

# Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

# Council



Listening Learning Leading

HELD ON THURSDAY 20 DECEMBER 2018 AT 6.00 PM

THE FOUNTAIN CONFERENCE CENTRE, HOWBERY PARK, CROWMARSH  
GIFFORD

## Present:

Lorraine Hillier (Chairman)

Anna Badcock, Joan Bland, Felix Bloomfield, Kevin Bulmer, Nigel Champken-Woods, Steve Connel, Sue Cooper, John Cotton, Anthony Dearlove, David Dodds, Stefan Gawrysiak, Elizabeth Gillespie, Tony Harbour, Paul Harrison, Elaine Hornsby, Mocky Khan, Sue Lawson, Lynn Lloyd, Imran Lokhon, Jeannette Matelot, Jane Murphy, Toby Newman, Caroline Newton, David Nimmo-Smith, Bill Service, Ian Snowdon, Alan Thompson, David Turner, John Walsh and Ian White

## Apologies:

Charles Bailey, Pat Dawe, Will Hall and Robert Simister tendered apologies.

**Officers:** Emma Baker, Steven Corrigan, Adrian Duffield, William Jacobs, Holly Jones, Abbie Mulcairn, Margaret Reed, Andy Roberts and Mark Stone

## 37 Minutes

**RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2018 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman sign them as such.

## 38 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest

Councillor David Turner made a statement in respect of agenda item 7, Local Plan Publication Version (2034), that he is the council's representative on the Culham Local Liaison Committee.

Nigel Champken-Woods and David Dodds declared a personal interest in item 10, the section 106 funding request by Thame Town Council, as they are members of that council.

Kevin Bulmer made a statement that he was a shareholder in a company which was the landlord of a bookmakers' premises in the district. As such he would leave the meeting room during the consideration of item 11 – Joint Gambling Policy.

### 39 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

Councillor Lorraine Hillier, Chairman, advised that she had agreed to take one item of urgent business to appoint a councillor to the Joint Staff Committee following the resignation of Councillor Nash as a district councillor. Currently South Oxfordshire District Council has two representatives and it is in the interest of the council to appoint a third representative to ensure equal representation with the Vale of White Horse District Council (see Minute 40 for details of the appointment).

On behalf of Council she wished Nicola Meurer, Democratic Services Officer, all the best for the future and thanked her for her work at the council, particularly clerking and advising meetings of the Planning Committee.

### 40 Appointment to Joint Staff Committee (urgent item)

Council considered the appointment of a councillor to the Joint Staff Committee to replace Councillor Nash.

**RESOLVED:** to appoint Kevin Bulmer to the Joint Staff Committee for the remainder of the 2018/19 municipal year.

### 41 Public participation

The chairman advised that a number of members of the public had registered to address Council on agenda item 7 – Local Plan publication version (2034). Council agreed to extend the public speaking time to allow each member of the public who had registered to speak three minutes to make their address.

Council received addresses from eighteen members of the public.

- Bev Hindle, on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council, spoke in support of the Local Plan proposals.
- Mr Harris, on behalf of Horspath Parish Council, urged Council to remove the housing allocation at Northfields from the Local Plan. No exceptional reasons existed to remove the land from the Green Belt. Future housing would lead to urban sprawl with an increase in noise and light pollution.
- Professor Richard Harding, on behalf of the Campaign to Protect Rural England, believed none of the strategic housing sites were required in the Local Plan as the current plan provided adequate housing numbers. The proposed housing numbers would lead to a huge influx of people damaging the countryside and services. He expressed doubt that the proposed housing numbers would be achieved which could impact on the ability of the district council to control planning in the future.
- Gill Bindoff urged Council to change the Local Plan's emphasis to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and require carbon neutral buildings and schemes to provide low carbon renewable energy.
- Robin Bennett, on behalf of The Green Party, expressed concern that the Local Plan is not sustainable and, if passed, would have a detrimental impact on the Green Belt, farming land and the countryside. He doubted that it would be possible to achieve the housing targets set out in the plan which was produced to meet the

requirements of the Growth Deal. He urged Council to agree a new plan with a reduced number of houses to protect the environment.

- Leigh Rawlins, of Sonning Common Parish Council, expressed the view that the number of houses proposed was too great, that the proposed density was too high and would lead to increased land values, that the plan offered no protection to the edge of existing settlements and the number of proposed houses was not deliverable.
- Ann Pritchard, on behalf of Chalgrove Parish Council, welcomed the lower priority given to Chalgrove Airfield but urged Council to remove it from the list of housing allocation sites in the Local Plan.
- Paul Boone spoke on behalf of the Chalgrove Airfield Action Group. He stated that Martin Baker was not prepared to relinquish its lease on the site, that other more deliverable sites existed, that Homes England had not costed the cost of the compulsory purchase order route and has misrepresented the deliverability of the site.
- Caroline Baird, a Culham resident, asked Council to remove Culham from the list of housing allocation sites in the Local Plan. The proposals will impact on the existing insufficient infrastructure, destroy the Green Belt and rural life.
- Steven Sensecall spoke on behalf of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) and the Commercial Estates Group (CEG) to support the Local Plan proposals, including those to allocate land for housing at Culham.
- Samantha Casey-Rerhaye spoke on behalf of Culham Parish Council and expressed the view that any new homes in Culham will add to the existing infrastructure problems. The planned infrastructure may solve the current problems but not those generated by additional housing. The projected employment growth at UKAEA was over optimistic as was the any hope for increased capacity for the railway line serving Culham Station.
- Tim Bearder, County Councillor for the Wheatley Division, urged Council to consider the negative impact of the proposals in the plan on the Green Belt.
- Robert Gardner spoke on behalf of Oxford Brookes University to support the Local Plan proposals, in particular allocating land for housing at the university's Wheatley Campus.
- Robert Barter, Chairman of Holton Parish Council, spoke on behalf of Holton Parish Council in support of the housing allocation site at Oxford Brookes University's Wheatley Campus but expressing concern at the site's removal from the Green Belt. He believed that the new homes should be on the eastern part of the site.
- Ginette Camps-Walsh, on behalf of Beckley and Stowood Parish Council, spoke against the Local Plan, the planned urban sprawl of Oxford, and the proposed inclusion of land in Elsfield parish as a housing allocation site.
- David Polgreen, on behalf of Stanton St John Parish Council, spoke against the detrimental impact of the proposals on the countryside, landscape, wildlife sites and the Green Belt in general due to urban sprawl. The lack of public transport provision would increase traffic and the use of 'rat runs'.
- Ann Henman, a resident of Beckley and Stowood Parish Council, spoke in objection to land within the Green Belt being allocated for housing rather than housing being provided in Oxford.
- Chris Wright, Chairman of Garsington Parish Council, expressed concern at the perceived lack of public consultation, the impact of the plan on the Green Belt, and the potential for the merging of small villages with Oxford

## 42 Petitions

None.

## 43 Local Plan publication version (2034)

During the course of debate on this item, Council agreed, prior to the expiry of two and a half hours, in accordance with council procedure rule 82, to suspend council procedure rule 12, which restricts the duration of a meeting to three hours, to allow Council to complete the business.

Councillor Felix Bloomfield, Cabinet member for planning, moved and Councillor Jane Murphy, Leader of the council, seconded Cabinet's recommendations as set out below:

1. to approve the publication version of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan and associated documents, for publication under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as the version of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan proposed to be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination, subject to:
  - a. the updates provided by officers to the report to Cabinet on 18 December 2018, as appended to the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18 December 2018;
  - b. the changes to the Local Plan text on land at Chalgrove Airfield, as appended to the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18 December 2018; and
2. to authorise the head of planning, in consultation with the Cabinet member for planning, to make any necessary minor amendments and corrections to the Local Plan and its associated documents including the identification of any saved plan policies as considered appropriate prior to:
  - a. publication of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan; and
  - b. submission of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination and leading up to and during the examination.

In moving Cabinet's recommendations Councillor Bloomfield, Cabinet member for planning, reported that, since the Council's decision on 15 May 2018, there had been a thorough assessment of all possible housing site allocations. By undertaking this assessment, it became very clear that such large sites each have their own delivery obstacles. In response to concerns about the delivery of enough housing to be able to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable sites, the draft plan now includes new strategic allocations around the edge of Oxford. Although these are sites that are within the Green Belt, this approach to allocations provides a more robust plan. He stated that the updated plan accords with the changes set out in the revised National Planning Policy Framework and provided a strengthened approach to the duty to co-operate with neighbouring councils. The plan is not just about housing but also employment, retail, the environment and supporting infrastructure and, in his view, was more likely to be compliant with the duty to cooperate than the previous publication version of the plan.

He referred to the Scrutiny Committee recommendations agreed at its meeting on 13 December for Cabinet consideration. He emphasised that if significant amendments to the

plan as proposed would delay the consultation scheduled for to commence on 7 January and impact upon the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and the milestones contained therein if the submission of the local plan was delayed beyond the growth deal deadline of 31 March 2019.

He referred to further legal advice circulated to all councillors which is subject to legal privilege and would require Council to go into confidential session if councillors wished to discuss the contents of the advice, or previous legal advice.

Councillor David Turner moved and Councillor Mocky Khan seconded an amendment in the following terms to the proposed Local Plan text on Chalgrove Airfield to clarify the position of Martin Baker and the negotiations:

After 4.60 add the words “Martin-Baker considers that, if homes are built, it will no longer for safety reasons, be able to do its required low altitude ejector seat testing from its Gloster Meteor aircraft and they advise this will cause them to have to leave the site”; and

After the second “development” in 4.61, add the words “However Martin-Baker have advised that they broke off negotiations with Homes England in 2017 and have no intention of resuming negotiations.”

On being put the amendment was declared lost.

Councillor David Turner moved and Councillor Sue Cooper seconded an amendment to remove the Chalgrove Airfield site from the Local Plan because it was not deliverable and the number of houses required could be met from other sites.

On being put the amendment was declared lost.

Councillor Sue Cooper proposed and Councillor David Turner seconded an amendment in the following terms:

To request the Cabinet to:

- (1) reconsider, following the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued in July, that our plan should be assessed against it and that our housing need should be assessed in accordance with the Standard Method provided by the NPPF. This will give figures of

$556 \times 23 = 12788$  for the 2016 method or

$627 \times 23 = 14421$  for the 2014 method

which are both below the 15726 figure for dwellings already completed or for which planning permission is agreed and therefore that all references to providing extra strategic sites can be deleted from the proposed South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2034;

- (2) commission an updated SHMA immediately, preferably with the other Oxfordshire Councils as part of the JSSP or independently as Oxford City has done. This should provide up to date evidence for the five year supply of housing required;

- (3) consider granting exceptions to the approach in (1) above if parishes in which the proposed sites lie still wish to pursue the proposals.

On being put the amendment was declared lost.

Councillor John Walsh moved and Councillor Elizabeth Gillespie seconded an amendment in the following terms to remove the field to the east of Wheatley from the Green Belt and to adjust the proposed number of houses from 300 plus to about 300 in line with the Scrutiny Committee recommendation to Cabinet.

“That Council asks Cabinet to amend the plan as follows:

(page numbers are from the printed draft scrutiny version)

Page 49

Remove paragraph 2 and following bullet points - "The Local Plan proposes to inset...."

Page 50

In policy STRAT10 replace "at least 300" with "about 300".

Remove penultimate paragraph on page - "The Wheatley Campus site is to be...".

Page 228 (Appendix 4)

Replace map with the map that was on page 215 of the October 2017 Publication version of the plan. This shows the field to the east of Wheatley which needs to be removed from the green belt for the neighbourhood plan to succeed”.

On being put the amendment was declared lost.

Councillor Sue Cooper proposed and Councillor David Turner seconded an amendment in the following terms

“To request the Cabinet to note that as there is a new policy in the draft SOLP 2011 - 2034, STRAT12, which sets out higher proposed densities for new builds and that this in theory should mean smaller or fewer (or a combination of both) sites are needed, to take account of this Council’s belief that:

- (i) the strategic sites should be listed in the order they are ranked in the evaluations as described in the background papers only sufficient sites should go forward to top up the supply to the "needed" 22775 as quoted in the plan
- (ii) this will mean that Land North of Bayswater Brook (ref STRAT15), Land at Chalgrove Airfield (ref STRAT9) and Land at Northfield (ref STRAT14) can be omitted”.

On being put the amendment was declared lost.

Councillors debated the Cabinet recommendations.

The majority of councillors supported the plan on the grounds that it was in the best interests of South Oxfordshire. It will deliver a significant amount of housing, including affordable housing, and will help ensure residents are not faced with speculative development. It also delivers on the commitment South Oxfordshire District Council made in agreeing the Growth Deal with Government. The plan balances the need for growth whilst maintaining and supporting a high quality of life for residents. The plan would facilitate much needed infrastructure funding.

A number of councillors spoke in opposition to the plan. The proposed housing numbers were too high with no evidence to support the need for the numbers which should be re-assessed before strategic housing sites are allocated. The plan does not protect the Green Belt and no exceptional circumstances exist to justify the allocation of sites within it. The plan will generate urban sprawl and impact on the green spaces between Oxford and neighbouring settlements in South Oxfordshire. The current infrastructure, particularly the road network, could not accommodate the increase in traffic generate by more houses. The proposed density of housing was too high and would not build communities. A number of councillors questioned whether the sites were deliverable and whether speculative development could return in such circumstances.

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 Cabinet recommendations, which was declared carried with the voting as follows:

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>
<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Councillors</b>
Anna Badcock	Sue Cooper	
Joan Bland	John Cotton	
Felix Bloomfield	Elizabeth Gillespie	
Kevin Bulmer	Tony Harbour	
Nigel Champken-Woods	Elaine Hornsby	
Steve Connel	Sue Lawson	
Anthony Dearlove	Imran Lokhon	
David Dodds	David Turner	
Stefan Gawrysiak	John Walsh	
Paul Harrison		
Lorraine Hillier		
Mocky Khan		
Lynn Lloyd		
Jeannette Matelot		
Jane Murphy		
Toby Newman		
Caroline Newton		
David Nimmo-Smith		
Bill Service		
Ian Snowdon		
Alan Thompson		
Ian White		
<b>22</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>

**RESOLVED** to:

1. approve the publication version of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan and associated documents, for publication under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as the version of the South Oxfordshire

Local Plan proposed to be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination, subject to:

- a. the updates provided by officers to the report to Cabinet on 18 December 2018, as appended to the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18 December 2018;
  - b. the changes to the Local Plan text on land at Chalgrove Airfield, as appended to the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18 December 2018; and
2. authorise the head of planning, in consultation with the Cabinet member for planning, to make any necessary minor amendments and corrections to the Local Plan and its associated documents including the identification of any saved plan policies as considered appropriate prior to:
- a. publication of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan; and
  - b. submission of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination and leading up to and during the examination

#### **44 Chalgrove Development Neighbourhood Plan**

David Turner made a statement that he would not vote on this item because he was a member of the Chalgrove Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Council considered the recommendations of Cabinet, made at its meeting on 18 December 2018, on making the Chalgrove Neighbourhood Development Plan part of the development plan for South Oxfordshire.

Councillors congratulated local residents who had been involved in the development of the plan.

**RESOLVED** to:

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

#### **45 Little Milton Development Neighbourhood Plan**

Council considered the recommendations of Cabinet, made at its meeting on 18 December 2018, on making the Little Milton Neighbourhood Development Plan part of the development plan for South Oxfordshire.

Councillors congratulated local residents who had been involved in the development of the plan.

**RESOLVED** to:

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

**46 S106 Request - Thame Town Council - towards the replacement cricket pavilion**

Councillors Nigel Champken-Woods and David Dodds did not vote on this item – see Minute 38.

Council considered the recommendations of Cabinet, made at its meeting on 18 December 2018, on a request from Thame town Council for Section 106 funds.

**RESOLVED:** to

1. create a budget for £168,915.00 for the replacement cricket pavilion project in Thame;
2. agree to pay Thame Town Council £148,951.72, subject to completion of building regulations;
3. agree to pay Thame Town Council the balance of £19,963.28, once equivalent funds have been received from developers under the S106 agreements; and
4. agree to secure a legal agreement with Thame Town Council for the use of these S106 monies.

**47 Joint Gambling Policy**

Councillor Kevin Bulmer left the room during the consideration of this item – see Minute 38.

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 18 December 2018, on a Joint Gambling Policy developed with South Oxfordshire District Council.

**RESOLVED** to:

1. adopt the Joint Gambling Policy attached to the council agenda for the meeting held on 20 December 2018;
2. authorise the head of housing and environment to make minor editorial changes to the joint gambling policy; and
3. authorise the head of housing and environment to publish the joint gambling policy in accordance with the Gambling Act 2005 (Licensing Authority Policy Statement) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006.

## **48 Virement of surplus capital budgets for refurbishment works at Henley and Thame Leisure Centres**

Council considered the recommendations of Cabinet, made at its meeting on 18 December 2018, on the use of surplus budget for the refurbishment of the dry side facilities at Thame and Henley leisure centres.

### **RESOLVED:** to

1. create a new capital scheme within the council's approved capital programme to refurbish the dry side toilets at Thame Leisure Centre;
2. vire £22,135 from the existing Thame wet side changing room refurbishment budget into that new capital budget;
3. create a new capital scheme within the council's approved capital programme to refurbish dry side changing rooms at Henley Leisure Centre; and
4. vire £19,271 from the existing wet side changing room refurbishment budget into that new capital budget.

## **49 Council Tax Empty Homes Premium**

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 18 December 2018, on the level of premium to be applied to long-term empty dwellings.

**RESOLVED:** that in accordance with the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 the Long Term Empty Property Premium (currently set at a 50%) is:

1. increased to 100% from 1 April 2019 for those properties which are empty for two years and over;
2. increased to 200% premium from 1 April 2020 for those properties which are empty for five years and over;
3. increased to 300% premium from 1 April 2021 for those properties which are empty for 10 years and over.

## **50 Council Tax Base 2019/20**

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 18 December 2018, on the council tax base for 2019/20.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. to approve the report of the head of finance to Cabinet on 18 December 2018 for the calculation of the council's tax base and the calculation of the tax base for each parish area for 2019/20;
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 2019/20 be 56,793.3; 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 2019/20 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 18 December 2018.

## **51 Report of the leader of the council**

Councillor Jane Murphy, Leader of the council, reported that Homes England is working with officers and leaders across Oxfordshire to support housing growth. A Housing and Infrastructure Fund bid is expected in January 2019.

## **52 Questions on notice**

No questions were submitted by councillors under Council procedure rule 11.

## **53 Motions on notice**

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

The meeting closed at 10.10pm

Chairman

Date