

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Council



Listening Learning Leading

HELD AT 10.00 AM ON THURSDAY 12 DECEMBER 2013

COUNCIL CHAMBER, SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES

Present:

Mrs Dorothy Brown (Chairman)

Mrs Ann Midwinter (Vice Chairman), Mrs Anna Badcock, Mr Roger Bell, Ms Joan Bland, Mr Felix Bloomfield, Mr David Bretherton, Mrs Janet Carr, Mrs Celia Collett, MBE, Mr John Cotton, Mrs Margaret Davies, Mrs Pat Dawe, Mr Leo Docherty, Mr David Dodds, Mrs Ann Ducker, MBE, Mr Mark Gray, Mr Tony Harbour, Mrs Eleanor Hards, Mr Neville F Harris, Mr Stephen Harrod, Mr Marc Hiles, Ms Elizabeth Hodgkin, Mr Malcolm Leonard, Ms Lynn Lloyd, Mr Imran Lokhon, Mrs Denise Macdonald, Mrs Judith Nimmo-Smith, Reverend Angie Paterson, Ms Anne Purse, Mr Christopher Quinton, Mr Alan Rooke, Mrs Pearl Slatter, Mr David Turner, Mrs Margaret Turner, Mrs Jennifer Wood and Miss Rachel Wallis

Apologies:

Mr Bernard Cooper, Ms Kristina Crabbe, Mr Philip Cross, Mrs Elizabeth Gillespie, Mr Marcus Harris, Mr Paul Harrison, Mr Bill Service and Mr Michael Welply tendered apologies.

Officers:

Mr Steve Bishop, Mr David Buckle, Mr Steven Corrigan, Mr Paul Howden, Mr Matt Prosser, Mrs Margaret Reed and Mrs Anna Robinson

Prior to the meeting Council observed a minute's silence in memory of Terry Joslin, a former councillor.

32 Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest

None.

33 Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2013 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman sign them as such.

34 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman announced the availability of tickets for the 2014 Royal Garden Parties. Councillors, who had not previously attended a Royal Garden Party on behalf of the council, were invited to apply for tickets.

She invited councillors to make a donation to her chosen charities, the Chilterns MS Centre and the Oxford Heartfelt Appeal, for the Christmas buffet lunch.

35 Questions from the public and public participation

None.

36 Delivering accelerated housing growth in Science Vale

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 5 December 2013, to approve a project to accelerate housing growth across the Science Vale area of South and Vale and establish budgets to allow the project to proceed. Both councils had been successful in securing a total of £2.06 million in grant funding from the Large Sites Capacity Fund.

In moving the recommendations of Cabinet Mrs Ducker, Leader of council, responded to questions submitted by Mrs E Hards prior to the meeting. She responded that:

- the baseline year for assessing housing delivery is 2013;
- that the problem of under delivery of new housing was a national problem and that this project would identify and analyse the barriers to housing delivery and put in place actions to overcome those barriers to speed up housing delivery;
- currently Vale of White Horse District Council is delivering over 75 per cent of the housing in Science Vale;
- the funding will be used to accelerate housing development with the required infrastructure being funded by developers;
- the project will provide useful information for the development of the Didcot Area Action Plan.

In response to comments Mrs Ducker undertook to:

- ensure all councillors received a map showing the Science Vale area;
- provide details of the number of houses completed each year as a direct result of this project

She confirmed that parish councils within the Science Vale area would be consulted on local infrastructure provision.

A number of councillors welcomed the project and the success of the council in securing grant funding.

RESOLVED: to

1. approve a revenue budget, in 2013/14, of £525,000, funded from a £1.025 million capacity fund grant;
2. approve a revenue budget, in 2014/15, of £500,000 funded from the second tranche of capacity fund grant.

37 Council tax base 2014/15

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 5 December 2013, on the council tax base for 2014/15.

RESOLVED:

1. to agree that, in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by the Local Government Finance Act 2012) and the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended)
 - i. from 1 April 2014 the council tax discount to be applied on unoccupied and substantially unfurnished dwellings (Class C in the Regulations) be 100 per cent for one calendar month and zero per cent thereafter. Where an unoccupied and unfurnished dwelling has already received the current 25 per cent discount for more than one calendar month on 1 April 2014, it shall receive zero discount. Where an unoccupied and unfurnished dwelling has received a 25 per cent discount for less than one calendar month on 1 April 2014, it shall receive a 100 per cent discount for the number of days required to reach one calendar month and then zero per cent discount thereafter. In considering whether a dwelling has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for any period, any one period not exceeding six weeks, during which it was not unoccupied and substantially unfurnished shall be disregarded.
2. to approve the report of the Head of Finance for the calculation of the council's tax base and the calculation of the tax base for each parish area for 2014/15;
3. to agree that, in accordance with The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by South Oxfordshire District Council as its council tax base for the year 2014/15 be 53,217.1;

4. to agree that, in accordance with The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by South Oxfordshire District Council as the council tax base for the year 2014/15 for each parish be the amount shown against the name of that parish in Appendix 1 of the report of the Head of Finance to Cabinet on 5 December 2013.

38 Council tax reduction scheme grant for town and parish councils

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 5 December 2013, on the total amount of council tax reduction scheme grant to pass down to town and parish councils for 2014/15, how to calculate the amounts for individual town and parish councils and the actual grant allocations for each town and parish council.

RESOLVED:

1. that the total council tax reduction scheme grant to be passed down to town and parish councils for 2014/15 be **£212,252**;
2. that the individual amounts for town and parish councils be calculated based on their relative need after considering the negative impact of the council tax reduction scheme on parish taxbases;
3. that the individual grant amounts for towns and parishes are as set out in Appendix 2 to the report of the Head of Finance to Cabinet on 5 December 2013.

39 Councillors' allowances scheme

Mr D Dodds moved and Mrs E A Ducker seconded a motion to apply no increase to the councillors' basic and special responsibility allowances payable from 1 April 2014.

RESOLVED: to apply no increase to the councillors' basic and special responsibility allowances payable from 1 April 2014.

40 Review of the council's constitution

Council considered the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on proposed changes to the council's constitution. The proposed changes, supported by the Constitution Review Task Group, were recommended to come into effect from 1 January 2014 with the exception of the revised budget and policy framework procedure rules and budget setting protocol that would come into effect immediately in preparation of the 2014/15 budget.

RESOLVED: to

1. agree the revised delegation 1.2 to the Head of Economy, Leisure and Property attached as appendix one to the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to Council on 12 December 2013 with effect from 1 January 2014;
2. agree the delegation in respect of the national non-domestic rates 1 form (NDR1) set out in paragraph seven of the report of the Head of Legal and

Democratic Services to Council on 12 December 2013 with effect from 1 January 2014;

3. agree the amendments to the financial procedure rules set out in paragraph 12 of the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to Council on 12 December 2013 with effect from 1 January 2014;
4. agree the revised budget and policy framework procedure rules and budget setting protocol set out in appendix two to the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to Council on 12 December 2013 with immediate effect;
5. agree the proposed amendments to officer delegation and Cabinet and Council procedure rules set out in appendix three to the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to Council on 12 December 2013 with effect from 1 January 2014;
6. authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to make the necessary changes to the council's constitution to reflect the changes set out in the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to Council on 12 December 2013;
7. authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to make any minor or consequential amendments to the constitution required for clarification, consistency and compliance with the council's style guide.

41 Questions under Council procedure rule 11

None.

42 Motions under Council procedure rule 41

None.

The meeting closed at 11.00am

Chairman

Date