

# Minutes

## OF A MEETING OF THE

# Cabinet



Listening Learning Leading

**HELD ON THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER 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: Jayne Bolton, Pat Connell, Steve Culliford, Andrew Down, Liz Hayden, Simon Hewings, George Jackson, Suzanne Malcolm, Steve May, Adrianna Partridge, Margaret Reed, Melanie Smans, Mark Stone, and Michelle Wells

Also present: Councillors Lynn Lloyd and Sue Roberts

### **28 Apologies for absence**

None

### **29 Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest**

None

### **30 Urgent business and chair's announcements**

None

### **31 Public participation**

None

### **32 Recommendations from other committees**

The leader invited Councillor Sue Roberts to address Cabinet on the corporate plan. Councillor Roberts, Chair of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee, spoke in support of the corporate plan's green credentials. It contained many welcome plans to improve the environment of South Oxfordshire and she thanked Cabinet for taking on board the committee's suggestions. Councillor Roberts believed that the council should monitor the green aspects of the plan by measuring carbon emissions now and each year in the future

to ensure it met its carbon reduction targets. The council should measure emissions from homes, transport, industry and construction. To do this it could tap into measurements already being recorded by other agencies. The council should also measure the weight and proportion of waste to recycling, and it should encourage investment in renewable energies such as wind farms, solar energy plants, and heat source pumps. The council should also protect nature across the district.

Cabinet welcomed the principle of these measures. However, the council would need to assess how cost-effective it would be to measure these elements. Cabinet thanked Councillor Roberts for her suggestions.

### **33 Establishing a council owned delivery vehicle**

Cabinet considered the report of the acting deputy chief executive – place. This sought agreement to develop a business case to establish a wholly owned holding company/vehicle to focus on public sector intervention to deliver a wide range of regeneration and community benefits.

The Cabinet member for development and regeneration reported that it was commonplace for councils to establish such delivery vehicles to support wider community benefit. Legal advice had been sought on the steps to progress the establishment of a delivery vehicle company and the Cabinet member recommended that these steps were followed. The vehicle would have the ability to deliver a range of projects, including truly affordable housing at social rent level, that met the council's aspirations around zero carbon/carbon neutral developments.

The strategic property review that was underway provided an opportunity to identify pieces of land which the council could seek to transfer to the vehicle to deliver regeneration projects. These projects could include affordable housing delivery, but also commercial and community facilities, such as community hubs, land maintenance and management, and health facilities.

The options open to Cabinet were to:

1. choose not to establish such a delivery vehicle—Cabinet considered that this could hinder the council's ability to address its emerging corporate plan ambitions such as "providing the homes people need" "improving health and jobs" and "dealing with the climate emergency".
2. choose to establish a delivery vehicle primarily focused on making a financial return—Cabinet dismissed this option as the Local Government Association had advised against this approach.
3. establish a joint vehicle with Vale of White Horse District Council—having taken legal advice, Cabinet believed it would be simpler for the council to progress with the establishment of the vehicle without having to wait for agreement from the another council, and it also provided greater transparency and traceability of each council's own investment along with greater flexibility.
4. establish one company with a series of sub-companies for particular themes or projects—Cabinet did not consider this was necessary at the outset, but could be relevant as projects came forward.

Cabinet supported the proposal to develop a business case. This delivery vehicle was not purely to make a profit or to delivery affordable housing, it was to provide greater

regeneration and community benefits. There would need to be clarity what was being asked of the company.

**RESOLVED:** to agree that, subject to the decision of Council on 8 October 2020 in relation to the establishment of an appropriate budget, to progress the development of a business case setting out the rationale for the setting up of a council-owned delivery vehicle, to focus on public sector intervention to achieve desired goals to deliver a wide range of regeneration and community benefits.

### **34 Affordable Housing - Allocating Section 106 Commuted Sums**

Cabinet considered the report of the interim head of development and regeneration. This set out the current position with the delivery of affordable housing as part of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. The report also proposed a framework for adoption to enable the evaluation and prioritisation of commuted sums received as part of section 106 agreements as a result of the council granting planning permissions. The commuted sums were in lieu of the on-site delivery of affordable housing.

The Cabinet member for development and regeneration reported that the intention of the framework was to assist in the development of affordable housing schemes. All tenure types would be considered. The intention was to use small and medium sized enterprises for the construction of such developments, and to build low environmental impact homes.

Cabinet supported the proposal and urged officers to progress this.

**RESOLVED:** to

- (a) note the current position regarding the affordable housing delivery programme; and
- (b) approve the framework (attached at appendix one to the interim head of development and regeneration's report to Cabinet on 1 October 2020) to evaluate and prioritise the spend of commuted sums (S106 monies) received by the council in lieu of the on-site delivery of affordable housing, in order to enable the provision of further affordable homes.

