

# Cherwell District Council

## Executive

1 June 2020

<p><b>Notification of Decisions Taken by the Chief Executive Under Urgency Powers</b></p>
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### Report of Chief Executive

This report is public

#### Purpose of report

To inform the Executive of two decisions taken under urgency powers by the Chief Executive in relation to Park and Charge (Appendix 1) and Meeting Oxford's Unmet Housing Need (Appendix 2).

#### 1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the decision taken under urgency powers by the Chief Executive in relation to Park and Charge (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 To note the decision taken under urgency powers by the Chief Executive in relation to Meeting Oxford's Unmet Housing Need (Appendix 2).

#### 2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Constitution states that the Chief Executive may take an urgent decision in relation to an Executive function (in consultation with the relevant Member(s)) if it is in the best interests of the Council and/or residents.
- 2.2 The Park and Charge and Meeting Oxford's Unmet Housing Need items were due to be considered by the Executive at their meeting of 6 April 2020. However, in light of the situation with the Covid-19 outbreak and Government advice to social distance and stop non-essential contact, the Leader of the Council and Executive Chairman, Councillor Barry Wood, agreed that the meeting no longer take place as staff were being deployed to core functions to ensure business continuity at that time and that the decision be taken by the Chief Executive using urgency powers.
- 2.3 All Executive members were consulted, endorsed the recommendations and supported the Chief Executive taking the decisions under urgency provisions.

## **3.0 Report Details**

### **Urgent Decision – Park and Charge**

- 3.1 This item related to opportunities presented by an Innovate UK funded project around electric vehicle charging points in council owned car parks. A consortium led by Zeta Lighting consisting of SSE Enterprise, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford University and [ui!]uk, was successfully awarded £3.9m grant for a £5.1m project to deliver up to 300 fast electric vehicle chargers for Oxfordshire.
- 3.2 The project started on 1 September 2019 and will finish on 31 March 2021 (18 months). Oxfordshire County Council are holding resources and acting as lead co-ordinator on behalf of the Oxfordshire Councils who will all be involved in the project. To ensure Cherwell District Council's participation, approval of the funding agreement was required by 8 April 2020.
- 3.2 The urgent decisions taken by the Chief Executive in relation to Park and Charge are set out below and detailed in Appendix 1:
- (1) That the funding agreement with Oxfordshire County Council (appendix 1 to the report attached to this decision) be approved.
  - (2) That the draft heads of terms be approved (exempt appendix 2 to the report attached to this decision) and approval given to engage with the commercial partners.

### **Urgent Decision – Meeting Oxford's Unmet Housing Need – Allocation of Affordable Housing**

- 3.3 This item sought in principle support on the proposed approach to allocating affordable housing that is to be developed on identified sites within Cherwell district in order to meet an apportionment of Oxford's unmet housing need.
- 3.4 Through the Growth Board, Oxfordshire local authorities are working together to provide the investment in infrastructure, housing and the economy that Oxfordshire needs now and in the future. The Growth Board has agreed an assumption that, in addition to the homes that are to be developed within the city, a further 15,000 homes are required to meet Oxford's unmet housing need to 2031. Under the statutory 'Duty to Cooperate', Districts have agreed to assist by providing an apportionment of the 15,000 homes. The number to be provided within Cherwell district is 4,400.
- 3.5 In February 2019, as part of the Local Plan Partial Review, Cherwell agreed a Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) with the Oxfordshire Councils. This states that the details regarding the provision, policy and operational procedures for allocating the affordable housing to meet Oxford's unmet needs should be agreed within 1 year of the SOCG or prior to any planning application being made on the first of the identified sites (whichever is the sooner). As the Cherwell District Council Local Plan Partial Review has not yet been adopted, there is an 'in principle' arrangement with Oxford City Council which can be adopted once the Local Plan Partial Review has been approved.

3.6 Various options have been explored in respect of the arrangements and allocation of the rented affordable housing that is to be provided on identified sites within Cherwell district. The options were reviewed by Executive who endorsed the recommended option and requested that the Chief Executive use urgent powers to take the decision to avoid any delay in progress.

3.7 The urgent decisions taken by the Chief Executive in relation to Park and Charge are set out below and detailed in Appendix 2:

- (1) That the following approach on the methodology for allocating the rented affordable homes to be provided on allocated sites in Cherwell District Council's Local Plan Partial Review in order to meet Oxford's unmet housing need be agreed:

"Oxford City Council processes all housing applications from eligible households who have a local connection to Oxford through residence, employment or family. When a property becomes available on an identified site to meet Oxford's need within Cherwell district, the City Council will then work with the registered provider to administer the letting of the property and will nominate eligible households directly from the Oxford housing register. Should the City Council be unable to make a nomination or allocate the property to someone with an Oxford local connection, then they would offer the opportunity to Cherwell District Council to nominate a housing applicant from its housing register."

## **4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

4.1 In line with the Constitution this report is informing Executive of two decisions that were taken by the Chief Executive under urgency powers.

## **5.0 Consultation**

All Executive Members who supported and endorsed the decisions taken under urgency powers.

## **6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not to note the report. This is not recommended as the urgent action has been taken and it is a constitutional requirement for it to be reported to Executive.

## **7.0 Implications**

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report as it is reporting urgent action already taken.

Comments checked by: Dominic Oakeshott, Assistant Director Finance (Interim), [dominic.oakeshott@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:dominic.oakeshott@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### Legal Implications

7.2 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report as it is reporting urgent action already taken.

Comments checked by: Nick Graham, Director Law and Governance, [nick.graham@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:nick.graham@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

## 8.0 Decision Information

### Key Decision

**Financial Threshold Met: No**

**Community Impact Threshold Met: No**

### Wards Affected

All

### Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

N/A

### Lead Councillor

N/A

## Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Urgent Decision – Covid-19 Financial Support to Businesses and Residents
2	Urgent Decision - Planning Procedures and Delegated Authority
Background Papers	
None	
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