



SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Council

28 February 2022

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If you need any further information about the meeting please contact Natasha Clark, Democratic and Elections democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, 01295 221589

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DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Council Minute Book

Monday 28 February 2022

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Budget Planning Committee

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Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 6 December 2021 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), Leader of the Council

Councillor Phil Chapman, Lead member for Lesiure and Sport

Councillor Colin Clarke, Lead member for Planning

Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Finance and Governance

Councillor Andrew McHugh, Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing

Councillor Richard Mould, Lead Member for Performance

Councillor Lucinda Wing, Lead Member for Housing

Also Present:

Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Ian Corkin, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Customers and Transformation

Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Economy, Regeneration and Housing

Councillor Dan Sames, Lead Member for Clean and Green

Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive

Bill Cotton, Corporate Director Environment and Place

Steve Jorden, Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets & Investment and Shareholder Representative

Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers and Organisational Development

Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer

Anita Bradley, Director Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer

David Peckford, Assistant Director: Planning and Development

Nicola Riley, Assistant Director: Wellbeing

Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes

Samantha Taylor, Principal Planning Officer

Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

74 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

75 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

76 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

77 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

78 **Infrastructure Funding Statement 2020/21**

The Assistant Director – Planning and Development submitted a report to seek approval of the Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement 2020/21 for publication and for an accompanying data submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Resolved

- (1) That the Infrastructure Funding Statement 20/21 (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved for publication by 31 December 2021, subject to any final changes considered to be necessary by the Assistant Director – Planning and Development in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning.
- (2) That the Assistant Director – Planning and Development be authorised to publish and submit the associated Infrastructure Funding Statement data as required by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Reasons

The publication of an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) is a statutory requirement that provides transparency and accessibility of information about s.106 developer contributions required for the grant of planning permission. The proposed IFS encapsulates the data that officers propose to publish and submit for 2020/21 to DLUHC to meet that requirement. The information is considered to be the most robust available at this time. Officers will prepare a statement annually and continue to develop monitoring systems on an on-going basis.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not to bring forward an Infrastructure Funding Statement

This is not a lawful option as it would mean that the Council would be in breach of its statutory duty

Option 2: Seek review of the key statistics and proposed Infrastructure Funding Statement.

Officers consider that this is not required as the information is the most robust available at this time.

79

Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2022-2023

The Director of Finance submitted a report to enable members to consider Council Tax discounts and to seek a recommendation to Council of the proposed levels of Council Tax discounts for the financial year 2022-23.

The report also enabled members to consider the banded scheme for Council Tax Reduction and to seek approval to recommend to Council a Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the financial year 2022-23.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of this report and any financial implications for the Council be noted.
- (2) That Full Council be recommended to agree:
 - the option of no-change to the Council Tax Reduction Income Banded Scheme for Working Age Customers for 2022-23;
 - to amend the Working Age Regulations in line with annual uprating; and
 - to amend the Council Tax Regulations for pensioners in line with uprating announced by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- (3) That, having given due consideration, Full Council be recommended to agree the following levels of Council Tax discounts and premiums for 2022- 23 as follows:
 - Retain the discount for second homes at zero
 - Retain the discount for empty homes (unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) at 25% for 6 months and thereafter zero.
 - Retain the empty homes premium of an additional 100% for properties that have remained empty for more than 2 years.

Reasons

The current scheme is understood by customers and has enabled them to budget for their council tax payments. One of the main advantages of the banded scheme is that it reduces the number of changes that the customer will experience enabling more effective personal budgeting. A revision to the scheme would yield a limited financial benefit to the Council but would increase the customer's council tax payable. There is still a degree of financial uncertainty for some customers and in the current financial climate the existing scheme should be retained.

Alternative option

Option 1: To undertake a review of the current CTRS

A revision to the scheme would yield a limited financial benefit to the Council but would increase the customer's council tax payable. There is still a degree of financial uncertainty for some customers and in the current financial climate the existing scheme should be retained.

80

Monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report

The Director of Finance and Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes submitted a report which summarised the Council's Performance, Risk and Finance monitoring positions as at the end of October 2021.

Resolved

- (1) That the monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report be noted.
- (2) That the changes in uses of reserves as set out in the Annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

Reasons

This report provides an update on progress made during October 2021, to deliver the Council's priorities through reporting on Performance, Leadership Risk Register and providing an update on the Financial Position. The Council is committed to performance, risk and budget management and reviews progress against its corporate priorities on a monthly basis. Executive is recommended to agree a change in the use of reserves in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules

Alternative options

Option 1: This report illustrates the Council's performance against the 2021-22 Business Plan. Regarding the monitoring aspects of the report, no further options have been considered. However, members may wish to request that officers provide additional information. Regarding the recommendation to approve changes in use of reserves, members could choose not to reject the change of use, however, the request is in accordance with the councils Financial Procedure Rules and within existing budgets.

81 **Graven Hill Development Company (Dev Co) - Request for s38 agreement (Highways Act 1980) works bonds relating to highway infrastructure delivered by Dev Co.**

The Shareholder Representative submitted a report to bring to the attention of the Executive the request from Graven Hill Village Development Company Ltd (Dev Co) for the Council to act as surety in two performance bonds for roadway infrastructure works to be undertaken by Dev Co under section 38 of the Highways Act 1980.

Resolved

- (1) That it be approved, in principle, that the Council act as surety for Dev Co in respect of two performance bonds (up to the sum referred to in exempt Annex to the Minutes, as set out in the Minute Book) relating to the construction of highway works by Dev Co pursuant to agreements between Dev Co and Oxfordshire County Council (as local highway authority) to be made under section 38 of the Highways Act 1980.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Shareholder Representative authority to agree the formal documentation in relation to the bonds, in consultation with the s.151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer.
- (3) That it be agreed that Dev Co be requested to pay to the council 1% of the value of the agreed bonds for use of the facility.

Reasons

Through agreeing with the recommendations in this report the council is ensuring that Dev Co can act swiftly to meet its aims and delivery objectives in relation to the highway works and in doing so safeguard the council's investment and return on investment.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not to give a performance bond. This has been dismissed by officers on the grounds that performance bonds are prerequisites for entering section 38 adoption agreements with the county council, and that, by giving a performance bond to a company in which the council has a stake, the council is acting in no less a manner than a parent company would in relation to a subsidiary.

82 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

83 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the ground that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

84 **Graven Hill Development Company (Dev Co) - Request for s38 agreement (Highways Act 1980) works bonds relating to highway infrastructure delivered by Dev Co. - Exempt Appendix**

Resolved

- (1) That the exempt appendix be noted.

85 **Service Review of Leisure Facilities Design, Build, Operate and Maintain (DBOM) Contract**

The Corporate Director of Customers and Organisational Development submitted an exempt report regarding a service review of the Leisure Facilities Design, Build, Operate and Maintain (DBOM) contract.

Resolved

- (1) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (2) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (3) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (4) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (5) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (6) As set out in the exempt minutes.

Reasons

As set out in the exempt minutes.

Alternative options

As set out in the exempt minutes.

The meeting ended at 6.55 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 10 January 2022 at 6.30 pm

Executive Members Present in person:

Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), Leader of the Council
Councillor Ian Corkin (Vice-Chairman), Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Customers and Transformation
Councillor Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning
Councillor Andrew McHugh, Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing

Executive Members Present Virtually (no voting rights):

Councillor Phil Chapman, Lead Member for Leisure and Sport
Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Finance and Governance
Councillor Richard Mould, Lead Member for Performance
Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Economy, Regeneration and Property
Councillor Dan Sames, Lead Member for Clean and Green
Councillor Lucinda Wing, Lead Member for Housing

Also Present:

Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group

Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Bill Cotton, Corporate Director Environment and Place
Steve Jordan, Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets & Investment
Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development and Resources
Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Anita Bradley, Director Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director: Wellbeing
Richard Webb, Assistant Director: Regulatory Services and Community Safety
Andrew Maxted, Planning Policy, Conservation and Design Manager
Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

87 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

88 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

89 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman explained that in light of the current COVID restrictions, the meeting was being held as a hybrid meeting with four Executive Members attending in person and six Executive members attending virtually. Only those Executive members attending in person could propose, second and vote on items but all Executive members could speak on items.

90 **Annual Monitoring Report 2021**

The Assistant Director – Planning and Development submitted a report to seek approval of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2021, and to present the District's current housing land supply position. The report also sought approval of the Housing Delivery Action Plan to assist the Councils approach to housing land supply and of accompanying updates to the Local Plan's Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the Brownfield Land Register.

On behalf of Executive, the Chairman thanked the Planning Policy team for their hard work producing the four documents.

Resolved

- (1) That the 2021 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved for publication.
- (2) That the district's housing delivery and five-year housing land supply positions (for conventional housing and for Gypsies and Travellers) at Section 5 of the AMR and the need for updating of the land supply positions should these materially change, including consideration of the Vale of White Horse Council's 3 December 2021 Cabinet decision relating to the Regulation 10A review of its Part 1 Plan, be noted.
- (3) That the publication the 2021 Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) update (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved for publication.

- (4) That the 2021 Brownfield Land Register (BLR) (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved for publication.
- (5) That the Assistant Director - Planning and Development in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, be authorised to make any necessary minor and presentational changes to the Annual Monitoring Report, Infrastructure Delivery Plan update, Brownfield Land Register and Housing Delivery Action Plan, if required prior to publication.

Reasons

The Annual Monitoring Report provides important information to measure the effectiveness of planning policies and to assist policy making and development management decision making. It is the statutory mechanism for monitoring housing delivery. Its most significant conclusion is that despite a continued relatively high level of housing delivery, the district is presently unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. The AMR is therefore accompanied by an updated 2021 Infrastructure Delivery Plan and a 2021 Brownfield Land Register, which must be reviewed annually, are also presented for approval.

It is recommended that all four documents be approved for publication.

Alternative options

Option 1: Amendment of the: 2021 Annual Monitoring Report, Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Brownfield Land Register.

Officers consider the documents to be robust, supported by data and research. Delay could lead to uncertainty within the development industry and risks for decision making.

Option 2: Not to approve the documents for publication

Production of an Authorities Monitoring Report is a statutory requirement. The AMR is necessary to monitor implementation of the Local Plan. Updating the Brownfield Land Register is also a statutory requirement. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan is required to monitor and support delivery of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031.

91

2020-2022 Community Nature Plan Progress Update

The Assistant Director – Wellbeing submitted a report to provide a progress update for the 2020-2022 Community Nature Plan and its approach to addressing the Council's statutory biodiversity duty.

Resolved

- (1) That the 2020-2022 Community Nature Plan progress report and its approach to addressing the Council's statutory biodiversity duty be noted.

- (2) That the essential role of key partners in the delivery of the Community Nature Plan be recognised.
- (3) That it be noted that the development of the 2022-2024 Community Nature Plan (CNP) will include an all-member seminar in 2022 involving planners, as requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee December 2020 and the implications of the provisions of the Environment Act will be taken into account in this next iteration of the Community Nature Plan.

Reasons

Restoring and enhancing the natural environment and green spaces for the benefit of people and wildlife is a crucial element of important development and economic decisions. Failure to recognise and assess the multiple benefits of the natural environment will affect community health and wellbeing, important habitats and species and future economic growth. This report seeks approval for recommendations which support plans and organisations that will assist the Council to protect and improve the District's natural environment and ensure that it remains healthy for people and wildlife.

Alternative options

Option 1: To reject the Community Nature Plan 2020-22 progress update and the recommendations in the report

This is not proposed as, without the Plan's progress update, the Council would not be able to demonstrate that it is meeting its NERC Act biodiversity duty and complying with its obligations relating to important wildlife sites, habitats and species under European and national legislation as well as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

92

Fixed Penalty Notices

The Assistant Director – Regulatory Services and Community Safety submitted a report to review and agree the fixed penalty notice fines that can be charged for various environmental crimes.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the following fixed penalty notice fine levels for certain environmental crimes enforced by the council be agreed:

Description of offence	Penalty	Penalty if paid within 10 days
Unauthorised deposit of waste (fly tipping)	£400	£240
Failure in household duty of care	£300	£180

Depositing litter	£100	£75
Failure to remove dog faeces from designated land	£100	£75

Reasons

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 provides that local authorities can issue a fixed penalty notice to a person believed to have committed specified environmental offences. Fixed penalties can be an effective and visible way of responding to environmental crimes and provide a quicker and proportionate alternative to prosecution through the courts. They allow the person believed to have committed an offence the opportunity to discharge their liability to conviction for that offence by payment of a fixed penalty. However, if an alleged offender does not pay a fixed penalty fine the matter would be put forward for prosecution for the original offence.

The receipts from fixed penalties can be retained by the council and used to support the investigation of environmental offences.

Alternative options

Option 1: To leave the fixed penalty fine levels unchanged at current levels. This option was rejected as the current fine levels do not reflect the seriousness of the offences or the Council's costs for investigating the offences.

Option 2: To not issue fixed penalty notices but to proceed with prosecutions. This option was rejected because issuing a fixed penalty notice is a proportionate approach for dealing with lesser offences in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy. The income from fixed penalties can be also be retained by the council and used to support the investigation of environmental offences.

93 Member Champion Review

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report to consider the findings of the Member Champion Review.

Resolved

- (1) That the roles of heritage and design Member Champion with the Lead Member for Planning portfolio, and the generations together Member Champion with the Lead Member for Wellbeing portfolio, taking effect from the 2022-2023 Municipal Year.
- (2) That the Military Member Champion role, to be appointed annually, be retained.

- (3) That the Terms of Reference for Member Champions be amended as set out in the Annex to the minutes (as set out in the Minute Book), taking effect from the 2022-2023 Municipal Year.

Reasons

Taking into account the feedback from Councillors Clarke and McHugh, it is recommended to merge the roles of heritage and design Member Champion with the Lead Member for Planning portfolio, and the generations together Member Champion with the Lead Member for Wellbeing portfolio, taking effect from the 2022-2023 Municipal Year.

The Assistant Director – Planning and Development has confirmed that the removal of the design and heritage Champion roles would not cause any operational issues, as all aspects of design and heritage are discussed with Councillor Clarke in his role as Lead Member for Planning.

It is recommended that the Military Member Champion role remains in place, to be appointed annually via a report to Executive which also appoints representatives to Outside Bodies.

Terms of Reference for Member Champions are recommended to remain broadly the same as initially introduced, subject to amendments as shown in appendix 3. Text shown in italics are proposed inclusions, with text struck through being proposed deletions.

Alternative options

Option 1: To retain all Member Champion roles, appointing non-Executive Members to the positions. This is rejected, as the changing Council priorities have aligned the Champion roles with Lead Member portfolios, except the Military Member Champion, as evidenced through discussions with the existing Champions. Maintaining a Champion role alongside the Executive Lead Member portfolio would be duplicating work

Option 2: To abolish/cease all Member Champion roles. This is also rejected, as removing the Military Champion role would give an impression of not giving due priority to the military community

94

Council Tax Base 2022-2023

The Director of Finance submitted a report to provide Council Tax Base for 2022-2023.

Resolved

- (1) That the report of the Director of Finance for the calculation of the Council's Tax Base for 2022-2023 be agreed and:

- (a) That pursuant to the Director of Finance's report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Cherwell District Council as its Council Tax Base for the year 2022-2023 shall be **56,801.6**
- (b) As for the parishes which form part of its area shown in the Annex to the Minutes (As set out in the Minute Book), the amount calculated as the Council Tax Base for the year 2022-2023 in respect of special items shall be as indicated in the column titled Tax Base 2022-2023.
- (c) As for the Flood Defence Areas which form part of its area, the amount calculated as the Council Tax Base for the year 2022-2023 for the purposes of levies on Oxfordshire County Council by River Authorities, shall be:

Thames Flood Defence Area	54,450.4
Anglian (Great Ouse) Flood Defence Area	1,901.3
Severn Region Flood Defence Area	449.9
TOTAL	56,801.6

Reasons

For the purposes of Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the Council is required to calculate the tax base (which will be used for tax setting purposes in February 2022) in respect of:

- (a) the whole of its area and;
- (b) for any parts of its area for the purposes of:
 - (i) Apportioning precepts and levies and;
 - (ii) Calculating the tax base for each area subject to a special item

Alternative options

There are no alternative options. The Council has to set a tax base in order to set its council tax for 2022-2023.

95

Monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report

The Director of Finance and Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes submitted a report which summarised the Council's Performance, Risk and Finance monitoring positions as at the end of November 2021.

Resolved

- (1) That the monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report be noted.

- (2) That the following change in use of reserves (specific request) be approved:

Directorate	Type	Description	Reason	Amount £m
Finance	Earmarked	Transformation Reserve	Engagement on partnership working	0.047
Total Earmarked Reserves				0.047

Reasons

This report provides an update on progress made during November 2021, to deliver the Council's priorities through reporting on Performance, Leadership Risk Register and providing an update on the Financial Position. The Council is committed to performance, risk and budget management and reviews progress against its corporate priorities on a monthly basis. Executive is recommended to agree a change in the use of reserves in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules

Alternative options

Option 1: This report illustrates the Council's performance against the 2021-22 Business Plan. Regarding the monitoring aspects of the report, no further options have been considered. However, members may wish to request that officers provide additional information. Regarding the recommendation to approve changes in use of reserves, members could choose not to reject the change of use, however, the request is in accordance with the councils Financial Procedure Rules and within existing budgets.

96

Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 6.55 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 7 February 2022 at 5.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Ian Corkin (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair), Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Customers and Transformation

Councillor Phil Chapman, Lead Member for Leisure and Sport
Councillor Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning
Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Finance and Governance
Councillor Andrew McHugh, Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Richard Mould, Lead Member for Performance
Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Economy, Regeneration and Property
Councillor Dan Sames, Lead Member for Clean and Green
Councillor Lucinda Wing, Lead Member for Housing

Also Present:

Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group
Councillor John Broad

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council

Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Steve Jordan, Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets & Investment & Shareholder Representative
Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Anita Bradley, Director Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer
Nathan Elvery, Interim Chief Operating Officer
Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance & Deputy S151 Officer
Shahin Ismail, recommended appointee as Interim Monitoring Officer
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

97 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

98 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

99 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Chairman in the Chair.

100 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

101 **Budget Setting for 2022/23 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy up to 2026/27**

The Director of Finance submitted a report which was the culmination of the Budget and Business Planning process for 2022/23 to 2026/27 and set out the Executive's proposed Business Plan and related revenue budget for 2022/23, medium term financial strategy to 2026/27, capital programme to 2026/27 and all supporting policies, strategies and information.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposed Fees and Charges for 2022/23 (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (2) That the equality impact assessment of the Budget be noted.
- (3) That report on Responses to the Budget Consultation be noted.
- (4) That the Reserves Policy and medium-term reserves plan (Annexes to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (5) That authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer (S151), following consultation with the Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Finance and Governance, to complete the legal Council Tax calculations once all the information required has been received.
- (6) That authority be delegated to the S151, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Finance and Governance, to make appropriate changes to the Executive's proposed budget to Council.
- (7) That Full Council be recommended to approve the Business Plan.
- (8) That, in relation to the Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), Full Council be recommended to approve:
 - i. That the net revenue budget for the financial year commencing on 1 April 2022 be approved.
 - ii. That the MTFS and Revenue Budget 2022/23, including the Savings Proposals, and Pressures, be approved.

- (9) That Full Council be recommended to agree an increase in the Basic Amount of Council Tax for Cherwell District Council for the financial year beginning on 1 April 2022 of £5, resulting in a Band D charge of £143.50 per annum.
- (10) That, in relation to the Capital Programme and related strategies, Full Council be recommended to approve:
- i. The Capital Bids and Capital Programme.
 - ii. The Capital and Investment Strategy.
 - iii. The Treasury Management Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators, Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy and Affordable Borrowing Limit for 2022/23.
 - iv. The Property Investment Strategy.
- (11) That, in relation to reserves, Full Council be recommended to approve a minimum level of General Balances of £6m.

Reasons

It is a legal requirement to set a balanced budget and the recommendations as outlined set out a way to achieve this. This report provides information around the various building blocks that make up the proposed budget for 2022/23 and beyond, allowing members to consider and scrutinise the elements of the budget and provide advice and guidance to Council to help further shape both budget setting for 2022/23 and the MTFs up to 2026/27.

Alternative options

Option 1: To reject the current proposals and make alternative recommendations. Members will not be aware of the medium-term financial forecast or implications of alternatives if they choose to take this option.

102

(Draft) Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Principles

The Assistant Director Regulatory Services & Community Safety to consider a revised Statement of Licensing Principles which is required to be published by the council under the Gambling Act 2005.

The report introduced a draft of the revised Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Principles, explained the reason for the review, provided a summary of the main changes to the current statement of licensing principles, and outlined the consultation process followed in revising the current document.

Resolved

- (1) That the revised Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act 2005 be agreed and Full Council be recommended to approve the Statement.

Reasons

Section 349 of The Gambling Act 2005 requires all licensing authorities to prepare and publish a statement of principles that they propose to apply in exercising their functions under the Act and in particular the 3 licensing objectives.

The Gambling Act 2005 became fully implemented on 1 September 2007 and it created a new system of licensing and regulation for commercial gambling. It requires the Council to prepare and publish a Statement of Principles for each successive period of three years, which outlines the principles that the Council will apply in exercising its functions as the Licensing Authority under the Act. The last statement was approved January 2019 and came into effect on 31 January 2019 and a new Statement must therefore be agreed by the Council.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not to review and republish the statement. It is a statutory requirement that the policy must be reviewed so this option is not recommended.

103

Approval of a Cherwell District Council Social Value Policy

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report to advise Executive on progress towards introducing a Social Value Policy for Cherwell District Council.

Resolved

- (1) That the Social Value Policy be approved.
- (2) That the planned implementation of the Social Value Policy be approved.

Reasons

The aim of the CDC Social Value Policy is to enable the Council's spending to go further by encouraging suppliers to commit to providing additional social value, through the tendering process, that will benefit local communities within Cherwell.

Incorporating social value into our procurement process can be achieved with minimal additional time and cost, yet it is a change that can make a real difference to people in the local community, to service delivery and to the Council's spending plans as a whole.

Social value is also a legal requirement as set out in the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, which came into effect in January 2013, and the recent National Procurement Statement (PPN 05/21) published in June 2021.

Both the law and the statement apply to all types of public bodies, including local authorities. The mandatory nature of this legislation underlines the importance of launching the policy as quickly as possible.

Alternative options

Option 1: The option of doing nothing is not available for this project, because it is a legal requirement as set out in the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and the recent National Procurement Policy Statement (PPN 05/21) published in June 2021.

Option 2: The option of undertaking the project using only internal resource was considered, however this would have incurred significant soft costs and would have also taken much longer to implement. Utilising the expertise of the Social Value Portal was considered the best value option, enabling the policy to be effective, well-considered and informed by best practices. In addition, the social value resulting from the new policy is expected to be many times the cost of annual membership, which is relatively low at £15 K GBP.

104

Shareholders Agreement - Crown House and Crown Apartments

The Shareholder Representative submitted a report to approve the shareholder agreement between Cherwell District Council (CDC) and Crown House Banbury Limited and Crown Apartments Banbury Limited

Resolved

- (1) That the entering into of a shareholder agreement between Cherwell District Council (CDC) and Crown House Banbury Limited and Crown Apartments Banbury Limited be approved.
- (2) That the Shareholder Representative, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to settle the final terms and sign the shareholder agreement on behalf of Cherwell District Council.

Reasons

Through agreeing with the recommendations in this report the council is ensuring that a relevant and up to date legal agreement between the Shareholder and Crown House companies is in place.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not to approve the entering into of the shareholder's agreement – this has been rejected as not entering into the agreement would mean that the Council would have no ability to influence or monitor the activities, of the companies through the various rights granted to it under the shareholder's agreement.

105 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 5.50 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Council

Record of Lead Member Decisions for the period December 2021 to February 2022

28 February 2022

Area of Responsibility	Decision Subject Matter
Lead Member for Planning	Application for the Designation of a Neighbourhood Area for the Parish of Islip*

*subject to expiration of call-in at 12 noon on 22 February 2022

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Cherwell District Council

Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 19 January 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes (Chairman)
Councillor Hugo Brown (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Andrew Beere
Councillor Adam Nell
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Substitute Members:

Councillor Sandy Dallimore for Councillor Tom Wallis

Also Present:

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council
Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Finance and Governance
Maria Grindley, Associate Partner, Ernst & Young (external audit)
Sue Gill, Ernst & Young (external audit)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Conrad Copeland
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Tom Wallis

Officers:

Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance
Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor
Sukdave Ghuman, Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Joanne Kaye, Strategic Business Partner
Sharon Hickson, Democratic and Elections Officer

49 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

50 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

51 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

52 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no chairman's announcements.

53 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

54 **Internal Audit Progress Report 2021/22**

The Director of Finance submitted a report presenting the Internal Audit Progress report for 2021/22.

