

Agenda



Listening Learning Leading

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Date: 14 May 2018

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A MEETING OF THE

Scrutiny Committee

WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY 22 MAY 2018 AT 6.30 PM

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

Members of the Committee:

To be confirmed at the annual meeting of Council on 17 May 2018

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1 Apologies for absence

To record apologies for absence and the attendance of substitute members.

2 Minutes (Pages 3 - 12)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the committee minutes of the meetings held on 23 January and 6 February 2018 (attached).

3 Declarations of interest

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

4 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

To receive notification of any matters which the chairman determines should be considered as urgent business and the special circumstances which have made the matters urgent, and to receive any announcements from the chairman.

5 Public participation

To receive any questions or statements from members of the public that have registered to speak.

REPORTS AND ISSUES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 Leisure strategy (Pages 12 - 14)

To consider the report of the interim head of community services (attached).

7 Work schedule and dates for all South and Vale scrutiny meetings (Pages 15 - 19)

To review the attached scrutiny work schedule. Please note, although the dates are confirmed, the items under consideration are subject to being withdrawn, added to or rearranged without further notice.

MARGARET REED

Head of Legal and Democratic

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Scrutiny Committee



Listening Learning Leading

HELD ON TUESDAY 23 JANUARY 2018 AT 6.30 PM

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

Present:

Richard Pullen (Chairman)

John Walsh, Steve Connel, Anthony Dearlove, Caroline Newton and Ian Snowdon
and John Walsh

Apologies:

Elaine Hornsby, David Turner and Ian White tendered apologies.

Officers:

Andrew Down and Susan Harbour

28 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2017 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the chairman.

29 Declarations of interest

None

30 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None

31 Public participation

None

32 Work schedule and dates for all South and Vale scrutiny meetings

The committee reviewed the work schedule and dates.

33 Ask The Leader

John Cotton, the leader of South Oxfordshire District Council, came to the table to answer questions from the committee. This was an open session and, although he had had advance notification of some of the questions, this was not the case with all of the questions. In addition, there were a number of supplementary questions asked. Councillor Cotton explained to the committee that he would be responding to questions both in his role as leader of the council, but also with his personal opinions, or in his role as portfolio holder. He would try to indicate where this was the case.

Question:

Are we on track to submit our local plan?

Response:

- The timetable has slipped, in part due to an extension of the consultation period and negotiations over leaseholder agreements at Chalgrove. The submission was likely to slip back until mid March, at the earliest (from late Jan/Feb). The Council needs to issue six weeks' notice to the planning inspectorate, which had not yet been given. It was likely that the plan would be adopted early next year, rather than later this year.
- The Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers of Homes England had been increased to enable focus on housing delivery. Progress with CPOs would be quicker.

Question:

Could we have an update on the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth deal?

Response

- The Oxfordshire authorities had the only successful deal to date. The original timetable aimed for 31 January 2019 for completion and was still on track. It was due to come to Cabinet in early February and Full Council on 15 February for approval.
- £150 million for infrastructure.
- £60 million for affordable housing.
- £5 million for early funding.
- Up to 100,000 homes.
- An issue was how the government would respond if the authorities do not deliver on their commitments.

Question:

Could South Oxfordshire District Council evaluate whether it is possible for it to build affordable homes?

Response:

- There are examples of this happening elsewhere such as "Urban Street" at South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- The potential exists to form a housing company and to invest. But the council would need to be clear on what could we add to what is done elsewhere. Where are the gaps?
- It is unlikely to provide a major income stream.

- There needs to be an overhaul of treasury management policy to address issues of risk aversion.
- Not just looking at financial returns, but also at the public good.

Question:

Do you see the government agreeing a devolution deal for Oxfordshire in the current climate?

Response:

- The Dorset councils' bid is at the forefront of devolution deals. If this bid is successful then it is likely that other councils will look for responses to their bids. Oxfordshire's councils' submission is still "live" with the Secretary of State, and waiting for a response.

Question:

What approach has been decided on for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money? Would it be allocated on a local basis or regarded as a centralised pot?

Response:

- No decision has yet been made. The CIL spending strategy needs to be brought to Full Council for a decision. It needs to be flexible and to support local needs without ring-fencing it to the areas where houses were built, especially as 40 percent goes to education.
- The council needs to take a strategic look at the needs in the district and where CIL money can go to support that.
- The leader was against drawing arbitrary lines within the district and against locking out the money on a geographical basis. However, it can and should be reviewed and audited to look at efficiency and fairness.

Question:

Regarding facilities at Great Western Park Didcot: the infrastructure was not in place as early as it should have been particularly the leisure centre and the northern perimeter road. Why was this?

Response:

- Regarding the leisure centre, there had been difficulty in finding and acquiring a site on which to build.
- The northern perimeter road has a current budget of approximately £15 million. The money is available but the cooperation of the County Council is required including the £1 million revenue costs to build the road. There is currently not a County Council planning permission in place. There is a knock on in terms of delivering the housing at this site.

Question: Can you update us on the county wide plan?

Response:

- There is a great degree of pragmatism and cooperation between Oxfordshire Leaders on the Joint Statutory Plan, part of Housing and Growth Deal. Progress is held up by wider partnership working and the difficulties faced by other organisations, and their financial concerns etc.

Question:

What is your view on the likely route of the Oxford-Cambridge route: South or North of Oxford?

Response:

- It is not clear at this stage. There is a meeting with Highways England next week with the leaders of both South and Vale Councils and Jacobs, the engineering company. By this summer the corridor will have been identified. However, it may be too wide to be able to identify whether the road is going North or South. It is likely that the north/south issue will be decided a year after that with the road likely to be finished 2030. There are a huge number of constraints around flooding, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), protected woodlands etc.
- Need to think about what problem the government is trying to solve. Is it about creating an extra arc to relieve traffic on the M25? And if so, what are the implications of this?

Question:

Is the proposed "Harrington" new settlement idea a serious consideration as either an alternative to Chalgrove Airfield, or as part of the Oxford to Cambridge Corridor package, or at all?

Response given in capacity as portfolio holder, not leader.

- Although this new settlement option was previously not favoured, given the issues with Chalgrove, it is one of the areas outside of the green belt which might make the Harrington settlement more appealing. It is very close to the motorway and it could become a dormitory settlement which would be at odds with the aim of getting people to work close to where they live. However, it would fit with the Oxford to Cambridge corridor, should it come near that area, and would be an option if the proposed Chalgrove development did not go forward.
- About one third of South Oxfordshire District Council is green belt, and there are also a lot of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and also a lot of flood areas. There are very few areas suitable for development.
- Highways England have a holding objection but might withdraw it for a smaller development.

Question: What is happening with the possible Grenoble Road development?

Response:

- A scoping application has been received from Magdalen College which is, tactically, a sensible first step for a potentially interested developer. It is possible other competitors will put their applications in for other areas.

Question:

What is your view on the future of outsourcing given the recent collapse of the outsourcing company, Carillion?

Response:

- It is necessary to look at how to most effectively achieve the council's objectives. The ability to ensure that contracts are effective can be hampered if there are not enough good staff working directly for the council. It is important to get the right balance.
- Shared services between South and Vale have worked well because they were joined incrementally. There is additional risk and difficulty in taking on super-large outsourcing in a more instant and dramatic way.

- It is important to know at where the council's strengths lie.

Question:

What is your view on SODC building and operating a crematorium with income from this source to support future projects?

Response:

- Other councils do this and they tend to make quite a lot of money.
- This would be a potentially interesting element in the discussion about revenue. There are no immediate plans but it is an interesting option.

Does the council have the ability to enforce national design space standards in the Didcot Garden Town development?

Response:

- Any development would need to comply with the new space standards in order to be building control compliant.

Question:

With the Didcot Garden Town becoming more and more of a reality, at what stage do you anticipate the need for a Boundary Review of the District's Wards?

Response:

- 2014 was the last time that a major review was conducted, and that included looking ahead at planned development for these areas.
- There is a need to look at the existing variances and see whether there is a need for such a review, but nothing is planned before the next district elections in 2019.

Question:

Didcot is now crossing the boundary into Harwell, but most services are based in Didcot. Is there a need to review wards and whether areas should be in South or other districts?

Response:

- A boundary review between districts is far more complex than one within the district.
- If we became a unitary authority, at least with Vale, then it would be easier to undertake the review within the parishes.

Question:

What more can we do to support the development of the Culham science centre? Are we already doing enough?

Response:

- There are some issues as the County Council may object to planning applications.
- The question is also relevant to other business and science parks who want their businesses to grow. As an authority we want to support the economic growth because it provides higher paying jobs within the district.
- It is important to support and to be proactive with businesses that want to expand.

Question:

Please can you continue to ensure that SODC has a substantive response to air quality in the coming budget?

Response:

- The budget is a matter for the Council itself rather than for the leader.
- Air quality is a key matter for this authority, however, not all things which would improve air quality are within the district authority's control. There are a number of options for moving this forward. The Low Emissions Strategy is important.

Question:

Do you think that autonomous vehicles are likely to have a significant impact on traffic in the district?

Response:

- It is likely that autonomous vehicles would have a significant impact on traffic and this would probably be in the near future. Proper trials are scheduled within the next 12 months.
- Technology is in place, but there are outstanding regulatory and ethical issues to be resolved.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm

Chairman

Date

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Scrutiny Committee



Listening Learning Leading

HELD ON TUESDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2018 AT 6.30 PM

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

Present:

Richard Pullen (Chairman)

John Walsh, Steve Connel, Anthony Dearlove, Ian Snowdon, David Turner and Ian White

Apologies:

Elaine Hornsby and Caroline Newton tendered apologies.

Officers:

Susan Harbour, Simon Hewings, William Jacobs and Mark Stone.

Also Present

Richard Spragett, Capita

35 Declarations of interest

None.

36 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

The chairman reminded the committee to retain the budget papers for full council, but to ensure that they were stored confidentially.

37 Public participation

None.

38 Work schedule and dates for all South and Vale scrutiny meetings

The committee considered the work schedule. It was agreed to delay the meeting on 8 March to the 27 March in order to consider the paper on the Berinsfield redevelopment.

39 Revenue Budget 2018-19 and Capital Programme report 15 Feb 2018

Jane Murphy, the Cabinet member for finance; William Jacobs, Section 151 Officer and head of finance; Simon Hewings, strategic finance manager and Richard Spraggett, chief accountant (Capita) were in attendance at the meeting to present the paper to the committee and to respond to questions.

The budget would be going to Cabinet for consideration on Monday 12 February, and on to Full Council for approval on Thursday 15 February. Scrutiny Committee were asked to consider the paper and the recommendations before them.

The Cabinet member for finance gave her thanks to the budget working group for their hard work and input, including the constructive input from the opposition. The leader of the opposition also gave positive feedback from the working group and his thanks for the opportunity for involvement at the development stage of the budget.

The medium term financial plan shows the council continuing to use money from reserves in order to balance the budget over this period and this was a cause of concern to some members of the committee. The head of finance explained that the council was required to produce a balanced budget for the next year, which it had done, and the purpose of the medium term financial plan was to offer a projection of what would happen over the period of the plan if the council did not take steps to address the current issues.

In the last few years, government changes to council funding streams, such as the abolition of the revenue support grant and the introduction of the New Homes Bonus and business rates retention scheme, had made local authority funding more difficult to predict as rates of house building and business rate growth were not on a steady trajectory. In addition, the government is able to change the schemes and therefore the amount of local authority funding.

The budget working group would be looking at an action plan to address the projected shortfalls in funding, but the committee were reminded that the government had previously encouraged councils to use reserves rather than increase council tax. Now that the cap on council tax increases had been raised to allow councils to raise additional funds through this route.

Members of the committee expressed enthusiasm that the council could be creative and entrepreneurial with its reserves in order to generate additional funding streams.

The committee asked a number of questions of clarification of the officers which were responded to.

The Cabinet member agreed to circulate copies of correspondence with Cabinet members about the Foxhall Manor Park pumping station.

The committee went into confidential session and excluded members of the public and partner organisations.

The Scrutiny Committee fully supported the following recommendations and did not add further to them:

1. That cabinet agrees to maintain car park fees and charges at current levels.
2. That cabinet recommends to council that it:
 - a. sets the revenue budget for 2018/19 as set out in appendix A.1 to this report;
 - b. approves the capital programme for 2018/19 to 2022/23 as set out in appendix D.1 to this report, together with the capital growth bids set out in appendix D.2 of this report;
 - c. sets the council's prudential limits as listed in appendix E to this report;
 - d. approves the medium term financial plan to 2022/23 as set out in appendix F.1 to this report;
 - e. allocates £1,000,000 to fund the Communities Capital and Revenue Grant Scheme.
3. That cabinet agrees that the cabinet member for finance, in conjunction with the head of finance, may make minor adjustments to this report and the prudential indicators should they prove necessary prior to its submission to council on 15 February 2018.

40 Exclusion of the public

The public were excluded by virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, Paragraph 3

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

41 Revenue Budget 2018-19 and Capital Programme report 15 Feb 2018

The committee discussed the confidential aspects of the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme.

The meeting closed at 7.05 pm

Chairman

Date

Scrutiny Committee



Report of Head of Community Services (Interim)

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To: Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 22 May 2018



Leisure Strategy

Recommendation

That the Scrutiny Committee review the Leisure Strategy and provide feedback on the documents to Cabinet.

Purpose of Report

1. To request the Scrutiny committee to review the attached Leisure Strategy and make recommendations to Cabinet (meeting on 7 June 2018)

Strategic Objectives

2. The Leisure Strategy helps ensure that the council achieves its strategic objectives as set out in its Corporate Plan 2016 - 2020 in the following areas:
 - to 'build thriving communities' through the corporate priority to 'help people to be healthy and active'
 - to invest in the district's future by 'planning for the future leisure needs in the district'

Background

3. The Leisure Strategy sets out the Council's action plans for the period up to 2033. The strategy documents identify the current leisure provision across South Oxfordshire and includes action plans for protecting and improving these facilities along with identifying new provision required to meet the needs of the growing population. Officers are committed to providing reports on performance against the leisure strategy to Cabinet and Scrutiny on an annual basis. To enable the Council

to adopt these documents, the Scrutiny Committee is requested to review the attached documents and provide feedback to Cabinet.

4. In line with the council's Public Engagement Charter, we have consulted residents and interested groups on the suite of documents that form the Council's Leisure strategy.
5. The Leisure strategy has been updated to take account of the new strategic site allocations and requires adoption before being considered as part of the evidence for the Local Plan Examination.
6. The online public consultation exercise closed on 7 May and provided an opportunity for the wider community to feedback on the suite of draft documents before adoption.
7. In line with methodology of the production of the draft strategy documents, a large number of key stakeholders have already been consulted throughout the process including National Governing Bodies, Sport England and local clubs.
8. The findings of the engagement will be reviewed and considered by the leisure team and any recommendations for change will be put to the Cabinet meeting for adoption.
9. The Leisure Strategy documents can be viewed at <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/sports-leisure-and-arts/leisure-strategy-2033> .
10. Once agreed, it will form the basis of annual progress reports to Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet. The actions plans from the strategy will be rolling and the actions within it will be reviewed annually, with any actions not completed in year being rolled forward.
11. The first progress report is scheduled for March 2019.

Financial Implications

12. There are no financial implications arising from monitoring and reporting on the Leisure strategies. Delivery of leisure projects occurring in the 2018/19 financial year are budgeted for. Delivering actions scheduled for future years will be dependent on budget being approved as part of the annual budget-setting process, Community Infrastructure Levy spending strategy and external funding partners.

Legal Implications

13. None

Risks

14. Should Cabinet decide not to approve the Leisure strategy there is a risk that it will not be adopted and therefore unable to be used as evidence in the local plan inspection. As we are already a significant way through the process of the local plan this could lead to reputational damage or missed opportunities to manage performance against our priorities effectively

Equality Implications

15. In line with the public sector equality duties of the Equality Act, officers have carried out an equality impact check of the strategy. This has not identified any potential for discrimination, rather opportunities to promote the council's commitment to inclusion for all within the strategy. The strategy will be updated to reflect this, along with the outcomes of the consultation. To view equality impact check use the link below.

Conclusion

16. Officers would welcome Scrutiny Committee's views on the proposed Leisure strategy to be taken forward to the Cabinet (meeting on 7 June 2018).

Background Papers

- Link <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/sports-leisure-and-arts/leisure-strategy-2033>

Schedule for Scrutiny Committees

(further items to be added to schedule as required)

Meeting date	Council	Agenda items	Purpose of Report	Invited	Cabinet members	Report Author	Head of Service	Strategic Lead
Thurs 14 June	Vale	OXIS - creation and management of infrastructure priorities list			Leader	James Gagg	Andrew Down	Adrianna Partridge
		Business and Innovation Strategy	To consider the strategy		Mike Murray	Melanie Smans/Suzanne Malcolm	Suzanne Malcolm	
		Self Assessment	To consider a development and training programme		N/A	Adrianna Partridge		
Thurs 28 June	Joint	Community Safety Partnership Annual Report	Annual Review		Caroline Newton/Eric Batts	Diane Foster	Liz Hayden	Adrianna Partridge
		5 Councils' Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR, Payroll and IT 	To review the performance of these contracts		Bill Service/Leader VoWH		Andrew Down	
Tues 24 July	South	Corporate Plan Refresh	Progress report		Kevin Bulmer	Sally Truman	Adrianna Partridge	Mark Stone
Thurs 26 July	Vale	Abbey Meadows	Progress report		Charlotte Dickson	Dylan Evans		Mark Stone
		Corporate Plan Refresh	Progress report		Ed Blagrove	Sally Truman	Adrianna Partridge	

