

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Council



Listening Learning Leading

HELD ON THURSDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2018 AT 6.00 PM

THE FOUNTAIN CONFERENCE CENTRE, HOWBERY PARK,
CROWMARSH GIFFORD

Present:

Jeannette Matelot (Chairman)

Charles Bailey, Joan Bland, Felix Bloomfield, Kevin Bulmer, Nigel Champken-Woods, Steve Connel, John Cotton, Pat Dawe, David Dodds, Stefan Gawrysiak, Elizabeth Gillespie, Will Hall, Tony Harbour, Lorraine Hillier, Elaine Hornsby, Sue Lawson, Lynn Lloyd, Jane Murphy, Caroline Newton, David Nimmo-Smith, Richard Pullen, Bill Service, Robert Simister, Ian Snowdon, Alan Thompson, David Turner, John Walsh and Ian White

Apologies:

Anthony Dearlove, Paul Harrison, Mocky Khan, Imran Lokhon, Anthony Nash and Toby Newman tendered apologies.

Officers:

Steven Corrigan, Matt Gaskin, Simon Hewings, William Jacobs, Margaret Reed, Richard Spraggett (Capita), Mark Stone and Chris Wheeler

70 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2017 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman sign them as such subject to the inclusion of Charles Bailey and Bill Service in the list of apologies.

71 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest

None.

72 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

The Chairman provided housekeeping information.

73 Public participation

The Chairman advised that Mr Crispin Topping had registered to address Council on agenda item 7 – Housing and Growth Deal for Oxfordshire. She would invite him to address Council at that item.

74 Petitions

No petitions were submitted by members of the public.

75 Housing and growth deal for Oxfordshire

Mr Crispin Topping, Chairman of the Steering Group of East Hagbourne Neighbourhood Plan, addressed Council on the Housing and Growth Deal for Oxfordshire (the Deal). He expressed full support for the Deal for the following reasons:

- in return for supporting the development of up to 100,000 new homes across Oxfordshire in the period to 2031 Oxfordshire will benefit from £215 million of Government funding;
- by agreeing to the Deal it will give vital added support to the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) bid by Oxfordshire County Council for key infrastructure around Didcot such as a new Thames Crossing and the science bridge. He considered that if the Deal was rejected Government support for the HIF was unlikely;
- the Joint Statutory Spatial Plan will facilitate much needed, and overdue, joined up policy making across Oxfordshire;
- the prospect of a three year land supply rather than a five year level will allow the district council to take back control over unwanted speculative development currently impacting communities (for East Hagbourne seven applications on unallocated land either approved, in process, or in prospect that could add up to 1000 units tripling the size of the population).

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations made at its meeting on 12 February 2018 on a Housing and Growth Deal for Oxfordshire.

Councillors supported the Deal which would provide much needed funding for infrastructure and affordable housing and provide planning freedoms with the application of a three year, rather than the current five year, land supply. The funding will ensure planned housing is supported by enhanced transport and social infrastructure. Without the Deal a similar number of houses would still be required but without the additional infrastructure funding and support for affordable housing. Not agreeing the Deal may have a negative impact on future prospects of securing funding from government.

In supporting the Deal councillors acknowledged that there are risks (including the ability of the local authorities to work together, resources to deliver the project and changes to national policy). However, the benefits to the county in terms of the additional funding for infrastructure, affordable housing, planning freedoms and economic growth outweighed these and provided an opportunity that should not be forgone.

RESOLVED: to

1. agree to the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal (the Deal) (attached as Appendix 1 to the report of the head of partnership and insight to Cabinet on 12 February 2018);
2. agree the Delivery Plan (attached as Appendix 2 to the head of partnership and insight's report to Cabinet on 12 February 2018) as the basis for the Deal, noting that elements will be updated as detailed work programmes develop;
3. authorise the chief executive, in consultation with the Leader and the Growth Board, to make minor changes to the Delivery Plan that may be required to secure agreement with Government;
4. authorise the chief executive, in consultation with Leader and the Growth Board, to agree the Year 1 affordable housing delivery programme, phasing and processes specified in the Delivery Plan;
5. appoint Oxfordshire County Council as the accountable body in respect of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal;
6. authorise the chief executive, in consultation with the Leader and the Growth Board, to review the terms of reference of the Growth Board and agree any amendments and any appropriate inter-authority agreements required to support the Delivery of the Housing and Growth Deal;
7. authorise the chief executive, in consultation with the Leader to take any other decisions arising from agreement to the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, until the revised terms of reference of the Growth Board are in place; and
8. agree to participate in the preparation of a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (JSSP) for Oxfordshire in accordance with the timescales set out in the Delivery Plan and in accordance with Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the milestones for progressing the JSSP being contingent on Government delivering the Planning Freedoms and Flexibilities as described in the Delivery Plan.

76 Treasury management mid-year monitoring 2017/18

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 12 February 2018, on the treasury management activities for the first six months of 2017/18.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 29 January 2018 and had not recommended any adjustments to the strategy as a result of the first six months' activities. That committee and Cabinet had concluded that the treasury management activities had operated within the agreed parameters set out in the approved treasury management strategy.

RESOLVED: to approve the head of finance's treasury management mid-year monitoring report 2017/18 to Cabinet on 12 February 2018.

77 Treasury management strategy 2018/19

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 12 February 2018, on the council's treasury management strategy and investment strategy for 2018/19 to 2020/21. An addendum which set out changes to paragraph 11 of the report proposing changes to the maturity period and adjustments to the total investment levels was circulated prior to the meeting.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee considered the report at its meeting on 29 January 2018 and recommended that the head of finance should consult the co-chair of Joint Audit and Governance Committee before investing in any Non-UCITS Retail Scheme. Cabinet supported the proposed strategy with the amendments as well as the recommendation of the Joint Audit and Governance Committee.

RESOLVED: to

1. approve the treasury management strategy 2018/19 set out in appendix A to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 12 February 2018 and the addendum to the report;
2. approve the prudential indicators and treasury limits for the period 2018/19 to 2020/21 as set out in table 2, appendix A to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 12 February 2018; and
3. approve the annual investment strategy set out in appendix A (paragraphs 18 to 59), subject to the head of finance consulting the co-chair of Joint Audit and Governance Committee before investing in any Non-UCITS Retail Scheme, and the lending criteria detailed in table 5 to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 12 February 2018.

78 Medium term financial strategy 2018/19 to 2022/23

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 12 February 2018, on the council's medium term financial strategy for 2018/19 to 2022/23.

RESOLVED: to approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2018/19 – 2022/23 as attached to the report of the head of finance to the Cabinet meeting of 12 February 2018.

79 Revenue budget 2018/19 and capital programme to 2022/23

The Chairman referred to regulations that require councils to record the names of those councillors voting in favour, against or abstaining from any vote on the budget, including amendments, and the council tax. In accordance with the regulations she would call for a named vote on each of these matters at this meeting.

The Chairman reminded councillors that they were not entitled to vote on any issue affecting the level or administration of the council tax or other decisions which might affect the making of any such calculation such as the budget, if they were over two months in arrears with their council tax payments. Where such circumstances applied, councillors were under a statutory obligation to disclose the restriction placed

on them and refrain from voting at the relevant meeting. No councillor made any such declaration.

Council noted the report of the chief finance officer on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of the reserves.

Councillor Murphy, Cabinet member for finance, presented the Cabinet’s proposals for the revenue budget 2018/19 and capital programme to 2022/23. On behalf of the council she thanked officers for their part in continuing to control costs and in preparing the draft budget. She also thanked the Budget Working Group for its support. Councillor Turner, Leader of the Opposition Forum, also thanked officers and Councillor Murphy for the involving the Opposition Forum in the budget preparations.

Councillor Murphy moved and Councillor Cotton seconded a motion to approve Cabinet’s recommendations as follows:

1. set the revenue budget for 2018/19 as set out in appendix A.1 to the head of finance’s report to Cabinet on 12 February 2018;
2. approve the capital programme for 2018/19 to 2022/23 as set out in appendix D.1 to the head of finance’s report, together with the capital growth bids set out in appendix D.2 of the report;
3. set the council’s prudential limits as listed in appendix E to the head of finance’s report,
4. approve the medium term financial plan to 2022/23 as set out in appendix F.1 to the head of finance’s report;
5. allocate £1,000,000 to fund the Communities Capital and Revenue Grant Scheme.

A number of councillors expressed support for the budget and specifically the inclusion of £100,000 to investigate and implement improvements to air quality and identify green travel initiatives in the district, funds to meet the shortfall in CCTV running costs as a result of Thames Valley Police reducing its ongoing contribution and measures taken to address the long term sustainability of the council by matching revenue against expenditure and reducing the reliance on reserves.

