

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 20 February 2017 at 5.00 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), Leader of the Council
Councillor Ken Atack, Lead Member for Financial Management
Councillor Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning
Councillor John Donaldson, Lead Member for Housing
Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Public Protection
Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes, Lead Member for Change Management, Joint Working and ICT
Councillor D M Pickford, Lead Member for Clean and Green
Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for

Also Present: Councillor Barry Richards, representing Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group

Apologies for absence: Councillor G A Reynolds, Deputy Leader of the Council
Councillor Kieron Mallon, Lead Member for Banbury Futures

Officers: Sue Smith, Chief Executive
Ian Davies, Director of Operational Delivery
Paul Sutton, Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer
Jo Pitman, Head of Transformation
James Doble, Interim Assistant Director Transformational Governance
Natasha Clark, Interim Democratic and Elections Manager

129 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

130 **Urgent Business - Update on proposals for local government reform in Oxfordshire and the development of a county wide devolution deal with Government**

The Chairman advised that he had agreed to add one urgent item of business to the agenda: Update on proposals for local government reform in Oxfordshire and the development of a county wide devolution deal with Government. The matter had arisen after agenda publication and a decision could not wait until the next meeting.

The Head of Transformation submitted a report which provided an update on the potential reform of local government within Oxfordshire; sought agreement for the urgent funding of communications, engagement and other related activity to protect the interests of Cherwell district residents, business and other key stakeholders arising from the possibility of local government reform; sought agreement for the Joint Chief Executive or the acting Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Leader, to respond to the County Council consultation in respect of its One Oxfordshire proposal on behalf of the council; sought authority for the Joint Chief Executive or the acting Head of Paid Service with the Leader to engage with the Secretary of State regarding local government reform and/or a devolution deal with Government on behalf of the council; and, sought agreement for the Joint Chief Executive or the acting Head of Paid Service with the Leader to work collaboratively with the other councils across Oxfordshire in pursuit of a county wide devolution deal with Government.

Resolved

- (1) That the Joint Chief Executive or the acting Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be given delegated authority to respond to the County Council consultation for a single county unitary on behalf of the Council and its key stakeholders, following feedback from this meeting.
- (2) That the Joint Chief Executive or the acting Head of Paid Service with the Leader of the Council continue to work in collaboration with West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxford City Council to present the opposing case for local government reform in Oxfordshire.
- (3) That the Joint Chief Executive or the acting Head of Paid Service with the Leader of the Council continue to work in collaboration with the Leaders of the other five Councils in Oxfordshire to pursue a devolution deal that will facilitate the continuation of economic growth and prosperity of our district and the county as a whole, through devolved powers and additional funding from Government.
- (4) That the Joint Chief Executive or the acting Head of Paid Service with the Leader of the Council engages with the Secretary of State/his officials regarding local government reform and/or a devolution deal on behalf of the Council.
- (5) That the provision of up to £150,000 from reserves (as agreed in the budget and policy framework), to be used only if considered necessary by the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Leader and Lead Member with responsibility for Financial Management to enable the Council to respond to the proposals for a single county unitary and other related activity to protect the interests of Cherwell district residents, or to pursue a devolution deal in whatever form is necessary, be agreed.
- (6) That following agreement of (5) above, the Executive be kept informed of actual spend against this emergency fund to enable monitoring, the effective management of risk and ensure transparency.

Reasons

Whatever the future operating model of local government within Oxfordshire, it is necessary to allocate resources to enable that work to be overseen and for the Council to be responsive to both challenge and change. The recommendations within this report enable the release of resources for that purpose, and to ensure that we continue to deliver business as usual whilst options are discussed further.

Alternative options

To accept the proposal of the County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and the Vale of White Horse District Council for the creation of a single county unitary council.

This is rejected for many reasons, including but not limited to:

- The disruption to services and time it would take to implement a single county unitary
- The costs involved
- The serious dilution of the strength of a local voice and a local councillor who knows their community, and is able to be an advocate for the best interests of their community
- The impact upon our workforce
- The impact upon the existing and future joint working with South Northamptonshire Council
- The loss of the opportunity to secure a devolution deal and additional funding from Government

131 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

132 **Award of Hope Close Superstructure Contract**

The Head of Regeneration and Housing submitted a report to consider the award of a Construction Contract for the Superstructure works at Hope Close, Banbury, a new build housing development consisting of 11 dwellings being delivered by Cherwell District Council, Regeneration and Housing.

Resolved

- (1) That the tender for the Superstructure Contract at The Fairway, Hope Close, Banbury totalling £1.444m to Edgar Taylor (Buckingham) Limited be approved.

Reasons

Cherwell District Council is developing land acquired from the Trustees of the Methodist Church, Hope Close, Banbury for the purpose of developing 11 new homes as part of an agreement to complete this scheme.

Phase two, for which approval is sought, includes the superstructure and overall completion of the development.

Following a 'best practice' procurement exercise Edgar Taylor (Buckingham) Limited has submitted the highest scoring tender offer. It is recommended the Contract is awarded to Edgar Taylor (Buckingham) Limited for the lump sum fixed price of £1,443,098.22.

Alternative options

The Council has completed a tender exercise in compliance with the Council's contract procedure rules and has considered carefully using the appropriate scoring criteria for selection of a preferred bidder to complete the infrastructure project. As an open tender process was completed, considerations of alternative options were not progressed. Officers are satisfied that the best fixed priced bid has been received against the tender evaluation process.

133 **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 1, Paragraphs 3 and 5 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.

134 **Castle Quay Phase Two Redevelopment**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted an exempt report relating to the Castle Quay Phase Two redevelopment.

Resolved

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

(6) As set out in the exempt minutes.

Reasons

As set out in the exempt minutes

Alternative options

Option 1: To reject the recommendations. This is not recommended for the reasons set put in the report.

The meeting ended at 5.34 pm

Chairman:

Date: