

# Minutes

## OF A MEETING OF THE



Listening Learning Leading

## Cabinet

Held on Thursday 10 March 2022 at 6.00 pm  
135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, OX14 4SB

### Present in the meeting room:

Cabinet members: Councillors David Rouane (Chair), Sue Cooper, Andrea Powell, Leigh Rawlins and Anne-Marie Simpson

Officers: Steve Culliford (Democratic Services Team Leader)

### Remote attendance:

Cabinet members: Councillors Robin Bennett (Vice-Chair), Pieter-Paul Barker, and Maggie Filipova-Rivers

Officers: Emma Baker (Principal Planning Policy Officer), Harry Barrington-Mountford (Head of Policy and Programmes), Pat Connell (Legal Services Manager), Simon Hewings (Head of Finance), Jeremy Lloyd (Broadcasting Officer), Adrianna Partridge (Deputy Chief Executive - Transformation and Operations), Richard Spraggett (Chief Accountant) and Mark Stone (Chief Executive)

## 87 Minutes

**RESOLVED:** to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 3 February 2022 and agree that the chair sign them as such.

## 88 Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest

None

## 89 Urgent business and chair's announcements

The chair made an announcement regarding the invasion of Ukraine. He thanked South Oxfordshire residents for showing support for the people of Ukraine. The council had received several offers of help to accommodate Ukrainian refugees. This was welcomed but the immediate need was for cash donations to the charities supporting the relief effort. The chair directed donors to the recognised charities or relief agencies, such as the Disasters Emergencies Committee.

The council had shown solidarity with other Oxfordshire councils against the invasion. The Ukrainian flag was flying outside the council's offices. An early release of the 2021 Census data showed that 70 residents in South Oxfordshire had identified themselves as Ukrainian nationals. The council's thoughts were with them and their families and friends in Ukraine. The council would do all it could to help refugees with housing, resettlement

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and community hub support, if asked to do so by the government. Any residents wishing to help with accommodation were asked to contact the council's housing team. Also, a community sponsorship scheme would be announced by the government shortly.

## **90 Public participation**

None

## **91 Recommendations and updates from other committees**

Cabinet noted the recommendations and updates from other committees since the last Cabinet meeting. An update from the Scrutiny Committee was included with the agenda, including references to today's Cabinet agenda items on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the quarter 2 performance monitoring report.

## **92 Covid response and next steps**

Cabinet considered the report of the deputy chief executive – transformation and operations. This set out how the council had responded to the Covid-19 pandemic by providing community and business support. The report also set out the agreed staff structure to continue the councils' response and to progress the recovery programmes. In addition, the report sought Cabinet's support for the principles outlined within the document 'Oxfordshire Covid-19 Recovery and Renewal Framework'.

The Cabinet member highlighted the areas of support provided to the community and businesses during the pandemic. Cabinet thanked staff for the effort made. Staff had adapted to new ways of working, often committing long hours to support the Covid effort and to meet their other responsibilities.

Although the pandemic was not over, the council would continue to support its community through the recovery phase, to living with Covid-19 in the long-term. The council needed to move forward with caution and consideration, continuing to provide a resilient response approach should it be required.

Appended to the report was an Oxfordshire Covid-19 Recovery and Renewal Framework. Cabinet was asked to support its principles. Cabinet supported the three key aims of consolidating recovery and building resilience, addressing the unequal impact of Covid-19, and supporting renewal, together with the cross-cutting priorities of tackling climate change and tackling inequality. However, Cabinet did not support the framework document. Cabinet considered that the work undertaken to date was effective and met the aims set out in the council's corporate plan. The framework, as written, proposed unnecessary duplication to the work already being undertaken. However, Cabinet was keen to support ongoing partnership work and co-operation in response to Covid-19.

**RESOLVED:** to

- (a) applaud the council's Covid-19 community support response activity to date and note the agreed staff structure to continue the response and progress the recovery programmes; and
  - (b) support the three aims (as set out in paragraph 8 of the Oxfordshire Covid-19 Recovery and Renewal Framework covering report) of:
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- consolidating recovery and building resilience,
- addressing the unequal impact of Covid-19, and
- supporting renewal,

and the two cross-cutting priorities of:

- tackling climate change and
- tackling inequality

and support continued work and co-operation with partners, but Cabinet does not support the renewal framework.

### **93 Oxfordshire Plan 2050**

Cabinet considered a report from the programme lead on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. This sought Cabinet's approval to an update on the Oxfordshire Plan's Statement of Community Involvement. The statement set out how the public and local organisations could shape the future of Oxfordshire. The statement had been amended in response to the recent lifting of coronavirus restrictions and now included consultation options through social media and other digital engagement methods. The cabinet at each of Oxfordshire's five local planning authorities was being asked to approve the same amended statement.

The Scrutiny Committee had considered the report in a different form to that now before Cabinet. Feedback from each councils' scrutiny committee had resulted in the report being updated before the Cabinet meeting. However, the committee had supported the revised Statement of Community Involvement and recommended its adoption to Cabinet.

The Cabinet member also supported the approval of the statement, as it would allow the Oxfordshire Plan to progress. The Cabinet member reported that the statement would be reviewed again once the final timelines were known.

Cabinet supported the updated statement of community involvement but asked that it be kept under review. Cabinet asked that district councillors were consulted on future draft Oxfordshire Plan documents before they were published. It was suggested that figure 2 in the statement, showing the relationship of the plan to other plans and strategies, could be clearer to show that the Oxfordshire vision sat above the Oxfordshire Plan and therefore informed it, rather than being a two-way process.

The Scrutiny Committee had also recommended that the Cabinet member for planning obtained greater clarity about the nature of the consultation responses to uncover any potential conflicts of interest and to respond to the committee's concerns in writing. Cabinet supported this suggestion.

#### **RESOLVED:** to

- approve the adoption of the revised Oxfordshire Plan Statement of Community Involvement, and to note that the statement will be kept under regular review as the project continues; and
  - note the Scrutiny Committee's recommendation to the Cabinet member for planning "to obtain greater clarity about the nature of the consultation responses to uncover any potential conflicts of interest and to respond to the committee's concerns in writing" and ask the Cabinet member to pursue this.
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## **94 Corporate plan performance monitoring report Q2 2021/22**

Cabinet considered the corporate plan performance monitoring report for quarter 2 of 2021/22, being the period 1 July to 30 September 2021.

The Scrutiny Committee had considered the report and had welcomed the performance gains and the improvements to the report since quarter 1.

The Cabinet member reported that the document set out progress against the corporate plan priorities. The format and presentation of the report had been improved also. This demonstrated that the council was striving for continuous improvement, openness and accountability.

Cabinet welcomed the report and the improvements made. Cabinet noted that the quarter 3 would be brought to Cabinet shortly.

**RESOLVED:** to note the corporate plan performance monitoring report for quarter 2, 2021/22.

## **95 Budget monitoring 2021/22**

Cabinet considered the head of finance's budget monitoring report for the period 1 April to 30 November 2021.

The Cabinet member for finance reported that there had been a revenue and capital underspend, most of which would be carried forward to the 2022/23 budget.

Cabinet welcomed and noted the report.

**RESOLVED:** to note the budget monitoring report up to 30 November 2021.

The meeting closed at 6.40 pm

Chair

Date

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