

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 17 MARCH 2016
MAIN POINTS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE
AND FOLLOW UP ACTION
REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE
(Contact: Councillor Peter Handley)

(The report is for information)

1. PURPOSE

To consider the main points arising from the meetings of the Committee held on 19 November 2015 and 7 January 2016 and provide an update on the follow up action that has been taken.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That, the report be noted.

3. BACKGROUND

19 November 2015

3.1. At the meeting of this Committee held on 19 November 2015 eight reports were received and considered.

Budget 2016/2017

3.2. The Committee received the report of the Strategic Director setting out the initial draft base budgets for 2016/17, draft fees and charges for 2016/17 and the latest Capital Programme for 2015/16 revised and future years.

3.3. The Committee resolved to endorse the proposed draft budget.

Draft Council Plan 2016-2019

3.4. Consideration was given to the report of the Joint Head of Business Information and Change Services, together with the revised Council Plan for 2016 – 2019.

3.5. Members discussed the revised document and resolved to endorse the draft Council Plan.

Oxfordshire County Council – Children’s Centres Consultation

3.6. The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Leisure and Communities which set out a recommended response to the County Council’s consultation on proposed changes to Children’s’ Services.

3.7. During discussion the committee raised a number of concerns regarding the consultation process and the options being offered.

3.8. After a detailed debate it was resolved that:

‘Cabinet be advised of the concerns expressed by Members as detailed above and requested to take these into account when formulating the Council’s response’

- 3.9. Cabinet considered the consultation at the December meeting where it was resolved:
'That the County Council be advised that, whilst West Oxfordshire would prefer to see the retention of universal services, it recognises the financial constraints faced by that Authority. Accordingly, of the options put forward in the consultation, this Council favours option 3, the provision of grant funding to the voluntary and community sectors with the proviso that the allocation of resources recognises the rural nature of West Oxfordshire and ensures an equitable distribution of funds.'

Future Provision of Intermediate Care Beds at Chipping Norton Hospital

- 3.10. The report of the Head of Leisure and Communities regarding the Council's response to the current consultation on proposals for future provision of intermediate care beds in Chipping Norton Hospital was considered.

- 3.11. After discussion the Committee resolved:

That the Cabinet be requested to respond to the consultation in the following terms:-

'Whilst the Council appreciates that OCC and OCCG are right to review the provision at Chipping Norton Hospital, it cannot support either of the two options recommended and support the continuing of the current provision until it can be satisfied that either of the options put forward will:

- provide appropriate high quality care **and beds** for local residents;
- address staff and GP concerns about the future needs of local residents;
- deliver genuine efficiencies while continuing to deliver the services people need.

Furthermore, consultation on the provision at Chipping Norton Hospital should be part of wider consultation that is planned for community hospital provision across the County.'

- 3.12. Cabinet considered the consultation and recommendations of this committee at their December meeting and resolved:

'That the County Council be advised that West Oxfordshire District Council cannot support either of the two options recommended for Chipping Norton Hospital and support the continuation of the current provision until such time as the consultation on the provision at Chipping Norton Hospital has taken place as part of the wider consultation that is planned for community hospital provision across the county.'

- 3.13. A response was submitted to OCC and the consultation replies were considered at a Cabinet meeting held on 26 January 2016 where it was resolved:

'To agree to move to implementation of Model A: the Intermediate Care Unit in Chipping Norton continues and the full 14 bed service is provided by the Orders of St John Care Trust'

Digital Nominations Scheme

- 3.14. The Committee received and considered the report of the Joint Head of Revenues and Housing Support regarding the introduction of a digital nominations scheme on a trial basis.

- 3.15. The Committee resolved as follows:

'That the recommendations set out in the report be endorsed.'

- 3.16. A report was considered at the December Cabinet meeting and it was resolved:
- (a) That the Council be recommended to agree that a digital nominations approach is adopted for a trial period commencing in summer 2016, with stakeholder consultation to be undertaken after 12 months, and the findings of that review to be considered by Cabinet late in 2017.
 - (b) That the Council be recommended to approve the adoption of the proposed new Allocations Policy for the period until the stakeholder review has been completed and consideration given to the findings.
- 3.17. The recommendation to adopt the scheme was ratified at the Council meeting held on 20 January 2016.

Committee Work Programme 2015/2016

- 3.18. The update report in respect of progress with the Committee Work Programme was received and noted.

Cabinet Work Programme

- 3.19. The Cabinet Work Programme published on 10 November 2015 was noted.

Performance Indicators – Quarter 1 2015/2016

- 3.20. The report of the Shared Head of Business Information and Change providing information on the Council's performance at the end of the second quarter of year 2015/2016 was noted.

Members' Questions

- 3.21. There were no members questions.

7 January 2016

Oxfordshire County Council – Children's Centres Consultation

- 3.22. A special meeting of the committee was held on 7 January 2016 to consider a call-in request in respect of the Cabinet decision (see paragraph 3.9 above) regarding the consultation on the future of Children's Centres.
- 3.23. Having considered the report it was resolved:
- 'That the Call-in request be not supported'*
- 3.24. The matter was further considered by OCC as part of the budget process at a meeting held on 16 February and in respect of Children's Centres it was agreed:
- 'A total of £2m of savings relating to Early Intervention hubs and children's centres will now not take place. An original £6m saving on Early Intervention Hubs and Children's Centres - agreed by the council at its annual budget meeting in February 2015 - will still take place. No decisions have been taken at this stage on how this £2m will be spent.'*

4. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

None.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

6. RISKS

None.

7. REASONS

The Chairman's summary of the previous meeting is an opportunity for the Chairman to outline to members progress made on their ideas and suggestions from the previous Committee meetings. It will also provide members with a further chance to comment on these subjects and provide a transparent method of showing the effectiveness of members' contributions to this Committee and its key overview and scrutiny role in monitoring, evaluating, questioning, challenging and developing policy.

Councillor Peter Handley
Chairman of Economic and Social Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 22 February 2016

Background Papers:

None