

## **CABINET: MINUTES**

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| <b>Date:</b>               | 6 <sup>th</sup> December 2005  |
| <b>Time:</b>               | 10.00 a.m. – 11.10 a.m.  |
| <b>Present:</b>            | Councillor J E Reynolds (Chairman – due to the absence of the Chairman Councillor Walters) |
| <b>Councillors:</b>        | S Johnstone, V Lucas, M McGuire, R Pegram, J Powley, J Tuck and F Yeulett                  |
| <b>Apologies:</b>          | L Oliver and K Walters   |
| <b>Also in Attendance:</b> | Councillors M Ballard, P Downes, G Heathcock, A Kent and S King                            |

### **80. MINUTES 31<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2005**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **81. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

### **DECISIONS FOR COUNCIL**

None.

### **82. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN CAMBRIDGE CITY AND SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE - REFERENCE FROM HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Councillor Heathcock as the Chairman of the scrutiny committee was invited to present the report. The report requested that Cabinet consider the Scrutiny Committee's concerns about the impact of proposals for mental health services in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, and that Cabinet make a representation to the Secretary of State for Health.

Councillor Heathcock made the following points:

- Closures and amalgamations of Adult Mental Health services by the PCTs would impact on the County Council's Adult and Older People's Social Care services and resources, including pressures on (i) day and residential respite care services; (ii) carers if inpatient and community facilities were insufficient, and (iii) the County Council's share of the County Council/PCTs' pooled budget for older people's services;

- That the underlying principles behind many of the proposals reflected national policy to provide greater support in the community for people with mental health problems;
- The draft letter presented to Cabinet summarised the concerns of all Scrutiny Committee Members, and this would carry extra weight if it was also approved by full Council.

In response, Cabinet supported the report and the request for representation to the Secretary of State for Health, and made the following comments:

- Given the time constraints, suggested that it was more appropriate for Cabinet to make the representation on behalf of the Council;
- Stressed the financial and structural implications of the government's and the PCTs' proposals, and that these concerns, which were common to all local authorities, should be highlighted in the letter;
- Stressed the implications for the provision of adult mental health services across the whole county, and the increased responsibilities for the County Council;
- Questioned how alternative arrangements would be provided and the likely number of additional clients who would seek Council services. It was noted that information on these aspects were not yet clear;
- Welcomed the Scrutiny Committee's work on this important issue.

It was resolved to delegate to the Deputy Leader of the Council in consultation with the Health Scrutiny Co-ordinator, to make representations to the Secretary of State for Health on behalf of the Council, based on the draft letter appended to the report, appropriately amended to reflect Cabinet Members' comments.

### **83. DOMICILIARY CARE SERVICES**

Cabinet received a report seeking approval to the proposed extension to the current domiciliary care contract for a further two years to 2010.

It was noted that there were currently 31 domiciliary care agencies on the County's select list operating across the County with a total contract value of £10 million. Re-tendering was due to start in 2006 in time for the current contract end date of April 2008. However, some of the issues that could result from the re-tendering process were (i) destabilisation of the fragile independent sector market for domiciliary care; (ii) staff recruitment and retention problems resulting from uncertainty; and (iii) gaps in service resulting from problems with collaborative working.

Cabinet agreed that a period of stability and continuity was required in this important area of the Council's work.

In response to Member questions, it was noted:

- that the Council worked closely with domiciliary care agencies to ensure that agency staff received appropriate training, and currently 18% of all agency staff had achieved National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 2, with 20% working towards NVQ level 2 and 9% working towards NVQ level 3;
- that the extension of the contract would not result in agencies becoming complacent regarding the level of service provided, as this was monitored closely within the framework of the contracts.

It was resolved to approve the extension of the contract for a further two years from April 2008 to April 2010 to enable the Commissioning Strategy to be delivered.

#### **84. DIRECT PAYMENTS POLICY FOR SOCIAL CARE SERVICES**

Cabinet received a report seeking approval to the adoption of the re-worked Direct Payment Policy for social care services.

A review of policy and procedures for Direct Payments had been undertaken with a view to improving performance. The Direct Payments policy was reworked in consultation with key partner agencies and the resultant policy document promoted flexibility and freedom of choice for individuals. Increasing the number of Direct Payments not only provided a more efficient way of working but also served to enhance one of the 26 Best Value Performance Indicators for Adult Social Care services.

In response to Member questions, it was noted that:

- representatives from the Office of Children and Young People's Services (OCYPS) had been part of the Working Group reviewing this issue and OCYPS supported the re-worked policy.
- Direct Payments were only applicable if the Council was arranging a package of care.
- training would be rolled out to relevant County Council, PCT and Mental Heath Trust staff.

It was resolved to formally adopt the Direct Payment Policy.

#### **85. PLANNING FOR PHASE 2 CHILDREN'S CENTRES**

Cabinet considered a report on the development of Children's centres.

Cabinet noted that Children's centres were a vital component of the government's strategy for childcare, and central to the Council's plans to enhance and expand services to families and children.

Whilst Cabinet was generally content with the general principles of Children's centres, concerns were raised regarding the following issues:

- the financial implications of creating 22 new Children's centres across the county by 2008;
- the government's plans for there to be a Children's centre in every community by 2010, which Cabinet believed was an ambitious timescale;
- the government definition of 'community' which was based on urban models – there was little guidance for rural areas. It was suggested that the Council could assist the government in developing appropriate guidance for rural areas.

Cabinet noted the proposed locations for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 Children's Centres, and whilst the latter proposals were at an early stage, commented that this would provide an exciting programme once complete. Proposals had been discussed at the Learning SDG and the December round of In Your Patch meetings, where helpful contributions had been made by Members.

