

Council Minute Book
Monday 15 December 2014

Contents

Executive

1. Minutes of meeting Monday 6 October 2014 of Executive (Pages 1 - 12)
 2. Minutes of meeting Monday 3 November 2014 of Executive (Pages 13 - 22)
- Executive Lead Member Decisions

Budget Planning Committee

3. Minutes of meeting Tuesday 7 October 2014 of Budget Planning Committee (Pages 25 - 28)
4. Minutes of meeting Tuesday 4 November 2014 of Budget Planning Committee (Pages 29 - 32)
5. Minutes of meeting Tuesday 18 November 2014 of Budget Planning Committee (Pages 33 - 36)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6. Minutes of meeting Tuesday 14 October 2014 of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Pages 37 - 42)
7. Minutes of meeting Tuesday 25 November 2014 of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Pages 43 - 48)

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Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 6 October 2014 at 6.30 pm

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

Councillor Ken Atack, Lead Member for Financial Management
Councillor Norman Bolster, Lead Member for Estates and the Economy
Councillor John Donaldson, Lead Member for Banbury Brighter Futures
Councillor Michael Gibbard, Lead Member for Planning
Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Clean and Green
Councillor Kieron Mallon, Lead Member for Performance and Customers
Councillor D M Pickford, Lead Member for Housing

Also Present: Councillor Barry Richards (representing Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group)
Councillor Lawrie Stratford

Apologies for absence: Councillor Nicholas Turner, Lead Member for Joint Working and Communications

Officers: Sue Smith, Chief Executive
Karen Curtin, Commercial Director (Bicester)
Ian Davies, Director of Community and Environment
Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance / Monitoring Officer
Jo Pitman, Head of Transformation
Paul Sutton, Head of Finance and Procurement
Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections

50 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

52 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

53 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

54 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcement:

1. Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, members of the public were permitted to film, broadcast and report on the meeting, subject to the efficient running of the meeting not being affected.

55 **Customer Satisfaction Survey Results 2014**

The Head of Transformation submitted a report which updated the Executive on the results of the annual satisfaction survey and identified any areas to be reflected in future business and/or performance plans.

In introducing the report, the Lead Member for Performance and Communications reported that overall satisfaction levels now peaked at its highest recorded level of 77%. This represented a 17% increase since the council began undertaking Customer Satisfaction Surveys in 2006.

Resolved

- (1) That the results of the customer survey, with particular reference to improvement in areas that were identified as priorities as an outcome of the survey undertaken in 2014, be noted.
- (2) That the following priorities and areas of focus for future action be agreed:

Customer Priorities

The 'top 6' key services which are perceived to be a priority by local residents in greater magnitude than other council services.

- 1) Household waste collection
- 2) Household recycling collection and food/ garden waste collection service
- 3) Dealing with anti-social behaviour/ nuisance
- 4) Providing affordable housing
- 5) Street cleaning and tackling environmental crime
- 6) Supporting the creation of jobs in the local area

Suggested Areas for Future Focus

- a) Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour: The positive increase in satisfaction with the Council's approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour and nuisance recorded last year has been maintained in 2014, with 56% satisfied. This is notably higher than the lowest recorded level of 30% in 2007. However ranked third in the above perceived priorities.
- b) Sports and Leisure facilities: Overall satisfaction with leisure activities provided by Cherwell District Council remains in line with previous years, with 56% satisfied with their provision and 11% dissatisfied. The leisure activities provided by the Council are the lead driver of overall satisfaction and as such, it is important to maintain satisfaction levels in this area. There are also areas of dissatisfaction to be addressed within Leisure Facilities. This year, ratings have remained stable; 68% are satisfied with the leisure facilities provided by the Council overall vs. 69% in 2013.
- c) Continuing to focus on Street Cleansing and dealing with environmental crime' one of the 'top 6' priorities street cleansing is a service that is experienced by all residents and plays an important part in terms of quality of life and enjoyment living within a local area. It is a service upon which the Council is judged and valued by many residents and as such should remain an on-going area of focus.

Reasons

This report presents a summary of the findings from the 2014 customer satisfaction survey. It highlights a general trend of improvement across council services as well as areas where continued focus is required.

The report also highlights customer priorities and these will be used to help inform budget setting, the development of the Council's Business Plan, Performance Pledges and 5 year Strategy.

As well as these high level findings the survey includes a wealth of service specific detail that will be used by service managers to help underpin service planning.

Alternative Options

Option 1: To accept the recommendations as outlined in part one of this report.

Option 2: To reject the recommendations and request additional work or alternative priorities arising from the survey findings.

The Head of Transformation submitted a report which presented the Council's performance for the period 01 April 2014 – 30 June 2014 as measured through the Performance Management Framework.

Resolved

- (1) That the following achievements be noted:

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity

- Northwest Bicester: Delivery of the Masterplan to the agreed timescales is reporting as Green. The next stage in delivering the Masterplan will be the submission and processing of planning applications for the development. It is anticipated that applications will be received for the majority of the site before the end of the year and determined during 2015.
- Graven Hill: deliver the Council's vision for this strategic site is reporting as Green. Huge progress has been made on concluding the S.106 issues and completion of the land transaction expected in early August 2014. The business case for creation of a 'group structure' of Companies Limited by Shares (Holding Company and Development Company) has been approved by the Executive (16th July) with companies incorporated and inaugural meeting of both companies held on the 7 July 2014. Six key work themes have been identified as necessary to deliver the council's vision for Graven Hill: consolidation of land assembly & boundary issues; On-going engagement with Ministry of Defence (MOD); Ecology and ground investigation; Design and planning; Delivery and procurement; Sales, marketing and investment.

Safe, Green and Clean

- Tonnage of waste sent to landfill is reporting as Green. On track and with a number of actions planned during 2014/15 to reduce amount sent to landfill.
- Number of fly tips enforcement actions (compared with same period 2013/14) is reporting as Green*. During the quarter 50 warning letters, 13 Section 71 Notices and 1 formal caution were issued. Warning letters work very well in circumstances when it would not be suitable to take a more formal approach.
- Percentage of nuisance cases responded to within prescribed period of 48 hours is reporting as Green. Case load increased from 183 in Quarter 4 2013/14 to 452 in Quarter 1 but despite the increasing case load response times have been maintained.

Thriving Communities

- Average time taken to process new claims and changes for Housing Benefit in days is reporting as Green*. Changes continue to be processed well within target and this is expected to continue through the year.
- No of households in temporary accommodation is reporting as Green*. The number of households in temporary accommodation remains within the target set. The Housing Team continue their service delivery with an on-going focus on homelessness prevention. This helps to keep the number of those progressing to make a statutory homeless application low, which in turn maintains the current performance for provision of temporary accommodation.
- Maintain a minimum usage level of visits to leisure facilities (Total of visits to District Leisure Centres and WGLC, NOA and Cooper) is

reporting as Green*. Throughputs are up 18,913 on June 2013 with:
- Spiceball Leisure Centre up 1,907, Kidlington & Gosford Leisure Centre up by 5,144 and Bicester Leisure Centre up by 11,862 - the increase is attributed to the play and teach pool figures.

- Processing of major applications with 13 weeks is reporting as Green*. The measures introduced last year continue to show improvements. A figure of nearly 91% has been achieved this quarter and this continues to represent sustained and significant progress compared to historic performance.

Sound Budgets and Customer focussed council

- Maximise income through designing services that can attract a market is reporting as Green. Some market work has been undertaken to ascertain the capacity to trade. Until the new operating model is in effect trading potential is limited.
- Increase our use of social media to communicate with residents and local businesses is reporting as Green. Facebook and Twitter continue to be used extensively at CDC, with residents engaging with the communications team on a daily basis on a variety of subjects. The range of messages that are promoted through social media also continues to grow as departments become more aware of what can be achieved on a limited or no budget.
- Deliver an annual balanced budget setting out the five year financial plan (Medium Term Financial Strategy) is reporting as Green. Currently developing updated Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with actions to address future anticipated pressures

- (2) That the following performance related matters be identified for review or consideration in future reports:

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity

- Bicester town centre regeneration including the Council Community Building is reporting as Amber. Planning permission obtained for the Community Building. We are currently reviewing costs ahead of awarding construction contract. Completion is aimed for Q4 2015.
- Agree next steps for the development options for Kidlington against agreed timescales and milestones is reporting as Amber. Masterplans follow on from Local Plans. These are currently delayed while the Local Plan issues are resolved.

Safe, Clean and Green

- Number of fly tips recorded (compared with same period 2013/14) is reporting as Red. There is no obvious trend showing so far regarding the number of fly tips. It has however been noted that there has been a small increase in the number of white goods being left out on the verge, for the scrap metal collectors. Investigations cannot always identify the resident that has left them out.
- Percentage of nuisance cases resolved within 8 weeks is reporting as Amber. Of the 452 cases received in Quarter 1, 425 were resolved. Due to the high number of cases resolution, performance has continued to be good although slight slippage is inevitable. A greater level of activity tends to occur in Quarters 1 and 2 as it is

seasonal. There has been an increase in the number of complaints about barking dogs and the figures here include those from Operation Jazz which is now in its third year. This operation, running 2 nights per week, has proved very successful and consequently officers are dealing with more calls.

Thriving Communities

- Processing of minor applications with 8 weeks is reporting as Red. The impact of greater overall application numbers together with a higher proportion of majors has affected the processing of minor applications. The emphasis on majors has resulted in a backlog of registration which has in turn had an impact on overall performance, 55% compared with a target of 65%. Short term measures have been put in place (allocation of additional staff and overtime working) to reduce the registration backlog. In addition the registration team has been relocated and the whole process is being modelled using "PlanSim" software which will allow the impact of changes to the process to be understood before introduction. These changes are expected to see an improvement in performance by the end of the next quarter.
- Percentage of planning appeals allowed against refusal decision (%) is reporting as Red. The performance measure is volatile as it is based on low overall appeal numbers and therefore each decision can impact on the performance measure for appeals. There is no evidence of poor performance, though this continues to be carefully monitored.

Sound Budgets and Customer Focussed Council

- Increase organisational capacity and efficiency and Improve workforce planning and development is reporting as Amber. Action Plan is being developed as part of the HR & OD Strategy work as part of 3 way working. During 2014/15 the focus will be on planning for this with implementation expected in 2015/16.
- Deliver significant reduction in phone contact by implementing additional online services is reporting as Amber. Suspension of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Customer Portal project pending 3 way working reviews will impact on the opportunity to achieve "significant" reductions. However work continues in the interim to use current software provision to implement online services where viable.

Reasons

This report presents the Council's performance against its corporate scorecard for the first quarter of 2014/15. It includes an overview of successes, areas for improvement and emerging issues to be considered.

Alternative Options

Option 1: To note the report

Option 2: To request additional information on items and/or add to the work programme for review and/or refer to Overview and Scrutiny.

57

Quarter 1 2014/15 Financial Performance

The Director of Resources submitted a report which summarised the Council's Revenue and Capital position, treasury management and procurement performance for the first three months of the financial year 2014-15 and projections for the full 2014-15 period.

The report also presented information on treasury management performance and compliance with treasury management policy during 2014-15 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice

Resolved

- (1) That the projected revenue and capital position at June 2014 be noted.
- (2) That the quarter 1 (Q1) performance against the 2014-15 investment strategy and the financial returns from the funds be noted.
- (3) That the contents and the progress against the Corporate Procurement Action Plan be noted.

Reasons

The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management which this Council has adopted requires a regular budget monitoring report. This report illustrates the Council's performance against the 2014-15 Financial Targets for Revenue, Capital and Procurement Monitoring.

Alternative Options

Option 1: As this is a monitoring report, no further options have been considered. However, members may wish to request that officers provide additional information.

58

Budget Strategy 2015 to 2016 and Beyond

The Director of Resources submitted a report which informed the Executive of the service and financial planning process for 2015-16, to approve the 2015-16 budget strategy and to agree the budget guidelines for issue to service managers to enable the production of the 2015-16 budget.

The report also presented the most recent Medium Term Revenue Plan (MTRP), sought consideration of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2015-16 and agreement of the Council's approach to Business Rates pooling for 2015-16.

Resolved

- (1) That the updated Medium Term Revenue Plan for the Council's revenue budget for 2015-16 to 2019-20 be noted.

- (2) That the overall 2015-16 budget strategy and service and financial planning process be endorsed.
- (3) That the proposed budget guidelines and timetable for 2015-16 (annexes to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be agreed.
- (4) That agreement be given to consult on the retention of the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) for 2015-16 and authority be delegated to the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Lead Member for Financial Management, to make the final decision on the scheme.
- (5) That authority be delegated to the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Lead Member for Financial Management, to make the final decision on Business Rates pooling for 2015-16.

