

# Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

# Cabinet



Listening Learning Leading

**HELD ON THURSDAY 7 APRIL 2016 AT 6.30 PM  
MEETING ROOM 1, 135 EASTERN AVENUE, MILTON PARK, MILTON,  
OX14 4SB**

## **Present:**

John Cotton (Chairman), Jane Murphy (Vice-Chairman), Anna Badcock, Elizabeth Gillespie, Will Hall, Tony Harbour, Lynn Lloyd, Jane Murphy and Robert Simister

Apologies: None

Officers: David Buckle, Charlotte Colver, Steve Culliford, John Dobson, Clare Kingston, Jeremy Lloyd, Margaret Reed, Anna Robinson, and Sally Truman

Also present: Joan Bland, Felix Bloomfield, Toby Newman, David Nimmo-Smith, David Turner and Ian White

## **53 Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest**

None

## **54 Minutes of the previous meeting**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 28 January, including its appendix, and 4 February 2016 as correct records and agree that the chairman signs them as such.

## **55 Public participation**

David Turner asked to address Cabinet on the corporate plan. This is recorded under minute 57 below.

## **56 Berinsfield improvement programme**

Cabinet considered the strategic director's report, which suggested the council should produce a regeneration strategy for Berinsfield and a delivery plan to improve the village environment. Officers had identified several issues including: some poor quality open spaces, the main health, education and community buildings being in poor condition, a number of properties being in need of investment, the lower than average household incomes being insufficient to support home ownership or private rented accommodation, the need for more suitable social housing accommodation for

elderly residents, and limited access to employment opportunities. The parish council's draft Neighbourhood Plan had identified the same issues.

Substantial investment was required to address these. The report proposed the council should produce a regeneration strategy for a comprehensive, co-ordinated programme of improvements to create a better, more sustainable Berinsfield for current and future generations.

Policy CSEN2 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy provided that a review of the Green Belt could take place at Berinsfield. The policy set out exceptional circumstances justifying a review. This provided the planning context within which the council intended to produce a regeneration strategy. The main principle was that land would only be released from the Green Belt if development funded the entire cost of an approved regeneration programme for the village. Appended to the report was a planning statement of intent explaining that only development proposals that met the exceptional circumstances test would be considered.

Cabinet considered the options identified in the report and concluded that:

- doing nothing would not tackle the issues identified, and would disadvantage the community from benefitting from the economic growth and wellbeing in South Oxfordshire
- there was no public sector funding available to produce a regeneration strategy and delivery plan
- council leadership and front-funding of the regeneration strategy was the only way to proceed

The Cabinet member responsible for strategic policy proposed an extensive programme of work over the period to December 2017 to evaluate options, and consider promoting a proportionate release of the Green Belt, should the delivery plan prove viable. The cost of this programme of work was estimated at £1.5 million. This would allow for:

- the preparation of a sustainable social infrastructure plan including leisure, education and health provision
- community involvement in developing the plans, aligning plans with those of SOHA and other providers, leading to a long term governance model
- the production of masterplan, including planning strategy, a Green Belt review, design code for new housing, and technical studies; and
- the development of the financial model, land assembly strategy, procurement and delivery mechanism and public private sector funding agreements

Cabinet supported the proposal.

**RECOMMENDED** to Council to:

- (a) vire £1,500,000 from the Regeneration and Housing Initiatives in Science Vale and Didcot scheme in the provisional capital programme to the revenue budget for the purposes of preparing a comprehensive regeneration strategy and delivery plan for Berinsfield by December 2017;

**RESOLVED** (subject to Council approving (a) above) to:

- (b) authorise the strategic director, in consultation with the cabinet members for strategic policy (including the local plan) and development management and

housing, to utilise the funding to produce a comprehensive regeneration strategy and delivery plan in the most cost effective and expedient manner; and

- (c) endorse the planning statement of intent, appended to the strategic director's report, as the only basis on which the council will consider promoting proportionate release of the Green Belt at Berinsfield.

## 57 Corporate plan 2016 - 2020

Cabinet considered the head of corporate strategy's report, which proposed a new corporate plan to cover the period 2016 to 2020. This identified the council's strategic objectives and priorities, and would help guide decisions on the allocation of resources. The corporate plan, if adopted by Council, would replace the priorities set out in the corporate plan that ended in 2016.

David Turner addressed Cabinet, suggesting that the corporate plan could help with:

- providing more help to groups developing neighbourhood plans
- publishing an annual programme for the deep cleansing programme
- providing rural transport to the council's leisure centres
- protecting rural bus services

Mr Turner also welcomed the introduction of budgets for individual councillors and plans to encourage providers to improve mobile phone coverage in rural areas.

The Cabinet member responsible for the corporate plan tabled an updated version of the plan and described its main points. He believed the corporate plan would focus activity, guide policy and operational decisions, and inform the public of the council's aims. Many policy choices had been made during informal discussions on the draft plan. Cabinet was invited to make further amendments prior to recommending its adoption to the Council.

Cabinet supported the draft corporate plan but added 'increasing participation in activity and sport to improve health' under the heading of helping people to healthy and active.

The Cabinet member also thanked the officer for her assistance in developing the plan, and thanked Mr Turner for his suggestions. The Cabinet member agreed to consider these and any more suggestions recommended by the Scrutiny Committee before the corporate plan would be considered by the Council on 14 April.

**RECOMMENDED:** to Council to adopt the Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020 as tabled at the Cabinet meeting, plus the following on page 4:

- Increasing participation in activity and sport to improve health

## 58 Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan

Cabinet considered the head of planning's report, which recommended that the Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan was made part of the development plan for South Oxfordshire.

The Cabinet member for strategic policy (including the local plan) reported that Henley-on-Thames Town Council and Harpsden Parish Council had worked together with their local communities to prepare a joint neighbourhood plan. The plan was

then subject to public consultation and an examination in public. The examiner concluded that, subject to modifications, the plan met the basic conditions set out in legislation and could therefore be submitted for referendum. Modifications were then duly made to the plan. At the referendum on 10 March 2016, 81 per cent of those who voted were in favour of the plan. The officers had confirmed that, as the plan did not breach any European Union obligation or any of the Convention rights within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998, the council had a duty to make the plan part of the development plan for South Oxfordshire. Cabinet supported the neighbourhood plan and congratulated the working groups on their work.

**RECOMMENDED:** to Council to make the Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan, as set out at appendix 1 to the head of planning's report, part of the development plan for South Oxfordshire.

The meeting closed at 6.55pm

Chairman

Date