

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Cabinet

HELD ON THURSDAY 7 JUNE 2018 AT 6.00 PM

MEETING ROOM 1, 135 EASTERN AVENUE, MILTON PARK, OX14 4SB

Present:

Cabinet members: Councillors Felix Bloomfield (Vice-Chairman, in the chair), Anna Badcock, Kevin Bulmer, David Dodds, Lynn Lloyd, Caroline Newton and Bill Service

Officers: Steve Culliford, Margaret Reed, Mark Stone, Shona Ware and Suzi Wild

Also present: Councillor David Turner

1 Apologies for absence

Councillors Jane Murphy (Chairman) and Paul Harrison sent their apologies for absence. Councillor Felix Bloomfield (Vice-Chairman) took the chair for this meeting.

2 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 20 March, 5 April and 10 May 2018 as correct records and agree that the Chairman signs them as such.

3 Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest

Councillor David Turner, attending the meeting to ask questions of clarification on the proposed volunteering grant scheme (minute 6 refers), gave an example to illustrate a point, citing the Chalgrove and Watlington Children's Centre. He declared an interest as he was a member of the centre's management committee.

4 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None

5 Public participation

None



Listening Learning Leading

6 Proposed volunteering grant scheme one-year pilot

Cabinet considered the report of the head of community services. The Council had approved a budget of £25,000 for a pilot grant scheme to support some of the costs associated with volunteering. Officers had drafted a policy to deliver the grant scheme. The aim was to increase the number of people volunteering in the district by providing support to voluntary and community groups to help them find the volunteers they needed and provide vital services to residents. The report sought approval for the policy and sought delegated authority to determine the grant applications.

Councillor David Turner addressed Cabinet, welcoming the volunteering grant scheme and asked the following questions of clarification. The Cabinet member for community services responded to each question:

Q1. Given that Council approved the budget growth of £25,000 for the 2017/18 financial year, why did the council not produce the report in that period and start the grant scheme?

A. Recruitment of a qualified member of staff took longer than expected, contributing to the scheme's introduction being delayed.

Q2. Has the council considered sending details of the applications to parish and town councils as an extra local validity check against the policy criteria?

A. Parish councils were involved in early formulation of the grant scheme. However, an extra validity check by this council's ward member would be beneficial in cases where the officers needed clarification. Ward members' responses must be fact-based, not subjective.

Q3. How many applications are we expecting to receive? We are proposing to eligibility check one fifth of what number?

A. No predictions had been made on the number of applications expected but the operation of the scheme would be reviewed after four months to ensure its effectiveness.

Q4. Can children's centres apply? The criteria referred to other authorities' statutory duties being ineligible for a grant under this scheme but children's centres are not a statutory duty of the county council. (Councillor Turner gave an example of the Chalgrove and Watlington Children's Centre and declared an interest as he was a member of its management committee.)

A. Children's centres that are not run by the county council could be eligible to apply, providing they meet the other criteria.

Q5. If the organisation is eligible, can it apply for a grant for an existing volunteer as well as new volunteers?

A. The aim of the scheme is to increase volunteering. An organisation could apply for support to increase the hours of existing volunteers.

Q6. The report refers to the mapping of applicants to ensure a fair geographical spread. Does this mean we will not be operating a 'first come, first served' approach? If not, how will this be administered without delaying eligible applications?

A. Grants would not be awarded on a 'first come, first served' approach. Instead, applications would be determined in several rounds during the year, with each application being determined on its merits.

The Cabinet member for community services introduced the report and confirmed that the application process would seek confirmation that the funds applied for would be spent on new volunteers or additional volunteering activities.

Cabinet welcomed the proposed volunteering grants scheme and approved the report's recommendations.

RESOLVED: to

- (a) approve the grant policy to support volunteers with some of the costs of volunteering, as set out in appendix one to the head of community services' report to Cabinet on 7 June 2018; and
- (b) authorise the head of community services to release volunteering grant payments of up to £750.

The meeting closed at 6.17 pm

Chairman

Date