

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 16 February 2016 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 5.10 pm.

Present:

Councillor John Sanders – in the Chair

Councillors:

Lynda Atkins	Mark Gray	David Nimmo Smith
Jamila Azad	Patrick Greene	Neil Owen
David Bartholomew	Tim Hallchurch MBE	Zoé Patrick
Mike Beal	Pete Handley	Glynis Phillips
Maurice Billington	Jenny Hannaby	Susanna Pressel
Liz Brighthouse OBE	Nick Hards	Laura Price
Kevin Bulmer	Neville F. Harris	Anne Purse
Nick Carter	Steve Harrod	G.A. Reynolds
Louise Chapman	Mrs Judith Heathcoat	Alison Rooke
Mark Cherry	Hilary Hibbert-Biles	Rodney Rose
John Christie	John Howson	Gillian Sanders
Sam Coates	Ian Hudspeth	Les Sibley
Yvonne Constance OBE	Bob Johnston	Lawrie Stratford
Steve Curran	Richard Langridge	John Tanner
Surinder Dhesi	Stewart Lilly	Melinda Tilley
Arash Fatemian	Lorraine Lindsay-Gale	Michael Waine
Neil Fawcett	Sandy Lovatt	Richard Webber
Jean Fooks	Mark Lygo	David Williams
Mrs C. Fulljames	Kieron Mallon	David Wilmshurst
Anthony Gearing	Charles Mathew	
Janet Godden	James Mills	

The Council considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and reports, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

1/16 MINUTES
(Agenda Item 1)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2015 were approved and signed, subject to the text 'specific' being inserted before the words 'senior officer' in the 2nd paragraph of Minute 88/15 (Appointment of Independent Person).

2/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item 2)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Roz Smith.

3/16 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

(Agenda Item 4)

The Chairman reported as follows:

Council paid tribute and held a minute's silence to honour the memory of former County Councillor Don Seale, County Councillor from 1997- 2013 and former County Councillor Barbara Gatehouse, County Councillor from 2001 – 2009.

4/16 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item 6)

The Council received the following Petitions and Public Address:

Petitions

Ms Mary Stiles, Parish Transport Representative for Thame, presented a Petition calling on the County Council not to vote for the proposed Budget on 16th February 2016, which included the withdrawal of all bus subsidies, on the basis that the 120/121/123/124 in the Thame area was a lifeline to local people who could not get into the town by any other means, did not have their own transport and could not walk that far. She further made a plea to at least maintain a service 2 to 3 times a week.

Ms Lynne Keen presented a Petition urging the Council not to close the Children's Centres, but instead to keep them open to all families as well as using them for the proposed 8 referral centres being opened to be accessed by referral for most vulnerable families.

Public Address

Ms Josephine French, doctoral student outlined the results of a medical study (the adverse Childhood Experiences Study) and suggested that the Children's centres and services provided protection against the risk factors set out in the study. She urged Councillors to keep the centres open to protect against generational cycles of suffering and social and economic difficulty and warned that there would be an increase in welfare and support services if they were not kept open.

Mr Malcolm Leading spoke as parish transport representative against the withdrawal of bus subsidies on the basis of the detrimental effect it would have on many parishes, including access to health services, doctors, dentists, hospital, shops and increased cars on the roads. He urged the Council to delay the decisions to allow for further talks between the parishes, County Council and Bus companies.

Ms Donna Crook spoke on behalf of 'Save Our Henley Bus campaign', urging the Council to keep the local bus service on the basis that it provided some of the most vulnerable people in the community with a lifeline to local services and enabled people to live independently without care or going into care homes.

Ms Claire Soper, outlined concerns about the Council's proposal to close Health and Wellbeing Centres in 2017 which provided much needed support for the frail and vulnerable elderly, often with dementia, Parkinson's and stroke who could not speak for themselves. She urged the Council to reconsider the proposal to shut all 8 centres and give consideration to retaining 3 'hubs' in the North, City and South.

Ms Clare Ellis and Ms Lesley Dewhurst spoke on behalf of the Homeless Voice Group urging the Council to protect the most vulnerable of Society not to withdraw the housing support budget.

Ms Suzy Imeson and Ms Esme Mutter spoke on behalf of the Stroke Association relating people's experiences with Aspasia, particularly around communication on the telephone. They urged the Council not to support proposals to end funding for the Stroke service.

Mr David Ricketts spoke on behalf of Unite, urging the Council not to cut early intervention Services in Oxfordshire.

Ms Charlie Payne urged the Council not to increase isolation in communities and in particular to the young or the elderly by closing children centre's or old people's day centres. She referred to the consultation on the future of children's services and in particular that 71% of respondents rejected the Council's proposals.

Ms Diane Wilson questioned how the Council could justify the closure of 44 children centres and the subsequent consequences to early intervention when it held £112m pounds in reserve, when to keep all the centres open would only use 7% of the amount.

Ms Jill Huish, a user of the service informed the Council that she had spent many months trying to save the Children's Centres and that the feedback so far on the new proposals put forward showed overriding concern regarding the cutting of universal services that keep families safe. She urged the Council to retain fully functioning Children Centres.

Master Dylan Lovell spoke to the Council of the support he and his mother had received through a very difficult and painful period in their life, including ADHD, Asperger's, domestic abuse and the death of his father. He questioned where children with similar very worrying issues would go in the future if the Children's Centres did not exist.

5/16 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC
(Agenda Item 7)

The Council received 2 Questions on Notice to Members of the Council

Mr Thomas Grey to Councillor Judith Heathcoat

Following the Chipping Norton Hospital Action Group's survey, the results of which we would like to hand over to OCC for its own evaluation, will OCC now take the views expressed by over 1300 people in the community into account and give consideration to including Chipping Norton War Memorial Community Hospital in the countywide review to be conducted in 2016?

Answer

As with all consultations the Council undertakes, the views of all those in the community who respond will be conscientiously considered.

Ms Suzy Imeson to Councillor Judith Heathcoat

The rationale for the proposed cut to the "SCS15 Intervention and preventative services – aphasia" states that this is to remove duplication and streamline stroke services. What current duplication and lack of streamlined services does this refer to, how has this been assessed and has this been corroborated by service users?

Answer

The aphasia service predominantly supports people who are being discharged from hospital following a stroke, and helps people to regain independence. In this way, it provides similar functions to a range of short-term support (also called intermediate care) services that are typically used to support people following a period of illness or an event which has made them less able to get by in their day to day lives, for example, after a stay in hospital or an injury.

A detailed review of these short-term support services undertaken jointly with NHS partners has identified that there is a significant amount of overlap and duplication between them. As agreed by Cabinet on 26th January 2016, these services will now be replaced with two services: a single Urgent Response & Telecare Service, and a single Hospital Discharge & Reablement Service. It is this duplication and streamlining that was referred to in the rationale, and applies to a wide range of services including aphasia. The rationale was not intended to indicate duplication within stroke services in particular, and I apologise if this was not clear.

I absolutely acknowledge the good work that the service does as part of the wider support provided by the Stroke Association, and appreciate the proposal to stop funding this service is unwelcome news. However, the scale of the budget reductions the council faces are significant and will require

some very difficult decisions to ensure we can set a balanced budget from April 2016 onwards.

We will continue to ensure that people with eligible needs for care and support receive the support they need. Oxfordshire County Council is committed to working with Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure that appropriate support for people who have had a stroke is in place. If this budget proposal is agreed, we will engage with current users of the service to help ensure that future support for people with aphasia is integrated into the Council's core adult social services, including the new short-term services referred to above. This would include an emphasis on ensuring information and advice, advocacy, assessments and support planning acknowledge people's specific communication needs. We will also continue to invest in services that support carers and families.

Supplementary Question

Our support is specifically to enable long term communication success and is not providing care, it's not a clinical service, a reactive telecare service does not address the needs of people with Aspasia for the simple reason that people to Aspasia struggle to communicate over the phone or via other technology. How long will a hospital discharge and reablement service be involved for and will they be able to support people with Aspasia and their families and carers in their life after stroke when they experience needs long term so that they do not experience a loss in support or independence. Where was the consultation on this review with the people that use this service?

Answer

I feel I gave you a very full response, there is one thing I would like to pick up on within your questions and it refers back to the Budget papers. You are reading duplication as being within stroke services, which in fact we are talking about duplication in short term support and the wording in your question is not the same as that which appears in the budget papers which states that we will be working closely with NHS Partners. I do understand about stroke, I have had personal experience of it, both my mother and my grandmother who were both registered as blind, had strokes, so I know entirely what it means, and there will be talking with you and others because today is the Budget day. Going forward, if the Budget is implemented that is when we will be talking to people.

6/16 PAY POLICY STATEMENT - REMUNERATION COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL ON 16 FEBRUARY 2016

(Agenda Item 8)

The Council had before them the report of the Remuneration Committee (CC8) which updated the Council's Pay Policy Statement and set out future proposals of the Remuneration Committee in relation to this area.

RESOLVED: (on a Motion by Councillor Webber, seconded by Councillor Fawcett and carried nem con) to:

- (a) receive the report of the Remuneration Committee;
- (b) approve the revised Pay Policy Statement at Annex 2 to this report.

