

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 18 December 2014 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 1.30 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Liz Brighthouse OBE – in the Chair

Councillor Neil Fawcett (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor Lynda Atkins
Councillor John Christie
Councillor Yvonne Constance
Councillor Janet Godden
Councillor Mark Gray
Councillor Steve Harrod
Councillor Simon Hoare
Councillor Charles Mathew

Other Members in Attendance: Councillors Nick Carter, Judith Heathcoat, Ian Hudspeth, David Nimmo Smith (for Agenda Item 5)

Officers:

Whole of meeting Lorna Baxter, Chief Finance Officer, Eira Hale and Sue Whitehead (Chief Executive's Office)

Part of meeting

Agenda Item

Officer Attending

5

Environment & Economy

Sue Scane, Director for Environment & Economy, Mark Kemp, Deputy Director, Commercial; Bev Hindle, Deputy Director, Strategy and Infrastructure Planning, Graham Shaw, Deputy Director, Oxfordshire Customer Services

Children, Education & Families

Jim Leivers, Director for Children's Services, Lucy Butler, Deputy Director Children's Social Care & YOS, Margaret Dennison, Interim Deputy Director – Education and Early Intervention, Gillian McKee, Finance Business Partner (CEF), Kate Terroni, Deputy Director Joint Commissioning

OFRS and Community Safety
Chief Executives

Dave Etheridge, Chief Fire Officer and Simon Furlong, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Joanna Simons, Chief Executive, Steve Munn, Chief Human Resources Officer, Peter Clark, County Solicitor & Monitoring Officer

Adult Social Care

John Jackson, Director of Adult Social Services, Seona Douglas, Deputy Director Adult Social Care

The Scrutiny 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/the following additional documents:] and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports [agenda, reports and schedule/additional documents] are attached to the signed Minutes.

42/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda No. 1)

An apology was received from Councillor Coates.

43/14 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 3)

The minutes of the meetings held on 25 September 2014 and 3 November 2014 were approved and signed.

44/14 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda No. 4)

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

45/14 SERVICE & RESOURCE PLANNING 2015/16 -2017/18

(Agenda No. 5)

The Committee had before them a report that formed part of a series relating to the Service and Resource Planning process for 2015/16 to 2017/18.

The report contained the following annexes:

Annex A: Service & resource Planning Report 2015/16 to 2017/18 to Cabinet 16 December 2015

Annex 1: New revenue budget pressures and savings 2015/16 – 2017/18

Annex 2: Review of charges 2015/16

Annex 3: Forecast earmarked reserves 2015/16 – 2017/18

Annex 4: Service & Community Impact Assessments (SCIAs) Overarching Assessment (SCIAs for individual proposals are available on the Council's website <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/service-and-community-impact-assessments-scias-201415>)

The Committee considered in turn the savings proposed by each directorate for their service areas.

They also took into consideration councillor comments from briefing sessions and the cabinet meeting held on 16 December 2014. The Director and the Leader, or relevant Cabinet Member for each Directorate, were available to respond to questions.

The Committee received a presentation from Lorna Baxter, Chief Finance Officer setting out the overall picture including the national context, the local impact of

Government funding reductions to Oxfordshire and a high level summary of the budget pressures and savings.

Economy & Environment

Sue Scane, Director for Environment & Economy, Mark Kemp, Deputy Director, Commercial; Bev Hindle, Deputy Director, Strategy and Infrastructure Planning, Graham Shaw, Deputy Director, Oxfordshire Customer Services, and Councillors Nimmo Smith and Carter came to the table.

Following detailed consideration it was agreed that the following point be made to Cabinet:

The Committee were exercised about the need to maintain the quality of Council services that are delivered through contracts, particularly where there is a need to make savings. They noted that it is important to ensure quality services are provided and not just to drive out value.

Children, Education & Families

Jim Leivers, Director for Children's Services, Lucy Butler, Deputy Director Children's Social Care & YOS, Margaret Dennison, Interim Deputy Director – Education and Early Intervention, Gillian McKee, Finance Business Partner (CEF), Kate Terroni, Deputy Director Joint Commissioning and Councillor Ian Hudspeth came to the table. Councillor Melinda Tilley sent apologies.

During consideration of the funding for school transport it was agreed that the detail of the services provided could usefully be looked at by locality meetings.

In response to a query about the full day nursery fees for Day Care Provision at the Roundabout Centre (page 32) Jim Leivers undertook to provide information on the details and breakdown of the figures.

Following further detailed consideration it was agreed that the following points be made to cabinet:

- The committee drew attention to the importance of ensuring that the reshaping of early help services is effective, not just in delivering savings but also in ensuring quality services for families and children.
- The committee also noted the interdependency between the reshaping of early help services and the need for wider change to the shape and structure of services across the whole Children, Education and Families directorate.

OFRS & Community Safety

Dave Etheridge, Chief Fire Officer and Simon Furlong, Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Councillor Ian Hudspeth came to the table. Councillor Rose sent apologies.

Following detailed consideration it was agreed that the following point be made to Cabinet:

The committee wished to note the important role that the fire service play in maintaining community safety and were keen to ensure that any savings proposals did not undermine this priority.

Chief Executive's Office

Joanna Simons, Chief Executive, Steve Munn, Chief Human Resources Officer, Peter Clark, County Solicitor & Monitoring Officer and Councillor Ian Hudspeth came to the table. Councillor Rose sent apologies.

Following detailed consideration it was agreed that the following point be made to Cabinet:

The committee noted an opportunity for the library service to develop in a way that supports a broader move to digital access of our services and would like consideration of savings proposals in relation to libraries to recognise this.

Adult Social Care

John Jackson, Director of Adult Social Services, Seona Douglas, Deputy Director Adult Social Care and Councillor Judith Heathcoat came to the table.

During discussion John Jackson referred to a research carried out by Southampton University on adult social care and it was agreed that members of the Committee receive a copy.

During consideration of learning disabilities and home care contracts the Committee highlighted the importance of making sure that the appropriate role of Scrutiny was considered as part of all fundamental service changes, particularly scrutiny of the potential impact of change on performance.

Following further detailed consideration it was agreed that the following point be made to Cabinet:

- The committee discussed in depth the potential impact and related increase in cost of paying social care providers at a level that allowed them to pay care workers the living wage. The committee invite Cabinet to keep this issue under review throughout the budget decision making process.

During overall consideration it was agreed that the following additional points be made to Cabinet:

- The committee drew attention to the need to maximise income generation opportunities across all directorates, by ensuring that fees and charges have been properly reviewed and increased where appropriate.
- The committee wished to be directly involved in the scrutiny of contract performance, to ensure that effective public scrutiny was taking place.

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..... in the Chair

Date of signing

2015