

Amendments for Council 16 April 2024

Amendments to Item 17 – Motion by Councillor Eddie Reeves

Amendment 1 from the proposer and seconder of the motion:

This Council regrets the way its retendering of services to neurodiverse families, children and young people was handled, leading to Autism Family Support Oxfordshire (AFSO) having funding for its youth groups and family support work cut from 1 April 2024.

~~The decision means that only funding for AFSO's Easter and Summer holiday activities will now be funded.~~

This Council further regrets the minimal oversight of such decision afforded to elected members and underscores the importance of democratic accountability in decisions taken in respect of services for vulnerable residents.

Specifically, one would have expected such a change to have been taken with the approval of the Leader of the Council, relevant Cabinet member and/or with pre-scrutiny of such decision having been taken on a cross-party basis. In the latter case, this did not occur.

The effect of such an arbitrary decision by this Council is that, from 1 April 2024, two well-qualified members of AFSO's team will be made redundant. Given that AFSO has provided cost-effective support for children and young people from diagnosis up to the age of 25 for over a decade – managing a caseload of 4,500 families – it is reasonable to assume that cutting its services will make matters worse for families.

Notwithstanding the 11th hour announcement of an as yet unquantified “one off grant”, ~~Given that the annual cost of maintaining these services is only £90,000,~~ this Council requests that Cabinet review the decision and recommends that a paper be taken to the Education and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee explaining the chronology and governance surrounding it.

Amendment 2a proposed by Councillor Kate Gregory to the original motion:

This Council regrets the **anxiety caused to families who receive family support from** ~~way its retendering of services to neurodiverse families, children and young people was handled, leading to Autism Family Support Oxfordshire (AFSO) and~~ **were told with short notice that the service would not continue beyond** ~~having funding for its youth groups and family support work cut from 1 April 2024.~~

The Council further regrets that in 2017, a health provider removed funding from AFSO and the Council had to step in on that occasion to fund this provision from the Short Breaks budget. This funding was always going to be a time limited level of support.

The funding for Short Breaks has a legal definition that budget must be spent on the direct provision of activity for children. It does not include parenting or family support and could therefore not be included in the recommissioning of Short Breaks.

~~The decision~~ **This** means that only funding for AFSSO's Easter and Summer holiday activities will now be funded.

This Council further regrets the minimal **foresight and oversight** ~~of such decision afforded to elected members and~~ by the **previous administration on their incorrect use of funding and it** underscores the importance of democratic accountability in decisions taken in respect of services for vulnerable residents.

~~Specifically, one would have expected such a change to have been taken with the approval of the Leader of the Council, relevant Cabinet member and/or with pre-scrutiny of such decision having been taken on a cross-party basis. In the latter case, this did not occur.~~

~~The effect of such an arbitrary decision by this Council is that, from 1 April 2024, two well-qualified members of AFSSO's team will be made redundant. Given that AFSSO has provided cost-effective support for children and young people from diagnosis up to the age of 25 for over a decade – managing a caseload of 4,500 families – it is reasonable to assume that cutting its services will make matters worse for families.~~

The Council welcomes the news that Autism Family Support Oxfordshire (AFSSO) has received a one-off grant from Oxfordshire County Council to allow it to continue providing vital parenting support to families.

Given **the anxiety this process has caused families** ~~that the annual cost of maintaining these services is only £90,000, this Council requests that Cabinet review the decision and~~ recommends that a paper be taken to the Education and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee **by the Director of Children's Services** explaining the chronology and governance surrounding it.

Amendment 2b if the proposers' amendment is accepted, then the amendment from Councillor Gregory becomes as follows:

The funding for Short Breaks has a legal definition that budget must be spent on the direct provision of activity for children. It does not include parenting or family support and could therefore not be included in the recommissioning of Short Breaks.

This Council further regrets the minimal **foresight and oversight** ~~of such decision afforded to elected members and~~ by the **previous administration on their incorrect use of funding and it** underscores the importance of democratic accountability in decisions taken in respect of services for vulnerable residents.

~~Specifically, one would have expected such a change to have been taken with the approval of the Leader of the Council, relevant Cabinet member and/or with pre-~~

~~scrutiny of such decision having been taken on a cross-party basis. In the latter case, this did not occur.~~

~~The effect of such an arbitrary decision by this Council is that, from 1 April 2024, two well-qualified members of AFISO's team will be made redundant. Given that AFISO has provided cost-effective support for children and young people from diagnosis up to the age of 25 for over a decade—managing a caseload of 4,500 families—it is reasonable to assume that cutting its services will make matters worse for families.~~

The Council welcomes the news that Autism Family Support Oxfordshire (AFSO) has received a one-off grant from Oxfordshire County Council to allow it to continue providing vital parenting support to families.

~~Notwithstanding the 11th hour announcement of an as yet unquantified “one off grant”,~~ **Given the anxiety this process has caused families** ~~that the annual cost of maintaining these services is only £90,000, this Council requests that Cabinet review the decision and recommends that a paper be taken to the Education and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee~~ **by the Director of Children's Services** explaining the chronology and governance surrounding it.

Amendment to Item 21 – Motion by Councillor Eddie Reeves

Amendment proposed by Councillor John Howson

This Council restates its commitment to improving its Children's Services following its Extraordinary Meeting **about SEND services** almost six months to the day on 13 October 2023.

Services provided by the Local Area Partnership have not been good enough in recent years and last year's Ofsted-Care Quality Commission report makes it clear that local challenges stand to be recognised and addressed.

~~At the time of writing, the Council awaits the determination of its Inspecting~~ **Oxfordshire Local Authorities; Children's Services (ILACS) inspection has resulted in an overall Good grading; improving on the previous 2018 inspection outcome.**

Mindful of the improvements that are needed in its Children's Services ~~in any event in order to reach a judgement of 'outstanding', this Council resolves to ensure that there is~~ **welcomes the** full and proper consideration of the outcome of the ILACS inspection by elected members, **with an all member briefing in addition to scrutiny by** ~~with the Cabinet members for Children's Services and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Improvement meeting with the Chairs of the Education & Young People and People Overview & Scrutiny Committees to ensure that there is proper cross-party scrutiny both of the contents of the report and subsequent improvements arising therefrom.~~

Amendment to Item 23 – Motion by Councillor Eddie Reeves

Amendment proposed by Councillor Brad Baines

This Council recognises that the voice of **Co-operatives and** small and medium-sized enterprises ('SMEs') have, too often, been overlooked.

This Council resolves to request the Leader of the Council to appoint a **Co-operatives and** Small Business Champion to provide a single point of contact for local businesspeople, including those running Co-operatives, and advise members attending Cabinet and relevant scrutiny committees of the impact of Council policies on the county's **Co-operatives and** SMEs.