

Cabinet

18th October 2011 – At a meeting of the Cabinet held at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mrs Goldsmith (Chairman), Mr Barnard, Mr Bradbury, Mr Brown, Mr Catchpole, Mr Evans, Mr Griffiths and Mr Montyn.

Declarations of Interest

39. There were no declarations of interest.

Urgent Matters

40. There were no urgent matters.

Improvement Plan Update

41. The Cabinet received the report on the Improvement Plan (copy appended to the signed minutes). Members were pleased to note that since the Cabinet meeting on 12th July 2011, there had been an unannounced inspection by Ofsted that had not identified any priority actions that the County Council needed to take. There had been significant and sustained improvement in key indicators. For example, assessments completed within 10 days were being achieved in 80% of cases each month and with a rolling annual average of 73% against a target of 75%. Core assessments were completed in 83% of cases for the last three months and the annual rolling average was 80% against a target of 80%. The County Council was now in the upper quartile for indicators and the Department for Education comments were favourable.
42. A report on progress was with the Children's Minister and monthly reports continued to be sent to the Independent Chairman of the Improvement Board. The current chairman was standing down
43. The Director for Children's Services stressed that there was no complacency in the Service. A peer review from colleagues and Members from other authorities would be carried out in the near future to assess progress and this was expected to be another rigorous test.
44. With regard to the implementation of Frameworki, the Director reported that development work was ongoing to enable the system to be used for auditing and the data migration would be completed in December 2011.
45. The Children's Access Point (CAP) had been open for three months and Ofsted had commented very favourably on the arrangements and saw it as a key strength in ensuring continued improvements.

46. Members noted that staff felt that there had been significant progress in the last year and that recent advertisements for staff had attracted over 20 applications. Managers could therefore be far more selective about who they chose to appoint and getting the balance of experienced and inexperienced social workers right.
47. The Cabinet thanked the Director and his staff for the considerable progress made and for their continuing hard work to drive through the improvements.

Total Performance Monitor to end of August 2011

48. The Cabinet received the report on the Total Performance Monitor to the end of August 2011 (copy appended to the signed minutes).
49. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources reported that with 5/12ths of the financial year having passed the Council was expected to be only £100,000 overspent by the year end. He said that was a remarkable performance given the scale of the overall budget.
50. Of the 40 projects identified in the delivery plan, 80% were on track (Green), 15% were Amber and 5% were Red. Where the target was showing Amber, savings had to be actually achieved in order to be given a Green status. Blue indicated that the savings had been achieved and £20m savings had already been made this year. The development of a change control system meant that the Cabinet Members had to identify alternative savings if an original savings proposal could not actually be realised.
51. In the Capital Programme estimated payments had reduced by £3.2m to £213.1m since June 2011 and there was slippage of £4.1m, in the same period, to 2012/13. £70m of external borrowing from the Public Works Board had been secured at favourable rates for the development of the Materials Resource Management Contract at Warnham.
52. Over the next three years, the projected reductions in personnel would be achieved, although there was a slight increase in numbers projected in 2012/13.
53. The recent announcement by the Government to support a further Council Tax freeze required careful consideration because the grant would not be built into future years' base budgets. Therefore if taken in 2012/13, the County Council would need to find a further £9.5m in savings in 2013/14.
54. The Cabinet noted the positive progress being made to achieve the targets. The Cabinet Member for Adults' Services reported that it was now likely that the unallocated balance of £1.2m from the NHS Social Care funding would be needed to mitigate the projected shortfall in the savings programme. Referring to paragraph 5.2 of the report, regarding Measure 14, he commented that reason that the target had not been met was simply because the numbers of people needing higher levels of support

were greater than that which had been projected. A cohesive approach to working with the NHS on discharges was being developed so that more emphasis was being given to reablement. He was pleased to report progress with the proposed transfer of the day care service at the Grange, Midhurst, which was due in November 2011 and thanked the local community, the Grange staff and the local County Councillor for their work in enabling this to happen.

55. In reply to a question about the £0.2m shortfall in the parking account, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport commented that although on-street parking charges had increased, the number of people parking had reduced. This was probably due to the current economic climate. Regarding Measure 21(a) reported at paragraph 5.1 he commented that good progress was being made with the new contractor, Balfour Beatty, on ensuring jobs were completed in good time and there was a meeting with the company on 19th October 2011 to discuss this. The Cabinet was pleased to note that under the new contract the contractor was only paid once for each pothole repair and this encouraged the contractor to ensure a permanent repair was made at the first attempt.
56. Overall the Cabinet was pleased to note the progress being made and the Leader reminded them that it was adaptable and she expected it to develop in to an even more robust document next year.

Appointment to an Outside Body – Chichester Harbour Conservancy

57. Resolved

That Mr Barnard be appointed as the County Council's representative on the Chichester Harbour Conservancy until the end of the Council's term in May 2013.

Dates of Future Meetings

58. The Cabinet noted the dates of future meetings:
- 10th January 2012
 - 31st January 2012.

Chairman

The meeting closed at 11.15 a.m.