In accordance with regulations requiring councils to record the names of those councillors voting in favour, against or abstaining from any vote on the council tax the Chairman called for a recorded vote which was carried with the voting being as follows:

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAIN |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Charles Bailey | | |
| Joan Bland | | |
| Felix Bloomfield | | |
| Kevin Bulmer | | |
| Nigel Champken-Woods | | |
| Steve Connel | | |

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAIN |
|---------------------|---------|---------|
| John Cotton | | |
| Pat Dawe | | |
| David Dodds | | |
| Stefan Gawrysiak | | |
| Elizabeth Gillespie | | |
| Will Hall | | |
| Tony Harbour | | |
| Lorraine Hillier | | |
| Elaine Hornsby | | |
| Sue Lawson | | |
| Lynn Lloyd | | |
| Jeannette Matelot | | |
| Jane Murphy | | |
| Caroline Newton | | |
| David Nimmo-Smith | | |
| Richard Pullen | | |
| Bill Service | | |
| Robert Simister | | |
| Ian Snowdon | | |
| Alan Thompson | | |
| David Turner | | |
| John Walsh | | |
| Ian White | | |
| 29 | 0 | 0 |

RESOLVED: to

1. set the revenue budget for 2018/19 as set out in appendix A.1 to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 12 February 2018;
2. approve the capital programme for 2018/19 to 2022/23 as set out in appendix D.1 to the head of finance's report, together with the capital growth bids set out in appendix D.2 of the report;
3. set the council's prudential limits as listed in appendix E to the head of finance's report
4. approve the medium term financial plan to 2022/23 as set out in appendix F.1 to the head of finance's report;

- allocate £1,000,000 to fund the Communities Capital and Revenue Grant Scheme.

80 Council tax 2018/19

Council considered the report of the head of finance on the setting of the Council Tax for the 2018/19 financial year.

In accordance with regulations requiring councils to record the names of those councillors voting in favour, against or abstaining from any vote on the council tax the Chairman called for a recorded vote which was carried with the voting being as follows:

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAIN |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Charles Bailey | | |
| Joan Bland | | |
| Felix Bloomfield | | |
| Kevin Bulmer | | |
| Nigel Champken-Woods | | |
| Steve Connel | | |
| John Cotton | | |
| Pat Dawe | | |
| David Dodds | | |
| Stefan Gawrysiak | | |
| Elizabeth Gillespie | | |
| Will Hall | | |
| Tony Harbour | | |
| Lorraine Hillier | | |
| Elaine Hornsby | | |
| Sue Lawson | | |
| Lynn Lloyd | | |
| Jeannette Matelot | | |
| Jane Murphy | | |
| Caroline Newton | | |
| David Nimmo-Smith | | |
| Richard Pullen | | |
| Bill Service | | |
| Robert Simister | | |
| Ian Snowdon | | |
| Alan Thompson | | |
| David Turner | | |
| John Walsh | | |
| Ian White | | |
| 29 | 0 | 0 |

RESOLVED:

- to note that at its meeting on 14 December 2017 the council calculated the council tax base 2018/19:

- (a) for the whole council area as **56,163.3** [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the “Act”)]; and
 - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a parish precept relates as in column 1 of appendix 1.
2. that the council tax requirement for the council’s own purposes for 2018/19 (excluding parish precepts) is £6,528,422
 3. that the following amounts be calculated for the year 2018/19 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) £84,267,979 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by parish councils.
 - (b) £72,874,693 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (c) £11,393,286 being the amount by which the aggregate at (3)(a) above exceeds the aggregate at (3)(b) above, calculated by the council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its council tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
 - (d) £202.86 being the amount at (3)(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (including parish precepts).
 - (e) £4,864,864 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act, as set out in column 2 of appendix 1.
 - (f) £116.24 being the amount at (3)(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (3)(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no parish precept relates.
 4. to note that for the year 2018/19 Oxfordshire County Council has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

| | |
|--------|-----------|
| Band A | £950.79 |
| Band B | £1,109.26 |
| Band C | £1,267.72 |
| Band D | £1,426.19 |
| Band E | £1,743.12 |
| Band F | £2,060.05 |
| Band G | £2,376.98 |
| Band H | £2,852.38 |

5. to note that for the year 2018/19 the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

| | |
|--------|---------|
| Band A | £121.52 |
| Band B | £141.77 |
| Band C | £162.03 |
| Band D | £182.28 |
| Band E | £222.79 |
| Band F | £263.29 |
| Band G | £303.80 |
| Band H | £364.56 |

6. that the council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in appendix 3 as the amounts of council tax for 2018/19 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings shown in appendix 3.
7. to determine that the council's basic amount of council tax for 2018/19 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.

