

Council



Listening Learning Leading

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Date: 4 October 2023

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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

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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)
Total	470,547	591,653	597,498	555,199	588,109	554,994

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

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Council



Listening Learning Leading

Held on Thursday 13 July 2023 at 6.00 pm
Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot, OX11 7JN

Present:

Councillors: David Turner (Chair), Kellie Hinton (Vice-Chair), Ken Arlett, Pieter-Paul Barker, Robin Bennett, David Bretherton, Sam Casey-Rerhaye, Mike Giles, Ali Gordon-Creed, Georgina Heritage, Sam James-Lawrie, Katharine Keats-Rohan, Mocky Khan, Axel Macdonald, Denise Macdonald, Ben Manning, Zia Mohammed, James Norman, Andrea Powell, Leigh Rawlins, David Rouane, Ed Sadler, Ian Snowdon, Andrew Tinsley, Freddie Van Mierlo and Tony Worgan

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors James Barlow, Tim Bearder, Sue Cooper, Perter Dragonetti, Maggie Filipova-Rivers, Stefan Gawrysiak, Kate Gregory, Alexandrine Kantor, Jo Robb and Anne-Marie Simpson

Officers: Steven Corrigan, Democratic Services Manager, Simon Hewings, Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer, Janet Kealey, Solicitor - Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer and Mark Stone, Chief Executive

14 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the annual meeting of Council held on 18 May 2023 and the special meeting of Council held on 12 June 2023 as correct records and agree that the Chair sign them as such.

15 Declarations of interest

Councillor Arlett declared an interest in respect of agenda items 8 and 9 as Chair of the Henley and District Housing Trust. The nature of the interest did not prevent him from taking part in the debate or voting on both items.

16 Urgent business and chair's announcements

The Chair and Vice-Chair provided details of the engagements they had attended since the last Council meeting.

17 Public participation

Two members of the public had registered to ask a question as set out below.

- A. Mr Curtis had submitted the following question to the Leader of the council but was unable to attend the meeting.

“This Council is currently contributing to the £120,000 cost of the review and update of the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan, which is being led by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP).

In the past, the Strategic Economic Plan has been largely developed in a silo and signed off behind closed doors but has gone on to have significant impacts including influencing housing targets and the contents of Local Plans, as well as broader strategies such as transport.

In the light of our climate and biodiversity emergencies, we know a step-change is required in how we consider these issues. For example:

- The House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Committee states that behavioural change is essential for achieving climate and environment goals, and for delivering wider benefits;
- The BEIS Independent Net Zero Review, published on 13th January states, ‘None of this will happen without a step change in the government’s approach to delivering net zero’; and the
- Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map & Action Plan Final Report.

The size of the challenge to achieve net zero carbon by 2050 at latest will require a considerable step change in activity. We need to embed climate change into decision making across Oxfordshire’s local authorities.

But indications from the series of workshops led by OxLEP suggest that:

- The primary aim remains economic growth, with the environment, net zero and wellbeing featuring as issues to be managed rather than front and centre.
- The timetable appears to be focused on speed (getting it done and dusted by June initially, but now the autumn) which apparently does not allow time for public consultation.
- Overall, the level of engagement has been low and primarily focused on members of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, including the universities and OxLEP. There has been very little representation from the diverse Oxfordshire population, including those economic and socially disadvantaged communities that might be viewed as having the most to gain from a robust Strategic Economic Plan.

Given the above, can the Leader:

- a) Explain why the SEP review is being pushed through at such speed and without meaningful engagement with relevant communities?

b) Provide reassurance that the draft new Strategic Economic Plan will at the very least go through a full Scrutiny process and be brought to a full Council meeting for approval, prior to the Leader voting on it at an OxLEP Board Meeting?"

Councillor Bennett, Cabinet member for economic development and regeneration, responded as follows:

"I am answering this question as the cabinet member for economic development and regeneration in recognition that the Leader has a personal responsibility as an OxLEP Director and therefore does not represent the council at OxLEP Board.

