

Agenda



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A MEETING OF THE

Scrutiny Committee

WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19 JUNE 2019 AT 6.30 PM

THE FOUNTAIN CONFERENCE CENTRE, HOWBERY PARK, CROWMARSH
GIFFORD

Members of the Committee:

Ian White (Chairman)

Mocky Khan (Vice-Chair)
Anna Badcock
Sam Casey-Rerhaye

Stefan Gawrysiak
Simon Hewerdine
Alexandrine Kantor

George Levy
Anne-Marie Simpson

Substitutes

*Ken Arlett
David Bretherton
Peter Dragonetti
Kate Gregory*

*Victoria Haval
Lorraine Hillier
Kellie Hinton
Axel Macdonald*

*Jo Robb
Ian Snowdon
Alan Thompson
Celia Wilson*

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1 Apologies for absence

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

2 Minutes (Pages 3 - 8)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the committee minutes of the meeting held on 22 January and 5 February 2019 (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 South Oxfordshire Emerging Local Plan

To consider the report of the head of planning (to follow).

MARGARET REED

Head of Legal and Democratic

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Scrutiny Committee

HELD ON TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2019 AT 6.30 PM

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

Present:

David Turner (Chairman)
Ian Snowdon, John Walsh and Lorraine Hillier (as substitute for David Nimmo-Smith)

Apologies:

David Nimmo-Smith and Ian White tendered apologies.

Officers:

Jayne Bolton, Charlotte Cottingham, Ben Duffy, Holly Jones, Suzanne Malcolm, Ron Schrieber and Mark Stone

Also present:

Councillors Paul Harrison and Jane Murphy. Kathryn Wood, Cushman and Wakefield.

34 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2018 were agreed as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

35 Declarations of interest

None.

36 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None.



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37 Public participation

Stuart Scott-Ely, the chairman of Berinsfield Parish Council, had registered to speak on Agenda Item 7 (see Minute 39 below).

38 Authority monitoring report 2017/18

The committee considered the report of the head of planning on the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) 2017/18, an annual report which set out the council's progress on Local Plan preparation and assessed the effectiveness of the policies and objectives contained in the Core Strategy, as well as reporting on a number of other statutory requirements.

Holly Jones, planning policy manager, introduced this item. Also present to answer questions was Ben Duffy, planning policy monitoring officer.

In response to members' questions, it was reported that:

- Recent recruitment of neighbourhood planners and the establishment of a separate team (via the restructure) had provided an improved platform from which to support neighbourhood plan groups.
- The figures in Table 4, Gross Value Added per head 2011-2016, were provided by the Office for National Statistics.
- No applications for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites had been approved in 2017/18.

Officers agreed to report back on the following:

- Whether the figures in Table 4 had been adjusted for inflation.
- Whether any applications for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites had been received and rejected in 2017/18.
- The current status of the Backhill Lane/cycle pedestrian scheme.

Officers also agreed to investigate the availability of data that purchasers of properties on new developments around Oxford City had moved from London and also to consider what evidence exists to indicate where these new residents work.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

39 Berinsfield strategic review of progress to date and proposed way forward

The committee considered the report of the head of development and regeneration on the Berinsfield project. The report sought comments to Cabinet on the strategic review of progress to date and the proposed way forward.

Paul Harrison, Cabinet member for development and regeneration, introduced this item. Also present to answer questions were Mark Stone, chief executive, Suzanne Malcolm, head of development and regeneration, Jayne Bolton, infrastructure and development manager, Charlotte Cottingham, development projects team leader, and Kathryn Wood, Cushman and Wakefield.

The report set out three options for the proposed way forward:

- a) The council retains some element of control over the project while ensuring that it does not take on too much responsibility and associated risk.
- b) The council invests considerable additional resources, staff and financial to acquire the land (either alone or in partnership with other stakeholders) and deliver the new development and community infrastructure as a developer.
- c) The council retains only the level of control available through the planning process and, once the Local Plan has set the strategic framework, the major development site and infill sites in the existing village may be delivered by the private sector.

Stuart Scott-Ely, representing Berinsfield Parish Council, addressed the committee. He stated that the parish council's preferred option was b) and expressed concern about what he perceived to be a lack of transparency with regard to this project and the district council's unwillingness to engage with the parish council.

In response, the Cabinet Member and officers acknowledged that there had been a lack of communication with Berinsfield Parish Council and outlined the reasons why this had not been possible until now. Subject to Cabinet approving the recommendations on 31 January, the Cabinet member and officers would attend the next parish council meeting to discuss the proposed way forward. The Cabinet member and officers also explained why, in their view, option a) was the best way of delivering the project.

RESOLVED: to note the report

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

The committee noted its work programme.

41 Exclusion of the public

RESOLVED: to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting for the following items of business under Part 1 of Schedule 12A Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 on the grounds that:

- i. it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and
- ii. the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

42 Berinsfield strategic review of progress to date and proposed way forward - Appendix

The appendix was noted.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm

Chairman

Date

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Scrutiny Committee

HELD ON TUESDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2019 AT 6.30 PM

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

Present:

David Turner (Chairman)
Will Hall, Jeannette Matelot, David Nimmo-Smith, Ian Snowdon, John Walsh and Ian
White

Apologies:

Elaine Hornsby tendered apologies.

Officers:

Andrew Down, Simon Hewings, William Jacobs, Adrianna Partridge, Ron Schrieber,
Richard Spraggett, Mark Stone and David Wilde

Also present:

Councillors David Dodds and Bill Service

43 Declarations of interest

None.

44 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None.

45 Public participation

None.



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46 Revenue Budget 2019/20 and Capital Programme to 2023/24

The committee considered the head of finance's report. This brought together all relevant information to allow Cabinet to recommend to Council a revenue budget for 2019/20 and a capital programme for 2019/20 to 2023/24. The report also recommended the prudential indicators to be set by the Council in accordance with 'the Prudential Code', introduced as part of the Local Government Act 2003 and included the Medium Term Financial Plan (MFTP), which provided details of the forward budget model for the next five years.

Councillor David Dodds, the Cabinet member for finance, introduced the report. Also present to answer questions were Mark Stone, chief executive, William Jacobs, head of finance, Simon Hewings, strategic finance manager, and Richard Spraggett, senior finance business partner.

In his introduction, the Cabinet member expressed regret at being unable to repeat last year's cross-party working on the budget due to delays in producing the budget. He thanked the officers and, in particular, Simon Hewings, for ensuring the budget could be finalised given the delays experienced.

The committee was advised that there was considerable uncertainty regarding future funding. 2019/20 marked the last year of the four year funding settlement, and was also the final year of the New Homes Bonus (NHB) scheme in its current form. It was not yet known what funding would be receivable in future from government.

Members expressed concern that the use of reserves to balance the MFTP was not sustainable beyond the medium term. The Cabinet member outlined steps being taken to reduce expenditure, by reducing the Communities' grants budget by £500,000 per annum, and increasing income, by supporting the development of a more commercial approach for the council.

In response to members' questions about the development of a more commercial approach, the chief executive reported that, subject to the revenue budget bid being approved, a range of options would be drawn up and presented to members.

The Cabinet member reported that the administration had always looked for possible savings and would continue to do so. Accordingly, the council had commissioned the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to support it in challenging the budget.

RESOLVED: to note the report

47 Corporate services contract changes and action plan update

The committee considered the report of the head of partnership and insight which gave an update on progress to date and next steps to address shortcomings in the council's IT or other corporate services provision and, in particular, the five change control notices raised to address specific concerns at the time.

Councillor Bill Service, Cabinet member for partnership and insight, introduced the report. Also present to answer questions were Andrew Down, head of partnership and insight, and David Wilde, IT consultant.

The committee was informed that the five change control notices raised in July 2018 had been progressed as follows:

- Return of the counterfraud service to South and Vale councils – completed in December 2018
- Return of all strategic finance responsibilities to South and Vale councils – completed in December 2018.
- Transfer back of strategic HR responsibilities to South and Vale councils – this change is now being considered as part of a wider commercial conversation.
- Finance system upgrade or replacement for South and Vale councils – this change was split into two:
 - On Pay360 the new system went live in December 2018 and the old Civica system has been retired.
 - On the finance system, the project has been fully defined and is ready to begin but there are ongoing commercial matters which need to be resolved.
- Separation of active directories for South and Vale councils from the five councils shared platform – this change is now being considered as part of a wider commercial conversation.

In response to members' questions about continuing concerns about performance, the committee was informed that the wifi network was not yet sufficiently robust and the finance system upgrade was still subject to negotiation.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

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

The committee noted its work programme.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm

Chairman

Date