Reasons

The Council needs to set guidelines and a timetable for the preparation of draft estimates for 2015-16. These guidelines should support the objectives contained in the Business Plan, Service Plans and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Alternative Options

Option 1: To disagree with the recommendations set out above. This is rejected as it will unnecessarily delay the formulation of the detailed budget for 2015-16.

59

Outcome of the Review of Flooding at Hanover Gardens, Bicester

The Commercial Director (Bicester) submitted a report to update on the outcome of the investigation into the root cause of the flooding at Hanover Gardens on 24 December 2013.

Executive thanked both Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council Officers for their hard work in assisting the residents and management team at Hanover Gardens and, in particular, the efforts to ensure affected residents were rehoused as quickly as possible. Executive also extended their thanks to the companies and hotels that had supported the residents.

Resolved

- (1) That the proactive response provided by Cherwell District Council to assist the residents and management team at Hanover Gardens be noted.
- (2) That the outcome and recommended actions from the Environment Agency Report (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be noted.

- (3) That it be noted the Council has agreed to run an information campaign in October 2014 throughout the District on the importance of preventing debris from entering all rivers in the district.
- (4) That it be noted that a partnership meeting with all interested parties continues to monitor any outstanding actions and the Council has representation through the Head of Housing and Regeneration.

Reasons

The immediate response provided by the Housing Team to the situation at Hanover Gardens on 24 December 2013 and for the period between Christmas and New Year was in line with Council policy and was at the high standard we expect. The team have been formally thanked for all the work that they undertook during the festive period.

As stated in Appendix 1 it is not possible to eliminate the risk of flooding from rivers but the recommendations identified in the report are positive steps that can be taken to reduce the risk of flooding from the River Bure in the future particularly in relation to preventing debris from entering the River Bure which was the root cause of the flood at Hanover Gardens.

The Council as a member of the partnership who worked together to review this issue will ensure that it fulfils its action by the agreed date and ensure that all residents of the District are aware of how important it is to prevent debris from entering the River Bure. An information campaign beginning with a press release concerning this report will run throughout October 2014.

Alternative Options

Option 1: To approve the recommendation

Option 2: To reject the recommendation

60

Hanwell Fields Community Centre Solar Panels

The Director of Community and Environment submitted a report which recommended the installation of solar PV panels on the roof of Hanwell Fields Community Centre, Rotary Way, Banbury and the use of a capital fund to finance the solar PV installation.

Resolved

- (1) That the installation of solar PV panels on the roof of Hanwell Fields Community Centre, Rotary Way, Banbury be approved.
- (2) That the use of capital (ref:50211" Hanwell Fields Community Development Fund") to finance the solar PV installation be approved.
- (3) That the division of resultant income as follows be approved: CDC to retain one third of the feed in tariff income to accumulate a reserve for

maintenance and the eventual replacement of the inverter which has a design life of 10 years (approximately half that of the panels) and to cover increased insurance costs of the building. The remaining two thirds of the feed in tariff income would be passed on to the Community Association.

Reasons

The proposed project will assist the HFCA to remain solvent and continue to provide and facilitate valued community services. For this reason it is legitimate use of a fund intended to promote community development.

At minimal cost to the District Council, this project will serve as a test case for provision of solar panels in CDC's other community centres.

The proposed project will reduce the carbon footprint of this CDC owned facility.

Alternative Options

Option 1: To amend the proposed split of income from the Feed in Tariff
Reason: Less than one third of the income is less likely to cover the council's maintenance costs.

Option 2: To reject the recommendations

61 **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.

62 **South West Bicester Sports Village**

The Director of Community and Environment submitted an exempt report relating to the South West Bicester Sports Village.

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) That a further update report on the project following the receipt and evaluation of construction contract tenders be submitted to Executive.

Reasons

As set out in the exempt minutes.

Alternative Options

As set out in the exempt minutes.

63

Woodgreen Leisure Centre

The Director of Community and Environment submitted an exempt report relating to Woodgreen Leisure Centre.

Resolved

- (1) As set out in the exempt decision notice.
- (2) As set out in the exempt decision notice.
- (3) That a further report on the outcome of the tendering process be submitted to Executive.

Reasons

As set out in the exempt minutes.

Alternative Options

As set out in the exempt minutes.

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 3 November 2014 at 6.30 pm

- Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), Leader of the Council
- Councillor Ken Atack, Lead Member for Financial Management
Councillor Norman Bolster, Lead Member for Estates and the Economy
Councillor John Donaldson, Lead Member for Banbury Brighter Futures
Councillor Michael Gibbard, Lead Member for Planning
Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Clean and Green
Councillor Kieron Mallon, Lead Member for Banbury Developments, Performance and Communications
Councillor D M Pickford, Lead Member for Housing
- Also Present: Councillor Barry Richards (representing Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group)
Councillor Les Sibley
Councillor Lawrie Stratford
- Apologies for absence: Councillor G A Reynolds, Deputy Leader
Councillor Nicholas Turner, Lead Member for Joint Working and IT
- Officers: Sue Smith, Chief Executive
Calvin Bell, Director of Development
Karen Curtin, Commercial Director (Bicester)
Ian Davies, Director of Community and Environment
Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance / Monitoring Officer
Paul Sutton, Head of Finance and Procurement
Ed Potter, Head of Environmental Services
Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections

64 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The Chairman reported that he had agreed to requests from Councillor Sibley to address the Executive on agenda items 10, North West Bicester Update and 11, North West Bicester Development Framework Supplementary

Planning Document and Councillor Lawrie Stratford on agenda items 7, Local Management Organisations, 10, North West Bicester Update and 11, North West Bicester Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document.

66 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

67 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

68 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcement:

1. Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, members of the public were permitted to film, broadcast and report on the meeting, subject to the efficient running of the meeting not being affected.

69 **North West Bicester Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document**

The Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy submitted a report which provided an update on the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to support proposals for an Eco-town development of up to 6,000 homes on land at North West (NW) Bicester. The report also sought endorsement of the Draft document and approval for public consultation.

In introducing the report the Lead Member for Planning pointed out that the first sentence in paragraph 7.2 of the published report (legal implications) should have been omitted.

At the discretion of the Chairman, Councillors Sibley and Lawrie Stratford addressed Executive.

In response to the addresses, the Lead Member for Planning confirmed that the consultation would start at the end of November for six weeks. The SPD would remain informal planning guidance until it was adopted, which would be after the adoption of the Local Plan.

Resolved

- (1) That the Draft North West Bicester Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document be approved for public consultation.

- (2) That officers be authorised, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, to make any further non-substantive changes to the North West Bicester Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document prior to public consultation.

Reasons

The NW Bicester Development Framework SPD will guide future eco-town developments and be used as informal guidance in determining planning applications that have been received and will be submitted as the proposals progress. It follows the standards set out in the Eco-towns PPS and emerging Cherwell Local Plan, providing further detail for consideration in planning applications, the development principles and character areas for the site. It is supported by a Sustainability Appraisal which considers the environmental effects of the masterplan proposals.

The Executive is recommended to note the contents of this report and endorse the vision and principles set out in the Draft masterplan as the basis of the Council's policy to be used as the basis for determining planning applications.

Alternative Options

Option 1: To not prepare and SPD and rely on the Eco towns PPS Cherwell Local Plan policy 1 and submitted Draft masterplan – This option was rejected given the potential for the PPS to be revoked and delay to the Local Plan adoption

Option 2: To commission consultants to prepare the SPD – This option was rejected in favour of the Eco Bicester project team leading on its preparation

Option 3: To await the adoption of the Local Plan before preparing SPD – This option was rejected due to the timescales involved and the necessity to have some form of informal planning guidance when determining the first outline applications later in 2014.

70

Local Management Organisations

The Head of Environmental Services submitted a report which to determine a clear policy regarding developers setting up local management organisations which own and maintain public open space, outdoor sports pitches and play areas on new developments, which then levy a service charge on residents for the maintenance & upkeep of such areas.

At the discretion of the Chairman, Councillor Lawrie Stratford addressed Executive.

Resolved

- (1) That the policy that the Council's strong preference is that public open space, outdoor sports pitches and play areas on new developments continue to be adopted by the Council in conjunction with the relevant

town or parish council with a commuted sum based on accurate costs which reflects the Council's tendered rates for maintenance be approved.

- (2) That the policy that the Council will only consider a local management organisation proposed by any developer if all the conditions set out in the annex to the minutes (as set out in the Minute Book) are met be approved.

Reasons

LMOs maintaining open spaces and play areas can be satisfactory but they can sometimes bring few benefits to residents and usually levy an additional charge to residents. However, there can be potential savings to a developer for such an approach in avoiding a large up front development cost.

Therefore, it is important that a policy on LMOs is in place to ensure adequate safeguards and standards are established and certainty is provided for residents if a developer seeks to follow this approach.

In recent public inquiries, the Council's technical specifications and rates for landscape maintenance were endorsed by the inspector. Consequently the commuted sums requested on new developments have a strong basis for provision.

Alternative Options

Option 1 Approve the policy that the Council's strong preference is for adoption of open spaces, parks and sports pitches with a commuted sum to cover the on-going maintenance.

Option 2: To reject the proposed policy

Option 3: To ask officers to develop alternative proposals

71

Pre-Application Fees for Licensing Act 2003 and Other Licensing Applications

The Director of Community and Environment and Interim Shared Public Protection and Environmental Health Manager submitted a report which sought consideration of the introduction of fees for providing pre-application advice in relation to licence applications subject to consultation.

Resolved

- (1) That the introduction of a discretionary pre-application advice service and charges for licence applications be approved.
- (2) That the introduction of pre-application charging from 1 April 2015 be agreed.

- (3) That the future extension of the scheme to other types of licence applications should this be successful be approved.

Reasons

The Licensing Act 2003 states that all licensing matters must promote the four licensing objectives. With a Licensing Officer giving expert advice to prospective applicants, it is envisaged that this promotion will be satisfactorily achieved.

Introducing a pre-application scheme will provide a quality service to applicants assisting them to get it right first time. This can only enhance the quality of applications submitted to the Council, which may ultimately cut down on the time spent and the cost of dealing with licensing applications at hearings.

Alternative Options

Option 1: To approve the introduction of fees for pre-application advice

Option 2: Not to approve the introduction of fees; officers will continue to provide advice but a fee will not be recovered.

72 **Improvements to Bicester and Kidlington and Gosford Leisure Centres**

The Director of Community and Environment submitted a report which sought consideration of a range of service improvements to Bicester and Kidlington and Gosford Leisure Centres and facility improvements to Kidlington and Gosford Leisure Centre.

Resolved

- (1) That the facility improvements proposed for Kidlington and Gosford Leisure Centre subject to an acceptable outcome of further contractual negotiations be supported in principle.
- (2) That the operational improvements put in place at Bicester and Kidlington and Gosford Leisure Centres be noted and welcomed.
- (3) That a further report on the scope for facility and customer improvements at Bicester Leisure Centre be received.

Reasons

The Council strives for continuous improvement in its services and indeed invites entrepreneurial flair from the operator and this can be regarded as an example of that. Five years after it entered a long term contract for its modernised leisure facilities is a reasonable period for changed patterns of use to be established and improvements to be considered. The proposed improvements will benefit the biggest part of leisure centre customer growth and address the dynamic nature of the health and fitness sector.

By retaining these improvements within the centre's current footprint, it does however mean that users of the Crazy Coliseum will not have like for like facilities provided. The offer of free use of two soft play environments will in some way compensate for this but only in part.

For changes of this nature which are both customer driven and very relevant, officers have requested, that subject to the decision of the Executive, PCL are to undertake a short in centre consultation period from 4 November to gain specific and overall customer views prior to implementation to see whether there are any other improvement and mitigating measure which could be implemented.

Alternative Options

Option 1: Undertake no change. This is not proposed as it would mean that the centre would continue to be constrained in accommodating the growth in health and fitness demand.

73

North West Bicester Update

The Commercial Director (Bicester) submitted a report to advise Members of the expenditure of the Eco Town grant received in 2010 and projects delivered in Bicester, to enable consideration of the proposals for future expenditure and to authorise a change to the delegation for authorisation of expenditure.

Resolved

- (1) That the expenditure that has taken place and the committed funding from the Eco Town grant be noted.
- (2) That the progress that has been made in delivering projects to meet the aims of the One Shared Vision for the Town be noted.
- (3) That the delegation of future expenditure to the Commercial Director (Bicester) in consultation with the Leader of the Council be agreed.

Reasons

Over the last 4 years a considerable amount of work has been done in Bicester and as this report demonstrates a number of outcomes have been delivered. Work has now started on site at NW Bicester on a national exemplar development as well as a masterplan for the whole site being submitted. The Project Team has worked with the promoters A2Dominion to ensure that the development meets the high standards set in the Eco Towns Planning Policy Statement. With work underway on site the potential to deliver key infrastructure on site in the form of the school and eco business centre is now closer, with the school due to start on site in March 2015 and steps now being taken to formalise the delivery of the eco business centre.

