Service being withdrawn as no longer considered viable by the operator. OCC changing other school transport routes to ensure children are still taken to school. As it happens, this should also be at a reduced cost to the council

S106 funds have been used to continue some of these routes until the contract end dates:

Service, Operator	Description	Outcome through providing S106 funding
B2, Stagecoach	Bodicote-Banbury	Contract for service continues until at least July 2017. There will be slight changes to the timetable after 20 July.
B10, Stagecoach	Hanwell Fields-Banbury	Contract for service continues until at least July 2017. There will be slight changes to the timetable after 20 July
488, Stagecoach	Chipping Norton-Banbury	Contract for service continues until end date of June 2017. No changes to current service.
S3, Stagecoach	Chipping Norton-Woodstock-(Oxford) Sunday	Contract for service continues until end date of November 2017. No changes to current service.

233, Stagecoach	Burford-Witney- Woodstock	Contract for service continues until end date of June 2018. There will be a revised timetable and route after 20 July. Further details in the attached.
X15, Stagecoach	Witney-Abingdon	New contract in place to support this service There will be a revised timetable and route after 20 July. Further details in the attached.
19, Stagecoach	Carterton- Bampton-Witney	New contract in place to support this service There will be a revised timetable and route after 20 July. Further details in the attached.
136 and 139- Sunday Service, Thames Travel	Cholsey- Wallingford- Henley	Contract for supporting the Sunday services continues until end date of June 2017. 136 - No changes to existing Sunday timetable. 139 - Sunday timetable to remain largely the same, but with routing now via Crowmarsh Gifford rather than Shillingford.
139, Thames Travel	Henley- Wallingford	Contract for service continues until end date of June 2017. Service route to be amended to operate hourly Wallingford – Crowmarsh Gifford – Nettlebed – Henley on Mondays to Saturdays with effect from 24/07/16. Peak journeys will be extended to serve Henley College. Benson Village and RAF Benson to now be served on service 136.
X2, Thames Travel	Oxford- Abingdon – Milton Park - Didcot	Continue to support service under a new contract until June 2017. Service frequency increased to two buses per hour Monday to Saturday. Service will co-ordinate with service X1 (re-numbered to 32A) to provide three buses per hour between Abingdon and Didcot. New extension in Wallingford to serve Hithercroft Industrial Estate with one bus per hour.
X1, Thames Travel	Oxford- Didcot- Harwell Campus- Wantage	New contract in place to support this service until June 2017. Service re-numbered to 32A. Will operate hourly between Wantage and Abingdon on Mondays to Saturdays. Route between Didcot and Abingdon will serve Culham village partly replacing service T2. Further information about the new service can be found in the attached route update document.
275, Red	Oxford City	S106 funding used to part fund

Rose Travel	Centre- Wycombe	High	Buckinghamshire County Council's contract to continue this service until July 2018
94, Thames Travel	Didcot Blewbury Hagbournes Didcot	– – –	New contract in place to support this service until June 2017. Service will operate to a revised route and timetable on Mondays to Fridays. Peak journeys will be extended to serve Didcot schools.

The following is the update that Thames Travel about the services they were continuing:

Service	What is happening?
T1	Service extended to serve Chinnor and Lewknor. Peak services will continue to operate into Oxford City Centre, off-peak service will terminate at Cowley Centre with through ticketing available for onward journeys to City and Rail Station on Oxford Bus Company City5 and BROOKESBus U5 services.
T2	Service will cease to operate at end of service on 23/07/16. New 3A service to be introduced by Oxford Bus Company and Stagecoach in Oxfordshire to serve Iffley Road, Littlemore, Sandford and Oxford Science Park with two buses per hour Monday to Saturday. Culham Village will be served by service 32A providing links to Abingdon.
T5	New peak commuter service introduced, operating between Oxford Rail Station, Oxford City Centre and Oxford Business Park on Mondays to Fridays.
X1	Service re-numbered 32A and will operate hourly between Wantage and Abingdon on Mondays to Saturdays. Route between Didcot and Abingdon will serve Culham village partly replacing service T2.
X2	Service frequency increased to two buses per hour Monday to Saturday. Service will co-ordinate with service 32A to provide three buses per hour between Abingdon and Didcot. New extension in Wallingford to serve Hithercroft Industrial Estate with one bus per hour.
X32	Minor timetable changes only at this time
X34	Minor timetable changes only at this time
X39	No changes
X40	No changes
17	New off-peak service introduced between Jericho and Oxford City Centre on Mondays to Fridays.
22 & 23	Withdrawn
24	Service will cease to operate at end of service on 23/07/16
25	Service will cease to operate at end of service on 23/07/16
25A	Subject to contract, service will continue to operate hourly Monday to Saturday. Revised timetable with amended service routing within Bicester to be introduced from 24/07/16.
32A	This is the former service X1 renumbered operating between Wantage and Abingdon only but via Culham Village instead of Drayton.
38	Service to be replaced by revised service operating 15 journeys per day between Grove and Wantage on Mondays to Fridays, and hourly on Saturdays from 24/07/16

41	Service to be enhanced to operate half hourly on Mondays to Fridays between 08:30 and 15:00. Service routing extended to serve Tesco and Fairacres retail park.-Service now ends 23/7/17
67/67A/67B	Subject to contract, services will be replaced by revised 67 service, operating hourly between Wantage and Faringdon via Stanford-in-the-Vale on Mondays to Saturdays. Through connections to Harwell, Milton Park and Didcot will be guaranteed and passengers wishing to make through journeys can remain on the bus. Uffington, Childrey, Fernham, Shellingford, the Letcombes, Kingston Lisle, Sparsholt, Westcot and Baulking will no longer be served.
94 (Bicester)	Service will cease to operate at end of service on 23/07/16
94 (Didcot)	Service will operate to a revised route and with reduced hours of operation on Mondays to Fridays only, with effect from 24/07/16. Peak journeys will be extended to serve Didcot schools.
95	Service will cease to operate at end of service on 23/07/16
96	No changes
97	Service will cease to operate at end of service on 23/07/16
114	Service will operate to a revised timetable, with one journey in each direction on Mondays to Fridays (schooldays only). Service ending 23/7/17
135	Limited Saturday service introduced providing one journey in each direction between Wallingford and Goring. Incorporated into service 143 from 3/7/17
136	Service to be enhanced from 24/07/16 to operate half hourly between Cholsey, Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford, Benson and RAF Benson on Mondays to Fridays, with an hourly service on Saturdays. Peak journeys will be extended to serve Wallingford School. No changes to existing Sunday timetable at this time. Better timed connections with trains at Cholsey Rail Station.
139	Service routing to be amended to operate hourly Wallingford – Crowmarsh Gifford – Nettlebed – Henley on Mondays to Saturdays with effect from 24/07/16. Peak journeys will be extended to serve Henley College. Benson Village and RAF Benson to now be served on service 136. Sunday timetable to remain largely the same as current, but with routing now via Crowmarsh Gifford rather than Shillingford.
143	No changes to Monday to Friday timetable at this time. Saturday routing and timetable revised to no longer serve Whitchurch Hill or Goring. Incorporates part of 135 3/7/17

4. Councillor Dr Johnson to Councillor Hibbert-Biles

“Oxfordshire Mind is seeking £308K funding for Mental Health Awareness for children and young people. This investment in Public Health would potentially save the NHS and Social Care millions of pounds a year in Oxfordshire. Will the Cabinet Member meet with Mr Dan Knowles, CEO of Oxfordshire Mind, and me regarding funding this scheme of prevention, ensuring better mental health for young people in this county in years to come?”

Answer

“Thank you for your question. I will answer it in two parts, firstly the request to meet and discuss specific funding with local representatives of MIND – an organisation which is well respected locally, and which I strongly support – and secondly, I will provide some background information about the Council’s wide role in mental health promotion.

So first the governance issues. I understand that Cllr Johnson's intentions are good, but I think it would be improper for me to proceed as she requests. There are several thousand charities in Oxfordshire, many of which regularly put forward proposals for sensible projects across the range of Council functions. We invest considerable sums in our local voluntary services, including Oxfordshire MIND, but we commit these funds through proper business processes which ensure that competition is fair, and much of our officer's time is spent in ensuring that these processes are handled within the Council's strict and proper regulations. We receive many proposals and many requests for funding each week, and it is important that these are dealt with in an even-handed manner – hence our governance arrangements. I would propose therefore that this proposal is put to our officers in the same way as proposals are from other organisations and it can receive due consideration through that route and, come to me or to Cabinet for decisions at the proper time.

I would however underline the fact that the Voluntary Sector is highly valued by the Council and I understand that my Cabinet colleague Cllr Gray has recently met with leaders of Oxfordshire's larger Voluntary Sector Organisations (including Oxfordshire MIND), with the Council's most senior officers, to review how that relationship can be strengthened going forward.

We need to spend every penny with care and that means that we follow the established processes for considering bids from any quarter.

With regard to mental health promotion, the Council has a wide range of services already in place. We aim to promote mental wellbeing as part and parcel of wider services so that mental and physical health are dealt with as a whole. Much of the time for example of our successful School Health Nursing service is spent on promoting mental health in precisely the young people you refer to. Also, our Health Visiting, Sexual Health and drug and alcohol services, all aim to promote mental as well as physical health. Similarly, mental health is promoted by exercise, diet and keeping fit, and our work on promoting physical exercise is also part and parcel of our drive to improve mental wellbeing. We also coordinate our prevention services with the NHS whose duty is to treat mental ill health when symptoms begin to show – again, Cllr Johnson will be aware that the NHS has recently strengthened its services in schools aiming at the vulnerable group of young people she mentions, and of course our school health nurses work hand in hand with these services as indeed they do with schools' own mental health counsellors.

Mental health is notoriously difficult to measure, but several indirect measures point to successful mental health promotion in Oxfordshire – teenage pregnancy rates are low and falling, exercise rates are high and addiction services show good results. Young people themselves are increasingly willing to come forward for help, and demand for help in schools and in NHS services attests to this. This is not to say that there are not challenges ahead and we are all well aware of the stresses modern life puts on young people. This is a problem for all of us to address – parents, schools, the NHS, the Council, and not least, young people themselves. We are well sighted on these issues – they were featured last year's annual report by our Director of Public Health - and we have good services in place. We are moving forward and will continue to do so and these challenges will require everyone to play their part.”