The Chief Internal Auditor and Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer responded to questions from the Committee, regarding Appendix 3 - "Executive Summaries of finalised reports" on the status of outstanding policies and training on Data Protection. Members were informed that there was an action plan and GDPR was a high priority within this plan.

In response to Members' requests for more reassurance of progress via an update to be circulated by the end of the month and a further update be given at the March committee meeting, the Chief Internal Auditor confirmed that a progress report setting out actions had been completed or a clear explanation why it had not from lead officers and managers would be submitted to the March meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the progress of the 2021/22 Internal Audit Plan and the outcome of the completed audits be noted.

55 **Statement of Accounts Update**

The Director of Finance submitted a report asking Members to consider changes to be incorporated to the draft statement of accounts.

Ernst & Young, the council's External Auditors (EY) provided an update to the committee, informing Members that evidence to questions has not been

received. The Committee requested that an item be added to the March agenda if these remained unanswered or if new questions were raised by EY.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration the revised Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) in the Draft Statement of Accounts 2020/21 along with necessary changes to supporting statements and notes be endorsed.
- (2) That it be agreed that on receipt of the final audit opinion, the Director of Finance (S151 Officer), in consultation with the Chair of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee (or Vice Chair in case the Chairman is unavailable), be authorised to sign the accounts.
- (3) That it be noted that, if any material changes to the accounts are required, then an additional committee meeting would be convened to consider the changes.

56 **Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021 - Update on Actions**

The Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer submitted a report to consider an update on actions from the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2020/2021.

The Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer confirmed a list of the elements incorporated within the Social Value and Climate elements would be forwarded.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration the update on the actions arising from the Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021 be noted

57 **Appointment of Independent Member to the Committee**

The Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer submitted a report requesting the Committee consider and agree the proposed arrangements for the appointment of an Independent Member.

In response to Members' comments, the Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer to report back to the committee how and where the post will be advertised.

Resolved

- (1) That the recruitment of an Independent Member to the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee be agreed.

- (2) That the proposed arrangements for the appointment of an Independent Member be approved.
- (3) That the Background Information and Independent Member specification be approved, with final approval delegated to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee,
- (4) That authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee, to finalise the recruitment pack.

58 **Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies 2022-23**

The Director of Finance submitted a report which presented the draft Capital and Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy for 2022-23.

Resolved

- (1) That Full Council be recommended to adopt the Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies 2022-23

59 **Work Programme**

The Committee considered it's work programme and proposed committee training schedule. As identified under agenda item 7, Internal Audit Progress Report 2021/22, "Update on Internal Audit of GDPR" would be added to the March meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to "Update on Internal Audit of GDPR" being added to the March meeting, the work programme and Committee training schedule be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.48 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Budget Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Planning Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 9 December 2021 at 6.30 pm

Present Virtually:

Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Chairman
Councillor Carmen Griffiths
Councillor Phil Chapman (and Lead Member for Leisure and Sport)
Councillor Conrad Copeland
Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Shaida Hussain
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Lucinda Wing (and Lead Member for Housing)
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Substitute Members present virtually:

Councillor Adam Nell (in place of Councillor McHugh)
Councillor Les Sibley (in place of Councillor Fraser Webster)

Executive Members in attendance virtually:

Councillor Barry Wood - Leader of the Council
Councillor Colin Clarke - Lead Member for Planning
Councillor Ian Corkin - Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Customers and Transformation
Councillor Tony Ilott - Lead Member for Finance and Governance
Councillor Richard Mould - Lead Member for Performance
Councillor Lynn Pratt - Lead Member for Economy, Regeneration and Property

Apologies for absence:

Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Andrew McHugh
Councillor Fraser Webster

Officers present virtually:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Stephen Chandler, Corporate Director Adults & Housing Services
Bill Cotton, Corporate Director Environment and Place
Steve Jordan, Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets & Investment
Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development and Resources

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director: Wellbeing
Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes
Joanne Kaye, Strategic Business Partner
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager
Lesley Farrell, Democratic and Elections Officer

24 **Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed Members and officers to the virtual meeting. The Chairman explained that in light of the new COVID measures and following discussion with officers he had agreed that we hold this meeting virtually rather than meet in person to follow the guidance, protect public health, minimise risks and also to comply with statutory requirements for our meetings.

25 **Adjournment and Reconvening of the Meeting**

Due to technical issues with the webcast, the meeting adjourned at 6.45pm and reconvened at 7.00pm.

26 **Declarations of Interest**

6. Budget Proposals 2022/23 - 2026/27.

Councillor Shaida Hussain, Non Statutory Interest, as a Trustee of Banbury Museum.

27 **Minutes**

The Committee indicated agreement of the Minutes of the meeting of the 26 October 2021 as a correct record. The Chairman advised that the minutes would be formally agreed at the next in person meeting of the Committee and signed by the Chairman.

28 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman reminded the Committee that any staffing matters arising from budget proposals should not be discussed at the Budget Planning Committee meeting but would be considered by the council's Personnel Committee as per its remit in the constitution.

29 **Urgent Business**

There were no matters of urgent business.

30 **Budget Proposals 2022/23 - 2026/27**

The Director of Finance submitted a report which set out the capital bids and revenue savings proposals and budget pressures for Cherwell District Council for the period 2022/23 to 2026/27.

The Director of Finance explained that the Government's spending review announcement on 27 October 2021 had provided some clarity with regards to funding, however the Local Government Finance Settlement had not yet been announced so there was still an unknown element in the figures for 2022/23. A provisional settlement figure was due to be announced the week commencing 13 December and it was not known if this would be a one or multi-year settlement. Due to a consultation linked to some of the elements, the final figure would not be known until February 2022. The assessments would then be included with the full budget papers to be considered by Executive in February 2022 for recommendation to Full Council in February 2022.

The Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development and Resources gave an overview of the results of the resident's survey. The key findings gave an overall satisfaction and the main priorities for residents were recycling and anti-social behaviour.

In response to Members' questions the Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development and Resources explained that the survey questions were consistent with previous resident's survey questions. The survey had been undertaken prior to the food waste collection changes and therefore the responses would not reflect these changes.

Following additional questions from the Committee the Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development and Resources undertook to provide Members with a copy of the resident's survey questions and a demographic breakdown of the respondents.

Executive Lead Members and Directors gave an overview of the pressures and proposed savings by service area within each directorate and answered questions from the Committee.

In relation to the housing proposals, and a Committee Member query regarding the proposals setting out there would be no impact on service delivery, the Lead Member for Housing explained service delivery would continue and a change of accounting procedure resulted in savings.

In relation to the leisure facilities savings proposals, in response the questions from the Committee seeking clarity of the changes to achieve the savings, the Assistant Director - Wellbeing explained that the priority was to retain a core offer in the three urban centres. The Assistant Director – Wellbeing undertook to provide a detailed note to Members explaining the review and savings in Leisure Facilities outside of the meeting.

With regards to proposals in the Environment and Place directorate, the Corporate Director, Environment and Place responded to questions regarding the economic impact and health benefits to the district of the Women's Tour Cycling Race and advised that the council had contributed a relatively modest budget. He was not aware of any direct studies but would liaise with Experience Oxfordshire and circulate any relevant information to Members.

In response to a query regarding the certainty of savings arising from reduced waste facility processing changes as a result of improved recycling material prices, the Corporate Director Environment and Place explained that the proposal was prudent and a figure officers believed was sustainable.

Some members of the Committee raised concerns that the Car Parking Equality and Climate Impact Assessment statistics did not show a fair and reasoned representation of comparator towns and local car parks. The Corporate Director, Environment and Place undertook to provide Members with details of the metrics used to choose the car parks included in the benchmarking.

Regarding pressures and savings proposals for the Commercial Development, Assets, and Investment directorate, following a Committee Members request for more information on the proposed annual savings for Castel Quay, the Assistant Director of Finance explained that the assessment was based on demand for Castle Quay and the ongoing impact of improvements against the initial assumptions in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Corporate Director, Commercial Development, Assets, and Investment advised that Castle Quay was recovering well from the impact of COVID and that Banbury itself was improving as a town and offered to meet with interested Members to provide further details on the figures relating to Castle Quay.

Some members of the Committee raised concerns in relation to the proposal to end the financial support for public space CCTV, highlighting that the residents survey had identified anti-social behaviour as a key priority. that it was proposed to cut funding for CCTV from the budget.

