

Cherwell District Council

Budget Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Planning Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 30 August 2016 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Chairman)
Councillor Douglas Webb (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor David Anderson
Councillor Ken Attack
Councillor Hugo Brown
Councillor Ian Corkin
Councillor Tom Wallis

Substitute Members: Councillor Mark Cherry (In place of Councillor Barry Richards)
Councillor Andrew Beere (In place of Councillor Sean Woodcock)

Apologies for absence: Councillor Carmen Griffiths
Councillor Alan MacKenzie-Wintle
Councillor Barry Richards
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Officers: Paul Sutton, Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer
George Hill, Corporate Finance Manager
Chris Stratford, Head of Regeneration and Housing
Mandy Anderson, Financial Analyst
Geni Hotchkiss, Business Support Unit Manager
Richard Stirling, Corporate Procurement Manager
Lesley Farrell, Democratic and Elections Officer
Joel Bliss, Assistant Democratic and Elections Officer

22 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

23 Urgent Business

The Chairman advised the Committee that there was one item of urgent business: the appointment of a new Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2016/17 following the resignation of the former Vice-Chairman.

Resolved

That Councillor Douglas Webb be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Budget Planning Committee for the remainder of Municipal Year 2016-17.

24 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 July 2016 were agreed a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

26 **Quarter 1 2016-17 - Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which outlined the Quarter 1 2016-2017 – Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring.

When considering the report, members commented on the following particular items, to which officers provided a response:

Financial System Upgrade – investigation required into credit balance at Q1 from previous year. The Committee was informed that this had not been paid.

Banbury Museum Emergency Lighting Replacement – this was a duplicate and should be removed.

Cooper Sports Hall Roof – the roof urgently needs replacing but the Academy has no funds. The Director of Operational Delivery would be submitting a report on the matter to Executive.

South West Bicester Sports Village – the Committee discussed a condition which was thought to have been placed on the planning application for a full sized artificial turf pitch. As this had not materialised, members requested that the Director of Operational Delivery provide a written update.

The Head of Regeneration and Housing reported on the Solihull Partnership and various projects listed in the Capital Spend and Year End Projections. Although there had been a slow start, the Head of Regeneration and Housing was confident that the projects would be completed.

The Committee expressed concern that comment details were directed towards Finance and difficult for members to understand.

In response to the Committee's concerns at the increasing cost of Agency staff and overspend of the budget for this, the Chief Finance Officer explained that uncertainty following the postponement of the publication of the external reports on devolution in Oxfordshire as a result of the changes to the Government meant that the interim measure of using Agency Staff had been extended. It was also difficult to recruit quality staff to senior posts so it had been necessary to employ from Agencies. The Committee was given

assurance that as grants were approved by Executive, the budget would increase.

Resolved

- (1) That, having reviewed the projected revenue and capital position at June 2016, it be noted and no comments forwarded to Executive
- (2) That, having reviewed the current position of reserves, they be noted.
- (3) That the Capital Outturn Position for 2015-2016 be endorsed.

27 **Business Rates Monitoring 2016-2017**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which summarised the Council's Business Rates performance for the financial year thus far in 2016-1017.

The Committee raised concern about the removal of the Car Park at Bicester North from the Rating List which accounted for a large proportion of the reduction of Rateable Value for Quarter 1. The Business Support Unit Manager would provide a response to Committee members outside of the meeting explaining the reason for its removal.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.

28 **Review of Procurement Strategy Progress**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which summarised the Council's Procurement Strategy progress for Quarter 1 of the financial year 2016-17.

Resolved

- (1) That the progress made during Quarter 1 2016-17 in implementing the Council's Procurement Strategy be noted.

29 **Solihull Partnership**

The Head of Regeneration and Housing gave a verbal update on the Solihull Partnership.

Members had been updated on projects listed in the Quarter 1 2016-17 – Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring, agenda item 6.

The Head of Regeneration and Housing advised the Committee that there had been challenges at the start of the relationship with the Solihull Partnership but after a slow start, a number of contracts were now underway and the Head of Regeneration and Housing was confident that projects would be delivered.

30 **Review of Committee Work Plan**

The Committee reviewed its workplan 2016-2017.

Resolved

(1) That the contents of the work programme be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm

Chairman:

Date: