

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Virtual meeting, on 1 February 2021 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), Leader of the Council
Councillor George Reynolds (Vice-Chairman), Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Leisure and Sport
Councillor Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning
Councillor Ian Corkin, Lead Member for Customers and Transformation
Councillor John Donaldson, Lead Member for Housing
Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Financial Management and Governance
Councillor Andrew McHugh, Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Richard Mould, Lead Member for Performance
Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Economy, Regeneration and Property
Councillor Dan Sames, Lead Member for Clean and Green

Also Present:

Councillor Shaida Hussain, Deputy Leader of the Labour Group
Councillor Lucinda Wing, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for agenda item 8

Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Steve Jorden, Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets & Investment
Ansaf Azhar, Corporate Director of Public Health & Wellbeing
Stephen Chandler, Corporate Director Adults & Housing Services
Jason Russell, Corporate Director Communities
Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers and Organisational Development
Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Jane Portman, Corporate Director (Interim)
Anita Bradley, Director Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director: Wellbeing
Richard Webb, Assistant Director: Regulatory Services and Community Safety
Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

90 **Declarations of Interest**

Members declared interests in the following agenda items:

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

The Chairman advised that Councillor Wing, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, would address Executive on agenda item 8, (Draft) Statement of Licensing Policy, to report the feedback of the Committee which had considered the report at their 12 January 2021 meeting.

92 **Minutes**

The Chairman advised that there was a grammatical error at Minute 83, Chairman's Announcements whereby the Director Law and Governance and incorrectly been titled "Director Law of Governance".

Subject to the correction of the grammatical error, the minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

93 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

94 **Budget and Business Plan 2021/2022**

The Director of Finance submitted a report which was the culmination of the Budget and Business Planning process for 2021/22 to 2025/26 and set out the Executive's proposed Business Plan and related revenue budget for 2021/22, medium term financial strategy to 2025/26, capital programme to 2025/26 and all supporting policies, strategies and information.

The report also detailed the Calculations for the amounts of Council Tax for 2021/22 and the setting of Council Tax for 2021/22.

On behalf of Executive, the Chairman thanked Finance Officers for putting together the papers. The Chairman also thanked all residents who had responded to the consultation commenting that action had been taken where possible in response to the comments.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposed Fees and Charges for 2021/22 (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

- (2) That the equality impact assessment of the Budget (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be noted.
- (3) That the Report on Responses to the Budget Consultation (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be noted.
- (4) That the Reserves Policy (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) and creation of new reserves (as described in the Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (5) That authority be delegated to the Director of Finance, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Financial Management and Governance, to complete the legal Council Tax calculations once all the information required has been received.
- (6) That authority be delegated to the Director of Finance, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Financial Management and Governance, to make appropriate changes to the proposed budget.
- (7) That Council be recommended to approve the Business Plan (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book).
- (8) That, in relation to the Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), subject to any revision needed in light of the ongoing and further planned consultations and equalities assessments on individual savings proposals, Council be recommended to approve that the net revenue budget for the financial year commencing on 1 April 2021 of £22.415m, including the budget allocations to the Directorates of the Council, as set out in the Annex to the Minutes, be approved
- (9) That Council be recommended to agree the MTFS and Revenue Budget 2021/22, including the Savings Proposals, Pressures and the Revenue Impacts of Capital Schemes (Annexes to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book).
- (10) The Council be recommended to agree an increase in the Basic Amount of Council Tax for Cherwell District Council for the financial year beginning on 1 April 2021 of £5, resulting in a Band D charge of £138.50 per annum.
- (11) That Council be recommended to agree the Capital Bids and Capital Programme (Annexes to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book).
- (12) The Council be recommended to agree the Capital and Investment Strategy (Annexes to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book).
- (13) That Council be recommended to agree the Treasury Management Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators, Minimum Revenue

Provision (MRP) Policy and Affordable Borrowing Limit for 2021/22 (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book).

- (14) That, in relation to reserves, Council be recommended to approve a minimum level of General Balances of £5m.
- (15) That Council be recommended to approve the Pay Policy Statement (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) in fulfilment of the requirements of Sections 38-43 of the Localism Act 2011.

