

# Agenda



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## A MEETING OF THE

# Scrutiny Committee

**WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 6.00 PM  
AT 135 EASTERN AVENUE, MILTON PARK, OX14 4SB.**

This meeting is in-person but will be broadcasted live. Follow this link to the council's YouTube channel to watch:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTj2pCic8vzucpzlaSWE3UQ>

### Members of the Committee:

Ian White (Chair)

Mocky Khan (Vice-Chair)

Anna Badcock

Sam Casey-Rerhaye

Stefan Gawrysiak

Alexandrine Kantor

George Levy

David Turner

David Bartholomew

### Substitutes

*Ken Arlett*

*Peter Dragonetti*

*Kate Gregory*

*Victoria Haval*

*Lorraine Hillier*

*Kellie Hinton*

*Axel Macdonald*

*Jo Robb*

*Ian Snowdon*

*Alan Thompson*

*Celia Wilson*

*Tim Bearder*

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## **1 Apologies for absence**

To record apologies for absence and the attendance of substitute members.

## **2 Declarations of interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

## **3 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.

## **4 Minutes (Pages 4 - 11)**

To adopt and sign as a correct record the committee minutes of the meetings held on 9 February 2021 and 1 March 2021.

Formal minutes and the notes of informal meetings held are published on committee pages, for information.

<https://democratic.southoxon.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=124>

## **5 Public participation**

To receive any questions or statements from members of the public that have registered to speak.

## **6 Work schedule and dates for all South scrutiny meetings (Pages 12 - 16)**

To review the attached scrutiny work schedule. Please note, although the dates are confirmed, the items under consideration are subject to being withdrawn, added to or rearranged without further notice.

### **REPORTS AND ISSUES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **7 Q1 2021/22 performance management report**

To consider a report regarding quarter 1 2021/22 performance management (paper to follow).

## **8 Exclusion of the public**

To consider whether 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 1-7 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.

**EXEMPT INFORMATION UNDER 100A(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**9 Inter authority agreement**

To consider a report regarding inter authority agreement (paper to follow).

**10 Office accommodation**

To consider a report regarding office accommodation (paper to follow).

**11 Revised capital programme**

To consider a report on revisions to the capital programme (to follow).

Patrick Arran  
Head of Legal and Democratic

# Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

## Scrutiny Committee

HELD ON TUESDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 6.00 PM

HELD AS A VIRTUAL MEETING.

You can watch the recording here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTj2pCic8vzucpzlaSWE3UQ>

### Present:

Ian White (chair)

Mocky Khan (vice-chair), Sam Casey-Rerhaye, Stefan Gawrysiak, Alexandrine Kantor, George Levy, Jane Murphy and David Turner

### Also present:

Cabinet members: Councillors Robin Bennett, Sue Cooper, Maggie Filipova-Rivers, Leigh Rawlins

### Officers:

Simon Hewings, Candida Mckelvey, Adrianna Partridge, Margaret Reed, Richard Spraggett.

## 82 Apologies for absence

Councillor Badcock sent her apologies. Her substitute who attended the meeting was Councillor Murphy.

## 83 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2020 were agreed as a correct record and will be signed as such by the chair.

## 84 Declarations of interest

None.

## 85 Urgent business and chair's announcements

The chair announced that he had an announcement on the work programme item.



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## **86 Public participation**

None.

## **87 Work schedule and dates for all South and Vale scrutiny meetings**

The chair noted that a lot of items on the work programme had no dates. He explained that the reason for this was changes to officer workload due to Covid-19 related work, meaning that reports cannot come forward as anticipated. The chair will meet with the vice-chair and officers to review the dates in early March.

There was a call-in of the scrutiny committee on the car parking fees and charges Cabinet decision. This will be held on 1 March 2021.

There was a task and finish group regarding the government green home grants. Councillors on the group hope to invite other interested parties across the district and county, to discuss retrofitting skills and industries. The green grants scheme had been extended. Councillors had developed a Terms of Reference and scope, and discussed having a joint scrutiny approach to this, with Vale of White Horse. Examples of interested parties include OxLEP, local colleges. Councillor Levy had registered interest in getting involved.

## **88 Budget 2021/22**

The chair explained that there was one appendix that is confidential (A6). It contained officer estimates of costs of the pandemic. If this needed further discussion it would need to be in closed session at the end of the public meeting.

Councillor Rawlins, Cabinet member for Finance, introduced the report.

The budget was constrained by less officer time being available and was very much a Covid-19 budget. That said, bringing together a budget was a major task and the officers were thanked for their work. The Interim Head of finance had set the scene in the paper.

The Cabinet report presented for scrutiny brought together all relevant information to allow Cabinet to recommend to Council a revenue budget for 2021/22 and a capital programme for 2021/22 to 2025/26. It recommended the prudential indicators to be set by the council in accordance with 'the Prudential Code' introduced as part of the Local Government Act 2003.

It also contained the opinion of the council's chief financial officer on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of the council's financial reserves and contained the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which provided details of the forward budget model for the next five years.

In last year's budget, there was a £2.2 million deficit. This climbed to £6.5 million deficit by 2024/25, leaving £7.7 million of unallocated revenue reserves remaining.

This year's budget assumed that the unallocated revenue reserves at the end of 2024/25 would be £17 million, and £11 million at the end of 2025/26. The burning of reserves was

an existential threat long-term. We projected that £21 million of reserves will be used up over the five-year MTFP period.

We will be seeking a long-term sustainable framework from Government to provide understandable security to councils. Addressing these shortfalls was a priority. There was a corporate plan in place now to guide the future. There was progress on a number of projects despite the limit on resources, and some projects needed to be scoped.

Other points:

- £5 increase in council tax was proposed - maximum increase allowed.
- Commercial property income has fallen due to Covid-19.
- There had been a slightly better settlement from government than was anticipated, leading to a more positive outlook.
- Base budget net expenditure grew by £2.6 million from 2019/20 base to 2021/22. Much of this will be tied down directly to Covid-19 costs. We had taken account of funding that had already been committed to by government.
- Paragraph 53 – revenue per resident is £131 per resident – we can apply 2.5 residents to each home = £328 cost per home. Last year was £126 per resident. Costs for South Oxfordshire are very low.

There was some positive progress:

- New office progress
- 5Cs negotiations progress and repatriating of staff
- Sales fees and charges items do feed beneficially into the budget.
- Proper stewardship of council properties
- Grounds maintenance brought in-house

Total net cost of Covid-19 to the council in this budget was £1.9 million.

The Interim Head of Finance reminded the committee that the council had a statutory duty to set a budget.

The chair led the committee through the report page by page, for questions.

- Page 12 – paragraph 53 regarding revenue costs. Councillor Rawlins explained how South Oxfordshire charging is low compared for other English shire district councils.
- If we were limited by an annual maximum £5 increase in council tax, how long would it take to reach the average for a shire district council? Discussions would be had about phasing in changes.
- Appendix A1 – this was a key summary page.
- Page 22 – any information on uplift for Cornerstone service charge? Cabinet member Councillor Filipova-Rivers answered that it was increased in 2019/20 and was being discussed with Hammersons.
- Appendix A2 showed savings and also investment in council properties. This will impact positively on insurance savings.
- Page 24 – the budget 2020/21 for 2020/21 included the global resettlement scheme and but did not appear in this report – had this moved due to Covid-19? Cabinet member Councillor David Rouane explained that the resettlement scheme was

funded, in the programme and was an ongoing cost. Lately people haven't been travelling so we have resettled less people. If the service was continuing, with no change, it would not appear in the schedule.

- Domestic abuse services - can we note we need to seek more funding due to the increase in need during lockdown? Cabinet member Councillor David Rouane advised that the council bought into a county-wide service. We will need to renegotiate soon, and that will be reflected in budget at the contract end. Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) funding to Community Safety Partnership (CSP) should continue but there was uncertainty to services, not change at this stage.
- Page 27 – committee was pleased to hear of two new enforcement officers being recruited.
- Car parking fees on page 28 – Appendix A5 - £35,000 per year for South Oxfordshire – the Interim Head of Finance confirmed that this is the budgeted increase in income. Estimates were based on future charges and usage. This was a prudent income estimate.
- Councillor Rawlins explained that New Homes Bonus (NHB) funding included a contribution from the council of £214,000, which had gone towards the affordable homes pot of money. NHB in its current form was due to cease. Treasury income was used in the year after it is earned This was reflected through transfers to/from earmarked reserves.
- On capital – the numbers for new offices relate to Crowmarsh – a budget for the new building will be determined in due course.

Officers were commended for achieving a budget to present in these difficult circumstances.

The committee motioned and voted in favour of noting the contents of the Cabinet report and its appendices.

## **89 Budget 21/22 - Appendix A6**

The meeting closed at 7.07 pm

Chairman

Date

# Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

## Scrutiny Committee

HELD ON MONDAY 1 MARCH 2021 AT 6.00 PM

### THIS WAS A VIRTUAL MEETING

Watch the recording here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTj2pCic8vzucpzlaSWE3UQ>

#### Present:

Ian White (Chairman)

Mocky Khan, Anna Badcock, Sam Casey-Rerhaye, Stefan Gawrysiak, Alexandrine Kantor, George Levy, Sue Roberts, David Turner and David Rouaner

#### Officers:

John Backley, Liz Hayden, Elizabeth Kingdom, Suzanne Malcolm, Candida Mckelvey

#### Also present:

Cabinet member, Councillor David Rouane.

#### 90 Apologies for absence

None.

#### 91 Declarations of interest

None.

#### 92 Urgent business and chair's announcements

The chair ran through housekeeping for the virtual meeting.

#### 93 Public participation

Two public speakers were registered to speak about the car park order.

The first public speaker to present to the committee was Paul Harrison, a Henley resident. Mr Harrison spoke against the cabinet decision on the car park fees and charges.

Opinions raised included;

- Sunday parking was a tax on prayer
- How would the council pay to enforce?



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- Concern over affecting Sunday trading
- Electric car owners getting discounted charges. Most cannot afford to own an electric car.
- Clarification was asked regarding the volume of church visitors. Mr Harrison responded that there are 6 churches that people, including out of area, come into the centre to visit.

The second speaker was Lee Upcraft, a Wallingford resident. He spoke against the Cabinet decision on car parking fees and charges. The opinions raised included:

- Why a one size fits all approach?
- There are good elements – but where is the evidence, cost analysis and impact analysis?
- Sunday charging was opposed in the survey.
- Sundays should be an opportunity to encourage visitors to come and spend money in the area.
- Clarification was asked regarding the impact on traders and the fact that some stores had now closed.
- Clarification was asked regarding the frequency of buses on a Sunday. Free parking was considered anti-bus – were more buses needed? It was responded by Mr Upcraft that most tourist visitors would not be using buses anyway.

## **94 Call-in of Cabinet decision on car park order 2021**

Councillors Ian White and George Levy had called in the Cabinet decision of 4 February on the car park order. The Head of Legal and Democratic had accepted that this was a valid request.

The reasons for the call-in were as follows:

1. At its meeting on 9 November 2020, a member of the Scrutiny Committee asked that the car parking charges report be brought back so that further consideration could be given following the public consultation, prior to a decision being made. The committee motioned to note the report and for comments made to be considered. This point is noted but not addressed in the officer's report.
2. Public concern has been raised over the consideration of their responses to the consultation, with special concern for residents of Wallingford.

Cabinet member for Housing and environment, Councillor David Rouane, introduced the item.

The Cabinet member explained that he considered fairness whilst producing this report. Regarding Wallingford concerns, there was a long-standing agreement with the Goldsmiths Lane car park, where there was two hours free parking and free Sunday parking. Wallingford Town Council objected to reduction in two other car parks. However, the Goldsmiths Lane arrangement should be ample to accommodate visitors. Regarding the electric car charges – Wallingford was one of the towns under air quality management and encouraging electric car use was part of reducing pollution in the town centre.

Now, on Sundays, in response to comments, the Sunday charge has been reduced by one hour. Further research had been impeded by the pandemic, and car park usage was not as normal.

Questions of clarification on the report followed.

- Cabinet member was asked to elaborate on the fairness issue – was there church representation in the survey? Cabinet member responded that he was willing to listen to special circumstances, but nothing was presented. The Wallingford concerns were mainly regarding visitors blocking car park spaces for shoppers.
- Will there be further research? It was responded that in future there would be reviews. For Sunday, there was no data because there was no charging at present. The charging changes would help address the car park budget deficit. In 12 years, the price had not changed. The car parks need to cover the costs of running, not be in deficit. We were currently making a loss.
- It was confirmed that the changes were to address the deficit and in the interest of fairness.
- It was discussed that it had taken 18 months to get to this point and action was needed now. It had been through scrutiny committee and the Climate and Ecological Emergency committee already.
- Officer added that car parks were in deficit, and parking costs should not fall on the taxpayer, but car park users instead. The car parks were not-for-profit. Fees were set to cover expenditure.
- Cabinet did discuss the consultation, and changes were made in response.
- The electric vehicle spaces were a work in progress, with an estimated 5-7 percent of spaces being dedicated currently.
- The new plan would be implemented for a year with a review.

During debate, a view was expressed that holding action for 6 months of review could be an option.

The idea of encouraging bus use on Sundays was considered helpful for environmental considerations. The desire for pedestrianisation may change needs in the future.

The committee concurred that car park users should cover the costs, not non car using taxpayers.

Committee members debated and concluded that the reports approach did seem fair overall, with the Wallingford arrangement being noted as a compromise. The report was a hybrid that addressed the main concerns.

The committee motioned and voted in favour of the following:

**Resolved:** to

Support the Cabinet decision from the 4 February 2021 regarding car park order.

## **95 National Green Grant and capacity/abilities in South Oxfordshire Task And Finish Group**

Councillor Sam Casey-Rerhaye updated the committee on the progress of the task and finish group for green grants.

The group were looking for volunteers and they wanted to invite members of Vale of White Horse (VOWH) scrutiny committee, to make this a joint working project.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) had been circulated and no comments raised.

The group is looking to proactively tackle the lack of local expertise to retrofit green home features, such as heat source air pumps. Ideally, a retrofit officer would be in place. Work with Cosy Homes was also underway.

Deputy Chief Executive for Place added that officers were supporting this, and Elizabeth Kingdom had been recruited in the insight and policy team, joining Andy Egan as a Climate Action Lead officer, and she was in attendance at this committee meeting.

Chair confirmed he would write to the VOWH scrutiny chair to invite members.

The meeting closed at 7.46 pm

Chairman

Date

# Scrutiny work programme

1 September 2021



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MEETING	AGENDA ITEM	PURPOSE	CABINET MEMBER	CONTACT OFFICER
Joint Scrutiny Committee 14 Sep 2021	<b>Strategic property review</b>		Robin Bennett	Catrin Mathias <a href="mailto:catrin.mathias@southandvale.gov.uk">catrin.mathias@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Joint Scrutiny Committee 14 Sep 2021	<b>SABA car park contract review</b>		David Rouane	John Backley <a href="mailto:john.backley@southandvale.gov.uk">john.backley@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Joint Scrutiny Committee 14 Sep 2021	<b>Biffa annual report</b>		David Rouane	Ian Matten <a href="mailto:ian.matten@southandvale.gov.uk">ian.matten@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Scrutiny Committee 20 Sep 2021	<b>Office accommodation</b>		Andrea Powell, Robin Bennett	Adrianna Partridge <a href="mailto:adrianna.partridge@southandvale.gov.uk">adrianna.partridge@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Scrutiny Committee 20 Sep 2021	<b>Inter Authority Agreements</b>			Suzanne Malcolm <a href="mailto:suzanne.malcolm@southandvale.gov.uk">suzanne.malcolm@southandvale.gov.uk</a> Adrianna Partridge <a href="mailto:adrianna.partridge@southandvale.gov.uk">adrianna.partridge@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Scrutiny Committee 20 Sep 2021	<b>Revised capital programme</b>		Leigh Rawlins	Simon Hewings <a href="mailto:simon.hewings@southandvale.gov.uk">simon.hewings@southandvale.gov.uk</a>