- a) The Strategic Economic Plan is a document wholly owned and developed by OxLEP and South Oxfordshire District Council has no remit in the development of the SEP, other than through the various workshops attended by officers and members. The question of engagement is one for OxLEP to respond to as the owner of the SEP and clearly South Oxfordshire would support the need for wide engagement with our communities in development of any strategy.
- b) This Council has not financially contributed to the SEP, nor will not be seeking to formally review or adopt the document. I understand OxLEP will not be providing the Council with an opportunity to review or comment on the document prior to it being presented to FOP in July. The Future Oxfordshire Partnership has its own scrutiny panel and I hope that this document will be examined through that process".

B. Mr Salmons asked the following question:

"Many Councillors will by now be familiar with the Great Western Park depot scandal — the shameful scheme advanced by this Council to tarmac over land designated for a wildflower meadow in Didcot and convert it into a permanent grounds maintenance depot for South and Vale.

The public outcry generated by this proposal when it came to light earlier this year made it crystal clear the public are opposed in principle to this scheme, but by all accounts the Council is pressing ahead regardless.

When the original planning application was withdrawn, the planning agent acting on behalf of the Council stated: "It is our clients intention to resubmit the application in due course following a period of engagement with local residents [...]"

The latest SODC Climate Action Plan performance report gave a hint as to what that engagement might look like. It stated: "Due to the high profile and sensitive nature of the site, it was agreed to withdraw the planning application and look at a more thorough comms campaign post elections [...]"

Could the Cabinet Member for Finance and Property Assets explain to the residents of Didcot how the Council is able to find millions upon millions of pounds to build itself a plush new office on the most valuable land in their town, but is apparently no longer able to afford rent on an industrial unit for their grounds maintenance service, and must therefore deprive the town's residents of the wildflower meadow they were promised when they purchased their homes?"

Councillor Barker undertook to provide a written response to the question.

18 Petitions

None.

19 Update on the council's Information Technology infrastructure

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 3 July 2023, on the current discussions relating to the council's Information Technology Infrastructure.

Councillor Powell, Cabinet member responsible, advised that Cabinet had agreed to move forward with the segregation of the council's Microsoft 365 tenancy and create a stand-alone environment for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils in advance of the end of the Capita contract in 2025. She undertook to provide a response on whether this course of action could bring forward the termination of the contract.

RESOLVED: that a supplementary estimate of £326,000 be added to the 2023/24 revenue budget, funded as set out in the head of corporate services' report to Cabinet on 3 July 2023.

20 Delivery and management arrangements for council-provided Local Authority Housing Fund

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 3 July 2023, on the work being undertaken in relation to providing homes under Government schemes.

In the absence of the Cabinet member, Councillor Filipova-Rivers, Councillor Bennett, Cabinet member for economic development and regeneration introduced this item. He reported that the government scheme offered grants to councils to provide housing for Afghans and Ukrainians in the district that were at risk of homelessness. Approximately 40 per cent of the cost of purchasing the properties would be grant funded with the council funding the remainder. The scheme supported the council's housing strategy and would provide secure accommodation at lower revenue costs than alternative housing provision. Thereafter the homes would belong to the council.

The council would need to temporarily outsource repairs and maintenance of these homes before a resource was available in-house.

RESOLVED: To proceed the allocation of a capital budget envelope of £4.6 million, being the council's share of the purchase costs of properties bought under the Local Authority Housing Fund scheme.

21 Local Authority Housing Fund 2

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 3 July 2023, on additional grant funding to support the council's refugee and general homelessness accommodation programme.

In the absence of the Cabinet member, Councillor Filipova-Rivers, Councillor Bennett, Cabinet member for economic development and regeneration introduced this item. The additional scheme would further support the provision of housing for the council's refugee

accommodation programme. However, unlike the first phase, the Local Authority Housing Fund 2 also allowed the council to utilise the accommodation for general homelessness use and would deliver a further four homes.

RESOLVED: to add £1.92 million to the approved capital programme, part funded by Local Authority Housing Fund 2 funding of £768,000 to purchase four homes under this scheme.

22 Appointment to vacant Planning Committee position

Council was invited to appoint a member to fill the vacant position on the Planning Committee.

RESOLVED:

1. To allocate the seat to the Green Group.
2. To appoint Councillor Casey-Rerhaye to the seat.
3. To authorise the head of legal and democratic to make the appointment to the vacant substitute place in accordance with the wishes of the Green Group leader.

23 Report of the leader of the council

Councillor Rouane, Leader of the council made a statement on the proposed closure of railway station ticket offices – available [here](#). He would write to Great Western Railway to raise concerns that the proposed closure of ticket offices at railway stations in South Oxfordshire would affect vulnerable passengers and put people off using public transport. He urged others to respond to the consultation.

24 Questions on notice

No questions had been submitted by members.

25 Motions on notice

In the absence of Councillor Robb, Councillor Powell moved, and Councillor Van Mierlo seconded, the motion as set out on the agenda at item 13.

After debate, and being put to the vote, the motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED:

That Council notes that the Environment Agency, as the navigation authority, has responsibility for the maintenance of its assets along the length of the River Thames, including pump-out stations and footbridges. The River Thames and the Thames Path National Trail are key contributors to the visitor economy of South Oxfordshire and are beloved by residents.

Council also notes that:

1. Two major footbridges along the Thames Path National Trail in South Oxfordshire (Benson Weir and Marsh Lock) will be closed for some years for important safety repairs;

2. Residents and river users report that pump-out stations, used by boats to legally discharge their waste, including at Shiplake Lock, have been periodically out of order such that some boaters have been forced to discharge their waste directly into the river;
3. The Environment Agency has seen its funding slashed in real-terms by around one-third since 2010.

Council asks the leader to write to the Environment Agency to:

1. Seek information and assurances regarding the safety of footbridges along the Thames in South Oxfordshire and assurances that the bridges that are closed will be repaired and reopened as a matter of utmost urgency recognising the importance of a safe and accessible Thames Path to our residents and visitors;
2. Find out about the state of pump-out stations along the length of the River Thames in South Oxfordshire and what contingencies are in place for when a pump-out station is out of repair;
3. Ask the EA for assurances regarding the maintenance of pump-out stations to ensure our river is not further degraded with untreated sewage and boat waste.

Council also asks the leader to write to the Secretary of State to raise the above concerns and ask that funding for the Environment Agency is increased to allow it to properly perform its functions and maintain its assets appropriately.

The meeting closed at 7.02pm

Chair

Date

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Minutes



Listening Learning Leading

OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE Council

**Held on Tuesday 29 August 2023 at 6.00 pm
Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot, OX11 7JN**

Present:

Councillors: David Turner (Chair), Ken Arlett, Pieter-Paul Barker, James Barlow, Robin Bennett, David Bretherton, Sam Casey-Rerhaye, Sue Cooper, Peter Dragonetti, Maggie Filipova-Rivers, Mike Giles, Ali Gordon-Creed, Georgina Heritage, Alexandrine Kantor, Katharine Keats-Rohan, Mocky Khan, Axel Macdonald, Denise Macdonald, Ben Manning, Zia Mohammed, James Norman, Andrea Powell, Leigh Rawlins, Jo Robb, David Rouane, Anne-Marie Simpson, Ed Sadler, Ian Snowdon, Freddie van Mierlo and Tony Worgan

Officers: Patrick Arran, Head of Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer, Steven Corrigan, Democratic Services Manager, Ore Idowu, Trainee Solicitor and Mark Stone, Chief Executive

Also present: Bill Cotton, Corporate Director Environment and Place at Oxfordshire County Council.

26 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bearder, Gawrysiak, Gregory, James-Lawrie, Hinton and Tinsley.

27 Declarations of interest

None.

Members were advised that, whilst members who are Oxfordshire County Councillors will have registered their interests as Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under employment, the matter before Council did not directly relate to the DPI and they were therefore entitled to take part.

In addition, due to the matter for debate, there was no issue with members taking part if they were involved in the Planning and Regulatory Committee decision or had made their views about HIF1 known in either a positive or negative way. Whilst this could be an issue for future decisions relating to the Joint Local Plan, this did not prevent any member from taking part at this meeting.

