

## Cherwell District Council

### Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 4 February 2013 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council (Chairman)  
Councillor G A Reynolds, Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ken Atack, Lead Member for Financial Management  
Councillor John Donaldson, Lead Member for Banbury Brighter Futures  
Councillor Michael Gibbard, Lead Member for Planning  
Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Public Protection  
Councillor Nigel Morris, Lead Member for Clean and Green  
Councillor Nicholas Turner, Lead Member for Performance & Customers

Also Present: Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group  
Councillor Tim Emptage, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

Apologies for absence: Councillor Norman Bolster, Lead Member for Estates & the Economy  
Councillor D M Pickford, Lead Member for Housing

Officers: Sue Smith, Chief Executive  
Calvin Bell, Director of Development  
Ian Davies, Director of Community and Environment  
Martin Henry, Director of Resources / Section 151 Officer  
Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance / Monitoring Officer  
Karen Curtin, Head of Finance and Procurement  
Adrian Colwell, Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy  
Claire Taylor, Corporate Performance Manager  
Helen Town, Strategic Housing Officer  
Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections

## 87 **Declarations of Interest**

Members declared interests in the following agenda items:

### **8. High Speed 2 Consultation Responses - Property and Compensation; and Safeguarding.**

Councillor Nicholas Turner, Non Statutory Interest, as Chairman of the Banbury, Bicester and Worcester National Farmers Union.

Councillor Nigel Morris, Non Statutory Interest, as a member of the National Farmers Union.

**12. Oxfordshire County Council Sites Acquisition and Supported Housing Scheme.**

Councillor G A Reynolds, Non Statutory Interest, as a member of Oxfordshire County Council.

Councillor Michael Gibbard, Non Statutory Interest, as a member of Oxfordshire County Council.

Councillor Nicholas Turner, Non Statutory Interest, as a member of Oxfordshire County Council.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

**89 Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

**90 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**91 Draft Budget 2013-14**

The Head of Finance and Procurement submitted a report which provided the second and final opportunity for the Executive to shape and refine the interaction between corporate service plans and financial matters before the final budget would be presented to full Council on 25 February 2013.

In presenting the draft budget, the Lead Member for Financial Management reported that a balanced budget for 2013/14 had been prepared without the need to raise council tax. The proposed zero % increase in council tax was in line with the Council's previously stated commitment and would be the fourth year that Council Tax had been frozen.

The Lead Member for Financial Management reported that the council had successfully managed the budget challenges, previously forecast for 2013/14. The public promise of saving £800k had been over achieved together with total cost reductions in the 2012/13 budget of over £2m.

The Lead Member for Performance and Customers provided an overview of the Council Business Plan, which set out the key priorities for the Council in 2013/14, and Performance Pledges 2013/14, which reflected the key priorities of the Council in the coming year and would be circulated to every household with the council tax leaflet.

Executive was advised that there would be minor updates to the Performance Pledges relating to the respective Banbury and Bicester Masterplans, collective switching, rolling out of the Banbury Brighter Futures programme across the district and continuing to support the Horton General Hospital. These would be reflected in the final version of the Pledges that would be presented to full Council on 25 February 2012.

Councillor Woodcock, Leader of Labour Group, reported that the Labour Group accepted the budget and commended the innovation shown in addressing cuts and meeting the shortfall.

In response to Councillor Woodcock's comments in relation to ensuring all CDC staff were paid a living wage, the Lead Member for Financial Management acknowledged that a small number of staff were affected and this would be reviewed in due course.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the changes to the draft budget since 7 January 2013 be approved and the draft revenue budget in the context of the Council's service objectives and strategic priorities be noted.
- (2) That the balanced budget be approved.
- (3) That Full Council be recommended to approve a Council tax freeze.
- (4) That the proposed 2013/14 capital programme be agreed.
- (5) That the review of earmarked revenue reserves undertaken by the Lead Member Financial Management and the Head of Finance and Procurement and approve re-allocation between various earmarked reserves be noted.
- (6) That the draft corporate plan and public pledges be endorsed and authority be delegated to the Director of Resources in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Lead Member for Performance and Customers to make any minor amendments to the plan or pledges as required.
- (7) That the 2013/14 Business Plan and Budget Equality Impact Assessment be noted.
- (8) That it be noted the latest MTFS financial forecast was currently being refreshed and would be part of the budget book.
- (9) That officers be requested to produce the formal 2013/14 budget book on the basis of Appendices 1-6 (annex to the minutes as set out in the Minute book).
- (10) That the updated Draft Budget 2012/13 be recommended for adoption by the Council on 27 February 2012.

- (11) That authority be delegated to the Head of Finance and Procurement, in consultation with Director of Resources and the Lead Member Financial Management to amend the contributions to or from general fund balances to allow the Council Tax increase to remain at the level recommended by Executive to Full Council following the announcement of the final settlement figures and as a result of any financial implications arising from resolution 10.

