

# Minutes

## OF A MEETING OF THE

## Council



Listening Learning Leading

**HELD AT 6.15 PM ON THURSDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2017**

**THE FOUNTAIN CONFERENCE CENTRE, HOWBERY PARK,  
CROWMARSH GIFFORD**

### **Present:**

Paul Harrison (Chairman), Charles Bailey, Felix Bloomfield, Kevin Bulmer, Nigel Champken-Woods, Steve Connel, John Cotton, Pat Dawe, Anthony Dearlove, David Dodds, Stefan Gawrysiak, Elizabeth Gillespie, Will Hall, Stephen Harrod, Lorraine Hillier, Elaine Hornsby, Sue Lawson, Lynn Lloyd, Jeannette Matelot, Jane Murphy, Anthony Nash, David Nimmo-Smith, Richard Pullen, Bill Service, Robert Simister, Alan Thompson, David Turner, John Walsh and Ian White

### **Apologies:**

Margaret Davies, Toby Newman and Margaret Turner tendered apologies.

**Officers:** Steven Corrigan, Matthew Gaskin, Simon Hewings (Capita), David Hill, William Jacobs, Alice Lynch and Margaret Reed

### **46 Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2016 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman sign them as such.

### **47 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest**

None.

### **48 Urgent business and chairman's announcements**

There were no items of urgent business. The Chairman provided housekeeping information and advised that his civic dinner would be held on Friday 31 March at the Phyllis Court Club in Henley.

Council agreed to suspend council procedure rule 80 insofar as it requires councillors to stand when speaking at Council meetings.

## **49 Public participation**

The Chairman advised that Mr Julian Brookes, Mayor of Henley Town Council, and Ms Lisa Grant, General and Financial Manager of the YMCA, had registered to address Council on agenda item 8 on an application for a community loan from Henley YMCA.

## **50 Petitions**

None.

## **51 Appointment of external auditors**

At its meeting on 23 January 2017 the Joint Audit and Governance Committee considered a report on appointing external auditors and recommended that Council opt in to the appointing person arrangements made by Public Sector Audit Appointments for the appointment of external auditors.

**RESOLVED:** to opt in to the appointing person arrangements made by Public Sector Audit Appointments for the appointment of external auditors.

## **52 Community Loan - Henley YMCA**

At its meeting on 1 February 2017 Cabinet considered a report on an application for a community loan from Henley YMCA and agreed to recommend Council to approve the award of a community loan.

Mr Julian Brookes, Mayor of Henley Town Council, and Ms Lisa Grant, General and Financial Manager of the YMCA, addressed Council in support of the application and responded to questions.

**RESOLVED:** to

1. approve the award of a community loan of £169,950 to Henley YMCA;
2. authorise the head of finance and the head of legal and democratic services to agree the conditions of the loan and the loan agreement;
3. approve a supplementary estimate of £169,950 to be added to the approved capital programme.

## **53 Treasury management mid-year monitoring 2016/17**

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 1 February 2017, on the treasury management activities for the first six months of 2016/17.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 23 January 2017 and had not recommended any adjustments to the strategy as a result of the first six months' activities. Likewise, Cabinet concluded that the treasury management activities had operated within the agreed parameters set out in the approved treasury management strategy.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the treasury management mid-year monitoring report 2016/17.

## **54 Treasury management strategy 2017/18 to 2019/20**

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 1 February 2017, on the approval of the council's treasury management strategy (TMS) for 2017/18 to 2019/20.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee considered the report at its meeting on 23 January 2017 and had not recommended any adjustments to the strategy. Cabinet agreed to recommend Council approve the strategy.

**RESOLVED:** to approve

1. the treasury management strategy 2017/18 set out in appendix A to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 1 February 2017;
2. the prudential indicators and limits for 2017/18 to 2019/20 as set out in table 2, appendix A to the head of finance's report; and
3. the annual investment strategy 2017/18 set out in appendix A (paragraphs 26 to 66) and the lending criteria detailed in table 5 of appendix A to the head of finance's report.

## **55 Medium term financial strategy 2017/18 - 2021/22**

Council considered Cabinet's recommendation, made at its meeting on 1 February 2017, on the medium term financial strategy for 2017/18 to 2021/22.

Cabinet supported the draft strategy, however, it believed that it should be adjusted to state that the council would not borrow to fund capital expenditure unless financially advantageous to do so.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2017/18 to 2021/22 as attached to the head of finance's report to the Cabinet meeting of 1 February 2017, subject to amending paragraph 2.1 (b) of the strategy to read: "To retain our debt-free status, i.e. we will not borrow to fund capital expenditure, unless financially advantageous to do so".