81 Pay policy statement 2018/19

Council considered the report of the head of corporate services on the adoption of a pay policy statement to meet the requirements of the Localism Act.

RESOLVED: to approve the pay policy statement for 2018/19 attached to the report of the head of corporate services to Council on 15 February 2018.

82 Report of the leader of the council

Council noted the revised Leader's scheme of delegation with portfolios to match the revised head of service areas of responsibility.

In accordance with the Cabinet arrangements and procedure rules, Council noted that on 21 December 2017, the Cabinet member for IT took an urgent decision to award a contract to purchase a software licence. The agreement of the Scrutiny Committee chairman was sought and received before the Cabinet member made this decision.

83 Questions under Council procedure rule 33

- A. Question from Councillor David Turner to Councillor Lynn Lloyd, Cabinet member for Community Services

Residents of Didcot have contacted the local ward councillor, Councillor Mocky Khan, to understand where the £100, 000 worth of works for The Wave was spent as they could not see any improvements apart from new shower heads. Can the Cabinet

member explain where the £100,000 was spent, which company / contractor did the work, was it value for money and are there procedures in place to check quality?

Answer

Councillor Lloyd responded that the majority of works were undertaken in areas that are not in the public domain or associated with major plant or building structure that effect the continued functionality of The Wave rather than necessarily the overall appearance (refurbishment of roof gullies and drains to prevent water leaking into the gym, replacement of guttering around the building and new air conditioning units).

Given the specialist nature of the works it has been necessary to procure a number of individual contractors to provide the works required.

The quality and the standards of the works has been managed by the leisure facilities team.

She offered to meet Councillor Khan to provide him with more detail on the individual projects.

B. Question from Councillor David Turner to Councillor Tony Harbour, Cabinet member for Didcot Garden Town

Will the Cabinet member please provide an update setting out what funding is currently available to secure the infrastructure needed to support the Didcot Garden Town project? What progress has been made in the last 4 months? Is the expansion of Didcot being delayed and if so is this harming the reputation of this council?

Answer

Councillor Harbour responded as follows:

“A substantial amount of revenue grant funding has already been received from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to develop projects included in the Garden Town Delivery Plan.

Additionally, a £6.2 million capital grant has recently been received to help fund Phase 3 of the Didcot Northern Perimeter Road, delivery of the road is a county council responsibility, and our Officers are currently in discussions with county council officers to produce a funding agreement that will enable the work to commence as soon as possible.

At the same time, senior council officers have worked with colleagues across Oxfordshire to secure the prioritisation of several Didcot Garden Town infrastructure projects within the list of projects included in the Oxfordshire Growth Deal. In partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and the Growth Board, we have also applied for a £250 million grant from the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund to support Didcot Garden Town linked infrastructure.

I can therefore confirm that, in the last four months, we have done everything possible to secure sufficient funding to support the Didcot Garden Town project and that a considerable amount of progress has been made.

I can also categorically confirm that the expansion of Didcot is not being delayed, it is a long term agenda and the funding and partnerships needed to achieve it will need to grow and sustain over many years – the short termism and lack of appreciation of these facts, amply illustrated by the question, remains the most serious risk to the Garden Town project.

Didcot has never been in better position to secure the infrastructure investment needed to support the Town's future growth in a sustainable way that benefits all of its resident, and I am committed to working with all partners, particularly the county council, to secure the funding required to deliver this.

Given there is no delay, and Central Government are recognising the progress we are making far from harming the reputation of this council, the effort put into developing realistic plans for Didcot as part of the long term Garden Town project have in fact greatly enhanced the reputation of the Council and has put us in a much better position to secure more infrastructure funding - not just for Didcot, but for the district as a whole."

84 Motions under Council procedure rule 38

No motions were submitted by councillors under Council procedure rule 38.

85 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 paragraphs 1,2 and 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.

86 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2017 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman sign them as such.

The meeting closed at 7.40pm

Chairman

Date

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