28 Public participation

The following members of the public addressed Council in opposition to the HIF1 application:

- Robert Harding representing the Campaign for Rural England.
- Greg O’Broin, Chair of Appleford-on-Thames Parish Council and the Neighbouring Parish Council Joint Committed (NPC-JC) which comprises the Parish Councils of Appleford, Sutton Courtenay, Culham, Burcot and Clifton Hampden and Nuneham Courtenay.
- Chris Hancock, member of the Appleford Parish Council Working Group.
- Robert Parker, Chair of Shirburn Parish Council.
- Sarah Nohre, a Green Party Didcot Town Councillor (representing her own views).
- Caroline Baird, representing Culham Parish Council.

They made the following points in respect of the proposed schemes:

- would provide an out-of-date solution which would increase car dependency and car traffic undermining climate change strategies;
- inadequate traffic modelling which did not include induced traffic and assumed traffic would be the same whether or not a new road is built;
- would provide for a road corridor between the A34 and M40 and attract a greater use by HGVs;
- lack of adequate and safe provision for cyclists and pedestrians and shift to public transport;
- fails to address the climate emergency and need to reduce carbon emissions;
- lack of local support for the schemes;
- lack of local decision making following the call in of the application by the Secretary of State;
- schemes will unlock further development and increase congestion;
- detrimental impact on the countryside and farmland.

Ryan Padgett, a Didcot resident, spoke in support of HIF1. He expressed the view that the infrastructure would support the provision of much needed homes to meet current and future demand and would provide for different modes of transport.

29 Impact of the Housing and Infrastructure Fund (HIF1) Schemes Position

The Chair, Councillor Turner, invited Mr Bill Cotton, Corporate Director Environment and Place at Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), to provide Council with an update on the situation from the perspective of Oxfordshire County Council as the applicant. Mr Cotton responded to questions from members. Mr Cotton confirmed that it remained the County Council’s policy to deliver the HIF1 schemes in support of both South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district council local plans. In response to a question, he replied that any decision to withdraw the planning application would be a matter for politicians. The HIF1 funding was time limited and therefore any significant reworking of the planning

application would impact on the availability of funding from Homes England which remained time limited. Oxfordshire County Council did not have the funds to meet the costs of the identified infrastructure if the funding was no longer available.

Council considered the report of the head of policy and programmes which explained the background to the Housing and Infrastructure Fund (HIF1) in relation to South Oxfordshire District Council and invited Council to consider the implications of the recent Oxfordshire County Council planning application process and its consequences for the HIF1 schemes.

Council noted that the county council's Planning and Regulatory Committee had voted against the granting of permission for the HIF1 planning application. The decision notice had not been published. Council also noted that the application had since been 'called-in' by the Secretary of State for the application to be determined by the Planning Inspectorate. Council noted that a public inquiry was scheduled to commence on 5 December 2023

Councillor Rouane moved, and Councillor Bennett seconded the amendment as set out below.

- (a) Council notes the content of this report,
- (b) Council notes the importance of local decision making,
- (c) Council resolves to request that the Leader write to the Secretary of State to raise the importance of the swift determination of the HIF1 planning application made by Oxfordshire County Council,
- (d) Council welcomes that officers will formally request that South Oxfordshire District Council is made party to the inquiry and that the council's views are properly represented, in particular:
 - i The importance of infrastructure funded by HIF1 to the delivery of housing and economic sites allocated in the adopted Local Plan 2035
 - ii South Oxfordshire's target of becoming a net zero district by 2030
 - iii The need for high quality design throughout, as set out in the Design Guide and the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan
 - iv Minimising harmful impact of any scheme on our natural and historic landscape, including the River Thames, and maximising biodiversity
 - v Respecting the views of affected communities including both Didcot and the surrounding villages

The majority of members supported the view that Didcot and the surrounding areas required major infrastructure to support the existing housing and the delivery of future housing and economic growth sites identified in the district council's Local Plan 2035. A number of members expressed a personal view that OCC's Planning and Regulation Committee had good reasons to refuse the planning application on the grounds of design and impact on the environment. It was their view that alternative options existed in terms of the design of the schemes, their environmental impact and provision of alternative transport options to the car.

Members supported the view that it was important that the council had the opportunity to be a party to the inquiry to reinforce its policies and articulate the views of local people from Didcot and the surrounding villages. It was noted that the district council had made submissions in respect of the planning application to balance the need for infrastructure with the council's priorities on climate and biodiversity and its own design guide. It was felt important that these issues are known to the inquiry, namely the council's policies to

become net zero by 2030, to minimise the harmful impact of any scheme on the district's natural and historic landscape and maximise biodiversity.

Some members expressed concern regarding the refusal of planning permission which risked the loss of substantial infrastructure funding to meet the needs of residents and business and a return to speculative planning applications over many years.

Following debate, and being put to the vote, the amendment was declared carried and became the substantive motion.

Councillor Khan moved and Councillor A Macdonald seconded an amendment, set out below, with additional words shown in bold.

- (a) Council notes the content of this report,
- (b) Council notes the importance of local decision making,
- (c) Council resolves to request that the Leader write to the Secretary of State to raise the importance of the swift **positive** determination of the HIF1 planning application made by Oxfordshire County Council,
- (d) This Council explicitly supports HIF1 and requests it is delivered.**
- (e) Council welcomes that officers will formally request that South Oxfordshire District Council is made party to the inquiry and that the council's views are properly represented, in particular:
 - i The importance of infrastructure funded by HIF1 to the delivery of housing and economic sites allocated in the adopted Local Plan 2035
 - ii South Oxfordshire's target of becoming a net zero district by 2030
 - iii The need for high quality design throughout, as set out in the Design Guide and the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan
 - iv. Minimising harmful impact of any scheme on our natural and historic landscape, including the River Thames, and maximising biodiversity
 - v. Respecting the views of affected communities including both Didcot and the surrounding villages

Those members in support of the amendment expressed the view that the additional words emphasised the importance of HIF1 to secure the required infrastructure for Didcot. However, the majority of members opposed the amendment supporting the view that the proposed inclusion of the word positive in (c) was a step too far as it was not within the council's gift to tell the Secretary of State how to deal with the call in. It was also the case that the substantive motion already referenced the council's clear support for HIF1 and also identified other matters that should be brought to the attention of the inquiry.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 68, which provides for a recorded vote if three members request one, the chair called for a recorded vote on the amendment which was declared lost with the voting as follows:

For	Against	Abstain
Members	Members	Members
Ken Arlett	Pieter-Paul Barker	
Mocky Khan	James Barlow	

For	Against	Abstain
Axel Macdonald	Robin Bennett	
Denise Macdonald	David Bretherton	
Ian Snowdon	Sam Casey-Rerhaye	
	Sue Cooper	
	Peter Dragonetti	
	Maggie Filipova-Rivers	
	Mike Giles	
	Ali Gordon-Creed	
	Georgina Heritage	
	Alexandrine Kantor	
	Katharine Keats-Rohan	
	Ben Manning	
	Freddie Van Mierlo	
	Zia Mohammed	
	James Norman	
	Andrea Powell	
	Leigh Rawlins	
	Jo Robb	
	David Rouane	
	Ed Sadler	
	Anne-Marie Simpson	
	David Turner	
	Tony Worgan	
5	25	0

On being put the substantive motion was approved.

RESOLVED: To

- (a) note the content of the report of the head of policy and programmes to the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 29 August 2023,
- (b) note the importance of local decision making,
- (c) request that the Leader write to the Secretary of State to raise the importance of the swift determination of the HIF1 planning application made by Oxfordshire County Council,
- (d) welcome that officers will formally request that South Oxfordshire District Council is made party to the inquiry and that the council's views are properly represented, in particular:
 - i The importance of infrastructure funded by HIF1 to the delivery of housing and economic sites allocated in the adopted Local Plan 2035.
 - ii South Oxfordshire's target of becoming a net zero district by 2030.
 - iii The need for high quality design throughout, as set out in the Design Guide and the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan.
 - iv Minimising harmful impact of any scheme on our natural and historic landscape, including the River Thames, and maximising biodiversity.
 - v Respecting the views of affected communities including both Didcot and the surrounding villages.

The meeting closed at 8:27pm

Chair

Date

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