		Abingdon Redevelopment: Charter Centre	To brief committee on the history of regeneration plans, where we are today, and what's next.		Mike Murray	Suzanne Malcolm	Suzanne Malcolm	
Tues 11 Sept	South	Financial Outturn 2017/18	To monitor the final revenue and capital expenditure against budget for the financial year 2017/18.		David Dodds	Richard Spraggett (Capita)	William Jacobs	
		S106 Agreements	Annual Monitoring Report		Felix Bloomfield		Adrian Duffield	
		CIL Spending	To consider a strategy		Paul Harrison	Jayne Bolton	Suzanne Malcolm	
Thurs 13 Sept	Vale	Annual Performance Review of The Beacon	Annual Review		Charlotte Dickson	Jo Paterson		
		Financial Outturn 2017/18	To monitor the final revenue and capital expenditure against budget for the financial year 2017/18.		Robert Sharp	Richard Spraggett (Capita)	William Jacobs	
		Planning Budgets	To review the effectiveness of recent growth bids		Roger Cox	Adrian Duffield	Adrian Duffield	
		Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Annual Review		Robert Sharp	Paul Howden	William Jacobs	
Thurs 20 Sept	Joint	New Housing Allocations Policy	To respond to the public consultation		Caroline Newton/Elaine Ware	Phil Ealey	Liz Hayden	Agenda Item 7
		Annual Performance Review of Biffa	Annual Review		Caroline Newton/Elaine Ware	Ian Matten	Liz Hayden	

deferred to the October meeting (no date yet)		Annual Performance Review of Sodexo	Annual Review		Caroline Newton/Elaine Ware	Ian Matten	Liz Hayden	
		Annual Performance Review of GLL	Annual Review		Lynn Lloyd/Charlotte Dickson	Dylan Evans		
Thurs 18 October	Vale	Air Quality Action Plan	Progress report		Elaine Ware		Liz Hayden	
Date to be arranged	Joint	HMO Policy and Strategy	To consider the impact of legislative changes		Caroline Newton/Elaine Ware	Phil Ealey	Liz Hayden	
		CAB/Wantage Independent Advice Centre	Presentation		Lynn Lloyd/Charlotte Dickson	Shona Ware	Adrianna Partridge	
Tues 27 Nov	South							
Thurs 29 Nov	Vale							
Tues 4 Dec	Joint	S106 negotiation, CIL charges, and management of spend.			Paul Harrison/Mike Murray		Suzanne Malcolm	
		OXLEP: funding, accountability, and bid success	To review current processes and recommend improvements		Jane Murphy/Leader VoWH		Andrew Down	
		Commissioning and procurement, and contract management -			Jane Murphy/Leader VoWH		All?	

		skills training and qualifications						
Tues 22 January 2019	South	Corporate Delivery Plan Progress Report	Regular Monitoring Report		Kevin Bulmer	Sally Truman	Adrianna Partridge	
Thurs 24 January	Vale	Corporate Delivery Plan Progress Report	Regular Monitoring Report		Ed Blagrove	Sally Truman	Adrianna Partridge	
		Annual Monitoring Report	Annual Review		Roger Cox	Ben Duffy	Adrian Duffield	
Tues 5 February	South	Review of Final Draft Budget	To make recommendations to Cabinet		David Dodds	Richard Spraggett (Capita)	William Jacobs	
Thurs 7 February	Vale	Review of Final Draft Budget	To make recommendations to Cabinet		Robert Sharp	Richard Spraggett (Capita)	William Jacobs	
Possible additional meeting	Joint							
Thurs 7 March	Joint	Board Reports	To review their efficacy		Ed Blagrove/Kevin Bulmer	Chris Draper	Adrianna Partridge	
Tues 26 March	South							
Thurs 28 March	Vale							

Dates to be identified for the following items:

South

Berinsfield Redevelopment Project
Planning Appeals (requested 26.9.17)
Performance Review of Cornerstone

Vale

Local Plan Process – Costs & Lessons Learnt (requested 20.9.17)
Report of Budget Scrutiny Task Group

Joint

Oxfordshire Growth Board Governance Arrangements
Science Vale Marketing Campaign
Reallocation of £295k Didcot Garden Town Grant
Planning Budgets

The Cabinet work programmes can be accessed via the following links:

South

<http://democratic.southoxon.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=121&RD=0>

Vale

<http://democratic.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=507&RD=0>

Meeting Start times: Joint: 6:30; South: 6:30; Vale: 7.00;

Scrutiny Work Item Preparation

Members are invited to consider the following headings for future agenda items

Item name

Date of report to Committee

What do we want to know about? What topics should the report provider include in their report to Scrutiny?

Who to invite to Committee? (Cabinet member(s) and Head(s) of Service). Anyone from outside agencies?