

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Cabinet

HELD ON THURSDAY 3 DECEMBER 2020 AT 6.00 PM

THIS WAS A VIRTUAL, ONLINE MEETING.

Present:

Cabinet members: Councillors Sue Cooper (Chair), Robin Bennett, Maggie Filipova-Rivers, Pieter-Paul Barker, Andrea Powell, Leigh Rawlins, David Rouane and Anne-Marie Simpson

Officers: John Backley, Jayne Bolton, Emily Cockle, Steve Culliford, Andrew Down, Susan Harbour, Liz Hayden, Mark Hewer, Simon Hewings, Paul Howden, Jeremy Lloyd, Margaret Reed and Mark Stone

41 Apologies for absence

None

42 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 6 August, 24 September, and 1 October 2020 as correct records and agree that the Chairman signs them as such, subject to removing the word 'source' from the term 'heat source pumps' in minute 32 of 1 October 2020.

43 Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest

None

44 Urgent business and chair's announcements

None

45 Public participation

Mr Neville Harris made a statement to Cabinet regarding civil parking enforcement. He supported the principle but urged caution at agreeing the detail without considering the implications.



Listening Learning Leading

46 Recommendations from other committees

Cabinet received the following comments from the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9 November 2020. The committee:

- supported the initiatives in the Community Infrastructure Levy spending strategy report;
- noted the car parking fees and charges report; and
- supported the three recommendations in the report on civil parking enforcement.

Cabinet welcomed the committee's feedback.

47 Strategic vision for Oxfordshire

Cabinet considered the report of the acting deputy chief executive – partnerships. This sought Cabinet's views on the first draft of a strategic vision for Oxfordshire.

Through the Growth Board, Oxfordshire's principal councils had collectively expressed their desire for plans, strategies, programmes and investment priorities for Oxfordshire to be ambition-led and outcome-focussed. This required councils to maximise impact by working together based on shared strategic priorities and by embracing innovation to develop solutions. Developing a strategic vision for Oxfordshire was an opportunity to achieve this.

The draft strategic vision was high-level, overarching and long-term. It was positive, optimistic and aimed high in its ambition for Oxfordshire. The vision set out how the plans, strategies and programmes for Oxfordshire, including the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, could be ambition-led and outcome focussed, facilitating a step-change in the approach to delivering sustainable development in Oxfordshire. The vision would help guide the approach to joint working and joint programmes between those councils and their partners

If successful, the vision would achieve the following outcomes by 2050:

- This would be the first generation to leave Oxfordshire's natural environment in a better state than that in which it found it. The natural environment would be more biodiverse, supporting social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.
- Oxfordshire would already be carbon neutral and be moving towards a carbon-negative future, in which the county was removing more carbon than it emitted each year.
- The population would be healthier and happier, inequalities would have been reduced, young people would feel excited about their future, and the overall well-being of the population would have improved.
- The economy of Oxfordshire would be successful and sustainable, making the most of all our people and with quality places where people want to live and work.
- We would have energy efficient, well-designed homes, sufficient in numbers, location, type, size, tenure and affordability to meet the needs of our residents.
- Movement around Oxfordshire would be transformed, with greater connectivity and mobility in and between places in ways that enhance environmental, social and economic well-being.
- Our communities would be rooted and flourishing, with enhanced and lasting connectedness driven by individual and community action.

Cabinet welcomed the draft strategic vision. There would be a need to create a balance between growth and sustainability. There would also need to be a method of measuring success. The council's plans and strategies would need to fit Oxfordshire's vision.

Councillors were asked to feed back any detailed comments to the Cabinet member by 11 December to allow time for a response to be drafted to the consultation document.

RESOLVED: to

- (a) authorise the acting deputy chief executive – partnerships to develop a response to the strategic vision engagement exercise, in consultation with the Cabinet member for strategic partnerships, reflecting the views expressed at this meeting; and
- (b) invite Cabinet members to provide any further comments on the draft strategic vision for Oxfordshire to the acting deputy chief executive – partnerships.

48 Review of community infrastructure levy spending strategy

Cabinet considered the report of the interim head of development and regeneration. This set out a review of community infrastructure levy spending and sought approval of a revised spending strategy.

The options open to Cabinet were to:

1. consider options used at other authorities;
2. allow the strategy to remain in its original state; and
3. adapting the existing strategy to make it more versatile.

The Cabinet member proposed the third option, with the approach to build on the understanding gained from operating the existing strategy in South Oxfordshire and adapting this. Cabinet wished to extend the opportunities so that community infrastructure levy funding could be used to deliver the council's priorities and provide new facilities in response to the demands placed on the district by new development. The council's allocation of funding could be directed towards existing council-owned infrastructure, providing that it was spent in accordance with community infrastructure levy regulations, along with any new infrastructure projects.