7/16 SERVICE & RESOURCE PLANNING 2016/17 - 2019/20

(Agenda Item 9)

The Council had before it the report by the Chief Finance Officer (CC8) which outlined the service & resource planning process for 2016/17 to 2019/20 including the Leader of the Council's overview (Section 1, published on the day), Corporate Plan (Section 2), Chief Finance Officer's statutory report (Section 3) and Budget Strategy and Capital Programme (Section 4), together with a number of statements/policies that the Council was required to approve for the 2016/17 financial year.

Under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Chief Finance Officer was required to report on the robustness of the estimates made in determining the council tax requirement and on the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. The assessment was set out in section 3 of the report. Council was required to have regard to this report in making their decisions on the budget.

The Council also had before it budget proposals in the form of: Amendments by the Labour Group to the Cabinet's Revenue Budget (CC9 Labour) and Amendments by the Green Group to the Cabinet's Revenue Budget (CC9 Green), and a statement by the Liberal Democrat Group (CC9 Liberal Democrat), together with a revised Section 4.3 – Council Tax Precepts. (Additional Papers).

Councillor Hudspeth moved and Councillor Brighouse seconded a motion which sought Council's approval for an adjournment to allow discussion between the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Labour Group to see if they could agree on a proposal to put before Council.

The motion was put to the vote and was carried nem con. Accordingly, Council was adjourned at 11.00 am for 3 hours and 35 minutes.

Council reconvened at 2.35 pm.

With the consent of Council, Councillor Hudspeth moved and Councillor Brighouse seconded an amendment to his original motion as shown at Annex 2 to these minutes. In moving the motion, Councillor Hudspeth and Brighouse paid tribute to Lorna Baxter and Katy Jurczynszyn for all their work in preparing the budget.

With the consent of Council, Councillor Brighouse withdrew her amendment.

With the consent of Council, Councillor Williams moved and Councillor Coates seconded an amended version of his amendment to the Cabinet's budget as set out in the Annex 1 to these minutes. In moving his motion, Councillor Williams paid tribute to Lorna Baxter and her team for their help and support.

Following debate, the amendment was put to the vote and was lost by 59 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.

Following a lengthy debate, the substantive motion was then put to the vote and it was carried by 60 votes to 2 (details of amended 4.2.2. shown at Annex 2)

RESOLVED: (by 60 votes to 2) to:

- (a) approve the Corporate Plan 2016/17 – 2019/20 as set out in section 2.0;
- (b) have regard to the Chief Finance Officer's report (at Section 3) in approving recommendations c to f below;
- (c) (in respect of revenue) approve:
 - (1) the council tax and precept calculations for 2016/17 set out in section 4.3 and in particular:
 - (i) a precept of £305,896,875;
 - (ii) a council tax for band D equivalent properties of £1,281.64;
 - (2) a budget for 2016/17 as set out in section 4.4, as amended by new section 4.2.2
 - (3) a medium term plan for 2016/17 to 2019/20 as set out in section 4.1 (which incorporates changes to the existing medium term financial plan as set out in section 4.2), as amended by new section 4.2.2
 - (4) the use of Dedicated Schools Grant (provisional allocation) for 2016/17 as set out in section 4.7;
 - (5) virement arrangements to operate within the approved budget for 2016/17 as set out in section 4.8;
- (d) (in respect of treasury management) approve:
 - (1) the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2016/17 as set out in section 4.5;
 - (2) the continued delegation of authority to withdraw or advance additional funds to/from external fund managers to the Treasury Management Strategy Team;
 - (3) that any further changes required to the 2016/17 strategy be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance;
 - (4) the Prudential Indicators as set out in Appendix A of section 4.5
 - (5) the Minimum Revenue Provision Methodology Statement as set out in Appendix B of section 4.5;
 - (6) the Specified Investment and Non Specified Investment Instruments as set out in Appendix C and D of section 4.5;

- (7) the Treasury Management Policy Statement as set out at Appendix E of section 4.5;
- (e) (in respect of balances and reserves) approve:
 - (1) the Chief Finance Officer's recommended level of balances for 2016/17 as set out in section 4.6.1
 - (2) the planned level of reserves for 2016/17 to 2019/20 as set out in section 4.6.2;
- (f) (in respect of capital) approve:
 - a Capital Programme for 2015/16 to 2019/20 as set out in section 4.9 including the Highways Structural Maintenance Programme 2016/17 and 2017/18 in section 4.9.1.

With the consent of Council, Councillor Hudspeth then moved and Councillor Brighthouse seconded that a full and timetabled consultation for unitary government to be put in place to discuss this issue on a cross-party basis with district, town and parish councils with the clear aim of bringing it to fruition.

The motion was put to the vote and was carried by 57 votes to 3, with 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED: (by 57 votes to 3, with 2 abstentions) that a full and timetabled consultation for unitary government to be put in place to discuss this issue on a cross-party basis with district, town and parish councils with the clear aim of bringing it to fruition.