MEETING	AGENDA ITEM	PURPOSE	CABINET MEMBER	CONTACT OFFICER
Scrutiny Committee 20 Sep 2021	<b>Q1 2021/22 performance management report</b>		Andrea Powell	Harry Barrington-Mountford <a href="mailto:harry.barrington-mountford@southandvale.gov.uk">harry.barrington-mountford@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Scrutiny Committee 11 Oct 2021	<b>Planning appeals</b>	To consider the annual report	Anne-Marie Simpson	Tracy Smith <a href="mailto:tracy.smith@southandvale.gov.uk">tracy.smith@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Scrutiny Committee 11 Oct 2021	<b>2020/21 financial out-turn</b>		Leigh Rawlins	Simon Hewings <a href="mailto:simon.hewings@southandvale.gov.uk">simon.hewings@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Joint Scrutiny Committee 16 Nov 2021	<b>Community safety partnership report</b>		Cabinet member for housing and environment, and Didcot Garden Town	Diane Foster <a href="mailto:diane.foster@southandvale.gov.uk">diane.foster@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Joint Scrutiny Committee 16 Nov 2021	<b>Joint South and Vale Statement of Community Involvement</b>		Anne-Marie Simpson	Emma Baker <a href="mailto:emma.baker@southandvale.gov.uk">emma.baker@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Scrutiny Committee 29 Nov 2021	<b>The distribution of affordable housing on larger sites</b>		Anne-Marie Simpson	Steve May <a href="mailto:stephen.may@southandvale.gov.uk">stephen.may@southandvale.gov.uk</a>

MEETING	AGENDA ITEM	PURPOSE	CABINET MEMBER	CONTACT OFFICER
Joint Scrutiny Committee 28 Feb 2022	<b>GLL performance report for 2019/20 and 2020/21</b>		Maggie Filipova-Rivers	Chris Traill <a href="mailto:Chris.trail@southandvale.gov.uk">Chris.trail@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
<b>Items for future meetings (dates to be determined)</b>				
Scrutiny Committee Tbc	<b>Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Strategy / EV Charging Points</b>		Sue Cooper	Michelle Wells <a href="mailto:michelle.wells@southandvale.gov.uk">michelle.wells@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Scrutiny Committee Tbc	<b>Public consultations</b>		Andrea Powell	
Joint Scrutiny Committee early 2022	<b>Future waste services</b>		David Rouane	Ian Matten <a href="mailto:ian.matten@southandvale.gov.uk">ian.matten@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Scrutiny Committee February 2022 Tbc	<b>Covid-19 Leisure Support Package</b>		Maggie Filipova-Rivers	Chris Traill <a href="mailto:chris.trail@southandvale.gov.uk">chris.trail@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Scrutiny Committee	<b>Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)</b>			
Scrutiny Committee	<b>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule 2021</b>		Cabinet member for planning	

MEETING	AGENDA ITEM	PURPOSE	CABINET MEMBER	CONTACT OFFICER
Scrutiny Committee	<b>Communications strategy</b>		Andrea Powell	
Scrutiny Committee	<b>Flooding - partnership roles and responsibilities</b>			Andrew Down <a href="mailto:andrew.down@southandvale.gov.uk">andrew.down@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Joint Scrutiny Committee	<b>Didcot Garden Town - project update</b>		David Rouane	Marybeth Harasz <a href="mailto:marybeth.harasz@southandvale.gov.uk">marybeth.harasz@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Joint Scrutiny Committee	<b>Oxfordshire Growth Board - review outcome</b>		Sue Cooper	Andrew Down <a href="mailto:andrew.down@southandvale.gov.uk">andrew.down@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Scrutiny Committee	<b>Leisure strategy review</b>		Cabinet member for community wellbeing	Chris Traill <a href="mailto:Chris.trail@southandvale.gov.uk">Chris.trail@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
Scrutiny Committee	<b>Delivery of crematorium, graveyard or alternative provision</b>	To review provision over next 20 years within the district	Robin Bennett	Catrin Mathias <a href="mailto:catrin.mathias@southandvale.gov.uk">catrin.mathias@southandvale.gov.uk</a>

MEETING	AGENDA ITEM	PURPOSE	CABINET MEMBER	CONTACT OFFICER
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