

Minutes of a meeting of the CABINET on Wednesday 11 September 2019

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Committee members:

Councillor Brown (Chair)	Councillor Chapman
Councillor Clarkson	Councillor Hayes
Councillor Hollingsworth	Councillor Rowley
Councillor Tidball	Councillor Upton

Officers:

Gordon Mitchell, Chief Executive
Tom Bridgman, Executive Director (Development)
Aileen Carlisle, Interim Executive Director (Communities and Customers)
Tim Sadler, Transition Director / Chairman Direct Services Companies
Anita Bradley, Monitoring Officer
Nigel Kennedy, Head of Financial Services
Laura Bessell, Benefits Manager
Julia Tomkins, Grants & External Funding Officer
John Mitchell, Committee and Member Services Officer

Also present:

Councillor Andrew Gant

Apologies:

Councillors Linda Smith and Turner sent apologies.

49. Declarations of Interest

None.

50. Addresses and Questions by Members of the Public

None.

51. Councillor Addresses on any item for decision on the Board's agenda

None.

52. Councillor Addresses on Neighbourhood Issues

None.

53. Items raised by Board Members

None.

54. Scrutiny Committee Reports

Councillor Gant, speaking in his capacity as Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, spoke to the Committee's report on Monitoring the Community Grants Programme (item 9 of the agenda). He was grateful for the Cabinet's agreement to the Committee's two recommendations. He noted that the Cabinet report's reference to 448 Oxford Lottery tickets sold was in fact a reference to the number of lottery transactions, a point which had been clarified during the Committee's discussion. The Cabinet agreement to find ways of encouraging a wider range of organisations to benefit from the grants programme was particularly welcome.

Cllr Gant said Scrutiny Committee had, at its last meeting, considered recent Cabinet responses to previous Scrutiny recommendations and asked for its views to be passed on.

- a) Performance. In view of the improved PMO function, quarterly reports on the capital programme should now be possible.
- b) Seacourt Park & Ride. Notwithstanding that this project was underway and Cabinet's previous response, the Committee wanted to reiterate its view that the business case for the scheme was not viable.
- c) Safeguarding. The Committee had asked for the number of children and young people in the City who had had face to face safeguarding training. The Committee had not asked the Council to collect this data, rather to see if it was available from partner organisations. The Committee had also asked for an update on progress following the Guest House review.

The Chair agreed that the proposal in a) above was sensible and should be pursued. Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Customer Focused Services, said obtaining data about the number of children referred to in b) above was likely to be difficult. He would enquire about progress with the Guest House review but noted that this might also be difficult given the amount of time which had elapsed since the review.

55. Consultation on proposals for a revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2020/21

The Head of Financial Services had submitted a report to seek approval for proposals for consultation on changes to the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) for 2020/21.

Marie Tidball, Cabinet Member for Supporting Local Communities, introduced the report which set out the basis for consultation on the CTRS for 2020/21. Reduction of the Revenue Support Grant to zero meant there was, now, no government funding to support the scheme. The estimated cost of the scheme for the Council in 2020/21 was £1.7m. The report detailed a number of minor changes for 2020/21, which would benefit a number of applicants for relatively little cost.

Laura Bessell, Benefits Manager, noted that the Council was one of only 30 in the country which continued to offer the opportunity for a discount of 100%. The Chair noted the continuing importance of the scheme as part of the Council's commitment to supporting those on low incomes.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Agree** that the proposals for the 2020/21 Council Tax Reduction Scheme outlined in the report be subject to consultation for an 8 week period from 23rd September 2019; and
2. **Instruct** the Head of Financial Services to bring a further report to Cabinet in January 2020 to outline the outcome of the consultation process and make proposals for the 2020/21 Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

56. Monitoring the Community Grants Programme - Report for 2018/19

Marie Tidball, Cabinet Member for Supporting Local Communities, introduced the report. She was proud to see the scale and breadth of the programme illustrated by the report and its undoubted positive social impact. She drew attention to the fact that while the investment cost of the programme to the Council was £1.5m, that, in turn, secured a further £4.2m, or almost £3 for every £1 spent. Innovation has been an important element of the programme, with, for example, the introduction of the Oxford Lottery, and use of "The Good Exchange" fundraising platform.

Cabinet members were appreciative of the value added by the programme. It was agreed that the use of case studies in these reports was helpful in bringing the programme to life.

Cabinet resolved to:

Note the results of the grant monitoring and the positive impact the community and voluntary sector is making in the city.

57. Joint Municipal Waste Plan

The Transition Director had submitted a report to:

1. Provide an update on the Oxfordshire Environment Partnership (OEP) which convenes the City, District and County Councils in Oxfordshire to share best practice and agree actions;
2. Seek support for the Resource and Waste Strategy for Oxfordshire (Appendix 1) which sets out how the City Council will work with others to deliver sustainable waste management services as part of our response to the climate emergency. It runs until 2023 and focuses on local authority collected waste; and

3. Reconfirm support for the reintroduction of joint working across Oxfordshire in the form of a partnership. Including reinstating a dedicated officer post to take forward county-wide waste management, following the declaration of a climate emergency.

Councillor Tom Hayes, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford, introduced the report saying it was timely given the current enthusiasm in the wider community for tackling a range of issues related to the climate emergency. The proposal would reinstate the Countywide Partnership on Resources and Waste Management and commit the Council to sharing the cost of an associated officer post with the other councils in the Partnership. The Resource and Waste Strategy was ambitious and the Partnership would facilitate good countywide political working to help achieve those ambitions.

It was noted that this would provide an excellent example of the merits of a partnership approach as opposed to delivering a programme via a single service countywide. The waste and recycling challenges in the City, for example, were different from those of a rural district and a partnership approach enabled those differences to be reflected in delivery of the programme.

Councillor Hayes concluded by noting the need to acknowledge all that had been done by Councillor Tanner in his previous role as the Executive Member for “A Clean & Green Oxford”.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Adopt** Oxfordshire’s Resources and Waste Strategy for Oxfordshire 2018-2023, in response to the Climate Emergency;
2. **Agree** support for reinstating a Countywide Partnership on resources and waste management;
3. **Support** the principle of the reintroduction of an Officer post to advance the shared goals of all Oxfordshire councils to effectively manage waste arising in the county, subject to City Council’s budget process for 2020/2021; and
4. **Delegate** authority to the Transition Director in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford to conclude the negotiation and agreement of a Memorandum of Understanding with all other relevant councils in Oxfordshire concerning the partnership and shared post across the proposed reformed Waste Partnership.

58. Treasury Management: Annual Report and Performance 2018/19

The Head of Financial Services had submitted a report which set out the Council’s Treasury Management activity and performance for the financial year 2018/2019.

Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Sustainable Transport introduced the report. In the present political and economic climate, returns on investments were generally low. The overall financial position of the Council was however sound.

Nigel Kennedy, the Head of Financial Services, said that the requirements of all the Prudential Indicators had been met. The majority of the sum invested with the two

failed Icelandic banks had been recovered but the outstanding balance was now considered to be irrecoverable and had, therefore, been written off in accounting terms.

Cabinet resolved to:

Note the report.

59. Minutes

Cabinet resolved to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2019 as a true and accurate record.

60. Dates of Future Meetings

Meetings are scheduled for the following dates:

- 03 October 2019
- 09 October 2019
- 13 November 2019
- 11 December 2019

All meetings start at 6pm.

The meeting started at 6.05 pm and ended at 6.40 pm

Chair

Date: Thursday 3 October 2019

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