The key changes proposed to the strategy were:

- extending the council's own funding parameters, so that it could effectively respond to priorities in the council's Infrastructure Development Plan and its new Corporate Plan;
- minor amendments to the allocation of community infrastructure levy funding with 50 per cent to Oxfordshire County Council (to support transport, education, libraries and household recycling centres), with the introduction of an application deadline to encourage timely use of available funding, and to provide details of projects in time for the budget setting process. Further geographical flexibility could also be considered at this council's discretion for education projects in exceptional circumstances, such as for special educational needs and disabilities schools;
- 20 per cent to support healthcare (widening this to other organisations, including the council, as well as the local clinical commissioning group) with ongoing discussions with the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group on identifying suitable projects for funding alongside exploring other options for delivering health care infrastructure;

- 30 per cent retained by South Oxfordshire District Council but removing the percentage split (currently set at 20 per cent leisure, 5 per cent green infrastructure, 2.5 per cent public art and 2.5 per cent public realm) so that any service could request use of funding for a wider range of projects in line with the Corporate Plan themes and the council's Infrastructure Development Plan;
- widening the geographic area where funds could be spent to provide more flexibility in funding projects across the whole of South Oxfordshire;
- allowing the use of community infrastructure levy funding across the district boundary for projects in the Didcot Garden Town area;
- widening the use of funds to enable spending to improve and maintain existing infrastructure, as well as for new infrastructure, provided it supported development; removing the Regulation 123 list and current pooling restrictions, as this was no longer a requirement under the regulations;
- continuing to develop and improve partnership working with parishes to ensure effective use of both district and parish community infrastructure levy funds in areas affected by new development.

Cabinet supported the revised spending strategy as outlined above. This would make it easier to spend the community infrastructure levy funds and brought greater flexibility. Cabinet noted that the spending strategy would be reviewed annually to ensure it remained effective.

RESOLVED: to approve the revised community infrastructure levy spending strategy, attached as appendix A to the interim head of development and regeneration's report to Cabinet on 3 December 2020, to come into effect from 1 April 2021.

49 Civil parking enforcement

Cabinet considered the head of housing and environment's report on a proposal to introduce civil parking enforcement, being the enforcement of on-street parking regulations. The report sought approval in principle to authorise Oxfordshire County Council to manage the enforcement in an agreement with Vale of White Horse District Council and Cherwell District Council.

A cross-council group had worked on various options, which were narrowed down to the proposal to introduce on-street parking enforcement as a joint service for all three districts, covering on-street enforcement only, but not the council's own off-street car parks. On-street civil parking enforcement would be carried out using the county council's existing external provider, whereas South Oxfordshire would retain off-street car parks enforcement using its existing external provider. This was the most cost-effective option, showing an estimated surplus to the council.

The Cabinet member supported this proposal, Cabinet members too. There would be a need to manage expectations. It was expected that the primary focus of the scheme might need to be on the district's four towns, plus Goring because of its railway station.

There was a set up capital cost to the council of £60,000, plus an internal revenue cost of £30,000 in 2020/21. A recommendation would be made to Council to approve this funding.

Councillors thanked officers for their work on this project.

RESOLVED: to

- (a) support an application by Oxfordshire County Council to the Department for Transport for the introduction of a Special Enforcement Area and bus lane enforcement powers across the districts of Cherwell, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White House to provide civil parking enforcement;
- (b) support the proposal for Oxfordshire County Council to manage civil parking enforcement and to authorise the head of housing and environment, in consultation with the head of legal and democratic, to negotiate and enter into any formal legal agreements required between South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and Oxfordshire County Council; and

RECOMMENDED to Council on 10 December 2020 to:

- (c) approve the addition of a new scheme in the approved capital programme of £60,000 as the council's contribution to Oxfordshire County Council's implementation costs, and to approve a revenue supplementary estimate of £30,000 in the 2020/21 budget for costs to be incurred by the council.

50 Treasury management mid-year monitoring report 2020/21

Cabinet considered the report of the interim head of finance. This set out a review of the treasury management performance at the mid-point of the 2020/21 financial year. The report projected that South Oxfordshire could be marginally under budget at the year end, resulting from the types of investments and their maturity dates. The returns had been achieved within the counterparty limits and the prudential indicators set out in the treasury management strategy 2020/21.

The report had been considered by the Joint Audit and Governance Committee at its meeting on 26 November 2020. The committee had been satisfied that the treasury activities had been carried out in accordance with the treasury management strategy and policy. Cabinet concurred and duly recommended Council.

The report also discussed the possible scenario of negative interest rates and their effect on the council's treasury management performance. In such a scenario, the councils' income would likely fall. This might require the council to seek longer term investments at higher interest rates and to increase its use of notice accounts. A reduction in investment income would have to be reflected in the medium term financial plans. Officers would monitor the situation closely.

Cabinet asked that when the treasury management and investment strategy was next reviewed, consideration was given to green investments. Officers agreed to review this.

RECOMMENDED to Council on 10 December 2020 to:

- (a) note that the Joint Audit and Governance Committee is satisfied that the treasury activities have been carried out in accordance with the treasury management strategy and policy; and
- (b) approve the treasury management mid-year monitoring report 2020/21.

51 Council tax base 2021/22

Cabinet considered the interim head of finance's report regarding the setting of the council tax base for 2021/22. Before the council tax could be set by Council, a calculation had to be made of the council tax base: an estimate of the taxable resources for the whole district and for each parish.

Cabinet noted how the council tax base was calculated and noted the assumptions made as part of that calculation. Cabinet was asked to recommend the council tax base to Council. Once set by Council in December, the council tax base would be notified to Oxfordshire County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner, and each parish and town council, to allow them to set their budgets for 2021/22.

Cabinet supported the recommendations.

RECOMMENDED: to Council on 10 December 2020 to:

- (a) approve the interim head of finance's report to Cabinet on 3 December 2020 for the calculation of the council's tax base and the calculation of the tax base for each parish area for 2021/22;
- (b) agree 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 2021/22 be 59,171.2; and
- (c) agree 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 2021/22 for each parish be the amount shown against the name of that parish in Appendix 1 of the interim head of finance's report to Cabinet on 3 December 2020.

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm

Chair

Date