## **56 Revenue Budget 2017/18 and Capital Programme to 2021/22**

The Chairman referred to regulations that require councils to record the names of those councillors voting in favour, against or abstaining from any vote on the budget, including amendments, and the council tax. In accordance with the regulations he would call for a named vote on each of these matters at this meeting.

The Chairman reminded councillors that they were not entitled to vote on any issue affecting the level or administration of the council tax or other decisions which might affect the making of any such calculation such as the budget, if they were over two months in arrears with their council tax payments. Where such circumstances applied, councillors were under a statutory obligation to disclose the restriction placed on them and refrain from voting at the relevant meeting. No councillor made any such declaration.

Council noted the report of the chief finance officer on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of the reserves.

Mrs Murphy, Cabinet member for finance, presented the Cabinet's proposals for the revenue budget 2017/18 and capital programme to 2021/22. On behalf of the council she thanked officers for their part in continuing to control costs and in preparing the draft budget.

Mrs Murphy moved and Mr Hall seconded a motion to approve Cabinet's recommendations as follows:

That Council:

1. sets the revenue budget for 2017/18 as set out in appendix A.1 to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 1 February 2017;
2. agrees that the capital schemes listed in paragraph 33 of the head of finance's report remain in the capital programme
3. approves the capital programme for 2017/18 to 2021/22 as set out in appendix D.1, together with the capital growth bids set out in appendix D.2 to the head of finance's report;
4. sets the council's prudential limits as listed in appendix E to the head of finance's report;
5. approves the medium term financial plan to 2021/22 as set out in appendix F to the head of finance's report;
6. allocates £1,000,000 to fund the Communities Capital and Revenue Grant Scheme.

Mr Turner moved and Mr Gawrysiak seconded an amendment to the above budget in the following terms:

"That the ongoing revenue savings proposal "Reduction in funding to Thames Valley Police" of £99,190 shown in Appendix B.2 on page 99 not be taken".

Those councillors who spoke in support of the amendment stated that if Thames Valley Police (TVP) were unable to bridge the gap in funding there could be a reduction in the number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO). This could

have an adverse impact on the feelings of safety for elderly and vulnerable people particularly in rural areas where the PCSOs have had a positive impact particularly on youth crime and disturbance.

However, the majority of councillors were of the view that responsibility for funding PCSOs was a matter for TVP. In addition the nature of policing was changing with resources diverted to other means of tackling crime.

The Chairman called for a recorded vote on the amendment which was lost with the votes recorded as follows (Mr Service had left the meeting prior to the vote):

| <b>FOR</b>       | <b>AGAINST</b>       | <b>ABSTAIN</b> |
|------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Stefan Gawrysiak | Charles Bailey       |                |
| David Turner     | Felix Bloomfield     |                |
|                  | Kevin Bulmer         |                |
|                  | Nigel Champken-Woods |                |
|                  | Steve Connel         |                |
|                  | John Cotton          |                |
|                  | Pat Dawe             |                |
|                  | Anthony Dearlove     |                |
|                  | David Dodds          |                |
|                  | Elizabeth Gillespie  |                |
|                  | Will Hall            |                |
|                  | Paul Harrison        |                |
|                  | Stephen Harrod       |                |
|                  | Lorraine Hillier     |                |
|                  | Elaine Hornsby       |                |
|                  | Sue Lawson           |                |
|                  | Lynn Lloyd           |                |
|                  | Jeannette Matelot    |                |
|                  | Jane Murphy          |                |
|                  | Anthony Nash         |                |
|                  | David Nimmo-Smith    |                |
|                  | Richard Pullen       |                |
|                  | Robert Simister      |                |
|                  | Alan Thompson        |                |

| FOR | AGAINST    | ABSTAIN |
|-----|------------|---------|
|     | John Walsh |         |
|     | Ian White  |         |
| 2   | 26         | 0       |

Mr Turner moved and Mr Gawrysiak seconded an amendment to the above budget in the following terms:

“That an ongoing revenue growth bid for the sum of £24,147 for “air quality” be added to the budget”.

Those councillors who spoke in support of the amendment expressed the view that the growth bid would be used to fund an education programme to encourage residents to take action and change their behaviours to improve air quality by reducing harmful emissions.

The majority of councillors referred to the current work being undertaken by the council to address air quality including the provision of electric car charging points and work on an air quality action plan which would identify measures to reduce harmful emissions.

The Chairman called for a recorded vote on the amendment which was lost with the votes recorded as follows (Mr Nimmo-Smith had left the meeting prior to the vote):

| FOR              | AGAINST              | ABSTAIN |
|------------------|----------------------|---------|
| Stefan Gawrysiak | Charles Bailey       |         |
| David Turner     | Felix Bloomfield     |         |
|                  | Kevin Bulmer         |         |
|                  | Nigel Champken-Woods |         |
|                  | Steve Connel         |         |
|                  | John Cotton          |         |
|                  | Pat Dawe             |         |
|                  | Anthony Dearlove     |         |
|                  | David Dodds          |         |
|                  | Elizabeth Gillespie  |         |
|                  | Will Hall            |         |
|                  | Paul Harrison        |         |
|                  | Stephen Harrod       |         |
|                  | Lorraine Hillier     |         |
|                  | Elaine Hornsby       |         |

| <b>FOR</b> | <b>AGAINST</b>    | <b>ABSTAIN</b> |
|------------|-------------------|----------------|
|            | Sue Lawson        |                |
|            | Lynn Lloyd        |                |
|            | Jeannette Matelot |                |
|            | Jane Murphy       |                |
|            | Anthony Nash      |                |
|            | Richard Pullen    |                |
|            | Robert Simister   |                |
|            | Alan Thompson     |                |
|            | John Walsh        |                |
|            | Ian White         |                |
| 2          | 25                | 0              |

Councillors supporting the Cabinet's budget revenue and capital budget proposals supported the view that the council continued to manage its financial matters sensibly while maintaining services and continuing its capital programme with no increase in this council's element of the council tax in 2017/18. Councillors supported additional investment to support the regeneration of Berinsfield, money to help Superfast Broadband reach more communities across the district and councillor ward budgets to support community projects and to help raise further funds for local voluntary and community groups.

The Chairman called for a recorded vote on the motion which was carried with the votes recorded as follows:

| <b>FOR</b>           | <b>AGAINST</b>   | <b>ABSTAIN</b> |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Charles Bailey       | Stefan Gawrysiak |                |
| Felix Bloomfield     | David Turner     |                |
| Kevin Bulmer         |                  |                |
| Nigel Champken-Woods |                  |                |
| Steve Connel         |                  |                |
| John Cotton          |                  |                |
| Pat Dawe             |                  |                |
| Anthony Dearlove     |                  |                |
| David Dodds          |                  |                |
| Elizabeth Gillespie  |                  |                |

| FOR               | AGAINST | ABSTAIN |
|-------------------|---------|---------|
| Will Hall         |         |         |
| Paul Harrison     |         |         |
| Stephen Harrod    |         |         |
| Lorraine Hillier  |         |         |
| Elaine Hornsby    |         |         |
| Sue Lawson        |         |         |
| Lynn Lloyd        |         |         |
| Jeannette Matelot |         |         |
| Jane Murphy       |         |         |
| Anthony Nash      |         |         |
| Richard Pullen    |         |         |
| Robert Simister   |         |         |
| Alan Thompson     |         |         |
| John Walsh        |         |         |
| Ian White         |         |         |
| 25                | 2       |         |

**RESOLVED:** to

1. set the revenue budget for 2017/18 as set out in appendix A.1 to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 1 February 2017;
2. agree that the capital schemes listed in paragraph 33 of the head of finance's report remain in the capital programme;
3. approve the capital programme for 2017/18 to 2021/22 as set out in appendix D.1, together with the capital growth bids set out in appendix D.2 to the head of finance's report;
4. set the council's prudential limits as listed in appendix E to the head of finance's report;
5. approve the medium term financial plan to 2021/22 as set out in appendix F to the head of finance's report;
6. allocate £1,000,000 to fund the Communities Capital and Revenue Grant Scheme.

## **57 Report of the leader of the council**

In light of the comprehensive officer briefing provided to councillors prior to the Council meeting on proposals for a unitary authority in Oxfordshire and the motion to be considered later in the meeting, the leader of the council had no updates.

## 58 Council tax 2017/18

Council considered the report of the head of finance on the setting of the Council Tax for the 2017/18 financial year.

In accordance with regulations requiring councils to record the names of those councillors voting in favour, against or abstaining from any vote on the council tax the Chairman called for a recorded vote which was carried with the voting being as follows (Mr Simister and Mr Walsh had left the meeting prior to the vote on this item):

| FOR                  | AGAINST | ABSTAIN |
|----------------------|---------|---------|
| Charles Bailey       |         |         |
| Felix Bloomfield     |         |         |
| Kevin Bulmer         |         |         |
| Nigel Champken-Woods |         |         |
| Steve Connel         |         |         |
| John Cotton          |         |         |
| Pat Dawe             |         |         |
| Anthony Dearlove     |         |         |
| David Dodds          |         |         |
| Stefan Gawrysiak     |         |         |
| Elizabeth Gillespie  |         |         |
| Will Hall            |         |         |
| Paul Harrison        |         |         |
| Stephen Harrod       |         |         |
| Lorraine Hillier     |         |         |
| Elaine Hornsby       |         |         |
| Sue Lawson           |         |         |
| Lynn Lloyd           |         |         |
| Jeannette Matelot    |         |         |
| Jane Murphy          |         |         |
| Anthony Nash         |         |         |
| Richard Pullen       |         |         |
| Alan Thompson        |         |         |
| David Turner         |         |         |
| Ian White            |         |         |

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAIN |
|-----|---------|---------|
| 25  | 0       | 0       |

## 59 Pay policy statement 2017/18

Council considered the report of the head of HR, IT and technical services on the adoption of a pay policy statement to meet the requirements of the Localism Act.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the pay policy statement for 2017-18 attached to the report of the head of HR, IT and technical services to Council on 16 February 2017.

## 60 Changes to the council's constitution

Council considered the report of the head of legal and democratic services and monitoring officer on a proposed change to the council's constitution to clarify the decisions which can be taken by full Council.

**RESOLVED: to**

1. amend Article 4 of the current constitution with immediate effect to provide for full Council to be responsible for the adoption or approval of a plan or strategy (other than a plan or strategy forming part of the policy framework), where Council determines that it should take the decision whether to adopt or approve that plan or strategy;
2. amend the full Council section of Part 2: Decision Making of the revised constitution agreed by Council on 15 December 2016 with effect from 1 March 2017 to provide for full Council to be responsible for the adoption or approval of a plan or strategy (other than a plan or strategy forming part of the policy framework), where Council determines that it should take the decision whether to adopt or approve that plan or strategy;
3. authorise the head of legal and democratic services to update the constitutions to reflect the agreed amendments;
4. authorise the head of legal and democratic services to make any minor or consequential amendments to the constitutions for consistency and to reflect the council's style guide;
5. determine that Council should itself take the decision whether to adopt or approve any proposals for unitary local government for Oxfordshire (including submitting the same to the Secretary of State and all further decisions following the Secretary of State's response), having considered recommendations of the Cabinet.

## 61 Questions under Council procedure rule 34

None.

## 62 Motions under Council procedure rule 41

Motion moved by Mr Cotton and seconded by Mrs Murphy:

‘This council supports proposals for a new countywide unitary authority and authorises the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the council, to work with other partner councils to develop a proposal for the creation of a new unitary council for Oxfordshire and present a detailed report to Council in due course.’

An amendment moved by Mrs Gillespie and seconded by Mr Dodds was, with the consent of Council, accepted by the mover and seconder of the original motion as follows with deleted words shown by a strikethrough and additional words shown in bold:

“This council supports ~~proposals for a new countywide~~ **the principle of a single** unitary authority **in Oxfordshire** and authorises the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the council, to work with other partner councils **that support the same proposal for reorganisation** ~~to develop a proposal for the creation of a new unitary council for Oxfordshire~~ **to develop the terms of a submission for local government change in Oxfordshire** and present a detailed report to Council in due course”.

Councillors supported the principle of one single unitary authority for Oxfordshire which would transform the way services are delivered to the people of Oxfordshire, maintain high quality services and secure investment in infrastructure. However, a number of councillors expressed concern regarding the current One Oxfordshire proposal put forward by Oxfordshire County Council. The view was expressed that the current proposal required improvement to ensure local accountability with decisions taken at a much more local level than that offered by the area executive board model. Locally held reserves should be used for the benefit of local residents and there should be a commitment to ensure service improvement through any new unitary authority as well as a commitment to making savings.

### RESOLVED:

That this council supports the principle of a single unitary authority in Oxfordshire and authorises the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the council, to work with other partner councils that support the same proposal for reorganisation to develop the terms of a submission for local government change in Oxfordshire and present a detailed report to Council in due course.

The meeting closed at 8:05pm

Chairman

Date