Reasons

This report is the culmination of the Budget and Business Planning process for 2021/22 to 2025/26 and sets out the Executive's proposed Business Plan and related revenue budget for 2021/22, medium term financial strategy to 2025/26, capital programme to 2025/26 and all supporting policies, strategies and information.

Alternative options

It is a legal requirement to set a balanced budget and the recommendations as outlined set out a way to achieve this. The following alternative option has been identified and rejected for the reasons set out below.

Option 1: To reject the current proposals and make alternative recommendations. Members will not be aware of the medium-term financial forecast or implications of alternatives if they choose to take this option.

95

CDC Property Investment Strategy

The Assistant Director Property Investment and Contract Management submitted a report to establish a new Property Investment Strategy for the Council in line with the current economic climate and seek Members' approval on the proposed strategy before adoption. The Property Investment Strategy formed part of the Council's overarching Capital and Investment Strategy and therefore this document was intended to supplement that 'master document'.

Resolved

- (1) That the high-level strategic approach which sets out a framework and the criteria against which any expansion or substantial capital investment in CDC's property portfolio will be assessed be approved.

Reasons

This report sets out Cherwell District Council (CDC) property acquisition investment objectives for the year 2021/22 and the criteria that will be applied prior to either recommending an investment purchase or recommending substantial investment in an existing asset to the Investment Committee.

Alternative options

The sale of the investment portfolio as a whole has been considered but rejected because the portfolio currently produces income which supports the provision of statutory council services and any money raised through a programme of disposals could not be reinvested to generate a higher return.

96

(Draft) Statement of Licensing Policy

The Assistant Director – Regulatory Services and Community Safety submitted a report which introduced a second draft of the revised Statement of Licensing Policy following consultation. It explained the reason for the review, provided a summary of the main changes to the current policy, and outlined the consultation process followed. Executive was requested to provide input to the policy before it is considered by Full Council.

Councillor Wing, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee addressed Executive to present the feedback of the Committee which had considered the report at its 12 January 2021 meeting. Councillor Wing advised that the Committee had supported and endorsed the Policy but had requested officers provide clarification on the role of the Licensing Committee, as it only met infrequently, and that officer provide information on the process for notifying ward councillors on applications in their ward.

The Chairman thanked the Councillor Wing and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their feedback and requested officers to provide feedback to the Committee on the matters they had raised.

The Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing and the Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets and Investment confirmed that they would review and report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the proposed changes be endorsed and no further amendments be suggested prior to consideration by Full Council on 22 February 2022.
- (2) That, having given due consideration, the recommendation from the Oxfordshire Tobacco Control Alliance that where external seating is provided 100% of the seating should be no smoking and not 70% as proposed in the draft policy not be taken forward at this time but reviewed in due course.
- (3) That officers be requested to provide feedback to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in response to their comments regarding the role of Licensing Committee in light of it meeting infrequently and notification to Ward Members of licensing applications.

Reasons

It is a requirement that the policy is reviewed at least every five years to ensure it reflects current legislation and guidance, although the Licensing Authority can review it at any time. The last review and revision occurred in 2015 when the policy was adopted by Council at its meeting on 14 December 2015 and published in January 2016.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not review the policy. It is a statutory requirement that the policy is reviewed at least every five years, so this option is rejected.

Option 2: Re-issue the policy with no changes. This option was rejected since revisions of the policy were considered necessary to take into account changes in safeguarding practice and commitments provided by the council to support smoking reduction in Oxfordshire.

97 **Monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report**

The Director of Finance, and Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes submitted a report which summarised the Council's Performance, Risk and Finance monitoring position as at the end of December 2020.

Resolved

- (1) That the monthly performance, finance and risk monitoring report be noted.

Reasons

The Council is committed to performance, risk and budget management and reviews progress against its corporate priorities on a monthly basis.

Alternative options

Option 1: This report illustrates the Council's performance against the 2020-2021 business plan. As this is a monitoring report, no further options have been considered. However, members may wish to request that officers provide additional information.

98 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

99 **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, 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.

100 **Stratfield Brake Sports Ground**

The Assistant Director Wellbeing submitted an exempt report in relation to Stratfield Brake Sports Ground.

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.

Reasons

As set out in the exempt minutes.

Alternative options

As set out in the exempt minutes.

The meeting ended at 7.33 pm

Chairman:

Date: