

## **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 11 October 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Sandy Dallimore (Chairman)

Councillor Mike Bishop  
Councillor John Broad  
Councillor Ian Harwood  
Councillor David Hingley  
Councillor Matt Hodgson  
Councillor Ian Middleton  
Councillor Perran Moon  
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke  
Councillor Bryn Williams

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Douglas Webb  
Councillor Maurice Billington

Also Present:

Councillor Phil Chapman, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities and Food Champion

Also Present Virtually:

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Policy and Strategy

Officers:

Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources  
Ed Potter, Assistant Director Environmental Services  
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing  
Shahin Ismail, Interim Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager  
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers (Virtual)

Liam Didcock, Leisure Contracts and Sports Hubs Officer  
Tom Darlington, Leisure Projects Officer  
Liam Semugabi, Democratic and Elections Officer

26 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

27 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 September 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

28 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman commented on the positive and constructive direction of travel of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the detailed work being undertaken by the Food Insecurity and Climate Action working groups.

29 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

30 **Playing Pitch Strategy**

The Chairman welcomed the Assistant Director of Wellbeing and Housing, the Leisure Contracts and Sports Hubs Officer and the Leisure Projects Officer to the meeting to give a presentation on the Playing Pitch Strategy.

The Committee was advised the Sports Studies comprised of the Built Facilities Strategy and Playing Pitch Strategy. The final Sports Study documents would be used to work with partners and other organisations on delivery models to improve and develop sports facilities where needed, to ensure the effective provision of sport and leisure opportunities across the district. They would be used as an evidence base for the new Local Plan and provide the basis of future sports facility developed contribution costs.

The consultants who had undertaken the study recommended the development of sustainable new sites and investment in existing infrastructure. The Leisure Projects Officer gave an overview of the key recommendations for Kidlington, Bicester and Banbury and explained that the work still required final sign from Sports England and National Governing Bodies and confirmed that there would be an annual review process. . In response to Members' questions regarding future growth and the weighting and balance between current and future needs, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing explained that the District Council's money for this work came from developer contributions unless the council made a capital investment, which had not been the case in recent years. It was therefore important to have an evidence base to inform the development of facilities for use by current and future residents.

During discussion, the Committee highlighted that smaller sports clubs should not be overlooked when seeking developer contributions as participants at the clubs frequently come from a wider area rather than just the town or village a facility is located in. The Committee also highlighted the importance of ensuring sites had suitable changing facilities for women and disabled people. The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing that officers were having discussions with Banbury Town Council and Bicester Town Council regarding accessibility.

In response to Members' comments regarding expanding the number of sports that facilities were provided for and where non-council facilities were provided, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing advised that developers could submit planning applications for sports sites which would be considered in line with planning policy. The council focussed on sports where there was most interest and residents would benefit from and was not seeking to set aside land for minor sports.

The Committee also discussed the rise of artificial 3G pitches to replace grass and, whilst noting that they facilitated year-round use of sites and therefore enabled residents to participate in activities year-round, there were environmental impacts in reducing the number grass sites.

In response to Members' questions regarding the influence Town and Parish Councils could have in requesting facilities and the size of development that triggered contributions, the Leisure Projects Officer explained that the current threshold for residential developments to make contributions was 10 dwellings. Town and Parish Councils were consultees on planning applications.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the Sports Studies be recognised as influential strategic documents, and it be agreed that they should be used to seek developer contributions / influence capital bids / seek external funding.
- (2) That it be agreed that the documents be shared with partners to ensure wider understanding / influence.
- (3) That it be agreed that the documents are reviewed annually, and Members kept abreast of key changes.

### **Food Insecurity Working Group - Update**

The Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities, in his capacity as Food Champion, gave an update on the work of the Food Insecurity Working Group. The Group had held its first meeting and agreed it would focus on three areas: Tackle food poverty and diet-related ill health; Build vibrant food communities with the capacity and skills to enjoy food together; and grow the

local economy through local enterprises, local jobs, and local wealth generation.

The Portfolio Holder advised that the Group had supported the approach to undertake two streams in parallel. One stream was in progress and about securing the food supply in the longer term and it was anticipated this would be reported on in January. The second stream related to providing immediate support to residents including a voucher scheme and ensuring all information was available both on the council's website and in printed format. The Committee was advised that the work overlapped with the Warm Spaces Initiative that the council was establishing with partners as safe spaces and to create a local community whilst ensuring that residents were supported. The joined up working that had started during the pandemic was continuing to support residents during the current cost of living crisis.

In response to the update, Committee members highlighted and praised the use of wording such as Warm Welcome as opposed to food banks and spaces that other local authorities were using as this helped reduce stigma in seeking support and recommended that this council follow that approach. The Committee also highlighted the importance of longer-term work including education on food and food waste and cooking from scratch.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the Food Insecurity Working Group update be noted.

### 32 **Climate Action Working Group - Update**

Cllr John Broad, Chairman of the Climate Action Work Group gave an update on the work of the Group.

At their first meeting the Group had received a presentation from representatives from Bioregional on the "One Planet Living" principles and how the work of the council had been evaluated against the principles.

The Group had agreed they would focus on three areas: Aligning policies, such as the Local Plan, to accommodate the climate emergency declared by Council in 2019; Identifying priorities to get to net zero by 20230; and, how the measure success of the above points. Considering the agreed work focus, the Group agreed they needed to update the Terms of Reference to reflect the relationship of the Group with the Local Plan Review.

### **Resolved**

- (2) That the Climate Action Working Group update be noted.

### 33 **Work Programme 2022/2023**

The Democratic and Elections Officer provided a brief update to the committee on the indicative work programme for 2022/2023 and reported that

the date of the Special Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting at which the Local Plan would be considered would move from 1 November. The revised date would be confirmed as soon as practicable.

**Resolved**

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the indicative work programme 2022-23 be noted.
- (2) That, having given due consideration, the update on items previously considered by the Committee be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm

Chairman:

Date: