

Council



Listening Learning Leading

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Summons to attend a meeting of Council

to be held on

THURSDAY 19 DECEMBER 2019 AT 6.00 PM

at

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

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MARGARET REED
Head of Legal and Democratic

Note: Please remember to sign the attendance register.

Agenda

Map

A map showing the location of Howbery Park is attached, as is a plan showing the location of the Fountain Conference Centre on the Howbery Park site.

1 Apologies for absence

To record apologies for absence.

2 Minutes (Pages 13 - 33)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the Council minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2019 - attached.

3 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary 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.

6 Petitions

To receive any petitions from the public.

7 Making the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan (Pages 34 - 38)

Cabinet, at its meeting on 5 December 2019, considered the head of planning's report on the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The report of the head of planning, which Cabinet considered on 5 December, is attached.

Cabinet has recommended to Council as follows:

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: to

1. make the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan so that it continues to be part of the council's development plan; and
2. authorise the head of planning, in consultation with the Cabinet member for planning, and in agreement with the Qualifying Body, to correct any spelling, grammatical, typographical or factual errors together with any improvements from a presentational perspective.

8 Treasury Management Outturn 2018-19 (Pages 39 - 59)

Cabinet, at its meeting on 5 December 2019, considered the report of the head of finance on the outturn performance of the treasury management function for the financial year 2018/19.

The report of the head of finance, which the Joint Audit and Governance Committee considered on 14 October 2019 and Cabinet considered on 5 December 2019, is **attached**.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee made no recommendations to Cabinet but noted the report and was satisfied that the treasury activities were carried out in accordance with the treasury management strategy and policy.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: to

1. approve the treasury management outturn report 2018/19; and
2. approve the actual 2018/19 prudential indicators within the report.

9 Council tax base 2020/21 (Pages 60 - 63)

Cabinet, at its meeting on 5 December 2019, considered a report on the council tax base for 2020/21.

The report of the head of finance, which Cabinet considered on 5 December, is **attached**.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

1. that the report of the head of finance to Cabinet on 5 December 2019 for the calculation of the council's tax base and the calculation of the tax base for each parish area for 2020/21 be approved;
2. 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 2020/21 be 57,848.5; and
3. 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 2020/21 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 2019.

10 Designating the council's section 151 chief finance officer (Pages 64 - 66)

To consider the report of the chief executive – attached.

11 Report of the leader of the council

To receive any update from the leader of the council.

12 Questions on notice

To receive questions from councillors in accordance with Council procedure rule 33.

1. Question from Councillor Ken Arlett to Councillor David Rouane, Cabinet member for housing and environment

How many vehicles/drivers have been caught feeding the meters for over 3 hours, in both the Kings Road and Greys Road car parks in Henley over the past 3 months?

2. Question from Councillor Ken Arlett to Councillor David Rouane, Cabinet member for housing and environment

Since the reduction of car park spaces in the Kings Road Car Park and the closure of one of the two entrances, what has been the loss on revenue since April?

3. Question from Councillor Ken Arlett to Councillor David Rouane, Cabinet member for housing and environment

Is it correct that takings from all town/parish council car parks are not kept separately?

4. Question from Councillor Ken Arlett to Councillor Sue Cooper, Leader of the council

Can the leader of the council confirm that the following issues will be considered by the constitution review working group?

- to allow local ward councillors to take part in the debate and vote at planning committee meetings
- to reduce public speaking time for each group of speakers to 3 minutes at planning committee meetings.
- to allow planning committee members to only ask one question per application to speakers, and one question to officers.

13 Motions on notice

To consider motions from councillors in accordance with Council procedure rule 38.

1. Motion to be proposed by Councillor Robin Bennett, seconded by Councillor David Rouane

Council notes that South Oxfordshire District Council's current position is support for an Oxfordshire County Unitary; in March 2017 this council voted to support 'Better Oxfordshire', a proposal to create a unitary authority.

The approach of 'Better Oxfordshire' was for a single unitary authority based on the current County Council boundary. Oxfordshire County Council and Vale of the White Horse District Council also took formal decisions to support the proposal.

The proposal was submitted to the Secretary of State for approval under legislative provisions containing a sunset clause, which expired in March of 2019, meaning that at this time the proposal is not under active consideration.

Government's current stated intention, according to recent statements by Robert Jenrick, in his role as Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, is to move away from smaller district councils and towards Unitary and/or Combined Authority models of Governance.

Council recognises that:

Democratic institutions should be responsive and accountable to their electorate as well as being efficient and achieving value for money for their services. South Oxfordshire District Council's status enables a close connection to residents and communities, especially with regard to planning, and it is a democratically accountable body with the powers and resources to work with other organisations and deliver services in ways that more distant organisations cannot.

Therefore, any future move towards Unitary status should be on the basis of the smallest viable geography that enables a similarly close link to communities and should not prevent independent candidates and smaller political parties competing for seats alongside the major political parties.

Should such structural change occur in the future, in addition to securing increased value for money in service delivery, it must also aim to increase, not reduce, localised accountability for service provision and resource allocation, and should support the devolution of power to the lowest sustainable level.

Council therefore confirms that:

- A. It recognises that much of the financial and economic data and analysis that underpinned the 'Better Oxfordshire' submission is now out of date; and
- B. Due to an absence of up to date analysis, South Oxfordshire District Council can no longer support a view that a County-wide single Unitary currently represents

the best governance model for Oxfordshire: and proposes that:

- i. Officers explore alternative governance approaches that protect, and enhance, the democratic link to local communities, to assist council in taking a new, updated view;
- ii. As part of this, officers should make contact with the MHCLG to explore the approach the new Secretary of State will take to any proposals for unitary based re-organisation; and asks that
- iii. A report on this matter is brought to full Council, by the Chief Executive and Leader, outlining their understanding of the new Government's intentions and possible approaches available to this council, by Summer 2020.
- iv. A cross party 'governance model' working group is formed to support the Council's review of this area; and notes that
- v. Should any revised unitary proposal be developed in future, the Constitution Review Group will be asked to recommend appropriate constitutional models for consideration by Council.

2. Motion to be proposed by Councillor Robin Bennett, seconded by Councillor Sue Roberts

Council notes the continuing development of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 – a joint statutory spatial plan based on the boundary of the County.

Council sees merit in regional - and county - scale planning for biodiversity and environmental sustainability matters, such as “nature recovery networks”, as well as for public transport infrastructure, but considers that **all** allocations (including strategic sites), planning policies and other related matters continue to be best dealt with at the local district planning authority level, and should not form part of the Oxfordshire 2050 plan.

Council therefore asks:

That officers and any councillor representing the council ensure this position is reflected in all engagement with, and contributions to, the Oxfordshire 2050 plan making process, and that the Council's position is made known, and emphasised, to key partners and Government.

3. Motion to be proposed by Councillor Sue Cooper, seconder to be notified

Recognising the financial position of the Council, and the need to ensure that residents are represented by a robust and sustainable council, officers are asked to bring forward proposals for South Oxfordshire District Council to consider whether or not a formal merger with the Vale of White Horse District Council, with the same total number of district councillors, creating a single district council based on their combined geography with increased financial resilience would be beneficial. This work should also consider the options for the development of area committees within this model, to ensure that decision making is devolved to the lowest

appropriate level.

Should any formal merger proposal be developed in future, the Constitution Review Group will be asked to recommend appropriate constitutional models for consideration by Council.

4. Motion to be proposed by Councillor Sue Cooper, seconded by Councillor Maggie Filipova-Rivers

Council:

1. Believes that young people should be allowed a say over their future.
2. Recognises that 16 and 17 year olds are knowledgeable and passionate about the world in which they live and are as capable of engaging in the democratic system as any other citizen.
3. Notes that there is currently an unequal situation across the United Kingdom, with 16 and 17 year olds having voting rights in Scotland and Wales that are not available to them in England and Northern Ireland.
4. Supports the need for greater engagement with young people, leading to greater involvement of young people in the decisions that affect their community.
5. Believes that lowering the voting age to 16, combined with strong citizenship education, would empower young people to better engage in society and influence decisions that will define their future.
6. Believes that people aged 16 and 17, who can consent to medical treatment, work full-time, pay taxes, get married or enter a civil partnership and join the armed forces, should also have the right to vote.
7. Recognises and supports the ongoing 'Votes at 16' campaign by the British Youth Council, the UK Youth Parliament and other youth organisations, supported by thousands of young people across the UK.
8. Calls for 16 and 17 year olds to have the right in all elections and referendums across the UK.

Council therefore:

1. Requests that the Leader write to relevant Ministers and local MPs: expressing this Council's support for the Votes at 16 campaign; calling for the extension of the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds in all elections and referendums across the UK
2. Requests that the Leader write to the local MYPs and the British Youth Council expressing this Council's support for the Votes at 16 campaign
3. Asks the Electoral Registration Officer/ Returning Officer to consider participating in any pilot scheme.

5. Motion to be proposed by Councillor Sue Roberts, seconded by Councillor Kellie Hinton

Council notes

Paragraph 73 of the NPPF, on 'maintaining supply and delivery' requires planning authorities to identify 'specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement'. This deliverability rule is commonly known as the '5-year land supply' requirement. Unfortunately, this phrase leads to the misconception that councils that cannot demonstrate a 5-year land supply cannot do so because they have failed to allocate sufficient sites. This is not the case for councils with 'made' local plans, who by definition would indeed have allocated sufficient land, with their plans consulted upon and passed at

inspection.

For complete clarity, 'land supply' in this sense does not mean 'supply of land'. An authority can have an up-to-date plan with sufficient sites allocated to meet its targets for the duration of the plan, say 15 years. In normal parlance, that would indicate a 15-year land supply. But if, for whatever reason, the *developers* fail to build out at rates to meet the council's target every year for the next 5 years, then it is the council that is deemed to have failed, not the developers.

The consequences of the land supply rules are catastrophic for local people. If developers fail to build out at the required rate on the sites allocated in the local plan, they themselves have created strong planning grounds for granting of planning permissions on new sites that they apply for; sites that were specifically not in the local plan and specifically not to be built upon.

We have the paradox of development occurring everywhere but on the sites allocated by councils. A council may attempt to defend the community and refuse planning permission, but it is then likely to face the developers at appeal. This is time-consuming, extremely costly, and distressing, for the council and residents alike. It should be noted that appeal's inspectors themselves have targets to allow a certain proportion of appeals through.

This consequent transfer of power away from local councils, power to determine where homes should go, sits uneasily with the Localism Act of 2011 which aimed to ensure "that power should be exercised at the lowest practical level – close to the people who are affected by decisions".

Development may stall for all sorts of reasons: the market may slow, and developers sensibly slow their build-out rate; they do not want to be left with homes they cannot sell, nor will they build to cause the market-price to drop. (And nor would anybody wish to see a housing crash). Very high house building targets in some areas have never before been accomplished; and there can be shortages of skilled workers and materials. It is even in the interests of developers to 'land-bank'.

George Freeman (Cons MP Mid Norfolk) summed this up in a House of Commons debate (Hansard, 4th July 2018): *"developers are banking...permissions for later, because they know that they will get them, and using the five-year land supply to force the wrong development in the wrong places". "Through the Localism Act 2011, we set out to [give] local communities the chance to shape their future. We are now in danger of looking like we are in favour of speculators, profiteers and out-of-town developers, who dump housing estates that we legislate for, with no responsibility being taken locally."*

Council therefore requests that the Leader write to the Minister for Housing Communities and Local Government requesting:

- That the Minister notes the severe problems that exist with the housing delivery test, (the '5-year land supply' rules) in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as outlined above
- That the Minister considers rendering the 5-year housing supply rules, null and void in order to re-instate the primacy of residents and their elected planning authorities in ensuring that homes are for the right people, in the

- right places
- That any other measures introduced to ensure appropriate delivery of homes should be actionable by the local authorities themselves on behalf of local people

6. Motion to be proposed by Councillor Sue Roberts, seconded by Councillor Simon Hewerdine

Council notes that:

- South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) will be undertaking a constitutional review beginning in January 2020. A working group, with representation from all political groups, has been set up to conduct this review.
- Other motions tonight relate to consideration of whether the council should consider a merger with Vale of White Horse with whom SODC shares an officer-corps, and wider unitary related decisions.
- It should be ensured that the Constitution Review Working Group gets sufficient training to enable it to make informed decisions. Training might be required from external experts, and information may be required through visits to or from other councils.

This Council agrees that the Constitution Review Working Group will include the following topics in its considerations:

- Whether there would be a benefit to residents in terms of decision-making, representation, and transparency were South Oxfordshire District Council to move to a committee-based structure:
- Whether the Climate Change Advisory Committee should become a Committee of Council and what, if any, amendments should be made to its terms of reference; and that
- Training should be made available to the Constitution Review Working Group and to all members on the matters referred to herein. Council asks Cabinet to reflect the cost of this in any budget proposals they bring forward.

7. Motion to be proposed by Councillor Sam Casey-Rerhaye, seconded Councillor Andrea Powell

The Council notes that:

- Cycling and walking are healthy, climate-friendly modes of transport
- In 2018, of fatalities on the road caused by vehicles crashes, 31% were people walking or on pedal cycles
- Many people are put off cycling because of perceived and actual dangers
- Electric bicycles could be a revolution in bringing more people to cycling and cycling further
- In a rural District many roads are narrow, winding and without pavements for walking
- A number of the towns in the District suffer from poor air quality that have

- major health impacts, particularly for children
- Physical inactivity is a contributor to diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis, depression and dementia
- The Council has a goal to achieve a carbon-neutral District by 2030
- Infrastructure needs to be developed rapidly to support more active travel, including for electric bicycles, to achieve national and local climate and health goals
- travel habits need changing urgently and that cycling and active travel need be easy and safe to be chosen over alternatives
- the Council already has a walking and cycling policy: T7

This Council therefore calls upon the relevant Cabinet members to:

i) develop a prioritised plan of where new and improved cycle and walking infrastructure is needed in the District to contribute to a SATN (Strategic Active Travel Network) and actively seek, and support the County to actively seek, capital and revenue funding for delivery of it through local and national sources

ii) update planning policy to better achieve active travel outcomes across the district and with greater urgency, noting such further policy development is currently unfunded (and is subject to Council having planning powers to do this).

iii) work to prioritise active travel in planning policy and use walking and cycling as an improvement to urban and rural communities in terms of community cohesion, wellbeing, and tackling inequalities

iv) engage in active travel promotion with relevant partners to encourage travel behaviour change

iv) urge the County Council to prioritise quality control of all active travel infrastructure in accordance with the Oxfordshire Cycling Design Standards, ensuring all proposals are audited for safety and encouragement of active travel

14 Exclusion of the public

To consider whether to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting for the following item 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.

