

Record of individual Cabinet member decision

Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Decision made by	Cllr. Anne Marie Simpson
Key decision?	No
Date of decision (same as date form signed)	12 May 2021
Name and job title of officer requesting the decision	Robyn Tobutt Senior Planning Policy Officer (Neighbourhood)
Officer contact details	Tel: 01235 422600 Email: Robyn.Tobutt@southandvale.gov.uk
Decision	<p>To recommend to Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To make the Wheatley Neighbourhood Development Plan so that it continues to be part of the council's development plan. 2. To delegate to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member and in agreement with the Qualifying Body, the correction of any spelling, grammatical, typographical or factual errors together with any improvements from a presentational perspective.
Reasons for decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The making of the Wheatley Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan) would not breach, or otherwise be incompatible with, any EU or human rights obligations, including the following Directives: the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC); the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2011/92/EU); the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC); the Wild Birds Directive (2009/147/EC); the Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC); the Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC); and the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC). In addition, no issues arise in respect of equality under general principles of EU law or any EU equality directive. 2. In order to comply with the basic condition on the European Union legislation the Qualifying Body has prepared a Strategic Environmental Assessment dated

September 2019. The Strategic Environmental Assessment sets out the background of how it was developed in Section 1 and 2. Section 3 sets out the scope of the SEA. Section 5 identifies the reasonable alternatives. Section 7 develops the preferred approach. Section 8 details the methodology. Section 9 assess the submission plan. Section 11 sets out the monitoring and next steps. The Environmental Report is well-considered and detailed. It assesses the environmental conditions in the neighbourhood area and appraises the policies (and reasonable alternatives) against the framework developed through the Scoping Report.

3. The Plan will not give rise to significant environmental effects on European sites. South Oxfordshire District Council produced a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening report on the impact of development proposed in the Plan on European sites which was published in November 2019. The HRA screening report concluded that the Plan would not have any likely significant effects on the integrity of European sites in South Oxfordshire, either alone or in combination with other plans or programmes. Natural England confirmed on 7 November 2019 that the proposals in the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites and that an Appropriate Assessment was not therefore required.
4. The council is satisfied that the Plan is in all respects fully compatible with Convention rights contained in the Human Rights Act 1988. There has been full and adequate opportunity for all interested parties to take part in the preparation of the Plan and to make their comments known.

Referendum

5. A referendum relating to the adoption of the Wheatley Neighbourhood Development Plan was held on Thursday 6 May 2021.
6. The question which was asked in the Referendum was: *'Do you want South Oxfordshire District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Wheatley to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'*
7. The result was as follows:
 - a. Yes = 1359 votes
 - b. No = 189 votes
 - c. Turnout = 42.79%
8. The majority of local electors who voted, voted in favour of the Plan; therefore, the Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan

	<p>has become part of the council's development plan.</p> <p>9. As the Plan was approved at the local referendum and the council is satisfied that the making of the Plan would not breach, or otherwise be incompatible with, any EU or human rights obligations, the council is required make the Wheatley Neighbourhood Development Plan so that it continues to be part of the council's development plan.</p>
<p>Alternative options rejected</p>	<p>The council's options are limited by statute. Paragraph 38A (4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out that the council must make a neighbourhood plan if more than half of those voting at the referendum have voted in favour of the plan being used to help decide planning applications in the plan area.</p> <p>The only circumstance where the district council should not make this decision is where the making of the plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998).</p> <p>Section 3 of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017, which came into force on 19 July 2017, amends section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to ensure that neighbourhood plans have full legal effect once they have passed their local referenda. In the very limited circumstances that the council might decide not to make the neighbourhood development plan, it will cease to be part of the development plan for the area.</p> <p>In this case, the referendum result was in favour of the plan, and so the Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan has become part of the council's development plan. For the reasons set out in paragraphs 1 to 4, the council is satisfied that the Wheatley Neighbourhood Development Plan would not breach or be incompatible with EU obligations or human rights legislation.</p>
<p>Climate, sustainability and ecological implications</p>	<p>The Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Achieving sustainable development through the planning system involves delivering on three overarching objectives – economic, social and environmental. The Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan has set out to achieve sustainable development in the neighbourhood area. Contributing to the economic objective, the Plan includes policies for infill residential development within the built-up area (H4) and the site</p>

	<p>allocation policy (SPES2). It also includes policies for the village centre (VCE1) and for general economic development (E1). On the social objective, it includes policies on community facilities (SC11/2) and on community energy projects (DQS1). On the environmental objective, the Plan positively seeks to protect the natural, built and historic environment. It has specific policies on the historic environment (HE1), biodiversity (EN1) and landscape character (H2).</p> <p>Taken as a whole, the council is satisfied that through its policies the Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan pursues net gain across each of the different objectives of sustainable development in a mutually supportive way.</p>
<p>Legal implications</p>	<p>The legal implications are set out elsewhere in the report on the basis of which it is considered that the council should now proceed to make the Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<p>Financial implications</p>	<p>Government grants are available to local authorities to help meet the cost of our responsibilities to progress neighbourhood plans through the formal stages, including the referendum. A total of £20,000 can be claimed for each neighbourhood planning area. The council becomes eligible to apply for this additional grant once the council issues a decision statement detailing the intention to send the plan to referendum.</p> <p>Any costs incurred in the formal stages in excess of Government grants is borne by the council. Staffing costs associated with supporting community groups and progressing neighbourhood plans through the formal stages are funded by the council. It is expected that costs associated with progressing this neighbourhood plan can be met from the existing neighbourhood planning budget.</p>
<p>Other implications</p>	<p>The council is required to comply with the statutory requirements (to consider whether the Wheatley Neighbourhood Development Plan should be made following successful local referendum), which this recommendation seeks to achieve. In view of the considerations referred to elsewhere in this report, as the majority of those voting have voted in favour of the plan at its local referendum, a decision not to make the plan would place the council at risk of a legal challenge.</p>
<p>Background papers considered</p>	<p>1. Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents</p>

	2. National Planning Policy Guidance (July 2014 and subsequent updates) 3. SEA Report 4. South Oxfordshire District Council HRA Screening Statement			
Declarations/conflict of interest? Declaration of other councillor/officer consulted by the Cabinet member?				
List consultees		Name	Outcome	Date
	Ward councillors	Alexandrine Kantor	No comment	Consulted 25/03/21 to 31/03/21
		Timothy Bearder	Agreement	11/05/2021
	Legal	Vivien Williams	Agreement	08/04/21
	Finance		No comment	Consulted 25/03/21 to 31/03/21
	Human resources		No comment	Consulted 25/03/21 to 31/03/21
	Sustainability		No comment	Consulted 25/03/21 to 31/03/21
	Diversity and equality		No comment	Consulted 25/03/21 to 31/03/21
	Climate and biodiversity		No comment	Consulted 25/03/21 to 31/03/21
	Communications	Comms	No comment	01/04/2021
	Senior Management Team	SMT Meeting	Agreement	07/04/2021
Confidential decision? If so, under which exempt category?	No			
Call-in waived by Scrutiny Committee chairman?	N/A			
Has this been discussed by Cabinet members?				
Cabinet portfolio holder's signature To confirm the decision as set out in this notice.	Signature _____ Councillor Anne-Marie Simpson _____ Date _____ 12 May 2021 _____			

ONCE SIGNED, THIS FORM MUST BE HANDED TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES IMMEDIATELY.

For Democratic Services office use only		
Form received	Date: 17 May 2021	Time: 11:30
Date published to all councillors	Date: 17 May 2021	
Call-in deadline	Not applicable as this is not a key decision.	

Guidance notes

1. This form must be completed by the lead officer who becomes the contact officer. The lead officer is responsible for ensuring that the necessary internal consultees have signed it off, including the chief executive. The lead officer must then seek the Cabinet portfolio holder's agreement and signature.
2. Once satisfied with the decision, the Cabinet portfolio holder must hand-sign and date the form and return it to the lead officer who should send it to Democratic Services immediately to allow the call-in period to commence.
Tel. 01235 422520 or extension 2520.
Email: democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk
3. Democratic Services will then publish the decision to the website (unless it is confidential) and send it to all councillors to commence the call-in period (five clear working days) if it is a 'key' decision (see the definition of a 'key' decision below). A key decision cannot be implemented until the call-in period expires. The call-in procedure can be found in the council's constitution, part 4, under the Scrutiny Committee procedure rules.
4. Before implementing a key decision, the lead officer is responsible for checking with Democratic Services that the decision has not been called in.
5. If a key decision has been called in, Democratic Services will notify the lead officer and decision-maker. This call-in puts the decision on hold.
6. Democratic Services will liaise with the Scrutiny Committee chairman over the date of the call-in debate. The Cabinet portfolio holder will be requested to attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting to answer the committee's questions.
7. The Scrutiny Committee may:
 - refer the decision back to the Cabinet portfolio holder for reconsideration or
 - refer the matter to Council with an alternative set of proposals (where the final decision rests with full Council) or
 - accept the Cabinet portfolio holder's decision, in which case it can be implemented immediately.

Key decisions: assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key'

The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' Constitutions now have the same definition of a key decision:

A key decision is a decision of the Cabinet, an individual Cabinet member, or an officer acting under delegated powers, which is likely:

- (a) to incur expenditure, make savings or to receive income of more than £75,000;**

- (b) to award a revenue or capital grant of over £25,000; or**
- (c) to agree an action that, in the view of the chief executive or relevant head of service, would be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising more than one ward in the area of the council.**

Key decisions are subject to the scrutiny call-in procedure; non-key decisions are not and can be implemented immediately.

In assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key', you should consider:

- (a) Will the expenditure, savings or income total more than £75,000 across all financial years?
- (b) Will the grant award to one person or organisation be more than £25,000 across all financial years?
- (c) Does the decision impact on more than one district council ward? And if so, is the impact significant? If residents or property affected by the decision is in one ward but is close to the border of an adjacent ward, it may have a significant impact on that second ward, e.g. through additional traffic, noise, light pollution, odour. Examples of significant impacts on two or more wards are:
 - Decisions to spend Didcot Garden Town funds (significant impact on more than one ward)
 - Changes to the household waste collection policy (affects all households in the district)
 - Reviewing a housing strategy (could have a significant impact on residents in many wards)
 - Adopting a supplementary planning document for a redevelopment site (could significantly affect more than one ward) or a new design guide (affects all wards)
 - Decisions to build new or improve existing leisure facilities (used by residents of more than one ward)

The overriding principle is that before 'key' decisions are made, they must be published in the Cabinet Work Programme for 28 calendar days. Classifying a decision as non-key when it should be a key decision could expose the decision to challenge and delay its implementation.