

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 20 October 2009 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.45 pm

Present:

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

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Seale (Item 5),
Councillor Skolar (Item 5)
Councillor Hannaby (Item 5)
Councillor M. Altaf-Khan (Item 8)
Councillor Alan Armitage (Item 9)
Councillor Jean Fooks (Item 10)

Officers:

Whole of meeting Graham Warrington (Legal & Democratic Services)

Part of meeting

Agenda Item

Officer Attending

5	Director for Social & Community Services and Steve Thomas Sue Talbot (Care Quality Commission)
6	Kathy Wilcox (Financial Planning)
7	Lorna Baxter (Financial Planning) and Roy Leach
8	(Children, Young People & Families)
9	Barbara Chillman (Children, Young People & Families)
10	Neil Monaghan and Mark Tailby (Environment & Economy)
11	Alexandra Bailey (Corporate Core)

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.

100/09 MINUTES

(Agenda Item. 3)

The minutes of the meetings held on 7 September 2009 and 15 September 2009 were both approved and signed subject to the following agreed amendment to Minute 85/09 (paragraph 4) of the 15 September minutes:

“Councillor Waine replied that (i) the ‘Readiness to Deliver’ document was quite clear regarding Transformation Strategy and he proceeded to read out the relevant part of the document.....”

101/09 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item. 4)

The following requests to address the meeting had been agreed:

Speaker	Item
Councillor Altaf-Khan (Shadow Cabinet Member for Schools Improvement)	8. St Nicholas CE Primary School
Councillor Armitage (Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance & Property)	9. Property Portfolio
Councillor Fooks (Deputy Leader of the Opposition)	10. Q1 Performance Management

102/09 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

(Agenda Item.)

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

“The recent move of CYP&F to County Hall was marred by lack of training of staff in how to use the ICT and new telephone system. Was adequate provision made for the training needed by these staff? How does the training budget of Oxfordshire County Council compare with the training budgets of other local authorities?”

Councillor Robertson:

The recent move of CYP&F staff to County Hall had taken place as part of the County Council’s Better Offices Programme with a package of help and support provided for such moves - including IT and telephony. This had proved to be very effective in previous office moves. The CYP&F relocation

had unearthed some additional IT and telephony needs and these had been quickly identified and measures put in place to address them. Providing an ICT help desk in the County Hall reception area was one example - affording some 1 on 1 support to individuals requiring it.

With regard to the Council's training budget, there was a clear and robust Learning & Development (L&D) planning process in place which captured and addressed L&D needs across the whole organisation and prioritised delivery of appropriate solutions to meet those needs. This included investment in ICT training. Our training budget benchmarked well against other local authorities and rated above average in the latest Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development (CIPD) survey.

Supplementary Question:

Was the Deputy Leader aware of problems of calls not being put through because of the overuse of voice mail.

Councillor Robertson: if that was common practice he shared that concern and would discuss with relevant officers how those problems could be addressed. He would let have Councillor Fooks have a full written response.

103/09 ADULT SOCIAL CARE INSPECTION

(Agenda Item. 5)

Sue Talbot from the Care Quality Commission presented the findings of the recent Independence, Wellbeing and Choice Inspection of social care services.

Mrs Talbot outlined the role of the Commission as the independent regulator of all health and adult social care in England making sure that high quality health and social care was provided for everyone, whether that's in hospital, in care homes, in people's own homes, or elsewhere.

The Commission concluded that with regard to;

Safeguarding adults

Oxfordshire was performing adequately.

Improving health and wellbeing for older people

Oxfordshire was performing well.

Increased choice and control for older people

Oxfordshire was performing well.

Capacity to improve

Promising.

The Lead Inspector and Area Manager would now jointly monitor progress over the coming months with a formal review of progress against the action plan scheduled for 6 months (mid April). Interim reports of progress would also be shared.

Also attending were three members of the Adult Services Scrutiny Committee - Councillor Seale (Chairman), Councillor Skolar and Councillor Hannaby.

Councillor Seale asked what Oxfordshire could do to ensure that the authority was moving in the right direction particularly as the numbers of safeguarded people was increasing.

Mrs Talbot advised that Oxfordshire had the key building blocks in place and that would be important in taking performance forward. She suggested the need to address duplication levels.

Recognising that partnership working was the way forward Councillor Skolar suggested that as Oxfordshire was the lead authority in the region it would be difficult to take that any further forward.

Mrs Talbot suggested the need to assess gaps regarding safe discharge of patients.

Councillor Hannaby mentioned the importance of adequate monitoring

The Director for Social & Community Services felt the inspection had been very useful with a sound methodology which would help drive Oxfordshire's performance forward. Oxfordshire now needed to plan to improve services based on this report and its recommendations.

Congratulating County Council staff on their work Councillor Chapman highlighted the importance of monitoring progress and proposed that the report be noted with a further report on the formal review of progress to be submitted to the Cabinet in 6 months.

104/09 FINANCIAL MONITORING - OCTOBER 2009

(Agenda Item. 6)

The Cabinet received the fifth financial monitoring report for 2009/10 financial year covering the period up to the end of August 2009 and noted the figure £439.0m in line 9 of paragraph 37 should have read £439K.