15 Confidential Minutes (Page 68)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the confidential Council minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2019 - **attached**.

MARGARET REED

Head of Legal and Democratic Services



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A4130 Didcot




Sat Nav: OX10 8BA

Brightwell

Benson

Wallingford

Centre for Ecology & Hydrology
South Oxfordshire District Council

Crowmarsh Gifford

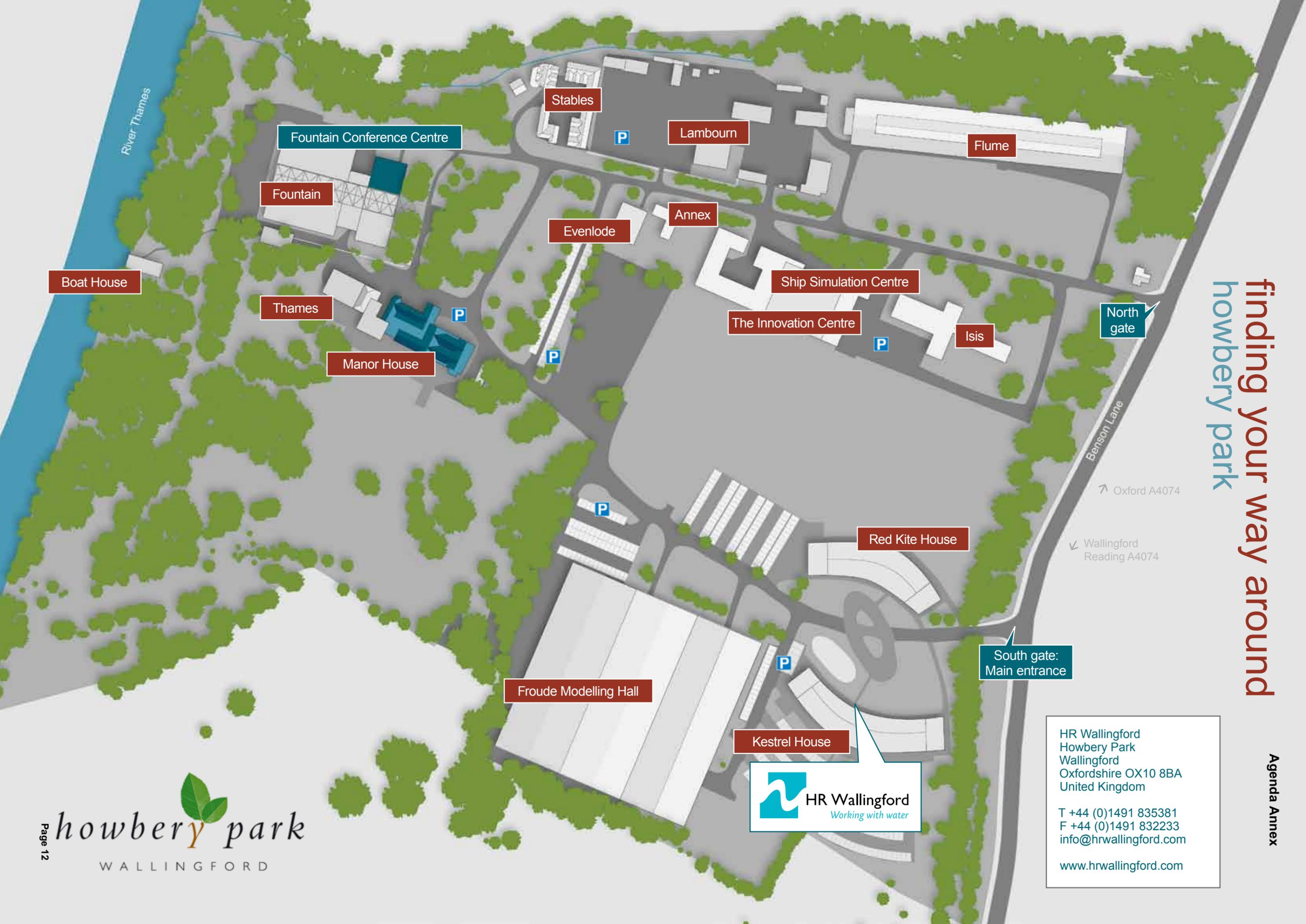
A4130 Henley
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Agenda Annex

finding your way around
howbery park



North gate

South gate:
Main entrance

↑ Oxford A4074

↓ Wallingford Reading A4074

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Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Council



Listening Learning Leading

HELD ON THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER 2019 AT 6.00 PM

THE FOUNTAIN CONFERENCE CENTRE, HOWBERY PARK, CROWMARSH
GIFFORD

Present:

David Bretherton (Chairman)

Ken Arlett, Anna Badcock, Pieter-Paul Barker, David Bartholomew, Robin Bennett, Sam Casey-Rerhaye, Sue Cooper, Peter Dragonetti, Maggie Filipova-Rivers, Stefan Gawrysiak, Elizabeth Gillespie, Sarah Gray, Kate Gregory, Victoria Haval, Simon Hewerdine, Lorraine Hillier, Kellie Hinton, Alexandrine Kantor, Mocky Khan, George Levy, Lynn Lloyd, Axel Macdonald, Jane Murphy, Caroline Newton, Andrea Powell, Leigh Rawlins, Jo Robb, Sue Roberts, David Rouane, Anne-Marie Simpson, Ian Snowdon, Alan Thompson, David Turner, Ian White and Celia Wilson

Officers: Steven Corrigan, Adrian Duffield, William Jacobs, Holly Jones, Suzanne Malcolm, Adrianna Partridge, Ian Price, Margaret Reed, Andy Roberts and Mark Stone

23 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2019 as a correct record and agree that the chairman sign them as such.

24 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest

Councillor Kantor made a statement in respect of agenda item 7, Local Plan 2034: options to progress, that she is employed at UKAEA Culham – a potential housing site in the Local Plan.

Councillor Turner made a statement in respect of agenda item 7, Local Plan 2034: options to progress, that he is a representative on Culham Local Liaison Committee.

25 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

The chairman provided general housekeeping information.

26 Public participation

The chairman advised that a number of public speakers had registered to address Council on the Local Plan item. He proposed and Council agreed to allow all speakers to have three minutes.

27 Petitions

None.

28 Local Plan 2034: options to progress

Councillor Bretherton, Chairman of the council, invited Mark Stone, Chief Executive, to address Council. The chief executive advised that on Wednesday 9 October the council received a letter from the Rt Hon Robert Jenrick, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, addressed to the leader of the council, which advised that he was considering whether to give a direction to the council in respect of the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan. He directed the council not to take any step in connection with the adoption of the Local Plan, while he considered the matter. In his letter he offered for his officials to work with council officers to discuss the next steps.

The chief executive advised that he wrote to the Secretary of State on 10 October to seek clarification regarding the direction. The Secretary of State responded prior to the Council meeting and there was nothing in the letter which removed the temporary direction. Until the council hears further from the Secretary of State it was not within the gift of Council to take any step in connection with the adoption of the Local Plan including hearing representations, responding to questions, debating or making a decision on the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan.

He recognised that many members of the public were attending the meeting for the Local Plan item and he apologised that the Council was unable to take the matter further at the meeting. He undertook to keep the public informed of any progress via the council's website and social media.

The chairman further advised members of the public that there would be no public speaking or debate on the Local Plan item.

29 Recommendations from Cabinet (Climate Change Advisory Committee)

Council noted that at its meeting on 8 October Cabinet had endorsed the recommendations of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee, endorsed the direction of travel and supported the motion to be considered at minute 35(3).

30 Extension of terms of office of independent persons to advise on code of conduct issues

Council considered the report of the head of legal and democratic and monitoring officer on extending the terms of office of two independent persons to advise on code of conduct issues.

RESOLVED: to authorise the monitoring officer to extend the terms of office of Chris Smith and George Green, the council's independent persons for code of conduct matters, until 31 October 2020 pending the receipt of further information on potential changes to the standards framework.

31 Climate Emergency Advisory Committee - appointment of substitute

Council considered a proposal to appoint Councillor Gillespie, a non-group councillor, as the named substitute for Councillor Hewerdine on the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee.

RESOLVED: to appoint Councillor Gillespie as the substitute for Councillor Hewerdine on the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee.

32 Constitution Review Task Group

Council considered a proposal to establish a joint Constitution Review Task Group with Vale of White Horse District Council to undertake a review of the constitution and make recommendations to Council.

RESOLVED: to

1. establish a joint Constitution Review Task Group with Vale of White Horse District Council comprising five councillors from each council;
2. allocate a seat to each political group;
3. authorise the head of legal and democratic to make appointments to the task group in accordance with the wishes of the relevant group leader.

33 Report of the leader of the council

Councillor Cooper, Leader of the council, addressed Council. The text of her report is available on the council's [website](#).

34 Questions on notice

1. Question from Councillor Mocky Khan to Councillor Maggie Filipova-Rivers, Cabinet member for community services

There are constant rumours that Didcot Wave is going to be closing, can the Cabinet member confirm what the situation is? Also, there are complaints regards the maintenance and appearance of the building and facilities. What is the work schedule, budget and timings?

ANSWER

There are no plans to close Didcot Wave Leisure Centre. In March 2018, Council took the decision to extend the current management arrangements with GLL to 31 August 2024 in line with the leisure management contract.

There has been significant works to the building in the past 18 months with more than £150,000 investment into essential maintenance and improvement works. This includes improvements to the wetside changing village and a refurbishment of the toilets and wetside shower area and a new air handling unit to improve the air quality in the pool hall. Essential repairs have also been carried out to the roof and gullies to better protect the building from the weather.

In addition, as part of the Council and GLL spend to save initiative, new LED lighting is currently being installed to the wetside changing and poolside area, gym, car park and to the outside of the building which is scheduled for completion at the end of this month. This will help to improve the whole environment making it much brighter, welcoming and safer for customers whilst also helping to reduce the amount of energy the building uses.

A breakdown of the works completed and currently scheduled are as follows:

Programme	Cost	Works	Date Completed
Dryside toilets	£29,000 (Council & GLL)	Full refurbishment of the dry side toilets	September 2016
Wetside Change and toilets	£53,252 (Council)	Includes refurbishment of the toilets, plinths to the lockers, showers and tiling and wetside cubicle/bench upgrades	December 2017
Building fabric works	£76,481 (Council)	Includes surveys, Air Handling Unit and roof works	January – May 2019
Spend to Save	£14,311 (GLL)	GLL LED lighting upgrade to the gym, car park and outside of the building	October 2019
Spend to Save	£8,458 (Council)	Council LED wetside and poolside	October 2019

All councillors have access to privileged information as to council activities which they can access at all times not only during council meetings.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

In response to a supplementary question regarding the perceived lack of awareness amongst residents of these improvements, the Cabinet member undertook to take this issue back to GLL.

2. Question from Councillor Mocky Khan to Councillor Maggie Filipova-Rivers, Cabinet member for community services

Cornerstone in Didcot is a flagship building for culture in South Oxfordshire. I am concerned to hear that the roof is leaking and this has been the case for nearly four years. Can the Cabinet member provide an update and what is happening to resolve this issue?

ANSWER

Cornerstone's roof has been leaking for approximately 18 months, and it has had our full attention during this time. We've had a number of experts out to investigate the issue, including the original contractors. Unfortunately, these investigations were unable to establish the root cause but did suggest a number of theories for the water ingress. The most recent investigation recommended carrying out more invasive investigations to confirm the cause and we're currently seeking the necessary funding to commission a specialist to do this as a matter of urgency. We hope to have the arrangements in place this month, and we will move quickly to get the necessary specialist investigations completed so that we can progress remedial options.

Whilst the roof situation is concerning, none of the expert investigations flagged any safety concerns, and it remains a priority for us.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

In response to a supplementary question regarding the length of time taken to address the issues, the Cabinet member responded that the matter is complicated and required specialist work but the matter did not present a health and safety risk.

3. Question from Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak to Councillor Leigh Rawlins, Cabinet member for planning

In the local plan documents there are options A, B and C. Can I please have a cost estimate for each of these options?

ANSWER

The cost estimate for each of the options are set out in the Cabinet report, paras 131 onwards;

Option A; estimated £5 million for a new plan including examination process, plus the cost of completing the current plan examination process, which we estimate to be in the order of £1 million including inspector and legal costs, **totalling £6 million**

Option B; estimated £5 million for a new plan including examination process, plus the cost of completing and reviewing the emerging plan (under Reg 19), resubmission, examination and adoption, which we estimate would be in the order of £1.6 million including inspector and legal costs, assuming this is completed within sixteen months, **totalling £6.6 million**

Option C; estimated £5 million for a new plan including examination process, **totalling £5 million**

In summary and ranked by cost; Option C is the lowest cost; Option A is the next lowest cost; and Option B is the highest cost.

4. Question from Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak to Councillor Robin Bennett, Cabinet member for Economic Development & Regeneration

Oxfordshire County Council has already spent £1,000,000 developing the HIF/Growth Deal bid. This is Oxfordshire residents' money. If the SODC local plan is withdrawn and the Growth Deal is lost, is South Oxfordshire District Council going to repay this £1,000,000 to OCC?

ANSWER

In advance of any agreement from government on the HIF contract, it is understood that OCC have spent £1,000,000 of their own funds on HIF preparation works. The council has had no definitive confirmation that the HIF/Growth Deal will not proceed should SODC Council decide to withdraw the emerging local plan. The council has received no request to contribute to these costs and the draft HIF contract is a matter between OCC and Homes England/MHCLG. OCC is a separate entity from SODC, which makes separate financial decisions and there is no reason or requirement for SODC to make a payment to them in relation to the costs mentioned.

5. Question from Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak to Councillor David Rouane, Cabinet member for housing and environment

We thank Councillors Rouane and Cooper for visiting Henley to look at our Greys Road public toilets. I think they agreed that they were in a shocking state. SODC derives £700,000 per annum from the Henley car parks which must be recycled back into car parks and car parking. Can we ask that a budget line of £120,000 be put into the next budget to ensure that this toilet is thoroughly refurbished?

Please see below recent photographs showing the shocking state of the toilets.





ANSWER

Officers are drafting project documents to identify the improvements that can be made to the Greys Road car park toilets and the associated costs. Once an outline specification is agreed then cabinet will be asked to transfer the budget from the provisional programme into the approved budget and we can start the procurement process. We are aiming to do this in the next few months and aim to start work in Quarter four 2019/20.

6. Question from Councillor Ken Arlett to Councillor Leigh Rawlins, Cabinet member for planning

Permitted Development Rights (PDR's) government policy, is having a drastic effect on the loss of offices in Henley into flats, I would imagine the same applies across South Oxfordshire. The loss of offices within the town centre also has a knock-on effect to local traders. This government policy may be good for big cities, but it is doing nothing for smaller towns. Other than taking out an Article 4 policy, how does the Cabinet member think this council can address the problem?

ANSWER

Our Authority Monitoring report 2017/18 shows for the district a net gain in employment floorspace from permitted developments in year. During this period there was a significant loss of office floorspace to residential accommodation, whilst floorspace gains were achieved in industry and warehousing. A full analysis of the impact of this prior approval process is needed before considering whether action is required. If action is justified, then the council is limited in what it can do to exempt property owner's rights to permitted development, however an Article 4 Direction (to withdraw those rights) is an approach.

The permitted development rights from office to residential were introduced by Government and local authorities were able to apply for exemptions at this time however the vast majority of these were unsuccessful.

The Government states that there should be a compelling case for the removal of permitted development rights. The use of Article 4 directions to remove permitted development rights should be limited to situations where this is necessary to protect local amenity or the wellbeing of the area. The potential harm that the direction is intended to address should be clearly identified and the Council must show strong justification for the withdrawal of permitted development rights. Therefore, the harm that a direction is intended to address or avoid should be clearly identified, and justification as to its purpose and extent must be given.

It should be noted however that the Secretary of State has the power to make a direction which modifies or cancels an Article 4 direction made by a local planning authority at any time before or after its confirmation, so the need for an evidence-based approach is critical. It should be noted that the Council has previously applied for such an exemption at Henley however this was unsuccessful.

The government is exploring permitted development (PD) rights for new housing to improve standards, the housing minister suggested, as part of the review of the policy announced in the Spring Statement. Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick has stated that the government has "learned from some of the concerns" of the introduction of office-to-residential permitted development rights. The review will focus on the impact on housing quality however the Council could utilise this as an opportunity for change.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

In response to a supplementary question about how to remove the permitted development rights, the Cabinet member responded that the council did not have the power to amend the legislation and that the impact of the current legislation was not clear.

7. Question from Councillor Ken Arlett to Councillor David Rouane, Cabinet member for housing and environment

Since the demise of traffic wardens and SODC's decision to cut funding for PCSO's, there is no one to enforce illegal parking in our towns and villages, this is causing immense problems in town centres and residential roads. SODC has agreed to look into the feasibility of introducing a civil parking enforcement scheme being devolved down from OCC to SODC. As no councillors are involved at present with the feasibility study, I ask that one councillor from at least the four major towns is included in the process?

ANSWER

As you have pointed out the management of Illegal parking on yellow lines on or near junctions, is the responsibility of the police. However, the police direct their resources based on risks which means that people often find that they don't respond to complaints about parking as they would wish. This is why South Oxfordshire District Council decided last year to work with Oxfordshire County Council and other districts to look into transferring this responsibility from the police to the district councils. This is not a simple thing to do, nor is it without cost, and so the county council is leading on a feasibility study for the whole county to determine how it should be done.

Officers are due to bring a report to Cabinet in December with the results of a parking feasibility study and for a decision on whether the council wishes to progress with enforcing illegal parking on-street. The feasibility study focuses on potential operational costs to see if there is a workable business case including joint working with the Vale and Oxfordshire county council. Councillors have received an invitation to a briefing session in the evening of Monday 11 November which will explain what the enforcement parking legislation is about, known as CPE – civil parking enforcement. We cannot embark on this project unless all three councils agree, South, Vale and Cherwell, because the DfT have made it clear that they will not accept a single submission.

If the project goes ahead, in addition the briefing on the 11 November we will engage with stakeholders as the project progresses. To date 28 councillors have confirmed that they will attend the briefing on the 11 November.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

In response to a supplementary question in respect of the future involvement of councillors, the Cabinet member responded that it was premature to consider the involvement of councillors until the receipt of the report setting out proposals.

8. Question from Councillor Ken Arlett to Councillor David Rouane, Cabinet member for housing and environment

On Friday 2 August, myself and Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak met with SODC's Leader Councillor Sue Cooper and Cabinet member Councillor David Rouane in Henley-on-Thames to look at car parking. By mid-day the three central car parks were at capacity. The two out of town car parks at the Rugby Club and the Railway Station are now almost at capacity, and there are numerous reasons for this. In the spring of 2020, there will be 12 new shops opening just off the Kings Road car park, but there is no more car parking to cater for these shops. It has been proposed by SODC in the past that a second floor be built on the Kings Road Car Park. Will SODC work with Henley Town Council, to come up with a scheme for more car parking in the Kings Road car park that will then improve the footfall before we have more shops closing?

ANSWER

The council does not currently have a budget to pursue this proposal which needs further careful consideration. Before we take the decision to embark on a project that encourages more cars to enter Henley town centre an Air Quality Management Area it is important to ensure that alternative options have been exhausted. For example, drivers could be encouraged to use car parks on the edge of town and this may be achieved by working with the county council to improve signage.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

The Cabinet member undertook to provide a written response setting out details of how the money taken in the Henley car parks has been allocated.

9. Question from Councillor Ken Arlett to Councillor David Rouane, Cabinet member for housing and environment

What strides have SODC officers made over the past three months to solve the problem of feeding the parking machines in Henley from the maximum three hours limit?

ANSWER

The council's parking contractors Saba have successfully updated the software used when paying by 'phone so that you are now not able to pay for more than three hours in Henley town centre car parks without leaving for two hours. Further, Saba are trialling an update to the back office software which links up the car parking 'pay and display' machines. This update stops the possibility of being able to buy a ticket from one machine and then get another ticket from any other machine and allowing parking for more than three hours.

However, this slows down the time it takes to issue a ticket so more tests are being carried out to make sure there is an acceptable solution before rolling it out.

35 Motions on notice

- (1) Motion moved by Councillor Alexandrine Kantor and seconded by Councillor Anne-Marie Simpson:

"Council notes that EU nationals are part of our shared communities. They are our husbands, wives, parents, friends and colleagues. They are an integral part of a vibrant and thriving South Oxfordshire.

Since 2016 EU nationals were promised again and again that "there will be no change for EU citizens already lawfully resident in the UK and [...] will be treated no less favourably as they are at present".

After three years of living in limbo, their homes and livelihoods are in danger of being threatened by the further uncertainty brought about by the prospect of an even more chaotic no-deal Brexit.

According to the Home Office's July statistics, only a third of EU nationals have applied for the Settled Status and 42% of them have been granted the inferior Pre-Settled status leading them to reapply for the Settled status later on. There is no possibility of knowing how many EU nationals need to apply, leaving vulnerable and unaware EU nationals left at risk of becoming unlawful residents at the mercy of the Home Office's "Hostile Environment". Lack of clarity regarding differentiating between EU citizens arriving before and after the UK's exit from the EU could lead to discrimination in the labour market and may prevent many from accessing the services that they are entitled to.

Another Windrush-like scandal could be unfolding right before the eyes of this Council and we mustn't be passive observers to it.

Therefore, the Council asks that:

1. Officers report on how the Council can mitigate adverse impacts on the rights of EU nationals (including but not limited to advising on what the Council can do to help landlords and employers to be better informed about immigration status and therefore avoid potential discrimination against EU nationals)

2. The Leader of the Council writes to EU citizens resident in the district giving advice on applying for Settled Status. This notice shall inform EU citizens of any potential consequences of not applying for the EU Settlement scheme.
3. The Leader of the Council writes to the Home Secretary seeking clarification and suggesting improvements for the European Settlement scheme, which include:
 - Providing physical proof of Settled status that can be used to access services
 - Confirming that there will be no changes to the rights of settled EU citizens that they currently have by ratifying the Immigration Bill as primary legislation before the exit day
 - Replacing the current European Settlement scheme with a registration scheme without a deadline where EU citizens are considered lawful by default and can request a proof of immigration status only when they are asked to demonstrate it”.

An amendment moved by Councillor Powell to replace 2 above with the following was accepted by the mover and seconder of the original motion with the agreement of Council:

“The Leader of the Council writes to EU citizens resident in the district giving advice on applying for Settled Status (within the constraints of GDPR). This notice shall direct EU citizens to resources, including the Council’s website, providing up-to-date information on the application process and the potential risks of not applying to the EU Settlement Scheme”.

Councillors expressed the view that non-UK EU nationals are an integral and valuable part of the community and that the council should do everything possible to ensure information and clarity is provided to those affected.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 67, which provides for a recorded vote if three members request one, the Chairman called for a recorded vote on the motion which was declared carried with the voting as follows:

For	Against	Abstain
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Ken Arlett		
Anna Badcock		
Pieter-Paul Barker		
David Bartholomew		
Robin Bennett		
David Bretherton		
Sam Casey-Rerhaye		

For	Against	Abstain
Sue Cooper		
Peter Dragonetti		
Maggie Filipova-Rivers		
Stefan Gawrysiak		
Elizabeth Gillespie		
Sarah Gray		
Kate Gregory		
Victoria Haval		
Simon Hewerdine		
Lorraine Hillier		
Kellie Hinton		
Alexandrine Kantor		
Mocky Khan		
George Levy		
Lynn Lloyd		
Axel Macdonald		
Jane Murphy		
Caroline Newton		
Andrea Powell		
Leigh Rawlins		
Jo Robb		
Sue Roberts		
David Rouane		
Anne-Marie Simpson		

For	Against	Abstain
Alan Thompson		
David Turner		
Ian White		
Celia Wilson		
35	0	0

RESOLVED:

That Council notes that EU nationals are part of our shared communities. They are our husbands, wives, parents, friends and colleagues. They are an integral part of a vibrant and thriving South Oxfordshire.

Since 2016 EU nationals were promised again and again that "there will be no change for EU citizens already lawfully resident in the UK and [...] will be treated no less favourably as they are at present".

After three years of living in limbo, their homes and livelihoods are in danger of being threatened by the further uncertainty brought about by the prospect of an even more chaotic no-deal Brexit.

According to the Home Office’s July statistics, only a third of EU nationals have applied for the Settled Status and 42% of them have been granted the inferior Pre-Settled status leading them to reapply for the Settled status later on. There is no possibility of knowing how many EU nationals need to apply, leaving vulnerable and unaware EU nationals left at risk of becoming unlawful residents at the mercy of the Home Office’s “Hostile Environment”. Lack of clarity regarding differentiating between EU citizens arriving before and after the UK’s exit from the EU could lead to discrimination in the labour market and may prevent many from accessing the services that they are entitled to.

Another Windrush-like scandal could be unfolding right before the eyes of this Council and we mustn’t be passive observers to it.

Therefore, the Council asks that:

1. Officers report on how the Council can mitigate adverse impacts on the rights of EU nationals (including but not limited to advising on what the Council can do to help landlords and employers to be better informed about immigration status and therefore avoid potential discrimination against EU nationals)
2. The Leader of the Council writes to EU citizens resident in the district giving advice on applying for Settled Status (within the constraints of GDPR). This notice shall direct EU citizens to resources, including the Council’s website, providing up-to-date information on the application process and the potential risks of not applying to the EU Settlement Scheme.
3. The Leader of the Council writes to the Home Secretary seeking clarification and suggesting improvements for the European Settlement scheme, which include:
 - Providing physical proof of Settled status that can be used to access services

- Confirming that there will be no changes to the rights of settled EU citizens that they currently have by ratifying the Immigration Bill as primary legislation before the exit day
- Replacing the current European Settlement scheme with a registration scheme without a deadline where EU citizens are considered lawful by default and can request a proof of immigration status only when they are asked to demonstrate it.

(2) Motion moved by Councillor David Bartholomew, seconded by Councillor Anna Badcock:

“Reading Borough Council is proposing to build a vast new bridge over the Thames at Caversham to alleviate Reading’s traffic problems. It is included in their Draft Local Plan as a top transport priority. The bridge would take off at the Thames Valley business park near Reading and land near the Playhatch roundabout in Oxfordshire. The only onwards option for traffic would be through the congested streets of Henley or along the narrow B481 country road through Oxfordshire villages.

To date, Reading and other Berkshire councils that are supporting the scheme have focused almost entirely on the costs of building the bridge and the benefits it will bring to Reading. While they recognise that the bridge would have a substantial impact on the Oxfordshire road network, the Berkshire councils blithely state these will be dealt with by unspecified and uncoded ‘mitigation measures’.

This council calls on the Leader to write to the leaders of Reading Borough Council, Wokingham Borough Council and Bracknell Forest Council, together with MPs John Howell, John Redwood, Matt Rodda and Theresa May, stating that:

a) In the context of the Climate Emergency a car-based solution to a car-based problem that would pour thousands of cars and HGVs into Oxfordshire is totally inappropriate and should a new bridge be built it should be restricted to public transport, cyclists and pedestrians;

b) Notwithstanding the above, if a car-based solution is pursued, the proposed bridge and necessary mitigation measures (i.e. improvements to the Oxfordshire road network) are not considered as two separate projects, but as one single project in order that the benefits, disadvantages and costs of the complete scheme can be holistically assessed”.

Councillor Robb moved and Councillor Casey-Rerhaye seconded an amendment to delete part b) of the original motion. Those councillors in support of the amendment expressed the view that the council should not support the building of a bridge for cars and HGVs. The provision of such a bridge was not compatible with the climate emergency. However, other councillors expressed the view that the inclusion of b) was pragmatic and required to ensure that, if a bridge is progressed, measures are put in place to mitigate against the impact on Oxfordshire and particularly the existing road network.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 67, which provides for a recorded vote if three members request one, the Chairman called for a recorded vote on the amendment which was declared lost with the voting as follows:

For	Against	Abstain
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors

For	Against	Abstain
Pieter-Paul Barker	Ken Arlett	Sue Cooper
Robin Bennett	Anna Badcock	Elizabeth Gillespie
Sam Casey-Rerhaye	David Bartholomew	George Levy
Peter Dragonetti	David Bretherton	Andrea Powell
Maggie Filipova-Rivers	Stefan Gawrysiak	
Sarah Gray	Victoria Haval	
Kate Gregory	Lorraine Hillier	
Simon Hewardine	Mocky Khan	
Kellie Hinton	Lynn Lloyd	
Alexandrine Kantor	Axel Macdonald	
Jo Robb	Jane Murphy	
Sue Roberts	Caroline Newton	
David Rouane	Leigh Rawlins	
Anne-Marie Simpson	Alan Thompson	
	David Turner	
	Ian White	
	Celia Wilson	
14	17	4

Councillor Rawlins moved and Councillor Hewardine seconded an amendment to include the following wording at the end of the original motion:

“Council recognises the challenges of Reading’s traffic congestion and pressure on cross-Thames capacity. However, before any bridge proposal is advanced, Council calls on Cabinet and officers to engage with Reading Borough Council to develop mutually acceptable measures to REDUCE cross-Thames car and commercial vehicle volumes through a variety of joined-up mitigation measures. These should include exploration of scope for Park-and-Ride facilities and improved rapid bus services to the station and key business parks in the town”.

Those councillors in support of the amendment expressed the view that the council had a duty to co-operate with Reading Borough Council to develop mutually acceptable measures to reduce cross-Thames car and commercial vehicle volumes through a variety of joined up mitigation measures including park and ride, improved rapid bus services to the railway station and key business parks in the town. However, a number of councillors expressed the view that the amendment ‘muddied the waters’ and that the council should concentrate on opposing the construction of a bridge.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 67, which provides for a recorded vote if three members request one, the Chairman called for a recorded vote on the amendment which was declared lost with the voting as follows:

For	Against	Abstain
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Pieter-Paul Barker	Ken Arlett	Robin Bennett
Sue Cooper	Anna Badcock	Sam Casey-Rerhaye
Elizabeth Gillespie	David Bartholomew	Peter Dragonetti
Sarah Gray	David Bretherton	Maggie Filipova-Rivers
Simon Hewerdine	Stefan Gawrysiak	Victoria Haval
Leigh Rawlins	Kate Gregory	Alexandrine Kantor
	Lorraine Hillier	Sue Roberts
	Kellie Hinton	
	Mocky Khan	
	George Levy	
	Lynn Lloyd	
	Axel Macdonald	
	Jane Murphy	
	Caroline Newton	
	Andrea Powell	
	Jo Robb	
	David Rouane	
	Anne-Marie Simpson	

For	Against	Abstain
	Alan Thompson	
	David Turner	
	Ian White	
	Celia Wilson	
6	22	7

Those councillors who spoke in support of the motion expressed the view that the council should oppose the building of a bridge for cars and HGVs, that if a bridge is progressed it should be restricted to public transport, cyclists and pedestrians and that if a car based bridge is constructed measures should be put in place to protect the AONB in Oxfordshire, the inadequate road network and rural villages.

After debate and on being put to the vote the motion was agreed.

RESOLVED:

That Reading Borough Council is proposing to build a vast new bridge over the Thames at Caversham to alleviate Reading’s traffic problems. It is included in their Draft Local Plan as a top transport priority. The bridge would take off at the Thames Valley business park near Reading and land near the Playhatch roundabout in Oxfordshire. The only onwards option for traffic would be through the congested streets of Henley or along the narrow B481 country road through Oxfordshire villages.

To date, Reading and other Berkshire councils that are supporting the scheme have focused almost entirely on the costs of building the bridge and the benefits it will bring to Reading. While they recognise that the bridge would have a substantial impact on the Oxfordshire road network, the Berkshire councils blithely state these will be dealt with by unspecified and uncoded ‘mitigation measures’.

This council calls on the Leader to write to the leaders of Reading Borough Council, Wokingham Borough Council and Bracknell Forest Council, together with MPs John Howell, John Redwood, Matt Rodda and Theresa May, stating that:

a) In the context of the Climate Emergency a car-based solution to a car-based problem that would pour thousands of cars and HGVs into Oxfordshire is totally inappropriate and should a new bridge be built it should be restricted to public transport, cyclists and pedestrians;

b) Notwithstanding the above, if a car-based solution is pursued, the proposed bridge and necessary mitigation measures (i.e. improvements to the Oxfordshire road network) are not considered as two separate projects, but as one single project in order that the benefits, disadvantages and costs of the complete scheme can be holistically assessed.

(3) Motion moved by Councillor Sue Roberts, seconded by Councillor Simon Hewerdine:

“On 11 April 2019, South Oxfordshire District Council declared a Climate Emergency, noting that the 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report states that we had just 12 years to act. Council resolved that it needs to commit to aggressive reduction targets and carbon neutrality as quickly as possible.

Since then, there has been a continual onslaught of extreme weather events that further highlight the climate emergency. In July, the European heat wave killed 868 in France, and set a new temperature high for the UK of 38.5°C. There were unprecedented wildfires in the Arctic. In September, Hurricane Dorian killed 50 in the Bahamas and left 70,000 homeless. More generally, we have severe ice melting at the poles, and sea level rise at the upper end of forecasts.

In September, Professor Sir David King, former Chief Scientist for the UK, said the world had changed faster than predicted by the IPCC. Whereas mean global temperature rises have matched predictions, individual extreme weather events have accelerated in intensity and frequency. In this grave situation, he says, the UK should aim to cut greenhouse gas emissions to almost zero, by 2040 rather than 2050.

South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) has set up a Climate Emergency Advisory Committee (CEAC). At its first official meeting on the 19th September it recommended the very challenging targets proposed here. It should be noted that other councils have set targets for their districts and cities to reach net zero-carbon by 2030, some even earlier. The Labour Party at its recent conference has also set a 2030 net zero-carbon target for the country.

Officers prepared options for CEAC to consider, including a focus only on Council operations; extending this to taking action on net zero-carbon over district-actives where Council has responsibilities, whilst responding reactively wherever possible to new initiatives for the district; and finally, for full net zero-carbon for the whole district. The cross-party committee unanimously agreed to a fully net zero-carbon district by 2030, with Council, in its own operations, to be net zero-carbon by 2025.

These targets are premised on the fact that SODC should be in a new building by 2025, and that it can influence outsourced contractors to provide us with a net zero-carbon supply chain. The aim for a net-zero carbon total district is to ensure that Council has a true target in the sense that it knows what it is that it is aiming to get to zero-carbon, and to ensure that its actions are more than purely reactive; rather, Council shall set up an ambitious new programme working with other actors to achieve its target.

Council resolves to:

Agree the unanimous recommendations of its cross-party Climate Emergency Advisory Committee to:

- Aim to reach net-zero carbon emissions across all of the operations of South Oxfordshire District Council by the target year of 2025
- Aim to reach net-zero carbon emissions for the whole District of South Oxfordshire by 2030”

The majority of councilors supported the motion which would allow the council to have targets to aim for and to set an example to the wider community. The view was expressed that Council should receive annual updates on progress against the targets.

After debate and on being put to the vote the motion was agreed.

RESOLVED:

That On 11 April 2019, South Oxfordshire District Council declared a Climate Emergency, noting that the 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report states that we had just 12 years to act. Council resolved that it needs to commit to aggressive reduction targets and carbon neutrality as quickly as possible.

Since then, there has been a continual onslaught of extreme weather events that further highlight the climate emergency. In July, the European heat wave killed 868 in France, and set a new temperature high for the UK of 38.5°C. There were unprecedented wildfires in the Arctic. In September, Hurricane Dorian killed 50 in the Bahamas and left 70,000 homeless. More generally, we have severe ice melting at the poles, and sea level rise at the upper end of forecasts.

In September, Professor Sir David King, former Chief Scientist for the UK, said the world had changed faster than predicted by the IPCC. Whereas mean global temperature rises have matched predictions, individual extreme weather events have accelerated in intensity and frequency. In this grave situation, he says, the UK should aim to cut greenhouse gas emissions to almost zero, by 2040 rather than 2050.

South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) has set up a Climate Emergency Advisory Committee (CEAC). At its first official meeting on the 19th September it recommended the very challenging targets proposed here. It should be noted that other councils have set targets for their districts and cities to reach net zero-carbon by 2030, some even earlier. The Labour Party at its recent conference has also set a 2030 net zero-carbon target for the country.

Officers prepared options for CEAC to consider, including a focus only on Council operations; extending this to taking action on net zero-carbon over district-actives where Council has responsibilities, whilst responding reactively wherever possible to new initiatives for the district; and finally, for full net zero-carbon for the whole district. The cross-party committee unanimously agreed to a fully net zero-carbon district by 2030, with Council, in its own operations, to be net zero-carbon by 2025.

These targets are premised on the fact that SODC should be in a new building by 2025, and that it can influence outsourced contractors to provide us with a net zero-carbon supply chain. The aim for a net-zero carbon total district is to ensure that Council has a true target in the sense that it knows what it is that it is aiming to get to zero-carbon, and to ensure that its actions are more than purely reactive; rather, Council shall set up an ambitious new programme working with other actors to achieve its target to:

Agree the unanimous recommendations of its cross-party Climate Emergency Advisory Committee to:

- Aim to reach net-zero carbon emissions across all of the operations of South Oxfordshire District Council by the target year of 2025

- Aim to reach net-zero carbon emissions for the whole District of South Oxfordshire by 2030.

36 Exclusion of the public

RESOLVED: to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting for the following item 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.

37 New office accommodation - design, sustainability and building specification

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 8 October 2019, on the progress of the new council office building and car park programme at the council's Crowmarsh Gifford site.

Council resolved to:

1. note the progress of the new council office building and car park programme at the council's Crowmarsh Gifford site; and
2. allocate additional budget provision to the capital scheme in the approved programme.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm

Chairman

Date

Cabinet Report



Listening Learning Leading

Report of Head of Planning

Author: Robyn Tobutt

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Wards affected: Chalgrove

Cabinet member responsible: Cllr. Leigh Rawlins

Tel: 01189 722565

E-mail: Leigh.Rawlins@southoxon.gov.uk

To: CABINET

Date: 5 December 2019

Making the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan

That Cabinet recommends to Council:

(a) To make the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan so that it continues to be part of the council's development plan.

(b) To delegate to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and in agreement with the Qualifying Body, the correction of any spelling, grammatical, typographical or factual errors together with any improvements from a presentational perspective.

Purpose of Report

1. To provide an update to the Cabinet on the progress of the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan and to present the relevant considerations in relation to whether this plan should be made (formally adopted).

Corporate Objectives

2. Strongly supporting the development of neighbourhood plans for our towns and villages.

Background

3. Berrick Salome Parish Council successfully applied for the parish of Berrick Salome to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012).
4. The preparation of the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan) was led by the parish council ('the qualifying body') and a group of volunteers from the local community.
5. Following the formal submission of the Plan to the council, the council publicised the Plan and invited comments from the public and stakeholders.
6. The council appointed Mr Andrew Ashcroft to independently examine the Plan. Examiners are tasked with reviewing whether a neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions required by legislation and whether it should proceed to referendum. The Examiner's report concluded that the Plan meets the basic conditions, and that subject to the modifications proposed in his report, the Plan should proceed to referendum.
7. The modifications proposed by the Examiner are largely minor in nature; re-wording and restructuring for clarity and to ensure the basic conditions are met. A full copy of the proposed modifications to the Plan are set out in the Examiner's Final Report¹. More significant modifications recommended by the examiner include:
 - (a) The modification of the settlement boundaries and infill development policy (Policy BER1) to remove reference to Rokemarsh given its limited size. The settlement boundary around Rokemarsh was removed and some more general separation of settlements text was inserted.
 - (b) The deletion of some of the text in the design policy (Policy BER2) as it included elements of supporting text and was repetitive in places.
 - (c) The replacement of the text in the managing traffic policy (Policy BER8). This amended the policy so that the focus is on land use matters and to put the emphasis on achieving a good relationship between development and highways capacity rather than seeking developer contributions to mitigate traffic issues.
8. Having considered the Examiner's recommendations and reasons for them the Cabinet Member for Planning decided on 12 September 2019:
 1. to accept all modifications recommended by the Examiner;
 2. to determine that the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan, as modified, meets the basic conditions, is compatible with the Convention rights²,

¹ Independent Examiner's Report to South Oxfordshire District Council on the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan (2019), available at: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-plans/berrick-salome-neighbo>

² *Convention rights* are defined in the Human Rights Act 1998 as (a) Articles 2 to 12 and 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights ("the Convention"), (b) Articles 1 to 3 of its First Protocol, and (c) Article 1 of its Thirteenth Protocol, as read with Articles 16 to 18 of the Convention. The Convention rights that are most likely to be relevant to town and country planning are those under the Convention's Article 6(1), 8 and 14 and under its First Protocol Article 1.

complies with the definition of a neighbourhood development plan (NDP) and the provisions that can be made by a NDP; and

3. to take all appropriate actions to progress the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan to referendum.
9. The modifications to the Plan were made and the referendum version of the Plan was published on 12 September 2019 alongside the decision statements required under Regulation 18(2)(a) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012).

Options

10. The council's options are limited by statute. Paragraph 38A (4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out that the council must make a neighbourhood plan if more than half of those voting at the referendum have voted in favour of the plan being used to help decide planning applications in the plan area.
11. The only circumstance where the district council should not make this decision is where the making of the plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998).
12. Section 3 of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017, which came into force on 19 July 2017, amends section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to ensure that neighbourhood plans have full legal effect once they have passed their local referenda. In the very limited circumstances that the council might decide not to make the neighbourhood development plan, it will cease to be part of the development plan for the area.
13. The council's decision on 12 September 2019 (referred to in paragraph 8), published in the decision statement issued on 12 September 2019 (referred to in paragraph 9), confirmed that the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan, as modified by the Examiner's recommendations, would not breach, and be otherwise incompatible with EU obligations or human rights legislation.
14. The Plan, as modified by the Examiner's recommendation, would not breach, and be otherwise incompatible with EU obligations, including the following Directives: the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC); the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2011/92/EU); the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC); the Wild Birds Directive (2009/147/EC); the Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC); the Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC); and the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC). In addition, no issue arises in respect of equality under general principles of EU law or any EU equality directive. In order to comply with the basic condition on European Union legislation the Council has prepared a Screening Opinion on the determination of the need for a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA). This process concluded that the Plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and therefore a SEA is not required. Consultation was carried out with the relevant statutory bodies (Natural England, Historic England, Environment Agency and Oxfordshire County Council). The responses received agreed with the conclusion that a SEA was not required. Taking the consultation responses into account, the council issued a Screening Statement on 26th March 2019.

15. The Plan, as modified by the Examiner's recommendations, would not give rise to significant environmental effects on European sites. The Council issued a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Determination on 26 March 2019, which confirmed to the qualifying body that an Appropriate Assessment would not be required. In response to the council's screening opinion, Natural England confirmed on 23 January 2019 that the proposals in the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites and that an Appropriate Assessment is therefore not required.
16. The council is satisfied that the Plan is in all respects fully compatible with Convention rights contained in the Human Rights Act 1988. There has been full and adequate opportunity or all interested parties to take part in the preparation of the Plan and to make their comments known.
17. Therefore, if the majority of those voting have voted in favour of the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Plan being used to help decide planning applications in the plan area, to not make the plan would be in breach of these statutory provisions.

Referendum

18. A referendum relating to the adoption of the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan was held on Thursday 24 October 2019.
19. The question which was asked in the Referendum was: *"Do you want South Oxfordshire District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Berrick Salome to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"*
20. The results was as follows:
 - a. Yes = 150 votes (94.3 %)
 - b. No = 9 votes (5.7 %)
 - c. Turnout = 59.5 %
21. The majority of local electors who voted have voted in favour of the plan; therefore, the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Plan has become part of the council's development plan.
22. As the plan was approved at the local referendum and the council is satisfied it would not breach and be otherwise incompatible with EU obligations or human rights legislation, the council is required to make the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan so that it continues to be part of the council's development plan.

Financial Implications

23. The Government makes funding available to local authorities to help them meet the cost of their responsibilities around neighbourhood planning. A total of £20,000 can be claimed for each neighbourhood planning area. The council becomes eligible to apply to receive this single payment once a date is set for the referendum, after a successful examination. The Government grant funds the process of progressing neighbourhood plans through the formal stages, including the referendum. Any costs incurred in the formal stages in excess of £20,000 is borne by the council. Staffing costs associated

with supporting community groups and progressing neighbourhood plans through the formal stages are funded by the council.

Legal Implications

24. The decision to make the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Plan is a legal requirement in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The only circumstance where the district council should not make this decision is where the making of the plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998). There is a requirement that the district council will publish a formal decision statement as required under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
25. It is not considered that the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any such obligation or rights. Therefore, the council should now proceed to make the plan.

Risks

26. The council is required to comply with the statutory requirements (to consider whether the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan should be made following successful local referendum), which this recommendation seeks to achieve. In view of the considerations referred to elsewhere in this report, as the majority of those voting have voted in favour of the plan at its local referendum, a decision not to make the Plan would place the council at risk of a legal challenge.

Conclusion

27. On the 12 September 2019, the council decided:
1. To accept all modifications recommended by the Examiner;
 2. to determine that the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan, as modified, meets the basic conditions, is compatible with the Convention rights, complies with the definition of a neighbourhood development plan (NDP) and the provisions that can be made by a NDP; and
 3. to take all appropriate actions to progress the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan to referendum.
28. The local referendum was held on 24 October 2019 to meet the requirements of The Localism Act 2011 and The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012.
29. As the majority of those voting have voted in favour of the Plan being used to help decide planning applications in the plan area, it is recommended that the Berrick Salome Neighbourhood Development Plan is made.

Joint Audit and Governance Committee



Report of Head of Finance/Financial Accountant (Capita)

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To: Joint Audit and Governance Committee, Cabinet and Council

DATE: 14 October 2019 by Joint Audit and Governance Committee

05 December 2019 (S) / 06 December 2019 (V) by Cabinet

12 December 2019 (S) / 11 December 2019 (V) by Council

Treasury Outturn 2018-19

That Joint Audit and Governance Committee:

1. notes the treasury management outturn report 2018/19,
2. is satisfied that the treasury activities are carried out in accordance with the treasury management strategy and policy, and
3. make any comments and recommendations to Cabinets as necessary.

That Cabinet:

Considers any comments from Joint Audit and Governance Committee and recommends Council to:

1. approve the treasury management outturn report for 2018/19;
2. approve the actual 2018/19 prudential indicators within the report.

Purpose of report

1. This report fulfils the legislative requirements to ensure the adequate monitoring and reporting of the treasury management activities and that the councils' prudential indicators are reported to the councils at the end of the year. The report provides details of the treasury activities for the financial year 2018/19.
2. This complies with the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA's) Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

Strategic objectives

3. Effective treasury management is required to help the councils meet their strategic objectives.

Background

4. The councils' treasury activities are strictly regulated by legislation. The CIPFA Prudential Code and CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice require a report to be provided to the councils at the end of the financial year.
5. This report provides details on the treasury activity and performance for 2018/19 against prudential indicators and benchmarks set for the year in the 2018/19 Treasury Management Strategy (TMS), approved by each council in February 2018. Each council is required to approve this report.
6. Link Asset Services are the councils' retained treasury advisors.
7. On 1 August 2016, the operational treasury management staff were outsourced to Capita. The executive decision making function remains with the head of finance.
8. There are three types of investment, the performance of which is covered in this report
 - a. True treasury investments – these investments are primarily for generating interest for the councils. Examples of these are loans to banks or other local authorities. It also includes investments in property funds.
 - b. Non-treasury loans – these are loans to third parties, which earn a return, but they do not fall under the strict definition of a treasury investment.
 - c. Property investments - both councils have investment properties let on commercial basis. The primary purpose of holding these assets is for investment purposes and they are not part of regeneration schemes.
9. The councils continue to invest with regard for security, liquidity and yield, in that order.

Economic conditions and factors effecting investment returns during 2018/19

10. UK bank base rates were increased to 0.75 per cent in August 2018, having been set at 0.50 per cent since November 2017. Link Asset Services provide a regular forecast of interest rates and the latest forecast is reproduced in **appendix A**. This

forecast shows that base rates are expected to rise in late 2020, with two further increases over the next two years. An increase in inflationary pressures is likely and this, coupled with rising wage inflation, would mean more consumer spending power and therefore a rise in interest rates.

11. The TMS makes clear that investment priority is given to the security of principal in the first instance. As a result, investments have only been made with counterparties of high credit quality and low risk. Since the global banking crisis and the downgrading of the credit ratings of many banks, it has become increasingly difficult to place money at competitive rates, as institutions with high credit ratings have been offering lower rates.
12. Average treasury investment balances were higher for both councils than expected in the year. This arose from a combination of accumulated revenue and capital surpluses/slippage and unbudgeted grant receipts. This was also the case in 2017/18. More cash to invest has been a factor in the surplus of treasury investment income over budget in the year for VOWHDC.
13. Investments that have helped to keep yields up for both councils include longer term investments taken out when rates were higher, such as the CCLA property fund at both councils, and the unit trusts at South.
14. Outlook for 2019/20 – as discussed above, interest rates are expected to rise slowly over the next three years. In order to reduce risk, efforts are being made to rebalance the treasury portfolio to reduce the value held by building societies. Other counterparties used by the council are other councils and housing associations.

Summary of investment activities during 2018/19

15. Prudential limits (security). Both councils are required by the Prudential Code to report on the limits set each year in the TMS. The purpose of these limits is to ensure that the activity of the treasury function remains within certain parameters, thereby mitigating risk and reducing the impact of an adverse movement in interest rates. However, if these limits are set to be too restrictive they may impair the opportunities to reduce costs/improve performance. These limits are shown in **appendix B**.

16. Yield - the performance of the two councils is summarised in the tables below.

South		Treasury investments £000	Non treasury loan £000	Sub Total £000	Property investment £000	Overall total £000
1	Average investment balance	151,513	15,000	166,513	6,456	172,969
2	Budgeted investment income	2,317	623	2,940		
3	Actual investment income	2,018	623	2,641	318	2,959
4	surplus/(deficit) (3) - (2)	(299)	0	(299)		
5	Rate of return (3) ÷ (1)	1.33%	4.15%	1.59%	4.92%	1.71%

Vale		Treasury investments £000	Property investment £000	Overall total £000
1	Average investment balance	84,161	7,062	91,223
2	Budgeted investment income	450		
3	Actual investment income	933	357	1,290
4	surplus/(deficit) (3) - (2)	483		
5	Rate of return (3) ÷ (1)	1.11%	5.06%	1.41%

17. VWHDC has exceeded treasury budgeted investment income this year in terms of both actual income against budget and rates of return against benchmark. SODC exceeded in terms of rates of return against benchmark. SODC has 0.3 million deficit compared to treasury budgeted investment income, mainly due to interest rates not increasing in 2018/19 as expected when the budget was set. More detail on benchmarks is included in the appendices that follow this report.

18. Detailed reports on the treasury activities for each council and performance for 2018/19 against prudential indicators and benchmarks set for the year are contained in **appendix C** – South Oxfordshire DC and **appendix D** – Vale of White Horse DC.

19. A detailed list of both councils’ treasury investments as at 31 March 2019 is shown at **appendix E**.

Debt activity during 2018/19

20. During 2018/19, there has not been a need for either council to borrow and both councils continue to take a prudent approach to their debt strategy. The prudential indicators and limits set out in **appendix B** provide the scope and flexibility for the Council to borrow in the short-term, if such a need arose, for cash flow purposes to support the council(s) in the achievement of their service objectives.

Financial implications

21. The treasury investments made in 2018/19 ensured over £2 million of actual investment income achieved for SODC during year and over £0.9 million received for VOWHDC. Income earned from investments supports the councils’ medium term financial plans and contributes to the councils’ balances or supports the in-year expenditure programmes.

22. Looking forward, income is anticipated to remain stable with any increase due to ongoing surplus cash balances and rises in market rates offset by a general reduction in the balances available to invest. This will be reflected in the councils’ 2019/20 budgets and medium term financial plans.

Legal implications

23. There are no significant legal implications. Compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services and the DCLG Local Government Investment Guidance provides assurance that the councils’ investments are, and will continue to be, within their legal powers.

Conclusion

24. Despite a difficult operating environment, both councils continued to make investments during 2018/19 that maintained security and liquidity whilst providing a return that exceeded market benchmarks.

Background papers

- Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA) code of practice for treasury management in the public sector.
- DCLG Local Government Investment Guidance
- CIPFA treasury management in the public services code of practice and cross sectoral guidance notes
- Treasury Management Strategy 2018/19 – Councils in February 2018.

Appendices

- A. Interest rate forecasts
- B. Prudential limits
- C. SODC – Treasury activities 2018-2019
- D. VWHDC – Treasury activities 2018-2019
- E. Treasury investments as at 31 March 2019
- F. Glossary of terms

Appendix A

Interest rate forecast as at July 2019

The table below shows Link Asset Services' forecast of the expected movement in medium term interest rates:

	Sep 19	Dec 19	Mar 20	Jun 20	Sep 20	Dec 20	Mar 21	Jun 21	Sep 21	Dec 21	Mar 22
BANK RATE	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.25	1.50	1.50	1.50
3 m LIBID	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.20	1.30	1.40	1.40	1.40
6 m LIBID	0.80	0.90	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.20	1.40	1.50	1.60	1.60	1.60
12 m LIBID	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.40	1.50	1.60	1.70	1.80	1.80
5 yr PWLB	1.50	1.60	1.70	1.80	1.90	2.00	2.10	2.10	2.20	2.30	2.40
10 yr PWLB	1.80	1.90	2.00	2.10	2.20	2.30	2.40	2.50	2.60	2.60	2.70
25 yr PWLB	2.40	2.50	2.60	2.70	2.80	2.90	3.00	3.00	3.10	3.20	3.30
50 yr PWLB	2.30	2.40	2.50	2.60	2.70	2.80	2.90	2.90	3.00	3.10	3.20

Prudential limits (indicators) as at March 2019

Prudential indicators as at 31 March 2019				
	Vale		South	
	Original estimate £m	Actual position £m	Original estimate £m	Actual position £m
Authorised limit for external debt				
Borrowing	30	0	30	0
Other long term liabilities	5	0	0	0
	35	0	30	0
Operational boundary for external debt				
Borrowing	25	0	25	0
Other long term liabilities	5	0	0	0
	30	0	25	0
Investments				
Interest rate exposures				
Limits on fixed interest rates %	100%	95%	100%	93%
Limits on variable interest rates £	50	4	50	9
Maximum principal sums invested > 364 days				
Upper limit for principal sums invested > 364 days £	40	11	70	18
Limit to be placed on investments to maturity				
1 - 2 years	NA	NA	NA	NA
2 - 5 years	NA	NA	NA	NA
5 years +	NA	NA	NA	NA

Prudential indicators – explanatory note

Debt

There are two limits on external debt: the ‘Operational Boundary’ and the ‘Authorised Limit’. Both are consistent with the current commitments, existing plans and the proposals in the budget report for capital expenditure and financing, and with approved treasury management policy statement and practices. They are both based on estimates of most likely, but not worst case, scenario.

The key difference is that the Authorised Limit cannot be breached without prior approval of the Council. It therefore includes more headroom to take account of eventualities such as delays in generating capital receipts, forward borrowing to take advantage of attractive interest rates, use of borrowing in place of operational leasing, “invest to save” projects, occasional short term borrowing to cover temporary revenue cash flow shortfalls as well as an assessment of risks involved in managing cash flows.

The Operational Boundary is a more realistic indicator of the likely position.

Interest rate exposures

The maximum proportion of interest on borrowing which is subject to fixed/variable rate of interest.

Investments

Interest rate exposure

The purpose of these indicators is to set ranges that will limit exposure to interest rate movement. The indicator required by the Treasury Management Code considers the net position of borrowing and investment and is based on principal sums outstanding.

Principal sums invested

This indicator sets a limit on the level of investments that can be made for more than 364 days.

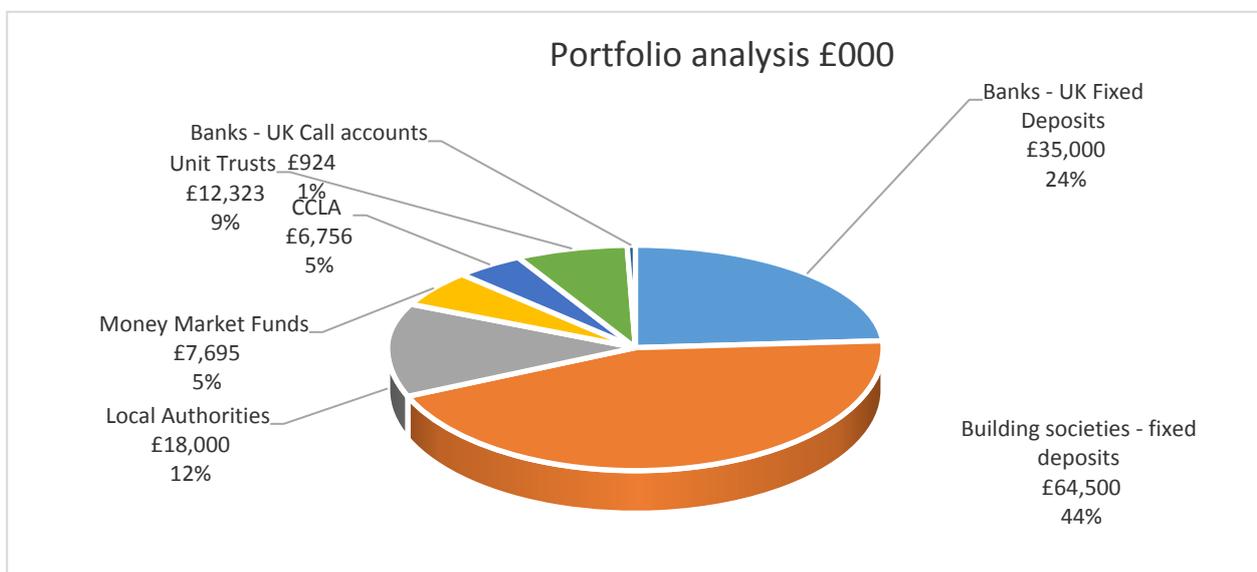
SODC treasury activities in 2018/19

Council treasury investments as at 31 March 2019

1. The council's treasury investments, analysed by age as at 31 March 2019 were as follows:

Table 1: maturity structure of investments at 31 March 2019:		
	£000	% holding
Call	924	1%
Money market fund	7,695	5%
Cash available within 1 week	8,619	6%
Up to 4 months	61,500	42%
5-6 months	9,000	6%
6 months to 1 year	40,000	28%
Over 1 year	7,000	5%
Kaupthing Singer & Friedlander	222	0%
Total cash deposits	126,342	86%
CCLA Property Fund	6,756	5%
Equities	12,323	8%
Total investments	145,420	100%

2. Most of the funds invested are held in the form of fixed interest rate and term cash deposits. These provide some certainty over the investment return.
3. The investment profile is organised in order to ensure sufficient liquidity for revenue and capital activities, security of investments and to manage risks within all treasury management activities.
4. The chart below shows in percentage terms how the portfolio above is spread across the investment types:



Treasury investment income

5. The total income earned on investments during 2018/19 was £2 million, compared to the original budget of £2.3 million, as shown in table 2 below:

Table 2: Investment interest earned by investment type			
Investment type	Annual Budget £000	Actual Interest £000	Variation £000
Fixed term and call	1,568	1,366	(202)
Equities	456	358	(98)
CCLA property fund	294	293	(0)
	2,317	2,018	(299)

6. The actual return achieved was £0.3 million less than the original budget. This was due to:

- Interest earned on cash deposits was £0.2 million lower than forecast principally due to interest rates not increasing as expected in the 2018/19 budget setting. The average rate received during 2018/19 was 1.73 per cent and the budget was set at a rate of 2.10 per cent.
- Dividend received on equities was £98,000 lower than forecast. This is partly due to a prior year correction.

7. The actual average rate of return on treasury investments for the year was 1.33 per cent (1.44 in 2017/18).

Performance measurement

8. A list of treasury investments as at 31 March 2019 is shown in **appendix E**. All investments were with approved counterparties. The average level of investments held was £151 million. Table 3 below shows in summary the performance of the council's treasury investments against the benchmarks set out in the TMS. These benchmarks are used to assess and monitor the council's treasury investment performance for each type of investment.

9. The £151 million does not represent the council's usable, cash backed reserves, which at 31 March 2019 totalled £114 million. The difference represents the council's working capital balance and capital grants received in advance of spend.

Table 3: Treasury investment returns achieved against benchmark				
	Benchmark Return	Actual Return	Growth (Below)/above Benchmark	Benchmarks
Bank & Building Society deposits - internally managed	0.71%	1.33%	0.62%	3 Month LIBID
Equities	2.16%	2.76%	0.60%	FTSE All Shares Index
Property related investments (excluding SOHA loan)*	3.59%	4.54%	0.95%	IPD balanced property unit trust index

Note: the benchmark return for unit trusts and CCLA includes the movement in capital value. All other benchmarks reflect earnings of treasury investment income.

10. Returns on Bank and building society deposits (Call accounts, money market funds and fixed term deposits) are benchmarked against the three-month LIBID rate, which was an average of 0.71 per cent for 2018/19. The performance for the year of 1.33 per cent exceeded the benchmark by 0.62 per cent.
11. It remained difficult to place investments because of continued financial uncertainty. Some good rates were achieved which contributed to the increase in investment income during the year.
12. The CCLA property fund principal investment of £5 million (March 2013) increased in value during 2018/19 to £6.8 million. Dividends received in the year totalled £0.3 million. Both the capital appreciation and the interest earned are included in the performance of 4.54 per cent achieved above. The capital gain is however not realised and so for comparison purposes, the actual rate of return is interest as a factor of market value of holding being 3.59 per cent.
13. The performance of 4.54 per cent for CCLA includes accruals and therefore creates a marginal difference between councils on the calculated return achieved.

Equities

14. The council's holdings with the Legal & General (L&G) UK 100 Index Trust were purchased in 2000/01 at an initial cost of £10 million. This is an authorised unit trust incorporated in the United Kingdom and regulated by the FSA. The trust's objective is to track the capital performance of the UK equity market as represented by the FTSE 100 index which represents 98-99 per cent of the UK market capitalisation.
15. The index shows the performance of all eligible companies listed on the London Stock Exchange main market and today covers 635 constituents with a combined value of nearly £2.3 trillion. It is recognised as the main benchmark for unit trusts.

Table 4: Unit Trusts - Movement in capital		
	£	£
Market Value as at 31.3.19		12,322,880
Less:		
Dividends received in year	281,338	
Accrued dividends	77,000	
		(358,338)
Amended market value as at 31.3.19		11,964,542
Market value as at 1.4.18		11,642,721
Increase in Market Value in year		321,821

16. The increase above is compared to the performance of the stock market as a whole using the benchmarking in table 5 below. The fund's over performance of 0.60 per cent compared with the stock market equates to £70,350 in real terms.

Table 5: Unit Trust performance	
Increase in FTSE all share was	2.16%
Increase in Market Value	2.76%
Over-performance	0.60%
	£
Market value as at 1.4.18	11,642,721
Adjusted for FTSE change	251,471
Benchmark Market Value at 31.3.19	11,894,191
Amended market value as at 31.3.19	11,964,542
Over performance	70,350

17. The performance of the fund over the past three years is summarised in table 5.1 below. The justification for holding this investment is regularly reviewed.

Table 5.1 Unit Trust past performance	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Performance against FTSE all share % (Under)/Over	(0.76%)	0.71%	0.60%
Performance against FTSE all share £000 (Under)/Over	(96,679)	95,067	70,350

18. Dividends received of £0.3 million were reinvested to acquire additional fund units.

19. Officers monitor the performance of the unit trust holding on a regular basis. When the market value reaches £14 million, a disposal of £2 million is made. No disposal took place during 2018/19.

Icelandic bank default – Kaupthing Singer & Friedlander

20. The Council invested £2.5 million in July 2007 with the failed Icelandic bank Kaupthing Singer and Friedlander Ltd (KSF). The Council has received £2,256,317 to date in respect of the claim for £2.6 million (£2.5 million investment plus interest).

21. As a wholesale depositor, the Council is treated as an unsecured creditor in the administration process and ranks equally with all other unsecured creditors. The

administrators intend to make further payments at regular intervals. The latest creditors' report now indicates that the estimated total amount to be recovered should be in the range of 86.25p to 87p in the pound. In total terms, this would mean receiving between £2,269,094 and £2,288,826.

Non-treasury investment loan

22. During 2013/14, the council entered into a secured loan agreement with SOHA to enable them to finance affordable housing schemes. The Council lent £15 million over 20 years at a fixed rate of 4.15 per cent. Interest is paid quarterly and during 2018/19, the council received £0.6 million.

Land and property

23. The Council holds a portfolio of investment properties, which includes land, depots, garages, and shops that are let on a commercial basis. These assets had average net book value of £6.46 million during 2018/19 (£5.08 million at 31 March 2018) and generated income of £0.32 million in 2018/19 (£0.40 million in 2017/18) giving a gross rate of return of 4.92 per cent.

24. Due to movement in property values and the exclusion of whole life costs, these rates of return should not be taken as a direct comparison with the treasury rates.

Liquidity and yield

25. The council uses short-term investments to meet daily cash-flow requirements and aims to invest a proportion of the portfolio over longer dated cash deposits where possible.

26. The amount maintained for liquidity was £8.6 million.

VWHDC detailed treasury performance in 2018/19

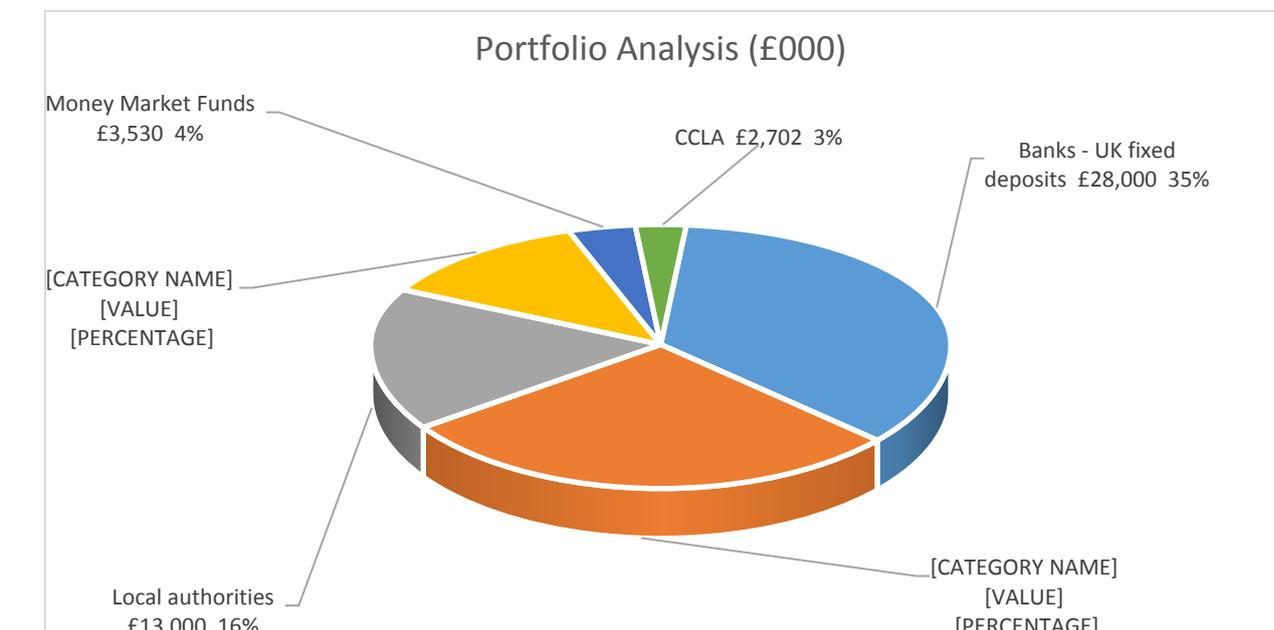
Council treasury investments as at 31 March 2019

1. The council's treasury investments analysed by age as at 31 March 2019 were as follows:

Table 1: maturity structure of investments at 31 March 2019:

	£000	% holding
Call	0	0%
Money market fund	3,530	4%
Cash available within 1 week	3,530	4%
Up to 4 months	12,000	15%
5-6 months	4,000	5%
6 months to 1 year	47,000	59%
Over 1 year	11,000	14%
Total cash deposits	77,530	97%
CCLA Property Fund	2,702	3%
Total investments	80,232	100%

2. Most of the funds invested are held in the form of fixed interest rate and term cash deposits. These provide some certainty over the investment return.
3. The investment profile is organised in order to ensure sufficient liquidity for revenue and capital activities, security of investments and to manage risks within all treasury management activities.
4. The chart below shows in percentage terms how the portfolio above is spread across investment types:



Treasury investment income

5. The total interest earned on treasury investments during 2018/19 was £0.9 million compared to the original budget estimate of £0.4 million as shown in table 2 below:

Table 2: Investment interest earned by investment type			
Investment type	Annual Budget £000	Actual Interest £000	Variation £000
Fixed term and call	334	817	483
CCLA Property Fund	116	116	0
Total Interest	450	933	483

6. The actual return achieved was £0.5 million higher than the original budget. This was primarily due to average balances throughout the year remaining higher than forecast.
7. The total actual average interest rate achieved for the year was 1.11 per cent.

Performance measurement

8. A list of treasury investments as at 31 March 2019 is shown in **appendix E**. All investments were with approved counterparties. The average level of investments held was £84 million. At 31 March 2019 the council's usable, cash backed reserves totalled £41 million. The difference represents working capital and capital grants received in advance. Table 3 below shows in summary the performance of the council's treasury investments against the benchmarks set out in the TMS. These benchmarks are used to assess and monitor the council's treasury investment performance for each type of investment.

Table 3: Treasury investment returns achieved against benchmark				
	Benchmark return	Actual return	Growth (below)/above Benchmark	Benchmarks
Internally managed - Bank & Building Society deposits	0.71%	1.11%	0.40%	3 month LIBID
Property related funds (CCLA)*	3.59%	5.06%	1.47%	IPD balanced property unit trust index

*Source: CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund Report March 2019

9. Returns on bank and building society deposits (internally managed cash deposits) are benchmarked against the 3-month LIBID rate, which was an average of 0.71 per cent for 2018/19. The performance for the year of 1.11 per cent exceeded the benchmark by 0.40 per cent.
10. It remained difficult to place investments because of continued financial uncertainty. Some good rates were achieved which contributed to the increase in investment income during the year.

11. The CCLA property fund principal investment of £2 million (April 2013) increased in value during 2018/19 to £2.7 million. Dividends received in the year totalled £0.1 million. Both the capital appreciation and the interest earned are included in the performance of 5.06 per cent achieved above. The capital gain is however not realised and so for comparison purposes, the actual rate of return is interest as a factor of market value of holding being 3.59 per cent.
12. The performance of 5.06 per cent for CCLA includes accruals and therefore creates a marginal difference between councils on the calculated return achieved.

Land and Property

13. The council holds a portfolio of investment properties, which includes land, offices and shops that are let on a commercial basis. These assets had average net book value of £7.1 million during 2018/19 (£8.4 million as at 31 March 2018) and generated income of £0.4 million (£0.5 million in 2017/18). This is equivalent to a gross return of 5.06 per cent.
14. Due to movement in property values and the exclusion of whole life costs, these rates of return should not be taken as a direct comparison with the treasury rates.

Liquidity and yield

15. The council uses short-term investments to meet daily cash-flow requirements and has also aims to invest a proportion of the portfolio over longer dated cash deposits where possible.
16. The amount maintained for liquidity was £3.5 million and was above the benchmark. This was due to the better rates of return on MMFs compared with other short-term deposits making it more attractive to hold funds short.

Agenda Item 8
Appendix E

South Oxfordshire District Council investments (excluding KSF) as at 31 March 2019

Counterparty	Deposit Type	Maturity Date	Principal	Rate
Close Brothers	Fixed	Apr-19	2,000,000	1.10%
Goldman Sachs International Bank	Fixed	Apr-19	2,000,000	1.10%
Goldman Sachs International Bank	Fixed	Apr-19	3,000,000	1.12%
Progressive Building Society	Fixed	Apr-19	3,500,000	0.95%
National Counties Building Society	Fixed	Apr-19	2,500,000	1.02%
Principality Building Society	Fixed	Apr-19	2,000,000	0.95%
Royal Bank of Scotland	Fixed	Apr-19	3,000,000	1.31%
Close Brothers	Fixed	Apr-19	2,000,000	1.05%
Monmouthshire Building Society	Fixed	Apr-19	1,000,000	1.00%
Surrey Heath BC	Fixed	Apr-19	3,000,000	0.90%
Newcastle Building Society	Fixed	Apr-19	2,000,000	1.02%
Newcastle Building Society	Fixed	May-19	2,000,000	1.02%
Newcastle Building Society	Fixed	May-19	2,000,000	1.02%
National Counties Building Society	Fixed	May-19	1,000,000	1.02%
Principality Building Society	Fixed	May-19	1,500,000	0.97%
National Counties Building Society	Fixed	May-19	1,500,000	1.02%
Nottingham Building Society	Fixed	May-19	2,000,000	0.97%
Nottingham Building Society	Fixed	Jun-19	1,000,000	0.86%
Principality Building Society	Fixed	Jun-19	3,000,000	0.86%
Goldman Sachs International Bank	Fixed	Jun-19	2,000,000	1.00%
Newcastle Building Society	Fixed	Jun-19	2,000,000	0.87%
Principality Building Society	Fixed	Jul-19	4,000,000	0.86%
Blaenau Gwent CBC	Fixed	Jul-19	3,000,000	0.95%
Principality Building Society	Fixed	Jul-19	2,000,000	0.86%
Monmouthshire Building Society	Fixed	Jul-19	2,000,000	0.90%
Progressive Building Society	Fixed	Jul-19	2,500,000	0.90%
Monmouthshire Building Society	Fixed	Jul-19	2,000,000	0.95%
Goldman Sachs International Bank	Fixed	Jul-19	2,000,000	1.20%
Newcastle Building Society	Fixed	Aug-19	2,000,000	1.03%
Newcastle Building Society	Fixed	Aug-19	2,000,000	1.03%
Monmouthshire Building Society	Fixed	Sep-19	3,000,000	1.05%
Goldman Sachs International Bank	Fixed	Sep-19	2,000,000	1.10%
Cambridge BS	Fixed	Oct-19	3,000,000	1.15%
Nottingham Building Society	Fixed	Oct-19	1,000,000	1.05%
Progressive Building Society	Fixed	Oct-19	1,000,000	1.08%
Progressive Building Society	Fixed	Nov-19	2,000,000	1.08%
West Bromwich Building Society	Fixed	Nov-19	2,000,000	1.15%
West Bromwich Building Society	Fixed	Nov-19	2,000,000	1.15%
Cambridge BS	Fixed	Nov-19	2,000,000	1.15%
Close Brothers	Fixed	Nov-19	3,000,000	1.10%
Nottingham Building Society	Fixed	Dec-19	3,000,000	1.15%
Goldman Sachs International Bank	Fixed	Dec-19	2,000,000	1.24%
Goldman Sachs International Bank	Fixed	Feb-20	2,000,000	1.05%
Nottingham Building Society	Fixed	Feb-20	2,000,000	1.20%
Close Brothers	Fixed	Mar-20	2,000,000	1.25%
Close Brothers	Fixed	Mar-20	2,000,000	1.25%
Kingston upon Hull City Council	Fixed	Aug-20	3,500,000	2.70%
Kingston upon Hull City Council	Fixed	Aug-20	1,500,000	2.70%
Kingston upon Hull City Council	Fixed	Jan-21	2,000,000	2.50%
Close Brothers	Fixed	Mar-21	3,000,000	1.50%
Close Brothers	Fixed	Mar-21	1,000,000	1.50%
Bury MBC	Fixed	Jul-21	5,000,000	1.50%
Royal Bank of Scotland	Fixed	Feb-23	2,000,000	2.46%

Agenda Item 8
Appendix E

South Oxfordshire District Council investments (excluding KSF) as at 31 March 2019

Counterparty	Deposit Type	Maturity Date	Principal	Rate
Santander	Call		826,988	0.40%
Royal Bank of Scotland	Call		2,329	0.25%
Royal Bank of Scotland	Call		95,101	0.25%
Goldman Sachs	MMF		7,005,000	Variable
Blackrock	MMF		690,000	Variable
L&G Equities	Unit trust		12,322,880	Variable
CCLA - property fund	Property fund		5,000,000	3.59%
GRAND TOTAL			143,442,298	

Vale of White Horse District Council investments as at 31 March 2019

Counterparty	Deposit Type	Maturity Date	Principal	Rate
Goldman Sachs International Bank	Fixed	Apr-19	2,000,000	1.25%
Places For People Homes Ltd	Fixed	Jun-19	2,000,000	1.70%
Goldman Sachs International Bank	Fixed	Jun-19	2,000,000	1.15%
National Counties Building Society	Fixed	Jul-19	2,000,000	1.00%
Goldman Sachs International Bank	Fixed	Sep-19	2,000,000	1.12%
Close Brothers Ltd	Fixed	Sep-19	2,000,000	1.15%
Cambridge Building Society	Fixed	Oct-19	2,000,000	1.15%
Goldman Sachs International Bank	Fixed	Oct-19	2,000,000	1.24%
Places For People Homes Ltd	Fixed	Oct-19	1,000,000	1.50%
Principality Building Society	Fixed	Nov-19	1,500,000	1.05%
West Bromwich Building Society	Fixed	Nov-19	1,500,000	1.15%
Close Brothers Ltd	Fixed	Nov-19	2,000,000	1.10%
Fife Council	Fixed	Nov-19	3,000,000	1.05%
Saffron Building Society	Fixed	Nov-19	3,000,000	1.12%
Newcastle Building Society	Fixed	Dec-19	1,500,000	1.15%
Principality Building Society	Fixed	Dec-19	2,000,000	1.10%
Nottingham Building Society	Fixed	Jan-20	2,000,000	1.15%
Darlington Building Society	Fixed	Jan-20	2,000,000	1.25%
Slough Borough Council	Fixed	Jan-20	4,000,000	1.10%
Close Brothers Ltd	Fixed	Jan-20	4,000,000	1.25%
Lloyds Bank	Fixed	Jan-20	10,000,000	1.10%
Newcastle Building Society	Fixed	Feb-20	1,500,000	1.25%
Places For People Homes Ltd	Fixed	Feb-20	2,000,000	1.50%
Close Brothers Ltd	Fixed	Mar-20	2,000,000	1.35%
Progressive Building Society	Fixed	Jun-20	3,000,000	1.22%
National Counties Building Society	Fixed	Jun-20	1,000,000	1.25%
Kingston upon Hull City Council	Fixed	Aug-20	2,000,000	2.70%
Kingston upon Hull City Council	Fixed	Jan-21	2,000,000	2.50%
Cambridgeshire County Council	Fixed	Feb-21	2,000,000	1.45%
Southern Housing Group	Fixed	Mar-21	5,000,000	1.60%
Goldman Sachs	MMF		2,030,000	Variable
LGIM	MMF		1,500,000	Variable
CCLA	Property fund		2,000,000	3.59%
GRAND TOTAL			79,530,000	

Note – these do not reconcile to table 1 figures seen in appendix c and d as these are original investment levels whereas the values in table 1 are the fair values of investments held.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Basis point (BP)	1/100th of 1%, i.e. 0.01%
Base rate	Minimum lending rate of a bank or financial institution in the UK.
Benchmark	A measure against which the investment policy or performance of a fund manager can be compared.
Bill of Exchange	A non-interest-bearing written order used primarily in international trade that binds one party to pay a fixed sum of money to another party at a predetermined future date.
Callable Deposit	A deposit placed with a bank or building society at a set rate for a set amount of time. However, the borrower has the right to repay the funds on pre agreed dates, before maturity. This decision is based on how market rates have moved since the deal was agreed. If rates have fallen the likelihood of the deposit being repaid rises, as cheaper money can be found by the borrower.
[Cash] Fund Management	Fund management is the management of an investment portfolio of cash on behalf of a private client or an institution, the receipts and distribution of dividends and interest, and all other administrative work in connection with the portfolio.
Certificate of Deposit (CD)	Evidence of a deposit with a specified bank or building society repayable on a fixed date. They are negotiable instruments and have a secondary market; therefore the holder of a CD is able to sell it to a third party before the maturity of the CD.
Commercial Paper	Short-term obligations with maturities ranging from 2 to 270 days issued by banks, corporations and other borrowers. Such instruments are unsecured and usually discounted, although some may be interest bearing.
Corporate Bond	Strictly speaking, corporate bonds are those issued by companies. However, the term is used to cover all bonds other than those issued by governments in their own currencies and includes issues by companies, supranational organisations and government agencies.
Counterparty	Another (or the other) party to an agreement or other market contract (e.g. lender/borrower/writer of a swap/etc.)
Credit Default Swap (CDS)	A swap designed to transfer the credit exposure of fixed income products between parties. The buyer of a credit swap receives credit protection, whereas the seller of the swap guarantees the credit worthiness of the product. By doing this, the risk of default is transferred from the holder of the fixed income security to the seller of the swap.

Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	The amount the council has to borrow to fund its capital commitments.
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.
CLG	[Department for] Communities and Local Government.
Derivative	A contract whose value is based on the performance of an underlying financial asset, index or other investment, e.g. an option is a derivative because its value changes in relation to the performance of an underlying stock.
Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF)	Deposit Account offered by the Debt Management Office, guaranteed by the UK government
European Central Bank (ECB)	European Central Bank – sets the central interest rates in the EMU area. The ECB determines the targets itself for its interest rate setting policy; this is the keep inflation within a band of 0 to 2%. It does not accept that monetary policy is to be used to manage fluctuations in unemployment and growth caused by the business cycle.
European and Monetary Union (EMU)	The Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) is an umbrella term for the group of policies aimed at converging the economies of all member states of the European Union.
Equity	A share in a company with limited liability. It generally enables the holder to share in the profitability of the company through dividend payments and capital appreciation. Equity values can decrease as well as increase.
Forward Deal	The act of agreeing today to deposit funds with an institution for an agreed time limit, on an agreed future date, at an agreed rate.
Forward Deposits	Same as forward dealing (above).
Fiscal Policy	The government policy on taxation and welfare payments.
GDP	Gross Domestic Product.
[UK] Gilt	Registered UK government securities giving the investor an absolute commitment from the government to honour the debt that those securities represent.
LIBID	London inter-bank bid rate
LIBOR	London inter-bank offered rate.

Money Market Fund	A well rated, highly diversified pooled investment vehicle whose assets mainly comprise of short-term instruments. It is very similar to a unit trust, however in a MMF.
Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)	Government body that sets the bank rate (commonly referred to as being base rate). Their primary target is to keep inflation within plus or minus 1% of a central target of 2% in two years time from the date of the monthly meeting of the committee. Their secondary target is to support the government in maintaining high and stable levels of growth and employment.
Other Bond Funds	Pooled funds investing in a wide range of bonds.
PWLB	Public Works Loan Board.
QE	Quantitative Easing.
Retail Price Index	Measurement of the monthly change in the average level of prices at the retail level weighted by the average expenditure pattern of the average person.
Sovereign Issues (excl UK Gilts)	Bonds issued or guaranteed by nation states, but excluding UK government bonds.
Supranational Bonds	Bonds issued by supranational bodies, e.g. European Investment Bank. The bonds – also known as Multilateral Development Bank bonds – are generally AAA rated and behave similarly to gilts, but pay a higher yield (“spread”) given their relative illiquidity when compared with gilts.
Treasury Bill	Treasury bills are short-term debt instruments issued by the UK or other governments. They provide a return to the investor by virtue of being issued at a discount to their final redemption value.

Cabinet Report



Listening Learning Leading

Report of Head of Finance

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To: CABINET on 5 December 2019

To: Council on 19 December 2019

Council tax base 2020/21

Recommendations

1. That 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 2020/21 be approved
2. 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 2020/21 be 57,848.5
3. 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 2020/21 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 2019

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to ask Cabinet to recommend the council tax base for 2020/21 to Council for approval.

Corporate Objectives

2. The calculation of the tax base is a legal requirement and an essential part of the tax setting process which helps to achieve the council's corporate objectives.

Background

3. Before the council tax can be set by the council, a calculation has to be made of the council tax base, which is an estimate of the taxable resources for the district as a whole and for each parish area.
4. The council tax base for the district has to be notified to Oxfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner by 31 January 2020. Each parish and town council is also notified of the figure for its area.
5. The legislation requires that the council tax base is approved by full council or a non-executive body with delegated powers. No such delegation exists, so cabinet is therefore asked to recommend to council the schedule set out in **Appendix 1** as the council tax base for the district as a whole and for each parish area.

Calculation of the tax base

6. The starting point for the calculation is the total number of dwellings and their council tax band.
7. The council then allows for the following information, for each band:
 - (a) dwellings which will be entirely exempt so no tax is payable (e.g. those occupied entirely by students)
 - (b) dwellings which will attract a 25 per cent reduction (e.g. those with a single adult occupier)
 - (c) dwellings which will attract a 50 per cent reduction (e.g. those where all of the adult residents qualify for a reduction)
 - (d) dwellings which will be treated as being in a lower band because they have been adapted for a severely disabled person. The regulations provide methodology to take account of the reduction available to those in band A dwellings
 - (e) dwellings which will be on the valuation list but which attract discounts or disablement relief or are exempt, for only part of the year
8. Each band is then converted into "band D equivalents" by applying the factor laid down by legislation. For example, a band A dwelling is multiplied by 2/3 to arrive at the band D equivalent figure, whilst a band H dwelling is multiplied by two. All these are then added together to give a total of band D equivalents.
9. A final adjustment is required to allow for non-collection. The council is required to decide what its collection rate is likely to be and apply this to its council tax base. For the 2019/20 tax the council assumed 98 per cent would eventually be collected and it is proposed to use 98 per cent again in 2020/21.

Taxbase for 2020/21

10. Based on the assumptions detailed above the council tax base for 2020/21 is 57,848.5.

11. Similar calculations are required for each parish in order to calculate the proportion of the district's tax base which relates to its area. A schedule of the tax base for each parish is set out in **Appendix 1**.
12. To calculate the council tax amounts payable per property band for the council, its council tax requirement (i.e. the amount of council tax to be raised) is divided by the Band D equivalent (taxbase). This will be finalised during January and February, culminating in the council tax being set by council on 13 February 2020 (this date is subject to the council being notified of the major precepting authorities' council tax requirements).

Financial Implications

13. These are set out in the body of the report.

Legal Implications

14. These are set out in the body of the report.

Risks

15. The council's methodology for calculating the taxbase involves basing the calculation on actual dwellings at a certain point in time, rather than forecasting on potential new dwellings that may be built in the future. Because of this the risk exposure is considered to be low.

Background Papers

None

PARISH COUNCIL TAX BASES - 2020-21

PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL	NUMBER OF DWELLINGS 2020-21	PARISH TAX BASE 2020-21	PARISH TAX BASE 2019-20	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL	NUMBER OF DWELLINGS 2020-21	PARISH TAX BASE 2020-21	PARISH TAX BASE 2019-20
Adwell	14	13.2	13.3	Sandford on Thames	581	492.7	491.7
Aston Rowant	350	436.7	431.0	Shiplake	707	975.5	969.9
Aston Tirrold & Upthorpe	225	267.6	266.5	Shirburn	55	59.8	57.7
Beckley & Stowood	252	280.2	279.3	Sonning Common	1,665	1,652.5	1,606.0
Benson	1,836	1,781.8	1,721.3	South Moreton	132	129.9	125.9
Berinsfield	1,104	659.0	657.9	South Stoke	220	226.9	225.2
Berrick Salome	124	166.5	167.9	Stadhampton	326	331.0	322.6
Binfield Heath	287	326.3	320.9	Stanton St John	191	223.6	217.3
Bix & Assendon	259	331.3	329.7	Stoke Row	277	333.8	335.5
Brightwell Baldwin	83	106.2	104.2	Stoke Talmage	25	31.3	29.1
Brightwell cum Sotwell	622	658.2	656.1	Swyncombe	117	140.1	137.9
Britwell Salome	87	102.8	100.9	Sydenham	148	163.6	161.2
Chalgrove	1,138	1,069.8	1,065.1	Tetsworth	296	310.4	305.4
Checkendon	215	244.5	238.0	Thame	5,548	4,828.6	4,691.6
Chinnor	2,847	2,641.5	2,512.8	Tiddington with Albury	278	262.8	262.8
Cholsey	1,738	1,540.3	1,509.3	Toot Baldon	58	69.5	69.8
Clifton Hampden	254	285.0	281.7	Towersey	181	186.0	184.8
Crowell	47	56.4	58.7	Wallingford	3,724	3,067.2	3,021.6
Crowmarsh	709	681.6	680.9	Warborough	441	493.6	480.9
Cuddesdon & Denton	203	170.0	164.9	Waterperry with Thomley	83	92.0	86.3
Culham	174	182.5	180.2	Waterstock	40	45.9	46.5
Cuxham with Easington	60	61.9	62.0	Watlington	1,233	1,172.8	1,165.6
Didcot	12,534	9,710.6	9,393.0	West Hagbourne	112	121.7	120.2
Dorchester	475	546.3	559.8	Wheatfield	11	14.6	14.1
Drayton St Leonard	118	131.2	130.1	Wheatley	1,917	1,765.4	1,748.5
East Hagbourne	496	508.9	506.9	Whitchurch on Thames	338	411.7	406.9
Elsfield	48	56.1	54.7	Woodcote	1,051	1,039.0	1,037.5
Ewelme	426	367.3	362.2	Woodeaton	29	38.0	38.0
Eye & Dunsden	148	181.2	182.3				
Forest Hill with Shotover	413	373.0	349.1	TOTAL	61,432	57,848.5	56,793.3
Garsington	774	686.9	690.3				
Goring	1,545	1,712.3	1,687.3				
Goring Heath	498	594.6	592.4				
Great Haseley	244	254.1	254.3				
Great Milton	340	312.2	307.5				
Harpsden	156	220.5	222.3				
Henley on Thames	5,903	5,828.2	5,745.6				
Highmoor	135	164.2	163.7				
Holton	162	189.5	180.7				
Horspath	618	616.6	609.3				
Ipsden	157	170.2	169.4				
Kidmore End	533	682.7	681.8				
Lewknor	290	303.5	305.6				
Little Milton	206	215.6	218.2				
Little Wittenham	28	32.4	33.4				
Long Wittenham	362	346.6	352.3				
Mapledurham	130	126.9	126.0				
Marsh Baldon	115	122.4	119.9				
Moulsford	217	250.1	248.1				
Nettlebed	340	360.1	358.9				
Newington	47	60.7	60.1				
North Moreton	156	190.9	192.0				
Nuffield	221	240.4	234.7				
Nuneham Courtenay	98	101.2	100.4				
Pishill with Stonor	143	189.3	186.4				
Pyrton	92	115.2	113.1				
Rotherfield Greys	156	204.0	208.0				
Rotherfield Peppard	696	939.4	930.4				

Joint Council report



Report of Chief Executive

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To: VALE COUNCIL

DATE: 18 December 2019

To: SOUTH COUNCIL

DATE: 19 December 2019

Designating the councils' section 151 chief finance officer

Recommendation

That Council

- (1) designates Simon Hewings, the interim Head of Finance, as the council's section 151 chief finance officer from 23 December 2019;
- (2) authorises the head of legal and democratic to make any consequential changes required to the council's constitution to reflect this change.

Purpose of Report

1. Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires each council to designate one of its officers to have responsibility for the proper administration of its financial affairs.
2. This report recommends that Simon Hewings, recently appointed as the interim head of finance by the Joint Staff Committee at its meeting on 19 November, be designated as the "section 151 officer" for each council from 23 December 2019.

Corporate Objectives

3. The section 151 officer has overall responsibility for the entire financial affairs of the councils, and therefore the satisfactory discharge of that responsibility contributes to all the corporate objectives of the two councils. However, its primary focus is on the 'effective management of resources' objective.

Background

4. The “section 151 officer” (also sometimes referred to as the “chief finance officer” in regulations) is one of three statutory officers at the councils. (The other two being the “Head of Paid Service” and the “Monitoring Officer”). Every unitary, county and district council must designate these three statutory officers.
5. William Jacobs, the incumbent Head of Finance and section 151 officer, will retire from the councils on 30 May 2020. To ensure resilience and effective handover, the chief executive agreed that William Jacobs will step down from the head of finance and section 151 officer positions when an interim replacement has been appointed.
6. Following advertisement of the post Simon Hewings was appointed to the post of interim head of finance by the Joint Staff Committee at its meeting on 19 November 2019. Simon Hewings will commence his new role on 23 December 2019. No objection was raised from cabinet members.

Options

7. The councils could choose to designate another officer as section 151 officer. It is a statutory requirement that the section 151 officer must be a suitably experienced professionally qualified accountant. Whilst there are other qualified accountants employed at the two councils the interim head of finance is the most experienced and the only one that has previously acted as a deputy section 151 officer. There would be greater operational risk from designating another officer into this role, although for resilience and succession planning, additional professionally qualified officers will be designated as ‘deputy section 151 officer(s)’ by the section 151 officer following their appointment.
8. Each council could designate a different section 151 officer. This option would be less efficient given the high degree of joint-working as two officers would need to be involved on financial issues that currently require only one. Such an arrangement could also lead to confusion and disruption if the two section 151 officers do not agree on a particular matter, reducing the overall resilience of the finance team. This option would also lead to significant additional costs being incurred by the councils, as it would require a complete reorganisation and restructure of the councils’ finance team.

Financial Implications

9. There are no direct financial consequences associated with this recommendation as there will be no change in the affected officer’s remuneration but see paragraph 8 for the implications of other options.

Legal Implications

10. The designation of a section 151 officer is a statutory duty for each council.

Risks

11. The objective of section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 is to reduce financial risk by requiring a designated officer to be responsible for the proper

administration of the council's financial affairs. This should reduce the risk of financial malpractice, poor financial planning, fraud, waste and loss.

12. The objective of requiring a professionally qualified and experienced individual to fulfil that role is to promote sound financial management and reduce the risk of financial failure.
13. The interim head of finance is an experienced professionally qualified accountant who has acted as deputy section 151 officer. His designation represents a low risk.

Conclusion

14. Following the announcement of the retirement in May 2020 of William Jacobs, the current Head of Finance and section 151 officer, the councils have appointed Simon Hewings as interim Head of Finance. The councils are recommended to designate the interim head of finance as the section 151 officer for each council. The proposed designation will require some minor consequential changes to the councils' constitution. The councils are asked to authorise the head of legal and democratic to make these changes.

Background Papers

None

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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