In the course of discussion on the CCTV savings proposals, some Members highlighted that there were still a number of unknowns, including the Local Government Settlement which may put the council in a better position. Executive could therefore be requested to remove this savings proposal were that the case.

The Leader of the Council highlighted that the proposals were out for consultation and the responses would be considered when finalising the proposals. In addition, there were different ways and schemes to fund CCTV.

It was proposed by Councillor Woodcock and seconded by Councillor Hussain that the proposal to end the financial support for CCTV be removed from the budget proposals.

On being put to the vote the proposal was lost and the motion subsequently fell.

The Chairman confirmed that when he report the Budget Planning Committee feedback to Executive, he would reflect the strength of feeling and Committee debate on the proposal to end funding for CCTV.

The Chairman confirmed that when he reported the Budget Planning Committee feedback to Executive, he would reflect the strength of feeling and Committee debate on the proposal to end funding for CCTV. include comments from the Committee regarding CCTV in his feedback to Executive.

Regarding proposals to make savings through stopping leasing space for customer services at Exeter Hall, Kidlington and letting the former customer service office at Franklin House, Bicester, in response to a query about what would replace these services, the Lead Member for Economy, Regeneration and Property explained both customer service link point sites had been closed since the start of the first lockdown in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. No complaints had been received about the sites being closed and it was not intended to re-open either site.

In response to a query from a Committee Member, the Corporate Director for Customers, Organisational Development and Resources explained that usage of the link points had reduced prior to the pandemic due to the increased availability of digital services and agreed to provide details of services offered at the Bicester and Kidlington link points prior to their closure due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

In relation to the proposal to stop providing dog fouling bags to residents, it was recommended by Councillor Sibley that as the saving was relatively small and given that this was a valuable service to the community, especially with the increase of dog ownership, the proposal should be removed.

The proposal was not seconded. Members of the Committee commented that dog fouling bags were relatively cheap to purchase and most councils did not provide this service. If minded, it was a service Town and Parish Councils could provide. Notwithstanding, the Chairman undertook to reflect the comments in his feedback to Executive.

Feedback on the savings proposals would be taken into account as part of the overall response to the budget consultation. Feedback from the Committee on the revenue pressures and capital bids will be provided to the Executive to consider in finalising its budget proposals for Council.

The Assistant Director of Finance gave an overview of the 2022/2023 capital bids. All bids were unanimously endorsed by the Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, Executive be advised that the Budget Planning Committee endorse the proposed capital bids, for inclusion as part of the 2022/23 budget proposal.
- (2) That, having given due consideration, Executive be advised that the Budget Planning Committee have no recommendations for the proposed revenue savings proposals or budget pressures for inclusion as part of the 2022/23 budget proposal.
- (3) That officers be requested to provide the following additional information on the following areas of the budget 2022/23 proposals:
 - a copy resident's survey questions and a demographic breakdown of the respondents.
 - details of the Leisure Facilities review and savings.
 - information on the economic impact and health benefits to the district of the Women's Tour Cycling Race.
 - In relation to the car parking Equality and Climate Impact Assessment, details of the metrics used to choose car parks in the assessment.
 - details of services offered at the Bicester and Kidlington link points prior to their closure due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

31

Review of Committee Work Plan

The Committee considered its work plan.

Resolved

- (1) That the Committee Work Plan be noted.

The meeting ended at 9.10 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Budget Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Planning Committee held at Virtual meeting, on 25 January 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present Virtually:

Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Chairman)

Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Andrew McHugh
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Fraser Webster
Councillor Lucinda Wing
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Substitute Members Present Virtually:

Councillor Andrew Beere (In place of Councillor Shaida Hussain)
Councillor Maurice Billington (In place of Councillor Carmen Griffiths)

Also Present Virtually:

Councillor Tony Ilott – Lead Member for Finance and Governance

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Carmen Griffiths
Councillor Conrad Copeland
Councillor Shaida Hussain

Officers Present Virtually:

Bill Cotton, Corporate Director Environment and Place
Anita Bradley, Director Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer
Steve Jorden, Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets & Investment
Vic Kurzeja, Director of Joint Property
Tim Spiers, Director of Digital & IT
Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance & S151 Officer
Vicki Jessop, Interim Assistant Director Housing and Social Care Commissioning
Robert Jolley, Assistant Director: Growth & Economy
Joanne Kaye, Strategic Business Partner
Stuart Parkhurst, Special Projects Manager
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director: Wellbeing
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Lesley Farrell, Democratic and Elections Officer

32 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

33 **Minutes**

The Committee endorsed the Minutes of the meeting of the 9 December 2021 as a correct record. The Chairman advised that the minutes would be formally agreed and signed at the next in person meeting of the Committee.

34 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

35 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

36 **Reserves Review**

The Director of Finance submitted a report which updated the Budget Planning Committee on the Review of Reserves that had taken place in the preparation of the budget for 2022/2023 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/2023 – 2026/2027.

In response to Members' queries regarding if there were sufficient funds in reserves for potential transformation and redundancy costs arising from the recent announcement, pending formal decision, that Cherwell District Council (CDC) and Oxfordshire County Council were mutually ending their formal partnership working arrangements, the Assistant Director for Finance explained that any costs were currently unknown. The Assistant Director for Finance assured the Committee that any costs arising from the separation could be made available from reserves in 2022/2023. If any potential ongoing costs of separation were identified these would be picked up as part of the 2023/2024 budget process and a further review of the level of reserves held by the Council would take place.

In response to Members' comments regarding Growth Deal Reserves, the Assistant Director for Planning and Economy explained that the Growth Deal was a £215m, five year contract with Government to accelerate the delivery of housing in Oxfordshire and due to end on 31 March 2023. CDC was part of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership which included 4 workstreams: Affordable Housing, Oxfordshire Plan 2050, Infrastructure and Productivity. £150m of the £215m was for Infrastructure but was not allocated to a specific project.

The funds helped ensure that CDC contributed fully to the Oxfordshire system to deliver the contract.

Resolved

- (1) That the outcome of the review of reserves and the forecast over the Medium Term Financial Statement be noted.

- (2) That the following feedback be given to Executive:
 - That having enquired if sufficient reserves were held to mitigate transformation and redundancy costs involved in light of the separation of joint services between Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council, the Committee was assured that the costs of separation, if any, were currently unknown and if necessary, funds could be made available from reserves to support costs of separation in 2022/23. If any potential ongoing costs of separation were identified, these would be picked up as part of the 2023/24 budget process and a further review of the level of reserves held by the Council would also take place.

37 **2021/22 Capital Programme**

The Director of Finance submitted a report for the Committee to consider the 2021/2022 Capital Programme and discuss further the larger schemes and those with little spend so far in the financial year identified by the Committee Chairman.

In introducing the report, the Assistant Director of Finance explained that a total of 28 such schemes had been identified with a budget of £18.0m. As at 30 November 2021 there was total spend of £1.8m whilst the forecast for the year was £15.5m. Of the remaining £2.5m, £2.0m is forecast to be reprofiled into future years and £0.5m is expected to be an underspend against the total cost of the schemes.

The Assistant Director of Finance gave an overview of the schemes and was supported by the relevant lead officer to answer Members' questions on particular schemes.

Admiral Holland – Redevelopment Project - The Assistant Director for Planning and Economy explained that whilst construction was formally completed in September 2020, it was necessary to budget for retention which would be paid in September 2022 and had been reprofiled beyond the 2021/2011 financial year.

Garden Town – (Banbury Road roundabout, Bicester) – In response to Member's comments highlighting that Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) did not own all the land for the Banbury Road roundabout project and querying the impact if the owners would not sell the land, the Assistant Director for

Planning and Economy explained that this was an OCC project and CDC had not been informed of any issues. Homes England had informed CDC that the funds would be transferred by the middle of February 2022. These funds would then be transferred to OCC and would be considered spent by CDC in this financial year.

Bicester Library – In response to the Committee’s comments regarding the delays with the Bicester Library project and request for an update on progress, the Assistant Director for Planning and Economy explained that Bicester Library had been a very challenging project and issues still remained. There had been difficulties with archaeology on the site, although planning permission had now been granted for three affordable houses on the site. There were also ongoing problems with anti-social behaviour for which a solution needed to be found.

Build Team – Essential Repairs - In response to Members’ queries regarding why reserves had been marked for essential repairs and they had not been carried out the Assistant Director for Planning and Economy explained that repairs were required due to the Structural Integrity of the roof and CDC were currently in legal discussions with the owner of Town Centre House and the repairs could not be carried out until resolved.