### **35 Budget 2020/21**

Cabinet considered the interim head of finance's report on the 2020/21 budget. The report recommended changes to 2020/21 budget to reflect the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and other matters on the council.

The Cabinet member for finance reported that for many years there had not been a need to review the budget mid-year, but the impact of Covid-19 had reduced income (such as car parking) and increased expenditure (on support for vulnerable residents, local communities and local businesses). The additional cost to the council had been £3.7 million. Part of this extra cost was offset by government grant support. However, at the time of writing the report it was estimated that the budget needed to be increased from £15.121 million to £16.177 million, with the resultant funding gap of £1.056 million, which would need to be funded from the council's reserves. It was possible that if the Covid-19 pandemic continued, there might be a need for further in-year budget changes.

Scrutiny Committee had reviewed the report and supported the proposals.

Cabinet supported the proposal to recommend Council to use reserves to fund the gap as this was what reserves were for.

**RECOMMENDED:** to Council on 8 October 2020 to:

- (a) agree that the net revenue expenditure budget for 2020/21 be increased to £16.177 million, with the increase to be funded from revenue reserves; and
- (b) agree the additions to the capital programme to be funded from capital receipts, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the interim head of finance's report to Cabinet on 1 October 2020.

### **36 Corporate Plan 2020-2024**

Cabinet considered the report of the acting deputy chief executive – transformation and operations. The report set out feedback from the consultation on the draft corporate plan for 2020 to 2024.

The Cabinet member with responsibility for the corporate plan thanked all those who had responded during the consultation. There had been 932 responses, more than had been seen before. The feedback had been positive and helpful. As a result, the plan had been amended and had received Scrutiny Committee's support. The Climate Emergency Advisory Committee's comments had been included also. Following the Cabinet meeting, Council would be asked to adopt the plan and a marketing launch would be held at the end of October. Later, a performance management framework would be developed and brought to Cabinet for approval. Scrutiny Committee would have the opportunity to review annual monitoring reports and chase progress against the plan.

Cabinet welcomed the consultation responses and the amended draft plan. Councillors also thanked officers for their work on the plan. There would be a need to ensure the performance measures were coherent, measurable and cost-effective. Over time, the measures would be reviewed.

**RESOLVED:** to agree the final content to be included in the South Oxfordshire District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024, subject to the deliverability of the measures in the plan;

**RECOMMENDED** to Council on 8 October 2020 to:

- (a) adopt the South Oxfordshire District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 set out in Appendix 4 to the report of the acting deputy chief executive – transformation and operations to Cabinet on 1 October 2020, with a marketing material launch following on 30 October 2020; and
- (b) agree that the deliverability of the measures, set out in Appendix 4 to the report of the acting deputy chief executive – transformation and operations to Cabinet on 1 October 2020, be kept under ongoing review.

### **37 Delegation of enforcement functions from Oxfordshire County Council to South Oxfordshire District Council under Covid-19 legislation**

Cabinet considered the head of legal and democratic's report. This set out a proposal to accept the delegation of functions granted to Oxfordshire County Council under The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restriction) (England) (No.3) Regulations 2020, that gave councils powers relating to the control and prevention of coronavirus. With the support of district council officers, Oxfordshire County Council had decided to delegate these functions to the district councils, adding to this council's existing powers.

Cabinet agreed to the proposal to delegate further powers to this council, as local control would be more effective. Environmental health officers would have a full range of health protection powers. The delegation arrangements from the county council would be effected through an agency agreement. It was noted that the council would be able to bid for funding to the Health Protection Board to fully cover the costs of taking on the new powers.

**RECOMMENDED:** to Council on 8 October 2020 to:

- (a) accept the delegation of functions from Oxfordshire County Council to enable South Oxfordshire District Council to carry out the enforcement actions detailed in The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restriction) (England) (No.3) Regulations 2020;
- (b) authorise the head of legal and democratic to enter into all necessary contracts and agreements to implement the delivery of the enforcement actions on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council under The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 3) Regulations 2020;
- (c) authorise the head of legal and democratic to enter into all necessary contracts and agreements to implement the delivery of the enforcement actions on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council for any further period for which The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 3) Regulations 2020 may be extended by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and any enforcement actions which Oxfordshire County Council may delegate to the council in pursuance of any other provision (whether by statute, regulation or direction) by which The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 3) Regulations 2020 may be replaced, amended or supplemented; and
- (d) authorise the head of housing and environment to perform the enforcement actions set out in any such agreements referred to in (a) to (c) above, and to authorise other officers to exercise any of these actions.

### **38 Exclusion of the Public**

**RESOLVED:** 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 paragraph 3 of 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.

### **39 Decision on the impact of Covid-19 on leisure facilities**

Cabinet agreed to continue to find a way to reduce the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the operation of the council's leisure facilities.

#### **40 Budget 2020/21**

Cabinet noted the exempt information in the appendices to the budget report.