In response to a Member question, reassurance was given that the proposed refocusing of Children's centre facilities in Oxmoor, from a 'virtual' centre to one based around Nursery and Pre-school facilities in the community, would not be to detriment of the good work that was currently taking place at this location.

It was resolved to:

- i) Approve the adoption of the guiding principles for the establishment and development of all future children's centres;
- ii) Note the revenue and capital allocations and the tight timetable for submission of proposals for Phase 2 children's centres to government;
- iii) Approve the list of proposed locations for Phase 2 children's centres and the submission of this information to government by the 14 December 2005 deadline.

## **86. (a) BUDGET MONITORING 2005-06**

Cabinet received a report summarising the financial results for revenue, capital and trading units to the end of October 2005, including details of the forecast outturn results for the current year. It was noted that there had not been opportunity to consider in detail the implications of the Local Government Finance Settlement announced on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December, but it was clear that it resulted in a tight settlement for the County for 2006/2007 and subsequent years.

It was noted the reduction in the forecast overspend was in the context of actions endorsed by Cabinet to reduce the overspend.

Members raised the following issues:

- concern regarding the unacceptable level of outstanding debt, and Members noted the work that was being done to address this position;
- whilst the budgetary difficulties of the Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) were recognised, Members were keen that the PCTs should meet their financial commitments to the Council promptly;
- concerns regarding the ongoing commitments in the Office of Children and Young People's Services (OCYPS) in future years, given that the pressures in 2005-06 were being offset by one-off savings elsewhere in OCYPS;
- concern regarding the catering overspend of £339K and the negative impact of recent national media coverage on the take up of school meals;
- that the recent resignation of County Councillor would necessitate a by-election at an estimated cost of £10,000, which would need to be found from within existing budgets.

It was noted that the £227K debt currently awaiting arbitration related to a dispute between two PCTs on where a client lived. Interest was not being charged on this debt, although the Council was currently investigating the possibility of such a policy generally.

It was resolved to note the forecast outturn for the end of the year 2005-06 of a £279k overspend (last month's reported figure being £577k overspend).

#### **(b) QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE ON "TOP 30" KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR 2005/06**

Cabinet received a report setting out the Council's "Top 30" Key Performance Indicators against the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) performance targets for the second quarter of 2005/06.

Cabinet noted the importance of improving performance to meet these targets not only within the Council but also through the partners who support these services. It was highlighted that many of the indicators, such as those for Schools (e.g. Key Stage 2 Maths and pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grade A\* to C) were not national targets but 'stretch' targets tailored for the county by the department of Education and Skills.

It was clarified that the voluntary sector activities funded through social care budgets which were not entered on the SWIFT database related to services which could be accessed by individuals who had not necessarily gone through an assessment.

It was noted that a review of performance management would be presented to Cabinet in 2006.

It was resolved to:

- i) note current performance on the Council's "Top 30" Key Performance Indicators for the second quarter 2005/06;
- ii) note progress towards our second Local Public Service Agreement and the target areas;
- iii) note the introduction of the Leading for Performance project and its objectives.

#### **87. DELEGATED DECISIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

Cabinet received a progress report on the actions taken/still outstanding in respect of matters delegated to individual Cabinet members or to officers acting on behalf of the Cabinet.

It was resolved to note the progress on delegations to individual Cabinet Members and/or to officers previously authorised by Cabinet to make decisions/take actions on behalf of the Cabinet.

#### **88. CABINET AGENDA PLAN - 20<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER**

Cabinet noted the addition of an additional item: Connexions service integration, which was a Key Decision.

It was resolved to note the Cabinet Draft Agenda Plan for 20<sup>th</sup> December 2005 as amended.

#### **89. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was resolved to:

That under Section 100 (A) 4 of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that the reports are likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information under paragraph 9 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972: by virtue of the:

Report 11 referring to the amount of expenditure proposed to be incurred by the authority under any particular contract for the supply of goods and services and referring to any terms proposed or to be proposed by or in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property.

#### **90. DEVELOPMENT OF GRAFHAM WATER CENTRE**

Cabinet received a report on plans to develop Grafham Water Centre, and the proposed funding package to support the developments.

Grafham Water Centre was owned by the County Council, and provided a wide range of activities for children and young people from Cambridgeshire and further afield. Members noted the phasing and financing of the proposed developments, which would include the construction of an indoor activity hall that would enable the Centre to provide activities throughout the winter months. The developments would be funded through lottery grant, capital receipts and a capital loan to the Centre from slippage in the OCYPS capital programme, and the full business plan had been rigorously scrutinised by Members.

Local Member Councillor Downes supported the developments, and made the following points:

- Perry Parish Council had been involved in the discussion from an early stage, and whilst the presence of the Grafham Water Centre within the village created some pressures and tensions for residents, generally the development was welcomed by residents for the benefits it would bring to the village;
- Commended the work of the Ian Downing, the Grafham Water Centre Manager, in working with the Parish Council and reaching a satisfactory outcome for the residents of Perry and the wider community, and in developing a viable business plan for the Centre.

Cabinet thanked Councillor Downes for his comments and in particular for his support throughout the project.

There was a query as to whether the new 20% Land Tax announced in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's pre-budget speech on 5<sup>th</sup> December would impact on this land sale, but it was considered that the proposed Land Tax would not be in place by that date.

It was resolved to:

- i) approve the hypothecation of capital receipts arising from the sale of a house and land currently assigned to Grafham Water Centre to the development of Grafham Water Centre;
- ii) approve a capital loan as detailed in the officers' report to Grafham Water Centre funded through slippage on the OCYPS capital programme.

Chairman  
20<sup>th</sup> December 2005