Orchard Lodge, Phase 1, Newton Close, Phase I and Bullmarsh Close, Phase II – The Committee noted the updates.

On Street Recycling Bins – In response to Members’ comments regarding non-delivery of the on street recycling bins, the Director for Environment and Place undertook to circulate a response to Committee Members outside of the Committee.

Vehicle Replacement Programme – The Committee sought assurance that with the non-replacement of vehicles, services would not be compromised and requested an update as to when vehicles could be replaced.

The Director of Environment and Place advised the Committee that there was a well-known issue with a shortage of chips and this had extended the procurement process. The new green waste collection vehicles would be available within the next couple of weeks and would not cause a delay to the roll out of this service. With regard to the wider fleet, vehicles would be kept in good order until electric vehicles became more affordable.

Thorpe Lane Depot Capacity Enhancement - The Committee noted that the majority of the reserves had been reprofiled. In response to Members’ request for the current position, the Director of Environment and Place explained that technical solutions were being sought and a consultation report was expected within the next two months. The Assistant Director of Environmental Services would update the Committee when technical solutions had been found.

Burnehyll – Bicester Country Park - In response to Members comments that very little work had been carried out on this project and queries , the

Committee was concerned that the reserves would not be spent and there had been no decision to reprofile. The Director of Environment and Place explained to the Committee that there had been problems with staffing and the recruitment process was ongoing. Once the post was filled the project would progress. Noting the comments of Committee regarding the decision not to reprofile the scheme, the Director of Environment and Place advised he would ask the Assistant Director Environmental Services to update the Committee on the decision of re-profiling.

Chargeable Garden and Food Waste – In response to the Committee’s request for an update on the progress of the new waste collection systems which would come into force in March, The Director of Environment and Place updated the Committee on the progress of the project. The uptake of second bins had been better than expected and the project was expected to complete on time.

Disabled Facilities Grant – In response to Members’ comments about the potential implications on disabled facilities grants by the end of the formal partnership working arrangements with Oxfordshire County Council, the Interim Assistant Director Housing and Social Care Commissioning explained that there was an expectation to deliver £1.7m of disabled facilities grants and the team was on track to complete 200 adaptations this year. CDC would continue to operate a home improvement agency with OCC after the end of formal partnership.

In response to some members of the Committee querying if the Disabled Facilities Grant procedure was out of date and required review and updating, the Interim Assistant Director Housing and Social Care Commissioning confirmed that the Disabled Adaptations Policy had been updated in March 2021.

North Oxfordshire Academy Astro turf – In response to Members’ comments regarding the length of time this project had been running and that it was still not complete, the Assistant Director for Wellbeing explained that funds for the project were from Section 106 agreements, the United Learning Trust and CDC. All monies would have to be in place before procurement could take place. It was very complex but was expected to be delivered in 2022.

Bicester Leisure Centre Extension – In response to Members’ comments regarding no reserves having been spent, The Assistant Director for Wellbeing explained that a feasibility study was being completed to assess the possibility of an indoor learner pool being built in the area of the closed bowling alley. This would not increase the footprint of the Leisure Centre.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding the financial impact of the end of formal partnership working arrangements with OCC, the Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets and Investment explained that the financial implications were currently unknown and any costs relevant to the work of the Committee would be submitted to the Budget Planning Committee at the appropriate time.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the 2021/2022 Capital Programme be noted.

38 **Draft 2022/23 Capital and Investment Strategy**

The Director of Finance submitted a report giving details of the draft Capital and Investment Strategy for 2022-23. This report was produced annually and gave details of how capital decisions were made and anticipated how the capital programme would be funded. It also gave details of borrowing limits and budget implications of the capital plans. The report contained an investment strategy which set out how the council made its investments and highlighted that the council was aware and considered risks when making investments.

In response to questions from the Committee the Assistant Director of Finance explained that the capital budget was as stated and that Cherwell District Council did not hold substantial amounts of capital. Any additional capital expenditure required would need to be funded through additional borrowing.

Resolved

- (1) That the draft Capital and Investment Strategy for 2022/23 be recommended to Full Council for adoption.

39 **Covid-19 Business Grants**

The Director of Finance submitted a report which provided the Committee with an update on the total amount of grants paid out to businesses in Cherwell to support them during the pandemic up to 31 December 2021.

In response to Members' comments regarding the amount of money written off by the government for loans given out during the pandemic and request for information on efforts made prior to the monies being written off into recovery of the loans given out within the Cherwell district, the Assistant Director of Finance explained that these were grants allocated to businesses and the loan monies written off were a separate matter. The Council had been given access to a government system and it was necessary for checks on businesses applying for grants to be made through this system or they could not be reclaimed. All necessary checks to prevent fraud were in place.

In response to questions from the Committee the Assistant Director of Finance explained that information on court action and fraud recovery would be circulated to Committee Members outside of the Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That the number and value of Covid-19 Business Grants paid out by Cherwell District Council to local businesses during the course of the pandemic to 31 December 2021 be noted.

40 **Review of Committee Work Plan**

The Committee considered its Work Plan.

Resolved

- (1) That the Committee Work Plan be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 30 November 2021 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Tom Wallis (Chairman)
Councillor Douglas Webb (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Matt Hodgson
Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Perran Moon
Councillor Adam Nell
Councillor Les Sibley
Councillor Bryn Williams

Also Present:

Councillor John Broad
Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Mike Bishop
Councillor Sandy Dallimore
Councillor Simon Holland

Officers:

Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers and Organisational Development
Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes
Ed Potter, Assistant Director: Environmental Services
Sandra Fisher-Martins, Climate Action Mobilisation Manager
Sarah Gilbert, Team Leader Climate Action
Sue Marchand, Community Nature Officer: Wellbeing
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director: Wellbeing
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer
Lesley Farrell, Democratic and Elections Officer
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

27

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

28 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19 October 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

30 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

31 **Monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring**

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Finance and the Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes which detailed Performance, Risk and Finance monitoring at the end of September 2021.

In introducing the report, the Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes reported that 82% of the programme measures and key performance indicators had reported green for quarter 2, with 13% reporting amber and the remaining 5% reporting red.

With regard to the measures that had reported as red, the Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes explained that one major planning appeal had been overturned by the Planning Inspectorate during September 2021. In relation to number of visits or usages of leisure centres, three of the main centres had experienced an increase in visitors in August 2021, but one centre had shown a decrease following the seasonal programming change for the outdoor swimming pool.

The Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes agreed to gather responses to the questions submitted in advance of the meeting. Responses would be circulated to all committee members after the meeting:

- Indicator BP2.2.2 reduction of fuel consumption used by fleet – clarification on how an increase in fuel consumption can be reported as amber when the aim of the indicator is to reduce consumption.
- Indicator BP3.2.2 percentage of business rates collected, increased the NNDR base – details regarding the total arrears and clarification on how the indicator can report green if there are arrears.
- Indicator BP3.1.3 support business enterprise, retention, growth and promote inward investment – more details requested on the council's support to businesses.

- Indicator BP4.1.1 support community safety and reduce antisocial behaviours – more details on the more regular and routine presence in Kidlington referred to.
- Indicator BP3.1.5 proactively manage the Cherwell workstreams of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal – an explanation of the term ‘homes from infrastructure’ used in the commentary, and clarity on what ‘productivity’ refers to in the context of the indicator.
- Key action of ‘business engagement’ under ‘an enterprising economy with strong & vibrant local centres’ programme measure – an explanation regarding how engagement with property developers and commercial property benefits residents of Cherwell.

Resolved

- (1) That the monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report be noted.
- (2) That the Quarter 2 Climate Action Plan and Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Action plan progress updates be noted.

32

Climate Action Programme Update

The Committee considered a report from the Director for Environment and Place, and a presentation from the Climate Action Mobilisation Manager which gave an update on progress in delivering the Climate Action Programme, and the reduction in the council’s greenhouse gas emissions in 2020/21.

The Climate Action Mobilisation Manager explained that 20 homes suffering from fuel poverty had been approved for ‘green homes’ grant funding, which would include provision of insulation and in some cases solar powered generation solutions.

The team was also working on a heat network feasibility study, which would give a district-wide map of opportunities available to take heat from a central source and deliver it to properties that may need it. A more detailed map of Banbury would be produced that would allow the team to approach potential partners to gauge interest in applying for funding for a pilot scheme. The mapping exercise was being completed with funding from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with match funding provided by Cherwell District Council.

The Climate Action Mobilisation Manager explained that the team had secured a £6m government grant from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. The grant was being used to focus on heat decarbonisation of council buildings, through methods such as the replacement of boilers with heat pumps or solar thermal systems.

Once all replacements had been completed it was anticipated the changes would save 1000 tonnes of CO2 emissions.

The next steps for the programme included the continued rollout of park and charge points in Bicester, Banbury and Kidlington, and Carbon Literacy training during 2022 for senior officers and members.

With regards to the Greenhouse Gas emissions report for 2020/21, the Climate Action Mobilisation Manager explained that the 22.5% reduction in emissions compared to the 2019/20 figures was as a direct result of the COVID-19 lockdowns and the closure of council buildings. It was expected that the figures would increase for the 2021/22 year to reflect the buildings reopening, but the decarbonisation work being undertaken would offset some of the increase.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Climate Action Team Leader agreed to circulate more information after the meeting regarding a previous pilot scheme in Oxford that involved using gullies to assist EV charging.

The Climate Action Mobilisation Manager agreed to circulate more information after the meeting in response to a question regarding the potential for shared heat schemes such as ground source heat pumps as part of the local plan related developments in the south of the district.

Resolved

- (1) That the progress and next steps in the Climate Action Programme be noted.
- (2) That the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report for 2020/21 be noted.

33

2020-2022 Community Nature Plan Progress Update

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Director – Wellbeing which provided an update on the 2020 – 2022 Community Nature Plan and its approach to addressing the Council’s statutory biodiversity duty.

Introducing the report the Assistant Director – Wellbeing explained that work on the Community Nature Plan involved a number of teams across the Council including planning, environmental services and the climate action team.

The wellbeing team had launched a ‘Connect to nature initiative’ during the COVID-19 lockdowns, which gave a monthly theme for residents across the district to engage with nature. The November theme was ‘be kind’, and focussed on looking after hibernating creatures such as ladybirds and hedgehogs.

Work would be starting during 2022 on the next iteration of the plan, and the Assistant Director – Wellbeing explained that Members would be involved in the drafting of the new plan via a workshop that would take place during Spring 2022.

The Community Nature Officer highlighted some of the partnership working with external organisations, including the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust, Wild Oxfordshire and Warriner School Farm.

In response to questions from the Committee the Community Nature Officer explained that the online activity hub gave details of all nature related activities taking place, and a flyer had also been produced to help publicise the sessions. The Community Nature Officer agreed to circulate details of the online hub and flyer after the meeting.

The Community Nature Officer also agreed to gather detailed information on hedgehog numbers in the district for circulation to the Committee after the meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the 2020-2022 Community Nature Plan progress report and its approach to addressing the Council's statutory biodiversity be noted.
- (2) That the essential role of key partners in the delivery of the Community Nature Plan be recognised.
- (3) That it be noted that the development of the 2022-2024 Community Nature Plan (CNP) will include an all-member seminar in 2022 involving planners, as requested by Overview & Scrutiny in December 2020, and it be noted that the implications of the Environment Act will be taken into account in this next iteration of the CNP.

34 **Safeguarding Self-Assessment Audit**

The Committee received a presentation from the Safeguarding Officer that detailed the work of the Safeguarding Team during 2020/21, and gave an overview of the Safeguarding Self-Assessment audit.

The Safeguarding Officer explained that the self-assessment audit had to be completed annually. The 2021 assessment was due to be submitted to the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children and Adults Board on 3 December, and would include evidence of working with the Domestic Abuse Partnership and the Neglect Strategy Group to raise awareness.

The Safeguarding Officer reported that actions from the 2020 audit included improving the level of training and awareness of safeguarding responsibilities amongst staff and elected Members.

Mandatory Safeguarding training for staff had been moved to the online iHasco platform in December 2020, which meant that staff received email reminders to complete the required modules, and the Safeguarding Team could monitor completion levels. Elected Members had also been added to the online platform, with 44% having completed “Prevent” training and 10% “Safeguarding” training.

Safeguarding briefings were held twice a month for staff, covering themes such as neglect, domestic abuse, modern slavery and hate crime. Details of the ‘See It Report it’ system were also available to staff who wanted to report potential issues, and links to the system had been added to the Members’ Portal.

Council staff undertaking non-office based work in the district such as waste collection staff and youth activators had received specific briefings regarding neglect and safeguarding, as their roles meant they would be well placed to spot potential issues. The teams had been provided with cards and posters raising awareness of the signs of neglect and how to report them.

The Safeguarding Officer explained that this would be particularly helpful in Banbury, as the area had the highest percentage of domestic abuse cases in Cherwell.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Assistant Director – Wellbeing explained that it would be possible to provide more details on the figures around domestic abuse in the district, but it was unlikely it could be provided as a ward by ward breakdown as the information held by Police also covered West Oxfordshire. The Assistant Director – Wellbeing agreed to investigate and circulate further information after the meeting.

The Committee congratulated the team on the involvement of the waste collection staff and youth activators in highlighting potential issues, and asked if the details for reporting potential concerns were available to members of the public. The Corporate Director Customers Organisational Development and Resources advised that both Cherwell District and Oxfordshire County Council customer contact centre staff could take reports from members of the public with concerns, or contact details could be found via either council’s website.

Resolved

- (1) That the presentation be noted.

Work Programme 2021-2022

The Committee considered its work programme for 2021-22, received an update from officers on potential subjects for review and considered a scoping document in relation to the Parish review, as well as draft Terms of Reference for the Constitution Review Working Group.

With regard to the proposed review of the district council's relationship with parishes, the Democratic and Elections Officer advised that Councillors Hallchurch and Mallon had joined the working group. The aim of the review was to look at the working relationship between Cherwell District Council and the parishes, with a view to mapping the various interactions and highlighting areas for improvement.

Councillor Bryn Williams expressed an interest in joining the working group.

In relation to the Constitution Review Working Group, the Governance and Elections Manager explained that the Director of Law and Governance had spoken with all Group Leaders individually regarding the prospective Terms of Reference for the review.

Councillors Barry Wood and Les Sibley had indicated they were happy with the proposed approach to the review and the Conservative and Independent Groups would be participating.

Councillor Sean Woodcock had indicated that the Labour Group were not happy with the proposed approach, and would not be participating in the review.

The Governance and Elections Manager explained that the absence of the Labour Group from the working group did not prevent the review from taking place, and the proposed Terms of Reference had been drafted to reflect that.

The timetable for the review had been altered to take account of the time spent discussing the review with the Group Leaders, and it was now proposed to bring proposals from the working group to the March 2022 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with a view to recommendations being considered by full Council in May 2022.

In response to a comment from Councillor Perran Moon that if no opposition members took part in the review, the working group not be referred to as 'cross-party', Councillor Les Sibley confirmed that the Independent Group would be participating in the working group and multiple groups would therefore be represented.

Councillor Ian Middleton stated that the Progressive Oxfordshire stance remained the same as that of the Labour Group, but that the group were happy to continue discussions to try and resolve the issues and give the working group a full democratic oversight.

With regard to the indicative work programme, the Democratic and Elections Officer explained that the COVID-19 response update had been moved to the January 2022 meeting at the request of officers involved in preparing the update.

In relation to the update on topics previously suggested for scrutiny, the Democratic and Elections Officer advised the Committee that information available from a number of sources had been signposted to Members, as well

as a report that was considered by the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board at its meeting on 7 October 2021. It was proposed to close the subject and remove it from the topic list, if Councillor Perran Moon was satisfied that his initial queries had been answered sufficiently.

Councillor Moon indicated that he was happy with the information provided, and that the subject could be removed from the topic list.