### **Reasons**

This report presents a final analysis of the Council's draft 2012/13 Revenue and Capital Budget. The details in Appendix 1-6 will form the basis of the budget book to be presented to Council on 25 February to support the setting of Council Tax.

### **Options**

Option One - To review draft revenue and capital budget to date and consider actions arising

Option Two - To approve or reject the recommendations above or request that Officers provide additional information

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### **New Homes Bonus**

The Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy submitted a report which sought consideration of the proposed use of the New Homes Bonus in the Cherwell District.

In introducing the report, the Lead Member for Planning circulated a schedule of amendments to the report which updated the original proposal to ensure that 25% of the New Homes Bonus would be used to meet the impact of planned growth across the whole district and improve community facilities in areas that had received development. 50% of the amount received would be held in a dedicated reserve (Local Government Resources Review Reserve) to enable the council to address any financial and service pressures. The remaining 25% would be allocated to supporting economic prosperity.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the proposed use of the New Homes Bonus for the first two year awards be approved as set out in the report as amended (annex to the minutes as set out in the minute book).

### **Reasons**

There is no obligation on Cherwell Council to pass the New Homes Bonus on, but a clear expectation that this will be done. CDC has published this policy note to guide the use of any monies received from the New Homes Bonus to provide consistency, transparency and guidance for the how the first award might be used to the benefit of the District.

## **Options**

Option One - To support the proposed use of the New Homes Bonus

Option Two - To amend the proposed use of the New Homes Bonus

Option Three - To not support the proposed use of the New Homes Bonus

## 93 **High Speed 2 Consultation Responses - Property and Compensation; and Safeguarding**

The Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy submitted a report which sought consideration of the Council's draft responses to the Governments High Speed 2 (HS2) consultations on Compensation and Safeguarding.

Executive was advised that the Property Compensation Consultation set out a proposed package of measures designed for owners and occupiers of property along the London-West Midlands line of the route. The Safeguarding Consultation was aimed primarily at local planning authorities along the line of the route, who would be aware of relevant planning issues in their areas and to whom the directions would apply.

In considering the draft consultation responses, Members stressed that whilst they remained opposed to HS2, the council had a duty to protect its residents should it materialise. Members also noted that tenants and businesses would be affected and should therefore be included in the consultation response.

## **Resolved**

- (1) That the draft responses to the Government's High Speed 2 Consultation documents on Property and Compensation and Safeguarding be approved for submission, subject to the inclusion of the following:
  - Inclusion of support for leaseholders and tenants in relation to properties and businesses

## **Reasons**

It is our duty as a local planning authority to ensure that our district, our residents and businesses do not suffer as a result of High Speed 2. The draft consultation responses have identified substantial flaws within the Governments proposed approach to compensation and safeguarding.

## **Options**

Option One – Do nothing

Option Two - Respond as proposed. CDC is the Local Planning Authority and the only public body able to respond on matters of detail relating to the route now that it has been confirmed by Government. Failure to discharge this role will leave the District at considerable disadvantage.

Option Three - Amend the proposed response.

94 **Revised Opening Hours**

The Chief Executive submitted a report which sought consideration of the proposal to change the opening time on Wednesday from 08.45 to 09.45 with effect from 1 April 2013.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the opening time on Wednesday from 08.45 to 09.45 with effect from 1 April 2013 be revised, subject to South Northamptonshire Council agreeing to do the same.

**Reasons**

Opening later on Wednesday will facilitate the holding of regular and effective team meetings amongst staff.

**Options**

Option One - To accept the recommendation

Option - To reject the recommendation and make no change to office opening hours

95 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**Resolved**

That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that they could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

96 **Oxfordshire County Council Sites Acquisition and Supported Housing Scheme**

The Head of Regeneration and Housing submitted an exempt report relating to the acquisition of sites owned by Oxfordshire County Council.

**Resolved**

- (1) As set out in the exempt minute.
- (2) That the intention to bid for additional funding from the Homes and Communities Agency, to enable the Council to deliver 12 units of supported housing for adults with autism and 10 units of supported housing for people with physical disabilities be noted.

- (3) That authority be delegated to the Head of Regeneration and Housing, in consultation with the Lead Member for Regeneration, Head of Law and Governance, Head of Finance and Procurement and Lead Member for Financial Management, to conclude the outstanding negotiations for the relocation of Bicester Town Library, into the new Community Building in Bicester town centre.

### **Reasons**

The negotiations between OCC and CDC in respect of these sites have been complex and at times challenging. The proposals protect the interests of both councils and deliver some significant outcomes for local people and the local physical and economic environment.

### **Options**

Option One - To approve all the recommendations ~ whilst this is the most challenging option, it clearly delivers the most outcomes.

Option Two - To approve none of the recommendations ~ this will cause risk to the council delivering its HCA contracts and limit opportunity to respond to housing need and attract further inward investment.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm

Chairman:

Date: