

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 16 February 2010 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 2.30 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Keith R. Mitchell CBE – in the Chair
Councillor David Robertson (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor Jim Couchman
Councillor Ian Hudspeth
Councillor Louise Chapman
Councillor Rodney Rose
Councillor Mrs J. Heathcoat

Other Members in Attendance:

Officers:

Whole of meeting Chief Executive, S. Whitehead (Democratic Services)

Part of Meeting

Agenda Item

6.

7.

Officer Attending

L. Baxter (Financial Planning)

C. Phillips (Partnerships)

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.

14/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item. 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Michael Waive.

15/10 MINUTES

(Agenda Item. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2010 were approved and signed.

16/10 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda Item. 4)

Councillor Fooks had given notice of the following question to the Deputy Leader:

“Now that a new phone system has been installed in County Hall, can we be updated with the improvements or otherwise to customer service at the reception area? Has the number of calls dropped been logged to compare with previous statistics? Are the staff now better equipped with team numbers to help them find a staff member on request?”

Councillor Robertson:

“The receptionists now have five information sources to help them direct customers currently –

- The intranet
- MyConnections staff directory
- Avaya phone user listing
- A local phone directory they can add their own numbers to
- A list of frequently used numbers such as district councils, key teams like Access, Admissions etc.

These latter four sources are available directly in the new console, so they can look up a number and transfer the call.

MyConnections is maintained by individual members of staff. We have put frequent reminders on the intranet news page to get people to update their own details, and to remind colleagues to do likewise. The vast majority of people have updated their details, so this information is more current than the directory they had on the old console.

The console gets a copy of MyConnections every day, so it's currency really depends on people taking responsibility for updating their own details.

Current reporting situation

We can now produce reports on how many calls are coming in, how many are abandoned, and the length of time before they are abandoned.

The new console has a message for callers queuing (activates after 30 seconds) saying reception are busy, and asking people to hold or to look at the website for information.

Future Plans

In the future this switchboard number will be developed and supported with a new knowledge management system and performance reporting, so that more queries can be answered rather than transferred and improved call handling data will be available. There will also be a larger number of staff taking central ownership for MyConnections – encouraging colleagues to make sure that their profiles on the staff database are up to date, which includes their team contact details, for when transfers are necessary.

Supplementary question:

Councillor Fooks stated that all the sources of information took time to look up. She was concerned that calls were being lost as those being called were on voice mail. She asked whether the Cabinet Member would consider having someone to observe the receptionists so that he could see the conflicting demands made on them.

Councillor Robertson replied that the additional method of information had been available for two years. People would be reminded again about the need for photos and to update information. He agreed that voice mail was frustrating and that he would arrange for instructions to be given to staff. Monitoring of the switchboard happened on a regular basis.

17/10 FINANCIAL MONITORING - FEBRUARY 2010

(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet received the ninth financial monitoring report for the 2009/10 financial year and covers the period up to the end of December 2009. It included projections for revenue, balances, reserves and capital.

The in – year Directorate forecast was an overspend of £4.305m.

The current position for general balances as set out in the addenda showed a forecast of £11.063m after taking account of agreed and proposed requests for supplementary estimates. After taking into account the forecast Directorate overspend, adjusted for the supplementary estimates for ICT and Southwark Judgement requested in this report, the consolidated revenue balances forecast was £9.308m.

The Leader highlighted continuing pressures relating to young unaccompanied asylum seekers, children's placements and pooled budgets. A supplementary estimate would address the ICT overspend. He commended the transport budget that was on track. The capital programme was also on track. Cabinet noted the action being taken as detailed by individual Cabinet Members.

RESOLVED: to:

- (a) note the report;
- (b) approve the virements as set out in Annex 2a;
- (c) approve the proposed new music service charges as set out in Annex 8;
- (d) note the addition to the Older People & Physical Disabilities Pooled Budget of £0.320m extra residential and Fairer Charging income in 2009/10;
- (e) approve the supplementary estimate request of £0.300m for costs relating to the Southwark Judgement as set out in paragraph 11 and Annex 2f;
- (f) agree to recommend Council to approve the supplementary estimate request of £2.250m for ICT as set out in paragraph 57 and Annex 2f, at their meeting on 6 April 2010; and
- (g) approve the write off of the bad debt of £13,000 as set out in paragraph 71.

18/10 ENDORSEMENT OF THE CHERWELL SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY, OUR DISTRICT, OUR FUTURE

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet considered the Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy, Our District, Our Future. The county council was a key partner in the Cherwell LSP and was involved in the development of the strategy and consultation on its priorities. Cabinet had endorsed the other four district strategies last year.

RESOLVED: to endorse the Cherwell sustainable community strategy and commit its support to delivery of the priorities identified.

19/10 REVIEW OF DELEGATION TO CABINET MEMBERS

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet considered a report reviewing the working of the Transport Decisions Committee now it had been operating for six months, and to consider future arrangements including any necessary changes to the delegation to the relevant Cabinet Members.

RESOLVED: to:

- (a) note the Leader of the Council's decision that the Cabinet Member for Transport Implementation be re-designated as Cabinet Member for Transport;
- (b) note the Leader of the Council's decision to wind up the Transport Decisions Committee with effect from 1 March 2010 and to authorise

the discharge of its functions to be exercised by the Cabinet Members for Transport and Growth & Infrastructure as set out in their respective portfolios; and

- (c) authorise the Assistant Head of Legal & Democratic Services to take all necessary steps to bring the arrangement at (b) into effect from that date, including:
 - (i) the setting of provisional dates and venues for delegated decision sessions for the Cabinet Member for Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Director for Environment & Economy; and
 - (ii) making the arrangements known to other members and to officers.

20/10 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

(Agenda Item. 9)

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

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Date of signing

2010

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