Councillor Mitchell highlighted that there were few variations from previous months. There were still significant overspends in place and the County Council faced difficult times to meet its commitments. He moved the recommendations.

Councillor Chapman advised that she would be undertaking a review of out of county placements.

Councillor Robertson complimented staff on progress made with regard to the Home to School Transport budget .

RESOLVED:

- (a) note the report CA6;
- (b) approve the virements as set out in Annex 2a to the report CA6;
- (c) note the updated transfer of excess inflation to the Efficiency Savings Reserve (paragraph 38 of the report CA6);
- (d) approve the request for £0.078m added to balances earlier this year to be removed to fund the transport capital programme (paragraph 40 of the report CA6) and
- (e) approve the updated capital programme included at Annex 7 to the report CA6.

105/09 BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE

(Agenda Item. 7)

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) was a substantial national investment programme intended to transform secondary school education with the potential to deliver in the region of £600m of capital investment to Oxfordshire's schools. Cabinet considered a report (CA7) providing an up to date account of progress made towards securing entry to the national BSF programme, describing the next steps to be taken and identifying a number of financial challenges which the Council and its schools will need to address.

The following amendment to paragraph 29 was noted:

Line 4 £3.4m to read £4.4m and that the shortfall would occur over 2 years – 2014/15 and 2015/16 - and not just the first year (2014/15) as stated in the report.

Councillor Waine called for all schools to commit to this initiative and stressed the need to achieve a BREEAM level of 'very good' as an absolute minimum moving to excellent. He also confirmed that sprinkler systems were provided in extensive/new build projects but confirmed that it was not always feasible to provide those systems where less extensive programmes of work were being undertaken.

RESOLVED:

- (a) confirm the Cabinet's commitment to the BSF programme;
- (b) confirm that the Cabinet wished officers to continue to seek to have Oxfordshire brought into the national BSF programme as soon as possible and fully engage with all relevant stakeholders and partners;
- (c) confirm that, unless or until such time as the requirements change, the Cabinet understood that the default model for the delivery of BSF was through a Local Education Partnership unless otherwise agreed with DCSF and Partnership for Schools subject to value for money consideration; and
- (d) acknowledge that, under the current regime, new schools delivered through the BSF programme would be predominately procured through PFI and that refurbishments would be procured through capital grant.

106/09 ST NICHOLAS CE PRIMARY SCHOOL, MARSTON

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet considered a report (CA8) setting out a proposal to increase the school admission number at St Nicholas CE Primary School, Marston from 45 to 60 following an informal consultation in the Marston area and a decision was now required as to whether or not to proceed to issuing a statutory notice to expand the school.

Councillor Altaf-Khan supported expansion but highlighted a number of issues regarding traffic and highway repairs and called for an investigation into the admission process in other schools in order to relieve pressure on St Nicholas School.

Councillor Waine welcomed Councillor Altaf Khan's comments regarding expansion at the school but added that pressure points for placements were not always places where numbers could be increased. He had no objection in principle to the proposal but also referred to a number of issues including traffic levels, highway repair and provision of a new entrance off Marston Road. Investigations were ongoing into the first two but provision of an additional entrance was contrary to policy. There were also financial implications attached to the capital works should the proposals be approved which would need to be the subject of a future report.

Councillor Rose added that he would be happy to consider provision of a pedestrian crossing but much of the road repair work would need to be undertaken by the City Council as a Section 42 responsibility.

RESOLVED: to approve the publication of a statutory notice for the expansion of St Nicholas CE Primary School, Marston

107/09 REPORT ON THE PROPERTY PORTFOLIO

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet considered (CE9) the annual report detailing the Council's property portfolio from April 2008 to March 2009.

Councillor Armitage raised particular concern regarding poor performance regarding lowering carbon dioxide emissions. Extreme weather conditions should be included within the parameters for these targets and should not be used as an excuse when performance was not achieved. He urged the Cabinet to instruct operating divisions to prioritise this work.

Councillor Waine highlighted the anomaly which existed in schools where every effort was made to reduce emissions yet there was an expectation to increase usage of IT.

RESOLVED: to note the report CA9

108/09 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: APRIL - JUNE 2009

(Agenda Item. 10)

Cabinet considered (CA10) the performance report for Q1 2009/10 covering the four key areas of customer, projects, finance and people.

Councillor Fooks felt the report was interesting but lacked detail. Highlighting a number of areas which needed attention such as appraisals, safeguarding children, high number of children permanently excluded and roads and footways she expressed particular concern regarding carbon dioxide emissions.

Councillor Robertson advised that the report contained a number of annual red targets which would not be reflected in Q1 and referred to the tremendous amount of work going on to achieve a uniformed approach between County Directorates and develop a performance culture throughout the County Council. He moved the recommendations.

RESOLVED: to note the report

109/09 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

(Agenda Item. 11)

Cabinet considered a list of items (CA11) for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet together with changes and additions set out in schedule of addenda.

RESOLVED: to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 2009