

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE



Listening Learning Leading

Cabinet

Held on Thursday 1 December 2022 at 6.00 pm
Meeting Room 1, Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon, OX14 3JE

Present in the meeting room:

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

Officers: Steve Culliford (Democratic Services Team Leader) and Mark Stone (Chief Executive)

Remote attendance:

Cabinet members: Councillors Robin Bennett and Maggie Filipova-Rivers (Vice-Chair)

Officers: Patrick Arran (Head of Legal and Democratic), Emma Baker (Planning Policy Team Leader), Harry Barrington-Mountford (Head of Policy and Programmes), Jayne Bolton (Community Wellbeing Manager), David Fairall (People and Culture Manager), Susan Harbour (Strategic Partnership Manager), Simon Hewings (Head of Finance), Mark Minion (Head of Corporate Services), Lucy Murfett (Policy Manager), Adrianna Partridge (Deputy Chief Executive - Transformation and Operations), and Susie Royse (Broadcasting Officer)

47 Apologies for absence

Councillor Pieter-Paul Barker had sent his apologies for absence.

48 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 10 November 2022 as a correct record and agree that the chair signs them as such.

49 Declaration of interests

None

50 Urgent business and chair's announcements

The chair reported that there had been a change of Cabinet membership since the last meeting. He thanked Councillor Leigh Rawlins for his work on Cabinet over the past three and a half years. He then welcomed new Cabinet member Councillor Kate Gregory.

51 Public participation

None

52 Recommendations and updates from other committees

Cabinet received updates from the Joint Audit and Governance Committee and the Scrutiny Committee following their meetings held since the last Cabinet meeting. There were no recommendations for Cabinet to consider.

Cabinet welcomed the Joint Audit and Governance Committee's recommendation to Council to appoint an independent co-opted person to that committee in a non-voting capacity.

Scrutiny Committee had made a recommendation to Council on 8 December that the council should clarify that if a developer changed its plans from a non-chargeable proposal to a chargeable proposal, the council would apply the relevant level of community infrastructure levy. Cabinet noted that since the Scrutiny Committee had met, changes had been made to the council's website and to the developer contributions supplementary planning document to clarify this.

53 Diversity and inclusion strategy

Cabinet considered the head of corporate services' report on a proposal to adopt a diversity and inclusion strategy.

The council's Corporate Plan included an aim to embed an organisational culture that celebrated diversity, inclusion and respect. The council had also approved a motion relating to diversity and inclusion, and had published a diversity and social campaign calendar on its website.

The strategy had been developed to strengthen and improve diversity and inclusion across the communities in South Oxfordshire and to further improve council services. Consultation feedback had been taken into account to further strengthen the strategy. The Cabinet member for community wellbeing reported that it was important for the council to create an environment where everybody felt that they belonged and that their voice would be heard. The council must embrace everyone's differences, their unique talents, beliefs, backgrounds, and abilities. The strategy was the first step in doing this. It would drive improvements in the council's services to make it easier for everyone to use them.

Cabinet welcomed the strategy, noting that an action plan would be developed to implement it. It was not a legal requirement to have a strategy, but Cabinet members considered it was important to do so. It was also an opportunity to review service provision to ensure that services were easily accessible by everyone.

RESOLVED: to

- (a) note the consultation responses received, including comments from Joint Scrutiny Committee; and
-

- (b) adopt the Joint Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils, as set out in Appendix 1 to the head of corporate services' report to Cabinet on 1 December 2022.

54 Oxfordshire Food Strategy

Cabinet considered the head of policy and programmes' report on the Oxfordshire Food Strategy. Oxfordshire County Council had commissioned Good Food Oxfordshire to produce a food strategy. Cabinet was asked to endorse the strategy and agree to develop a local action plan to implement it. Funding would be available from the county council to deliver the action plan.

The strategy aimed to ensure:

- healthy and sustainable food was affordable and accessible to everyone
- a sustainable food economy where local food businesses flourished, with more production, more outlets, more employment and better standards for workers
- more people could enjoy and engage with healthy, sustainable food and that 'good food for everyone' was part of our culture
- that food production, consumption and waste had a less negative impact on the planet
- more locally produced, sustainable food was bought and consumed locally, and that supply chains were more resilient
- that the council continued to evaluate and strengthen existing initiatives, build foundations for new initiatives, and to manage and monitor progress

Cabinet supported the strategy and welcomed the opportunity to develop a local action plan to implement it. The action plan should also allow the council to work in partnership with the many local community groups and the farming community that were already working towards these aims. Cabinet looked forward to the action plan and its implementation.

RESOLVED to:

- (a) endorse the Oxfordshire Food Strategy (Part One) principles and framework for delivery, attached at Appendix 1 to the head of policy and programmes' report to Cabinet on 1 December 2022; and
- (b) ask officers to work with relevant partners to develop a detailed local food strategy action plan (Part Two).

55 Didcot Growth Accelerator Enterprise Zone - Memorandum of Understanding

Cabinet considered the report of the deputy chief executive – partnerships. The report outlined the work undertaken to draft a new memorandum of understanding that would set out how local business rates were spent.

The spending of the retained business rates in the Enterprise Zone area was the responsibility of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. These business rates were spent on infrastructure projects in Oxfordshire but not necessarily in the area from which they originated. The revised memorandum of understanding had resulted from

negotiations for a better allocation of the spend, by confirming the prioritisation of projects in the Didcot Growth Accelerator Enterprise Zone (EZ2) or its surrounding area, and on schemes that promoted the council's corporate objectives.

Cabinet welcomed the council entering into a revised memorandum of understanding on this basis. Cabinet also supported the Vale of White Horse being formally confirmed as the accountable body, as the majority of the enterprise zone was within its district.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that South Oxfordshire District Council should enter into a new memorandum of understanding with the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Vale of White Horse District Council and Oxfordshire County Council, for the retention and distribution of business rates growth income from the Didcot Growth Accelerator Enterprise Zone, agreeing the roles of each party and specifically that Vale of White Horse District Council becomes sole Accountable Body; and
- (b) to authorise the deputy chief executive – partnerships, in consultation with the Cabinet member responsible for partnerships, to finalise terms of the new memorandum of understanding, including non-material amendments, and to enter into it.

56 Oxfordshire Plan 2050 ceasing production and implications for the Joint Local Plan and Local Development Scheme

Cabinet considered the head of policy and programmes' report. This reported that work had ended on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the implications this had for the Joint Local Plan and the Local Development Scheme.

Cabinet recalled that in February 2018, the council made a decision to participate in a strategic plan with the other Oxfordshire authorities, and later that year, Cabinet approved the timetable for an Oxfordshire plan. However, during the summer 2022, the leaders of the five Oxfordshire local planning authorities announced that they were unable to reach agreement on the approach to planning for future housing needs and ended work on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Instead, the councils agreed to tackle these issues through their own local plans, in South Oxfordshire's case through a joint local plan with Vale of White Horse, recognising the wider duty to co-operate.

The report presented the next steps and sought approval of an amended timetable for the Joint Local Plan in an updated Local Development Scheme. The report proposed that the timetable for getting the Joint Local Plan to adoption stage should be extended by 11 months. This would allow time to fill some gaps in the councils' evidence base and would avoid holding public consultations during a pre-election period. Recognising that the timetable might need to change again, the report sought delegated authority to make further updates.

Cabinet noted the end of work on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and welcomed the progress already made on the Joint Local Plan with the Vale of White Horse District Council. Cabinet noted that not all of the freedoms and flexibilities initially offered by the government for the period of 2050s development were made available. Cabinet welcomed the revised Local Development Scheme and its amended timetable, and supported the delegation to make further changes to the timetable if necessary.

RESOLVED to:

- (a) formally note the cessation of work on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050;
- (b) note that Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire councils have committed to develop a Joint Local Plan and work is progressing well to the delivery of that outcome, recognising the wider duty to co-operate;
- (c) approve the updated Joint Local Development Scheme (December 2022), attached at Appendix 1 to the head of policy and programmes' report to Cabinet on 1 December 2022; and
- (d) authorise the head of policy and programmes, in consultation with the Cabinet member for planning, to make any updates to the Joint Local Development Scheme.

57 Council tax base 2023/24

Cabinet considered the head of finance's report on the council tax base for 2023/24. Each year an estimate was made of the taxable resources for the district as a whole and for each parish area. This was then recommended by Cabinet to full Council for approval. The council tax base for the district would then be notified to Oxfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley, plus each parish and town council.

Cabinet welcomed the report and the detail it provided for each parish. Officers were asked to consider adding a further column in next year's report to show the change in the number of homes for each parish.

RESOLVED to recommend Council to:

- (a) approve the report of the head of finance for the calculation of the council's tax base and the calculation of the tax base for each parish area for 2023/2024;
- (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 2023/24 be 61,349.5; 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 2023/24 for each parish be the amount shown against the name of that parish in Appendix A of the report of the head of finance to Cabinet on 1 December 2022.

The meeting closed at 6.55 pm

Chair

Date
