

## CABINET

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 23 June 2015 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.15 pm

**Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor Ian Hudspeth – in the Chair  
Councillor Rodney Rose  
Councillor Mrs Judith Heathcoat  
Councillor Melinda Tilley  
Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale  
Councillor David Nimmo Smith  
Councillor Lawrie Stratford

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillor Brighthouse (Agenda Item 6)  
Councillor Fooks, (Agenda Item 6)  
Councillor Godden (Agenda Item 6)  
Councillor Gray (Agenda Item 6)  
Councillor Hards (Agenda Item 7)  
Councillor Gill Sanders (Agenda Item 6)  
Councillor Webber (Agenda Item 6)

**Officers:**

Whole of meeting	Peter Clark, County Solicitor & Monitoring Officer; Sue Whitehead (Chief Executive's Office)
Part of meeting	
Item	Name
6	Jim Leivers, Director for Children's Services
7	Lorna Baxter, Chief Finance Officer
8	Jonathan McWilliam, Director of Public Health

*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.*

### **50/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

(Agenda Item. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Carter and Councillor Hibbert Biles

## **51/15 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item. 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 May were approved and signed as a correct record.

## **52/15 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

(Agenda Item. 4)

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

"What are the consequences for Oxfordshire of the letter from Lord Nash, the PUS at the DfE taking away the responsibility of the local authority to help choose sponsors for new schools from 1st July 2015?"

Councillor Tilley replied:

"Up until now decisions about sponsors for underperforming schools have, ultimately, been taken by the Secretary of State acting on the advice of 'brokers' who have worked with Council officers to identify the most appropriate sponsor to tackle the underlying issues and to support long term sustained improvements. Delegating the decision making to the Regional Schools Commissioner who will, over time, develop an understanding of the 'education landscape' of Oxfordshire, strikes me as much more sensible than a remote Secretary of State, or PUS, making the decision. Officers will be meeting with the Regional Schools Commissioner next week and Lord Nash's letter will be on the agenda. I hope that we can build upon our already positive working relationship with him and I am confident that he will wish to call upon officers' local knowledge and expertise in order to make the best possible decisions about which organisations are best placed to sponsor Oxfordshire schools in need of support."

Supplementary: Councillor Tilley responding to a further question from Councillor Howson replied that no, she was unable to give an assurance that the Regional Schools Commissioner will take decisions based on the suggestions of council officers.

Councillor Godden had given notice of the following question to Councillor Carter:

"The message below was received from Botley School on 1 June. My question is not what has happened since then, but how did this happen in the first place, and what measures are we taking to improve performance and communication?"

"The building work has been delayed unfortunately, as it should have been finished by now. The initial delay was due to the steel structure (to support the new reception classroom) being built to incorrect measurements which caused a 12 week delay. There was supposed

to be a meeting with Carillion staff to complete a snagging list on 20th May, but this was cancelled as the build wasn't sufficiently advanced for that meeting to happen. I have not had a response from Carillion with an update, since my last meeting with them on 20th April."

Councillor Carter replied:

"The last progress meeting with Botley School was held by the Project Manager on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June, as part of regular formal monthly progress meetings, in addition to weekly site meetings which are held between the construction lead and the School site representative, during this meeting the practical completion date was communicated to the school as being the 15<sup>th</sup> of July, the team also agreed that a snagging session would be completed on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June, with the school invited, with a view to have all outstanding snagging items cleared by the practical completion date.

The delays during construction have been approximately 6 months, attributable to the following reasons.

- 6-8 weeks for an unidentified Gas Main which required re-routing before commencement of work. This was not present on any existing service drawings was not picked up during ground surveys
- 12 week delay due to inaccuracies in the steel frame when delivered, which required the Frame to be reworked. This was a subcontracted package of works, the reworking of which did not financially cost Oxfordshire, however there is recognition of the disruption to the school by being on site longer than anticipated.
- There have been another 4 weeks or so of minor delays which have contributed to this delay.

All of the delays have been communicated with the school and have been verified by Oxfordshire's Employers Agent and have been managed to their conclusion in the context of the contracts that were agreed at the outset of the project. These delays have materially not affected the cost of the project to Oxfordshire, however final accounts are still to be established.

In order to mitigate these types of delay's in the future the Properties & Facilities Department and Carillion are currently redefining the requirements, outputs and processes needed during the design phase of projects as the length of time it has taken for some jobs to progress through this process has been longer than originally scheduled and has put subsequent pressure on the construction periods. In addition to this all School Projects will be targeted for completion 8 weeks prior to when the Asset is required for use, which will allow some time for unforeseen events to be addressed should they occur, prior to their required need."

Councillor Fooks had given notice of the following question to Councillor Carter:

"Both the primary schools in my division of Wolvercote and Summertown have suffered from delays to building work being carried out at the schools. Will the Cabinet member tell me how he will ensure that such delays do not happen in future, as it is immensely disruptive to the education of the children in the school?"

Councillor Carter replied:

"There has already been a major overhaul of personnel who are working on the professional services and construction teams within the Property and Facilities contract, some of the current issues we face are as a result of work that had been progressed prior to this overhaul, given that most building projects are several years from inception to delivery the time lag is a critical factor that has to be taken into account.

Coupled with the changes to the professional services and construction teams, the Properties & Facilities Department and Carillion are currently redefining the requirements, outputs and processes needed during the design phase of projects as the length of time it has taken for some projects to progress through this early part of the process has been longer than originally scheduled and has put subsequent pressure on the construction periods. As part of the review of our processes all School projects will be targeted for completion 8 weeks prior to when the Asset is required for use, which will allow some time for unforeseen events to be addressed should they occur, prior to their required need. To further improve efficiency, Carillion are introducing Standardised Design processes and alternative construction routes (such as Modular Buildings) to reduce overall project durations.

In addition to this the OCC Corporate Landlord Function (Contract Performance Management) will be ensuring that a robust Project closure process is in place to capture lessons learned and ensure that these are incorporated into future projects.

Specifically regarding the project at Wolvercote, the time taken in design meant that there was little or no time to absorb delays due to unforeseen events, in this case an ancient well was discovered during the excavation of the foundations for the new building, upon this discovery works were halted for Archaeological investigation to take place in order to establish whether anything of significance was found. As part of this work a Roman Brooch was found and is currently with the Archaeological team in OCC.

With regards to Cutteslowe the other school in this area which has had works completed recently, these were practically completed in time for September 2014, however the snagging at this site took an unacceptably long time to complete. The process for this has been addressed and is now part of pre completion works, prior to handover, there have also been several other works which have continued into this Academic year, these were either not in the original scope or were late variations to the design as a result of the

school not being happy with the agreed final design once it was observed when finished. There have also been some on-going work with the school to close out issues affecting previous phases of work from the past.”

Supplementary: Councillor Fooks requested that local members be kept informed.

## **53/15 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item. 5)

Item 6 – Councillor Fooks, local councillor

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillors Brighthouse and Webber together with Councillors Godden, Gray, and Gill Sanders, as members of the Early Intervention Cabinet Advisory Group were invited to the table during discussion of this item.

Item 7 – Councillor Hards, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance

## **54/15 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EARLY INTERVENTION CABINET ADVISORY GROUP (CAG)**

(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet considered the report of the Early Intervention CAG which provided some background into the work of the CAG and made recommendations to Cabinet for changes to the children’s early intervention service in order to realise the necessary savings.

Councillor Fooks referred to the huge concerns within communities and commented that the report would not allay those fears. Within her Division there were areas that were very deprived with high numbers of single parents, children on free school meals and families on income support or job seekers allowance. She believed that the proposals on early intervention centres needed re-consideration and that it would be a mistake to close them. There was a need to provide at lower cost but the Centres themselves should be asked for their suggestions to achieve this. In response to concern that the consultation was over the summer period when schools were closed the Leader explained that there would be a full consultation on proposals to come back to Cabinet following initial conversations with stakeholders over the summer period.

Councillor Gray, as Vice Chairman of the CAG highlighted the seriousness with which they approached their task and outlined how their work had been carried out. He was pleased to see the move to a 0-19 service and he did feel that going forward the Council would need to focus on the statutory services and work with the most vulnerable families.

Councillor Brighthouse, Leader of the Opposition, stated that there was more information that she would have liked to have seen, for instance around the finances of the individual centres. As someone heavily involved in her own local centre she was aware of the value of the stay and play services, which

encouraged people into the centres. The question was how to work in the local areas to ensure children were safeguarded and that the most vulnerable were not disadvantaged by the new service. The Council was facing very difficult decisions in a time of financial constraint and increasing need.

Councillor Godden, speaking as a recently resigned member of the CAG commented that she had a minority view, feeling that further information was needed before being able to say that the proposals in the report were the best way forward.. She felt uncomfortable and embarrassed not to be in a position to understand the funding of individual centres and at the lack of information on the changing policies and the impact on health partners. She would have liked to see more being done to explore what was possible with the current model before suggesting a new model. She had formally written with her views but received no acknowledgement.

Councillor Gill Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families and member of the CAG, recognised the need for cuts. The CAG had recognised that it was vital that children & young people received the support they needed and the question was how to best provide that in the face of such cuts and to assure the public that needs will be met. She urged that the consultation be thorough and wide ranging. She welcomed the move to a 0-19 service. Going forward the experience of trained staff was vital as was partnership working. She commented that the job losses were worrying and that currently staff must be very unsure of their future employment. She hoped that the eventual proposals would meet needs and that the Council will not need to make further cuts. She urged Cabinet to continue to lobby the Prime Minister .

Councillor Webber, Liberal Democrat Group Leader, thanked Councillor Godden for all her work on the CAG and understood her reasons for stepping down. He had concerns about the process so far but would be replacing Councillor Godden. Having spoken to Councillor Godden he supported the 0-19 service. He felt that the approach was wrong and that schools and parish councils should be approached first to see what they could do to then look at what remained to be done by the Council.

Councillor Tilley responded to the speakers commenting that there was an in depth understanding of need; that children's centres had already been asked to find savings and she recognised the need to work with them; that the major consultation would not begin until September when schools were back; that the NHS were central to this matter and it was vital they were involved and that safeguarding was central to the proposals. Councillor Tilley responding to Councillor Godden stated that she had not known how to reply to her letter. The CAG had had a lot of information on matters such as footfall, delivery and duplication. She recognised the need to work with

Jim Leivers, Director for Children's Services, introduced the contents of the report, highlighted that the report was the start of the process and explained the context and background to the recommendations. His staff had tried to

provide relevant information and no-one sought to hide or prevent information going to the CAG. He detailed the consultation process to be followed and briefly explained the proposals.

During discussion Cabinet thanked the CAG for the work they had undertaken and recognised that although it would be difficult there was the need to make progress on a sustainable delivery model.

Councillor Brighthouse suggested that locality meeting during September may be a useful tool in terms of tapping into councillors local knowledge. It was essential that this massive piece of work was done properly involving the whole range of individuals concerned including teachers. Councillor Hudspeth welcomed the use of locality meetings.

Councillor Tilley in moving the recommendations thanked all the CAG members and paid tribute to former Councillor Val Smith who had been a very valued member during her time on the CAG.

**RESOLVED:-** to agree that Cabinet consults with potential partners on the proposals set out below:

- a. The current service needs to be streamlined and refocused to respond to (i) financial pressures to achieve savings of £6m by 2017/18; (ii) increases in demand for statutory services.
- b. A robust and sustainable service should be developed that delivers an integrated response to families' needs and focus on the prevention of the escalation of need.
- c. One coherent 0-19 years' service be created rather than continuing with an early intervention service divided by age groups. This allows for better joined up working and use of limited resources.
- d. Location of services and funding should be determined based on need as defined by Index of Multiple Deprivation, Children on Protection Plans, Children in Need and percentage under 5 (2015-20). See Annex 1 for draft summary of the needs analysis providing detailed information on the data.
- e. In addition to centres being located on the basis of need considerations of access and geographical spread of centres is critical given the rural nature of the county. The existing locality model should be used as a basis for future service design.
- f. Children & Family Resource Centres be developed in line with County Council localities. Locality based centres targeted to those areas of greatest need will be developed and combined with outreach services so as to allow for a good geographical spread of resources. Locality modelling which is based on natural communities means limited resources can be allocated on a needs basis at a local level. Locality

modelling is a robust model which can be flexible to meet changes in need and population. It also allows for local communities/groups and parishes to play a part in service delivery.

- g. Early intervention services must not be duplicated. Close working is required with partners, especially schools and Public Health to ensure an effective service.
- h. Outreach of early intervention work from main service centres should be a means to ensure service provision in both urban and rural areas.
- i. Early intervention services need to focus on providing evidence based prevention work in particular to prevent children's needs escalating and requiring statutory interventions as well as providing targeted family support. This means that some other services perhaps traditionally associated with children's centres and early intervention cannot continue under county council funding streams for example stay and play sessions.
- j. Maintaining services through the current network of centres is not sustainable and alternative options for these buildings should be sought. Discussions are required with communities about the future of buildings and services in their area.
- k. The voluntary and community sector provision of early intervention services in Oxfordshire is thriving. Communities should be supported by the council, including being given the opportunity to access funding to develop alternative models of service delivery. As a strong signal of commitment to alternative models community funding should be made available for communities to bid for.
- l. Detailed proposals for the future delivery of early intervention services be drawn up for public consultation and communication undertaken at the earliest stage to involve stakeholders, including schools, district councils, town and parish councils, public health and the voluntary and community sector.
- m. Given the current indications from Government, that there is likely to be extensive reductions in available resource, we recognise that reductions in the service, beyond the £6m, will be needed.

## **55/15 PROVISIONAL 2014/15 REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN**

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet considered a report that set out the provisional revenue and capital outturn position for 2014/15 and showed how actual expenditure and income for the year compared to the budgeted position. Figures shown in the report reflect the Council's draft Statement of Accounts for 2014/15.



Councillor Hards, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance by reference to Annex 2 and the overspend on Social & Community Services highlighted as a general point that the end position was impressive but that the use of reserves, in this case the pooled budget reserve was not sustainable. He made detailed comments on the position across Directorates and asked a number of questions related to actions being taken.

Councillor Stratford, Cabinet Member for Finance, agreed that the outturn was extremely close and detailed the actions taken to achieve such a good outcome. It had been a difficult year and finance officers and heads of service had worked hard for the final result. He accepted that the coming year would be as hard or harder.

The Leader thanked Councillor Stratford, Lorna Baxter and the Finance Team for their work.

Cabinet Members responded to the individual questions but noted that it would be helpful to have notice of them in order to respond fully.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) in respect of the 2014/15 outturn to:
  - i. note the provisional revenue and capital outturn for 2014/15 along with the year end position on balances and reserves as set out in the report;
  - ii. approve the carry-forwards and virements as set out in Annex 2a;
  - iii. recommend Council to approve the virements greater than £1.0m for Children, Education & Families, Social & Community Services, Chief Executive's Office, and Environment & Economy Directorates as set out in Annex 2a;
  - iv. agree that the surplus on the On-Street Parking Account at the end of the 2014/15 financial year, so far as not applied to particular eligible purposes in accordance with Section 55(4) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, be carried forward in the account to the 2015/16 financial year;
  - v. Agree the use of £0.825m one off funding from Children, Education & Families reserves to offset the overspend within Children's Social Care;
- (b) in respect of the 2015/16 revenue budget and Capital Programme to:
  - i. approve the virements for 2015/16 as set out in Annex 7;

- ii. recommend Council to approve supplementary estimates of £2.0m to the Efficiency Reserve and £2.7m to the Budget Reserve as set out in paragraph 90.
- iii. Approve the entry into the capital programme of the Riverside routes to Oxford city centre cycling scheme with a total budget of £3.667m and release of £0.336m project development budget to proceed with feasibility and preliminary design works.
- iv. Approve the increase in budget of the Cutteslowe roundabout scheme by £1.077m to £5.177m and the increase in budget of the Wolvercote roundabout scheme by £0.538m to £5.632m and to contractually commit to construction of both schemes;
- v. Approve the increase in the Universal Infant Free School Meals Programme by £2.053m to £4.046m.

#### **56/15 NOVATION OF HEALTH VISITOR CONTRACT**

(Agenda Item. 8)

A ministerial announcement on 29 January 2014 confirmed that the responsibility for the commissioning of some elements of the 0-5 Healthy Child Programme (HCP) (including health visiting), are transferring out of NHS England to Local Authorities on 01 October 2015.

Cabinet considered a report seeking ratification of the approach being taken to novate the Health Visiting contract in line with the transfer of commissioning responsibility for 0-5 public health services to local authorities from the 1st October 2015.

**RESOLVED:** to ratify the approach being taken to novate the Health Visiting contract in line with the transfer of commissioning responsibility for 0-5 public health services to local authorities from the 1st October 2015.

#### **57/15 APPOINTMENTS 2015/16**

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet considered a report on member appointments to a variety of bodies which in different ways support the discharge of the Council's Executive function.

**RESOLVED:** to agree the appointments set out in the annex to the report with the following additional appointments to existing vacancies:

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Adoption & Permanency Panel – Councillor Mills

Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils – Councillor Nimmo Smith

**58/15 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS**

(Agenda Item. 10)

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 2015