Green Group Budget Amendments - Revenue					
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	TOTAL
Proposed Council Tax Increase	7.00%	3.99%	3.99%	3.99%	
Band D Council Tax	£1,318.73	£1,371.35	£1,426.07	£1,482.97	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Cabinet Net Pressures (+) / Savings (-)	0	10,316	6,169	-1,250	15,235
Corporate					
Additional amount to spend from having a 7.0% Council Tax increase in 2016/17	-8,852	-546	-530	-560	-10,488
Cost of Referendum in 2016/17	638	-638			0
Extend the proposal to create a trading arm of the Council to include other services such as Legal, Finance & HR		-100	-100	-200	-400
Hire out rooms in County Hall for meetings and private functions in the evenings and weekends	-50				-50
Reduce pay budgets of Senior Staff	-100				-100
Share Senior Management Team with other Councils	-200	-200			-400
One-off saving from reduced redundancy costs		-400	400		0
Employers Parking Levy			-2,250	-2,250	-4,500
Contribution to Capital to fund a Benelux Style Cycle network (see also capital programme amendments below)			2,250	2,250	4,500
Contribution to Capital to fund Insulation Scheme	5,000	-5,000			0
Children, Education & Families					
Do not close Children's Centres	800	4,200			5,000
Retain Early Years SEN inclusive teachers provision (CEF6)		100			100
Retain contracts for services to disabled children and families (CEF12)		250			250
Social & Community Services					
Retain funding for the falls service (SCS5)	273				273
Retain funding for carers (SCS8)	60	100			160
Retain funding for Information and Advice (SCS9)			120		120
Retain funding for Carers Respite (SCS10)		100			100
Retain funding for Intervention and Preventative Services (SCS25)				400	400
Funding for Homeless Services		500			500
Crisis Fund for Vulnerable people impacted by the cuts	1,544	-1,544			0
Environment & Economy					
Retain funding for bus subsidies	1,220				1,220
Increase Park & Ride Charges by £2 per day	-700				-700
Subsidy for parking season ticket holders	200				200
Increase other parking charges and CPZ Permits plus new income from additional CPZ	-250				-250
Increase in the charge for Processing Licenses and Planning Applications above the proposed increase	-6				-6
Increase in the general charges	-50				-50
Biodiversity Specialist	35				35
County Cycling Planning Advisory Officer	35				35
Libraries & Culture					
Maintain funding to the Arts			92		92
Delay the Library Savings for one year	522	-522			0
Corporate Services					
Reduce the number of Members on the Cabinet by three	-58				-58
Reduce the level of Members Allowances	-100				-100
Commission a feasibility study to assist NHS PFI buyouts	39				39
Revised Net Pressures (+) / Savings (-)	0	6,616	6,151	-1,610	11,157
Change to Cashflow Position	0	-3,700	-18	-360	-4,078

Annex 2

4.2.2 - Changes to the Budget Proposals - from published Council Papers					
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Cabinet Net Pressures/Savings - Per Section 4.2	0	6,374	6,169	-1,250	11,293
Remove Savings:					
SCS21a - Tier 2 Day Services (Voluntary Sector provided Day Services)	300	450			750
SCS21b - Tier 3 Day Services (Health and Wellbeing Centres)		2,050			2,050
SCS21c - Transport to Day Centres		200			200
CEF12 -Early Intervention Hubs/Children's Centres		2,000			2,000
New Savings:					
Full review of all day services for older people		-1,000			-1,000
Additional contribution from Budget Reserve	-300	300			0
Revised Net Pressures/Savings	0	10,374	6,169	-1,250	15,293
As a consequence of this amendment to the published Council papers, changes will be required to:					
4.1 Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 - 2019/20					
4.2 Summary of Proposed Budget Changes 2016/17 - 2019/20					
4.4 Detailed Revenue Budget 2016/17					

Explanation

1. In relation to SC21AB&C – £1.5million* with full review of the all-day service for older people.
2. SC12** – Put in £2m in order to ensure in terms of service and geography the needs of the Children of Oxfordshire are met.
3. Transition – To create a cross party board of members to consider maximum benefit from use of temporary funds across services and across geography of Oxfordshire. This fund will be for 16/17 a total of £4million with £1million allocated for creating a one off pump priming fund for one year to take to districts and parishes, inviting them to commit money to support Children's Centres which they would help save, a £1million added for income generation pump priming. Homelessness budget also to be considered
4. Workplace – commit to a full review of implications with a view to implementation as early as is feasible.

5 SC1A

A review of cabinet members

* Error – should read £1million

** Error – should read CEF12

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CC1

..... in the Chair

Date of signing