A number of projects have been delivered in the town, particularly focussing on energy efficiency and sustainable travel. These have delivered

demonstration projects as sought by DCLG and delivered against the aims of the One Shared Vision for the town.

Over £30m worth of grant funding has been attracted to Bicester, including the DCLG eco town funding. This has been instrumental in the range of projects that it has been possible to deliver in the town. This approach of seeking external funding is continuing with further work being done to enable projects to continue to be delivered in the town.

Grant funding is a small proportion of the overall investment that has taken place in the town. A study by Montague Evans estimated that over £184m of private sector funding has been invested in the town since 2009 in the construction of housing and commercial premises. Furthermore the report concluded in terms of future development as part of the growth of Bicester, the estimated value of the housing sites identified in Bicester is £950 million which is expected to be supported by approximately £700 million of infrastructure investment.

Never the less as the town grows the DCLG eco town funding remains an important source of funding for the delivery of projects in the town. Importantly the funding is enabling a project team to be employed and this is instrumental particularly in the attraction of additional funding and delivery of projects in the town. To maximise the benefits from the grant the ability to recycle funding over time to provide for further investment in the town is sought where feasible.

Future funding will largely rely on the receipt of developer funding to repay the investment in the primary school or income from the eco business centre. Limited funding remains for sustainable travel initiatives and energy efficiency projects is also ring fenced. Other sources of funding are actively being sought including grants from other sources and projects that can be delivered in partnership. This is necessary to be able to continue to deliver projects to meet the outcomes of the One Shared Vision.

The appointment of the Commercial Director (Bicester) has increased the Council's capacity for delivering the planned growth and associated benefits in Bicester along with the required infrastructure. The change of delegation of the eco town funding to the Commercial Director (Bicester) in consultation with the Leader of the Council is recommended to ensure that funding continues to be appropriately targeted.

Alternative Options

Option 1: to leave the delegation with the Chief Executive or not to delegate responsibility for spending eco town funding.

With a Director for Bicester now appointed it is logical that delegation now reflects the revised structure. Much funding is day to day and with no delegation the Council would have less flexibility in the timing of decisions with regard to funding.

Option 2: To commit to future spend of recycled funding

The timing of the receipt of recycled funding is uncertain and over time priorities and pressures can change. It therefore is difficult to commit to funding specific projects at the current time. Some flexibility is therefore sought to review priorities as funding becomes available.

74 **Housing Strategy Priority 5: Homeless Prevention Action Plan Update**

The Head of Regeneration and Housing submitted a report which updated the Executive on the progress of the Homelessness Prevention Action Plan 2013-2015.

Executive commended the Housing Team, and in particular the Homeless Prevention Team, for their hard work in homelessness prevention and on-going work towards achieving the Governments Gold Standard for homelessness services.

Resolved

- (1) That the update of the Homelessness Prevention Action Plan which takes account of learning from the current year's plan, and reflects Cherwell District Council's application for the Gold standard accreditation for homelessness services be approved.
- (2) That for the 2015/16 financial year the ring-fencing of the homeless grant monies provided as part of the Council's general financial settlement awarded by central Government be approved.

Reasons

It is through adopting this Action Plan that the Council makes clear its commitment to the homelessness prevention agenda to both central Government and its partners across the statutory and voluntary sectors

The Homelessness Prevention Action Plan is a result of a review of the previous action plan as directed by Chapter 5 of the Housing Strategy, which requires a review of partnerships.

The adoption of the Homelessness Prevention Action Plan is an important step on the Council's journey to achieving Gold Standard for Homelessness Services, and all that lies behind that award.

Alternative Options

Option 1: Not to endorse the Homeless Action Plan 2015/16 which also requests continued ring-fencing of the DCLG element of council grant for homelessness prevention. This has been rejected as it will lead to an increase in statutory duties to homeless and an increase in spending on provision of expensive temporary accommodation

75 **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 item 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, Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 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.

76 **Commissioning of Services for Banbury CAB**

The Head of Regeneration and Housing and Interim Shared Community Partnerships and Recreation Manager submitted an exempt report which update the Executive on the delivery of services contracted to Banbury Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and requested an extension of the contract for a further 2 years as per the original contract.

Resolved

- (1) That the extension of the current CAB contract by a further 2 years from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2017, such an extension being contained within the original contract award, be approved.

Reasons

It is anticipated based on contract performance to date that the CAB will have successfully delivered the required services for three years by 31 March 2015. They have complied with all the requirements of the contract offered by the Council and have worked in close contact and in partnership with Council officers. They have established bases in the three main centres of the District as well as offering home visits, telephone advice and an email service to ensure they are accessible to all clients both in employment and those with multiple needs. They are a well-known brand offering quality marked specialist advice which the general public trust.

A contract extension will provide further time for the Council to explore how it may wish to re-engineer advice services for the District. It will provide an opportunity to research how we may be able to work in closer partnership to commission services and give consideration to providing increased value for money in due course.

Alternative Options

Option: Not to extend the Contracts and for the services to be discontinued. This would lead to loss of these three vital services across the District.

Banbury Town Council Open Spaces

The Head of Environmental Services submitted an exempt report which sought approval for additional resources to carry out cleansing operations on behalf of Banbury Town Council in their Parks and Open Spaces.

Resolved

- (1) That the additional revenue resources required for Street Cleansing to carry out Cleansing activities for Banbury Town Council be approved.
- (2) That the additional capital needs in the Environmental Services Vehicle programme in 2015/16 be noted.
- (3) That the opportunities for improving cleansing standards in Banbury be noted.

Reasons

Carrying out Street Cleansing work for Banbury Town Council presents an opportunity to ensure higher cleanliness standards and satisfaction in Banbury. The work is similar to the work already carried out by Street Cleansing for Bicester Town Council and Kidlington Parish Council. The work will also bring in some additional income to the Street Cleansing team.

This work has some risks as does any commercial activity. However the Street Cleansing team has the necessary skills, experience and leadership to ensure this is a successful partnership leading to higher cleansing standards and an efficient use of public funds.

Alternative Options

Option 1: Approve the resources to carry out activities for Banbury Town Council from April 2015.

Option 2: Reject carrying out Street Cleansing work for Banbury Town Council

Option 3: Ask officers to develop alternative options

The meeting ended at 7.40 pm

Chairman:

Date:

COUNCIL

RECORD OF LEAD MEMBER DECISIONS FOR THE PERIOD 11 OCTOBER 2014 TO 5 DECEMBER 2014

15 December 2014

Area of Responsibility

Decision Subject Matter

Leader
(in the absence of the
Deputy Leader)

Precautionary Salting ('Gritting') Policy (Update)
Updated Autumn 2014

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Cherwell District Council

Budget Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Planning Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 7 October 2014 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Chairman)
Councillor Douglas Webb (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Ken Atack
Councillor Carmen Griffiths
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes
Councillor Melanie Magee
Councillor Alastair Milne Home
Councillor Barry Richards
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Substitute Members: Councillor Rose Stratford (In place of Councillor Nigel Randall)

Apologies for absence: Councillor Nigel Randall

Officers: Paul Sutton, Head of Finance and Procurement
Nicola Jackson, Corporate Finance Manager
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer

32 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

33 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

34 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 September 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

35 Chairman's Announcements

There were no Chairman's announcements.

36 **Budget Strategy 2015 to 2016 and Beyond**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Resources which detailed the budget process and strategy for the 2015-16 financial year. The report also gave an update on the Medium Term Revenue Plan, the Council Tax reduction scheme and the approach to Business Rates pooling.

The report was presented to the Committee for information, following consideration and approval by the Executive at its meeting on 6 October 2014.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement explained the Business Rates pooling system, and added that the Council had until 31 October to notify the Government of its intentions for the 2015-16 financial year.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.

37 **Capital Programme - Use of Contingency**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Resources which outlined how a Capital Contingency budget could be operated if the decision was made to create one.

The Interim Head of Finance and Procurement explained that in the event a contingency budget wasn't set up, it would still be possible to access funds in the event of an emergency. It was possible for Capital bids to be submitted at any point during the financial year, and in the event of extreme urgency a retrospective bid could be submitted.

Following discussions the Committee agreed that no recommendations needed to be made regarding creation of a central contingency budget.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted
- (2) That no recommendations be made regarding a central contingency budget

38 **Business Support Unit**

The Interim Head of Finance and Procurement updated the Committee on progress with the Business Support Unit.

The Personnel Committee had approved the creation of the unit in July 2014. Job descriptions were currently being prepared for the three posts, and it was hoped that they would be filled as soon as possible.

In response to questions the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement explained that once established the posts would pick up work such as Council Tax banding queries with the Valuation Office and Business Rates charging.

Resolved

(1) That the update be received.

39 **Work Programme 2014 - 15**

The Committee considered the draft Work Programme for 2014/15

Resolved

(1) That the work programme be noted.

40 **Fees and Charges Review 2015-16**

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement, which detailed fees and charges being considered for the 2015-16 revenue budget.

In response to questions from the Committee, it was agreed that further information would be requested from the Head of Environmental Services relating to the costs of Commercial collections, in particular the difference in costs between refuse collections and Schedule II collections.

The Committee also asked if it would be possible for Planning Application fees to be included for information in future.

Resolved

(1) That the report be noted.

41 **Exclusion of 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 item 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, Paragraphs 1, 2 and 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

42 **Fees and Charges Review 2015-16 - Exempt Appendix**

The Committee considered the exempt appendix to the Fees and Charges Review 2015-16.

Resolved

- (1) That the exempt appendix be noted

The meeting ended at 7.47 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Budget Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Planning Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 4 November 2014 at 6.30 pm

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

Councillor Ken Atack
Councillor Carmen Griffiths
Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes
Councillor Alastair Milne Home
Councillor Nigel Randall
Councillor Barry Richards

Substitute Members: Councillor Lawrie Stratford (In place of Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE)

Apologies for absence: Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Councillor Melanie Magee
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Officers: Paul Sutton, Head of Finance and Procurement
Nicola Jackson, Corporate Finance Manager
Richard Stirling, Corporate Procurement Manager
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer

43 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

44 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

45 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7 October 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

46 Chairman's Announcements

There were no Chairman's announcements.

47 **Review of Procurement Strategy Progress**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Finance and Procurement which summarised progress on the Council's procurement strategy.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Head of Finance and Procurement acknowledged the importance of contextual information where savings were referred to, and explained that the report would become a regular update item for the Committee, with the level of detail being increased for future meetings.

The Committee requested further information regarding the refurbishment of the Oxfordshire Academy athletics track, particularly on the impact on the existing facility.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.

48 **Work Programme 2014-2015**

The Committee considered the draft work programme for 2014/15.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to the inclusion of a Medium Term Revenue Plan update at the 18 November meeting and consideration of a directorate budget review in March 2015, the work programme be noted.

49 **Exclusion of 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 item 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.

50 **2015-16 Budget Reduction Proposals**

The Committee considered an exempt report from the Head of Finance and Procurement which detailed proposed budget reductions for the 2015-16 budget.

The Committee requested further written information on some of the proposed category 1 savings.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted

51 **Medium Term Revenue Plan Update**

The Head of Finance and Procurement presented an exempt update on the latest Medium Term Revenue Plan position for 2015/16.

Resolved

- (1) That the update be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Cherwell District Council

Budget Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Planning Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 18 November 2014 at 6.30 pm

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

Councillor Ken Atack
Councillor Carmen Griffiths
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Councillor Barry Wood

Substitute Members: Councillor Michael Gibbard (In place of Councillor Alastair Milne Home)
Councillor Matt Johnstone (In place of Councillor Barry Richards)
Councillor Lawrie Stratford (In place of Councillor Nigel Randall)

Apologies for absence: Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes
Councillor Melanie Magee
Councillor Alastair Milne Home
Councillor Nigel Randall
Councillor Barry Richards
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Officers: Paul Sutton, Head of Finance and Procurement
Nicola Jackson, Corporate Finance Manager
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer

52 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

53 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

54 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4 November 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

55 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcement:

1. The informal meeting of the Committee to consider Capital Bids had been postponed from 11 November 2014 and would be held on 25 November 2014 instead.

56 **Quarter 2 2014-15 - Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Resources, which detailed the Quarter 2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring position.

In response to queries from the Committee, the Head of Finance and Procurement explained that the anticipated overspend was currently an estimate, and the situation could change before the end of the financial year.

Resolved

- (1) That the projected revenue and capital position at September 2014 be noted.
- (2) That the Quarter 2 performance against the 2014-15 investment strategy and returns from funds be noted.

57 **Work Programme 2014-2015**

The Committee considered the draft work programme for 2014/15.

Resolved

- (1) That the work programme be noted.

58 **Exclusion of 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 grounds 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.

59 **Quarter 2 2014-15 - Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report - Exempt Addendum**

The Committee considered the exempt addendum to the report of the Director of Resources.

Resolved

- (1) That the exempt addendum be noted.

60 **Medium Term Revenue Plan Update**

The Committee considered an exempt report and presentation from the Head of Finance and Procurement, which detailed the current Medium Term Revenue Plan position.

Resolved

- (1) That the update be noted

The meeting ended at 8.20 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, OX15 4AA, on 14 October 2014 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Ann Bonner (Chairman)

Councillor Claire Bell
Councillor Lynn Pratt
Councillor Dan Sames
Councillor Lawrie Stratford
Councillor Bryn Williams
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Apologies for absence: Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Diana Edwards
Councillor Jon O'Neill
Councillor Neil Prestidge

Officers: Kevin Larner, Rural Development and Countryside Officer
Dave Parry, Democratic and Elections Officer

30 **Declarations of Interest**

Members declared interests in the following agenda items:

10. Dial-a-Ride.

Councillor Lawrie Stratford, Non Statutory Interest, as a member of Oxfordshire County Council.

31 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

32 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 2 September, 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

33 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

34 **Youth Engagement - Scoping Document**

The Committee considered a revised scoping document prepared by Councillors Bryn Williams, Dan Sames and Neil Prestidge proposing a scrutiny review with respect to youth engagement.

The Committee was supportive of a review taking place and suggested that, in order to ensure all political groups were represented, additional membership of the informal Task and Finish Panel be sought from other political groups represented on the Council.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to Resolution (2) below, the draft scoping document in respect of Youth Engagement in democratic processes be approved, and an informal Task and Finish Panel comprising Councillors Bryn Williams, Dan Sames and Neil Prestidge, together with appropriate officers, undertake a Scrutiny Review.
- (2) That, in addition to the members identified in Resolution (1), additional members be sought from the other political groups represented on the Council.

35 **Recycling - Scoping Document**

The Committee considered a scoping document prepared by Councillors Claire Bell and David Hughes proposing a scrutiny review with respect to Recycling.

The Committee noted advice that, initially, officer support would be provided by Ed Potter – Head of Environmental Services, and Elly Attwood – Service Development Manager. Supporting the review taking place, it was suggested that, in order to ensure all political groups were represented, additional membership of the informal Task and Finish Panel be sought from other political groups represented on the Council.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to Resolution (2) below, the draft scoping document in respect of Recycling be approved, and an informal Task and Finish Panel comprising Councillors Claire Bell and David Hughes, together with appropriate officers, undertake a Scrutiny Review.
- (2) That, in addition to the members identified in Resolution (1), additional members be sought from the other political groups represented on the Council.

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Law and Governance, which presented the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15.

Executive Work Programme

The Committee agreed that there were no additional items in the Executive Work Programme for November 2014 to February, 2015 that they wished to include on their Work Programme in 2014/15.

Committee Work Programme

The Committee gave consideration to its current Work Programme and either noted or agreed the following:

Review of Local Plan process – current work programme item to be separated into two items – ‘Review of Local Plan process’ and ‘Review and development of policy regarding wind turbines and their locations, and the application of the fracturing (‘Fracking’) mining technique’.

Website – draft scoping document in preparation and would be submitted to the Committee in November.

Air Quality – investigate possibility of raising subject with Oxfordshire County Council’s Bicester Localities Committee.

Oxfordshire Growth Board – scheduling and lead officer to be identified.

Resolved

- (1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2014/15 be noted.
- (2) That no items in the current version of the Executive Work Programme (November 2014 to February 2015) be included on the Work Programme for 2014/15.
- (3) That the current work programme item *‘Review of Local Plan (to include consideration of wind turbines and their locations, and the application of the fracturing (‘Fracking’) mining technique’* be separated into two items – ‘Review of Local Plan process’ and ‘Review and development of policy regarding wind turbines and their locations, and the application of the fracturing (‘Fracking’) mining technique’.

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 item of business on the grounds that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part I, 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.

Dial-a-Ride

(Having previously declared a non-statutory interest as a member of Oxfordshire County Council, Councillor Lawrie Stratford withdrew from the meeting and took no part in the discussions or voting on this item).

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Ken Atack, Lead Member for Financial Management, the Countryside and Communities Manager, and Oxfordshire County Council's (OCC) Transport Co-ordinator (Community Transport & Concessionary Fares) to the meeting.

The Countryside and Communities Manager presented a briefing note of the Shared Interim Community Partnerships and Recreation Manager, advising on potential changes to the Dial-a-Ride service which might, in-turn, impact upon voluntary and community transport in the district. Acknowledging that further key information would not be available until the next meeting, the Committee nevertheless noted the work done to-date by the Lead Member for Financial Management and the Countryside and Communities Manager. The Committee also noted advice from the Assistant Public Transport Officer that, if changes were to be made to existing arrangements, these would only be made in phases. Agreeing that the Council should be involved and consulted on the current review, the Committee identified the need to have information regarding users of the services and the numbers, particularly with higher need, who would be affected by any changes to current arrangements.

The Committee noted that the publication of the OCC review would coincide with the date of the next meeting and agreed that consideration be given to holding a special meeting of the Committee during December for specific consideration of this item.

Resolved

- (1) That, whilst acknowledging the Council's 'Top-up' funding in respect of the Oxfordshire County Council's Dial-a-Ride scheme ensured a comprehensive service and represented value for money, the implications of the County Council's Supported Transport Programme Review be reported to the November meeting and that, in the interim, Oxfordshire County Council be asked to keep the Council fully involved in and consulted on the review process.
- (2) That, pending the outcome of the review, officers investigate all options for future service provision.
- (3) That, as the outcome of the Review is not due to be published until the date of the next scheduled meeting of the Committee, Democratic Services investigate the possibility of holding a special meeting of the Committee during December for specific consideration of this item.

The meeting ended at 7.05 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, OX15 4AA, on 25 November 2014 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Ann Bonner (Chairman)
Councillor David Hughes (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Claire Bell
Councillor Bryn Williams
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Also Present: Councillor Michael Gibbard, Lead Member for Planning
Councillor Kieron Mallon, Lead Member for Banbury Developments, Performance and Communications

Apologies for absence: Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Diana Edwards
Councillor Jon O'Neill
Councillor Lynn Pratt
Councillor Neil Prestidge
Councillor Dan Sames
Councillor Lawrie Stratford

Officers: Adrian Colwell, Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy
Jo Pitman, Head of Transformation
David Allen, Lead Officer, Transport Policy (South Northamptonshire Council)
Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections
Dave Parry, Democratic and Elections Officer

39 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

40 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

41 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14 October, 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

42 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements

43 **Quarter 2 Performance Report**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Mallon, Lead Member for Banbury Developments, Performance and Communications, Councillor Gibbard, Lead Member for Planning, and the Head of Transformation to the meeting.

The Head of Transformation submitted a report and appendix providing a summary of the Quarter 2 performance report, and detailing the areas where the performance of Council services was strong and performing well, along with areas of review, as measured through the Performance Management Framework. The report and appendix provided an opportunity to reflect upon the Council's performance and determine whether there was a need to review performance in any of the services, or to refer any specific points to the Executive for consideration at its December meeting.

The Committee welcomed the overall excellent performance, and requested it be recorded that the efforts made by the staff were appreciated. Of the small number of areas where performance was below target, the Committee noted that fly-tipping remained an area of concern. A number of suggestions were made to help address the issue and, in response, the Lead Member for Banbury Developments, Performance and Communications advised that he would speak to the Lead Member for Clean and Green as to additional measures and, in particular, whether some flexibility could be applied to the three items of bulky waste for £10 service (e.g. to increase the number of items where a resident didn't have access to a vehicle).

Noting next the performance with respect to the processing of minor planning applications, the Committee was advised by the Lead Member for Planning that this area had suffered due to resources being concentrated on major applications, appeals and the Local Plan process. The Head of Strategic Planning and the Environment added that measures were currently being taken to increase capacity to deal with both major and minor applications. However, it was important to have a balance, and take account of the anticipated drop in future major applications, and also ensure existing staff had the skills for the future.

Finally, responding to a question regarding the figures in respect of the number of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance, the Head of Strategic Planning and the Environment undertook to identify the number of people who came off the benefit because they had gone into work, rather than those who had just come off the benefit.

Resolved

- (1) That the highlighted areas in the report be noted.
- (2) That further information be provided in respect of the measures being taken to address the instances of fly-tipping.

44 **Customer Insight Report**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Mallon, Lead Member for Banbury Developments, Performance and Communications, and the Head of Transformation to the meeting.

The Head of Transformation submitted a report providing an update on customer feedback, including complaints.

Responding to a query, the Head of Transformation undertook to investigate whether repeated complaints were received in respect of recurring problems, and also whether there were any individuals who made repeated complaints.

Resolved

- (1) That the position of customer feedback received by the Council during the first two quarters of 2014/2015 be noted.
- (2) That the Committee continue to receive Customer Insight reports at half yearly intervals.

45 **Workplace Travel Plan 2015**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Gibbard, Lead Member for Planning, the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy, and the Lead Officer, Transport Policy (South Northamptonshire Council) to the meeting.

The Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy submitted a report providing an update on progress in completing the joint Workplace Travel Plan 2015, supporting the move by South Northamptonshire Council to The Forum, and recommending the final draft Travel Plan for formal adoption.

Whilst broadly welcoming the report, the Committee expressed concern at the number of journeys made by staff between the two Councils offices and, noting advice from the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy that measures were in-hand to help reduce the need for officers to travel, suggested that information be submitted to a future meeting regarding any increase in the use of conference calling. Consideration might also be given to providing incentives to those staff who travelled via car-sharing or alternative methods of transport. However, efforts should be concentrated on those alternatives that could work rather than those that were essentially non-starters.

Finally, it was noted that whilst the report related to Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council it could, in the future, be applied to a possible three Council joint arrangement as the Policy was based on best practice.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to (3) and (4) below, the work of officers in their on-going efforts to introduce a new joint Workplace Travel Plan for South Northamptonshire Council and Cherwell District Council by January, 2015 be supported.
- (2) That the final draft Travel Plan be recommended to Executive for formal adoption.
- (3) That further information be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee regarding the number of conference calls that take place during 2015.
- (4) That comparison figures in respect of the number of staff travel journeys between Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

46

Service Plans 2015/16

The Committee gave consideration to the annual Service Plan process, and agreed that Street Cleansing and Waste Collection Service Plans should be reviewed in detail at an informal meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held during February 2015. It was also agreed that all Members be invited to attend.

Resolved

- (1) That a briefing for all Members in respect of the Street Cleansing and Waste Collection Service Plans be arranged for February 2015.

47

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Law and Governance, which presented the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15.

Executive Work Programme

The Committee agreed that there were no additional items in the Executive Work Programme for December 2014 to March, 2015 that they wished to include on their Work Programme in 2014/15.

Committee Work Programme

The Committee gave consideration to its current Work Programme and either noted or agreed the following:

Dial-a-Ride Scheme: Future – It was noted that, due to the Oxfordshire County Council rescheduling consideration of the future funding of Community Transport, this item be rescheduled to the February meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the special meeting on 11 December, 2014 cancelled.

Youth Engagement – It was noted that Councillors Bell and Williams had held a meeting with the Senior Recreation Development Manager and would be writing-up their findings and liaising with the other members of the Review Panel.

Recycling – Councillor Bell advised that she had met with the Head of Environmental Services and the Team Leader, Environmental Services, and would be sharing her findings with the other members of the Review Panel.

Air Quality – It was noted that this matter had been submitted to the Oxfordshire County Councils Localities Committees during October, 2014 and the issues raised broadly welcomed. The Committee agreed that the topic should now be deleted from the work programme.

New items for inclusion: Noting that the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel had recently written to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee regarding measures taken to identify, combat and prevent cases of Female Genital Mutilation it was agreed that the Council's representative on the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Councillor Rose Stratford) be asked to keep the issue under review, and advise the Overview and Scrutiny Committee if it appeared there were measures the District Council could take to assist in this area.

Joint three way Scrutiny – Following the recent Centre for Public Scrutiny Briefing for CDC, SNC and SDC Scrutiny Councillors, it was agreed that the matter be placed on the work programme for further discussion.

Resolved

- (1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2014/15 be noted.
- (2) That no items in the current version of the Executive Work Programme (December, 2014 to March, 2015) be included on the Work Programme 2014/15.
- (3) That the updates on the Youth Engagement and Recycling Reviews be noted.
- (4) That, as the Council's appointed representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Rose Stratford be requested to raise the issue of Female Genital Mutilation, and advise the Overview and Scrutiny Committee if there is any role for CDC in assisting in combating and preventing female genital mutilation.
- (5) That it be noted that the special meeting of the Committee scheduled for 11 December, 2014 has been cancelled.
- (6) That the item 'Air Quality' be deleted from the Work Programme.

The meeting ended at 8.16 pm

Chairman:

Date:

