

# Council



Listening Learning Leading

Contact Officer: Steven Corrigan

Tel: 07717 274704

E-mail: [steven.corrigan@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:steven.corrigan@southandvale.gov.uk)

Date: 4 October 2023

Website: [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk)

## Summons to attend a meeting of Council

to be held on

**THURSDAY 12 OCTOBER 2023 AT 6.00 PM**

at

**DIDCOT CIVIC HALL, BRITWELL ROAD, DIDCOT, OX11 7JN**

Alternative formats of this publication are available on request. These include large print, Braille, audio cassette or CD, and email. For this or any other special requirements (such as access facilities) please contact the officer named on this agenda. Please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Patrick Arran  
Head of Legal and Democratic

Note: Please remember to sign the attendance register.

# Agenda

## 1 Apologies for absence

To record apologies for absence.

## 2 Minutes (Pages 7 - 18)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the Council minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2023 and the extraordinary meeting held on 29 August 2023.

## 3 Declarations of interest

To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests and non-registrable interests or any conflicts of interest in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

## 4 Urgent business and chair's announcements

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

## 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 Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Neighbourhood Development Plan

To consider the recommendations of the Leader of council, made on 29 September 2023, regarding the neighbourhood plan for Brightwell-cum-Sotwell.

The Individual Cabinet Member Decision is available [here](#).

### Recommendation:

1. To make the Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Neighbourhood Development Plan Review with the modifications specified in the Examiner's report.
2. To delegate to the Head of Policy and Programmes, in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member and in agreement with the Qualifying Body, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Parish Council, the correction of any spelling, grammatical, typographical or factual errors together with any improvements from a presentational perspective.

## 8 Section 106 (S106) Request - South Oxfordshire District Council Leisure Facilities - Didcot Wave Gym Equipment

At its meeting on 28 September 2023, Cabinet considered a [report](#) covering a request from South Oxfordshire District Council's Leisure Facilities team to release funds of £103,139.77 from two S106 contributions towards gym equipment at Didcot Wave pool and gym.

Cabinet resolved to support the request and recommend that Council create a budget in the approved capital programme for the Didcot Wave gym equipment project to be funded by the S106 contributions.

**RECOMMENDATION:** to create a budget for £103,000 in the approved capital programme for the Didcot Wave gym equipment project, to be funded by the S106 contributions set out in the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 28 September 2023.

## 9 Report of the leader of the council

To receive the report of the leader of council.

## 10 Questions on notice

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

### A. Question from Councillor Gawrysiak to Councillor Filipova-Rivers, Cabinet member for community well being

Henley Town Council has recently extended a loan facility of £100,000 to the Henley Kenton Theatre because it needs time to restructure and get back on its feet. This came about as a legacy of Covid and some management issues. South Oxfordshire District Council currently budgets around £470,000 per annum, with a total six year bill of £3,346,000, to operate its own arts centre Cornerstone, a district council owned building, which is for the benefit of Didcot and the wider region.

Cornerstone costs						
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cornerstone	482,969	599,052	599,478	493,476	526,385	571,136
Café	(12,422)	(7,399)	(1,980)	61,723	61,724	(16,142)
<b>Total</b>	<b>470,547</b>	<b>591,653</b>	<b>597,498</b>	<b>555,199</b>	<b>588,109</b>	<b>554,994</b>

Currently the district council makes no contribution to other theatres around the district in Thame, Wallingford and Henley. I believe that it is fundamentally unfair that the district council tax base is disproportionately spent on Cornerstone as a subsidy for the Arts, and other theatres across the district get nothing. We should equally support cultural life across South Oxfordshire and, budgets permitting, financially support other arts venues.

As a first stage in the process to address this inequality of funding, would the Cabinet member agree to write to Didcot Town Council (Population 35,000 to see if

they would be willing to make an ongoing financial contribution to support Cornerstone in the future?

As a second Stage, would the cabinet member be willing to ask officers, as part of the Budget setting process, to propose a suitable grant structure for the Theatres in Henley, Thame and Wallingford for consideration as part of the wider budget?

### **B. Question from Councillor Rawlins to Councillor Simpson, Cabinet member for planning**

It is very important to monitor the housing mix policy in our current local plan to ensure new residential development provides an appropriate mix of one, two, three and four bed (and above) housing for our residents. A swathe of household extensions and permitted development (PD) can increase the number of bedrooms to a home and change the mix of our market housing stock over time; thus limiting the availability of more modest housing stock and thereby increasing prices and rents.

The 2021 census data provides recent data about our housing stock and the impact of actual cumulative changes in that stock. It would appear that overall the change in housing stock materially diverged from planning policies under previous administrations of this council, particularly as the vast majority of new housing that is being delivered will be on sites granted permission before LP2035 was approved.

What steps can be taken to ensure we achieve the right housing mix for our residents in the future? To comply with our policy, it would seem that future permissions will need to change applied mix for a number of years in order to correct the past cumulative and ongoing current divergence caused by extensions?

## **11 Motions on notice**

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

- (1) Motion to be proposed by Councillor Robb, seconded by Councillor Filipova-Rivers:

Council's Pay Policy Statement approved on 16 February 2023, ensures that all directly employed staff receive at least the Real Living Wage as annually defined by the Living Wage Foundation. The Real Living Wage is currently £10.90 an hour and will be updated on 24 October of this year.

The payment of at least the Real Living Wage to our employees is one way of ensuring that all our suppliers and residents are aware that we recognise the importance of the Real Living Wage in helping to reduce in-work poverty.

However, Council is currently unable to become accredited as a Real Living Wage employer as it does not have a clear commitment, or plan in place, to ensure that all the contracts it awards to third parties require that those companies are committed to paying, as a minimum, the Real Living Wage.

All our major contracts are joint arrangements between Vale of White Horse and

South Oxfordshire District Councils.

Whilst Council recognises that it cannot simply change existing contracts, requiring payment of at least the Real Living Wage is something we are able to address in future procurements and contracts.

To demonstrate its commitment to the Real Living Wage and secure accreditation as a Real Living Wage employer, Council confirms its belief that:

- no Council employee, or employee of its third party contractors, should be employed on less than the Real Living Wage.

Council therefore asks:

1. The Chief Executive to continue to engage with Unison, as the Council's recognised trade union, to ensure that this position is maintained going forward in respect of all employees.
2. The Chief Executive to prepare a report for Cabinet, outlining the steps that are required for our Council to secure accreditation as a Real Living Wage accredited employer.
3. The Chief Executive to include, within this report, proposals to implement a requirement on all future contracted providers to pay at least the Real Living Wage to all their staff throughout the duration of the contract, identifying any likely costs associated with this.
4. Cabinet to consider the report when prepared and, should its recommendations be approved by both South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse, authorise the Chief Executive to work with colleagues to implement its recommendations as soon as practicable.
5. The Chief Executive to bring to the attention of all existing third parties who currently provide services directly on behalf of the Council, our view that all employers should, as a minimum, pay the Real Living Wage to their staff and seek an update on their companies' position in relation to this matter.
6. The Chief Executive to update Council on progress towards its Accreditation as a Real Living Wage Employer when the next Annual Pay Policy Statement is brought before it.

(2) Motion to be proposed by Councillor Giles, seconded by Councillor Van Mierlo:

Council notes:

1. That in 2019 it declared a 'climate emergency' along with the ambition of becoming a net zero council by 2025, and a net zero district by 2030, in anticipation of a concerted national response to the climate emergency, and in 2021 declared an 'ecological emergency', following ongoing global heating and drastic declines in biodiversity, concerns which seriously harm the natural environment and place additional burdens on local communities.
2. That Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire (PaZCO) stated in its 2021 report that 'all net-zero pathways will involve'...'a major programme of retrofit for existing homes and non domestic buildings'...and 'the phase out of gas boilers and fossil-fuelled modes of transport'.

3. That the UK Government has now regrettably reduced its climate targets - delayed the ban on installing oil, LPG and solid fuel boilers by nine years, delayed the phase out of sales of new internal combustion engine cars by five years, and abandoned the energy efficiency requirements on private landlords - which will make it incredibly difficult for the district to reach its ambition of becoming net zero by 2030.

4. That net zero initiatives can save residents money, for instance the upfront costs of home insulation can be returned to consumers in lower energy bills within a very short timeframe.

5. That delaying net zero targets harms business and industry certainty, and therefore impacts investment in green technology, skills, and infrastructure.

Council resolves to:

6. Ask CEEAC to consider the impact of the UK Government's u-turn on net zero on the council and district, and to review the 2025 and 2030 net zero ambitions and the climate action plan during the process of reviewing the CAP and in the production of the next Climate and Nature Recovery Action Plan in 2024, and to make recommendations to Cabinet in this regard.

7. Ask the Leader to write to the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, requesting a regulatory impact assessment of the outcome of their policy changes, and to seek an assurance and rationale for how they consider these policy changes to be compliant with their statutory obligations to meet current and future carbon budgets.

Patrick Arran  
Head of Legal and Democratic