With regards to potential new topics for Scrutiny, the Committee requested that a personal safety update be arranged for Members, in light of the recent death of Sir David Amess MP. The Democratic and Elections Officer explained that senior officers had requested a session be arranged for all Members, and discussions were underway with Thames Valley Police for a suitable session to be held in 2022.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding scheduling of updates on Planning Policy, the Recovery and Prosperity Strategy and Digital Infrastructure, the Democratic and Elections Officers advised that discussions were ongoing with relevant officers. A draft of the Recovery and Prosperity Strategy was due to be considered by Executive in January 2022, and would subsequently be scheduled for an Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting. The Corporate Director Customers Organisational Development and Resources undertook to liaise with relevant officers and Democratic and Elections Officers to schedule a briefing update on digital infrastructure at a future committee meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to the inclusion of Councillors Hallchurch, Mallon and Williams in the group membership, the Parish Working Group scoping document be approved.
- (2) That the Constitution Review Working Group Terms of Reference be approved.
- (3) That the work programme update be noted.
- (4) That the update on topics previously suggested for review be noted and it be agreed to remove Teenage Mental Health from the topic list.
- (5) That the update on items previously submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.22 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 1 February 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Tom Wallis (Chairman)
Councillor Douglas Webb (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mike Bishop
Councillor Sandy Dallimore
Councillor Simon Holland
Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Perran Moon
Councillor Adam Nell
Councillor Les Sibley
Councillor Bryn Williams

Substitute Members:

Councillor Shaida Hussain (In place of Councillor Matt Hodgson)

Also Present:

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council
Craig Bower, Programme Director of Digital Infrastructure Oxfordshire

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Matt Hodgson

Officers:

David Peckford, Assistant Director: Planning and Development
Andrew Maxted, Planning Policy, Conservation and Design Manager
Tim Spiers, Director of Digital & IT
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer
Lesley Farrell, Democratic and Elections Officer

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

37 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 November 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

38 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

39 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

40 **Digital Infrastructure Update**

The Committee received a presentation from the Programme Director of Digital Infrastructure Oxfordshire, which gave an update on the progress of full fibre internet and 5G mobile signal rollout across the county.

Following the partnership with BT Openreach that had been in place since 2014, 14,000 premises in the district had been connected to superfast broadband services. 98.5% of the district now had access to superfast services, an increase from 63% when the programme started.

The percentage of premises with no access to a connection of at least 10 megabits per second (mbs), which was considered a minimum requirement for getting online, was currently 0.9%.

The Programme Director of Digital Infrastructure Oxfordshire explained that the focus of the current programme was to deliver full fibre connections to premises, rather than cabinets as had previously been the case. Openreach had published their rollout plans for delivery, and work to upgrade connections had been carried out in Banbury before Christmas 2021. A number of smaller providers would also be providing fibre services to property connections, but they had not publicly announced their plans due to commercial sensitivities. This made associated communications with affected areas difficult, as the upgrading of wires and poles involved roadworks and disruption to infrastructure. However, once the appropriate upgrades had been made and fibre connections were in place, it would be easier to make changes in the future.

Regarding connection of business premises, the Programme Director of Digital Infrastructure Oxfordshire explained that since 2019, 230 businesses had been connected via funding from DEFRA. The businesses had been in some of the hardest to reach areas of the district, and therefore not viable for commercial providers to install connections. As the base infrastructure was

now in place, it was hoped commercial providers would use the connections to further develop services in those areas.

In October 2021 a new project had started called 'Gigahubs'. 24 public service buildings across the district had been identified as hub sites, which would have fibre connections installed that could then be used to extend fibre connectivity to local residents and businesses.

In relation to mobile digital signal, the Programme Director of Digital Infrastructure Oxfordshire explained that the team had a focus on 'small cell' improvements. This involved the installation of small units on street furniture such as lampposts, to increase the available mobile signal. Initially the project would be rolled out to a small number of lampposts in Oxford, but it was hoped that by the end of 2023 up to 70 lampposts across the county would have the technology, including some in Banbury and Bicester.

With regard to planning applications for new or upgraded mobile phone masts, the Programme Director of Digital Infrastructure Oxfordshire explained that discussions were ongoing with mobile phone providers to encourage them to go through the pre-application process before submitting an application. Doing so would allow discussions to take place regarding the suitability of proposed locations and possible alternative locations, increasing the possibility of an application being approved.

In response to questions from the Committee the Programme Director of Digital Infrastructure Oxfordshire said that the Shared Rural Network had been set up by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in 2020, which encouraged the four mobile network operators in the UK to share masts and improve digital connectivity.

The Committee thanked the Programme Director of Digital Infrastructure Oxfordshire for the presentation.

Resolved

- (1) That the presentation be noted.

41 Oxfordshire Plan 2050: Summary of responses from Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation and next steps

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Director – Planning and Development that gave an update from the Future Oxfordshire Partnership on the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, and included a summary of comments received during the recent consultation.

The Assistant Director – Planning and Development gave a short presentation that highlighted the key aspects of the report.

All Oxfordshire district and city Scrutiny Committees were due to consider the same report during February, before a further report was submitted to all

Executive and Cabinet meetings in March. The Statement of Community Involvement for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 had been updated following the consultation stage, and was recommended to all Oxfordshire district and City Executive/Cabinets for approval.

The next stage of the plan process would be the Regulation 19 submission plan, that was currently scheduled for Summer 2022. Once this stage had been completed the plan would move to Regulation 22, submission of the plan to the Secretary of State to start the examination. This was currently scheduled for Autumn 2022, but the Assistant Director – Planning and Development explained that detailed analysis of the consultation responses was still being undertaken, and timeframes for the subsequent stages of the plan could be amended.

422 parties had submitted responses to the consultation. Feedback had been generally positive, with widespread support for the approach to climate change adaptation, and general agreement regarding the need for more affordable homes across the county.

As well as the positive feedback, some responses had called for more say on the next iteration of the plan, as there was concern that proceeding straight to Regulation 19 stage wouldn't give time for further consultation. The Assistant Director – Planning and Development explained that it would be possible for the Future Oxfordshire team to proceed to Regulation 19, but they were considering all responses in detail before confirming the next stage.

Comments had also been submitted regarding a need for the plan to have long term flexibility due to the time scale it was proposed to cover.

The central plan team were now considering the scope of the proposed plan, and undertaking further work in relation to the latest legislation and national policy, as well as considering the relationship between the Oxfordshire Plan and the local plans of each authority across the county.

The detailed work programme would be reviewed, and discussions would take place with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities due to the plans link with the Growth Deal.

With regard to the Statement of Community Involvement update, the document detailed how consultation would be undertaken, when, and who would be consulted. It had been necessary to update the document following the lifting of Coronavirus regulations.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Assistant Director – Planning and Development explained that there was time for changes to be made to the plan if the central team felt they were necessary. Once a local plan reached Regulation 19 stage it was unlikely that any significant changes would be made, so it was important that appropriate time was taken between Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 stages to address consultation feedback and ensure the plan was ready to proceed to examination.

The Committee thanked the officers involved in producing the comprehensive feedback document, but some Members commented that there had been insufficient time to fully read and review all documents submitted for the meeting due to the level of detail.

The Committee repeated the concerns that had been raised in July 2021 when considering the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation document regarding the accuracy of the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment, due to the implications of the figures on the plan.

With regard to references to affordable housing, the Committee again emphasised the need for more social rented housing rather than Government defined affordable housing. The Assistant Director – Planning and Development explained that the detail regarding implementation of the plan would be the responsibility of local Housing teams, and affordability would be an important aspect of the discussions at that stage.

In response to a query regarding if it would be possible for affordable rented housing to be linked to local wages rather than the national market formula, the Assistant Director – Planning and Development explained that there wasn't a detailed policy in place yet but discussions could be held regarding the possibility of such a link. The Committee requested an update on discussions at the relevant time.

Referring to the recommendation in the report for the Committee to note the consultation feedback, some Committee members felt that agreeing to note the report could not be interpreted as agreeing with the details.

Resolved

- (1) That the summary results from the recent regulation 18 (part 2) consultation be noted.
- (2) That the revised scope of the Oxfordshire Plan, with clarification over its relationship to city and district Local Plans and supporting evidence base be noted.
- (3) That the next steps of the Oxfordshire Plan process be noted.
- (4) That Executive be recommended to adopt the revised Statement of Community Involvement for the Oxfordshire Plan (Annex to the minutes as set out in the Minute Book) when it considers a report on this matter at its March 2022 meeting.

(Councillors Perran Moon and Shaida Hussain requested that it be recorded they had voted against the recommendations).

(Councillors Ian Middleton and Simon Holland requested that it be recorded they had abstained from voting on the recommendations).

Work Programme 2021-2022

The Committee considered its work programme for 2021, received an update on subjects for review and on items previously submitted to the Committee.

With regard to the Member Training and District and Parish relationship working groups, Councillor Sandy Dallimore reported that both working groups had formulated recommendations and detailed reports would be submitted to the March 2022 meeting of the Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That the work programme update be noted.
- (2) That the update on topics previously suggested for review be noted.
- (3) That the update on items previously submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.37 pm

Chairman:

Date: