



## **Council Minute Book**

**Monday 19 December 2022**

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## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Executive**

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 3 October 2022 at 6.30 pm

#### Present:

Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Policy and Strategy  
Councillor Ian Corkin (Vice-Chairman), Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economy  
Councillor Phil Chapman, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities  
Councillor Colin Clarke, Portfolio Holder for Planning  
Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Housing  
Councillor Adam Nell, Portfolio Holder for Finance  
Councillor Lynn Pratt, Portfolio Holder for Property  
Councillor Dan Sames, Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Green Communities

#### Also Present:

Councillor Amanda Watkins (virtual)

#### Apologies for absence:

Councillor Richard Mould, Portfolio Holder for Performance  
Councillor Eddie Reeves, Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities

#### Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive  
Nathan Elvery, Chief Operating Officer Interim  
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities  
Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources  
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer  
Shahin Ismail, Interim Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing  
Richard Webb, Assistant Director Regulatory Services & Community Safety  
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

#### Officers in attendance virtually:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Interim Assistant Director Customer Focus  
Simon Hope, Interim Head of Communications and Marketing

### **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

40 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

41 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

42 **Responding to the Cost of Living Crisis**

The Corporate Director Resources submitted a report which summarised the work the Council was undertaking with respect to the current Cost of Living situation that our residents were experiencing.

In introducing the report the Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities, also the council's Food Champion, updated Executive on the work of the Food Insecurity Working Group that had been established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The cross-party Working Group would be working with officers on the production of the Cherwell action plan, focusing on three of the priorities from the Oxfordshire Food Strategy: tackle food poverty and diet-related ill health; build vibrant food communities with the capacity and skills to enjoy food together; and, grow the local food economy through local enterprises, local jobs and local wealth generation. The Group would also be working with officers on promotional campaigns for healthy living schemes and promotions, such as the Healthy Start vouchers.

The Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities also highlighted the warm space initiative whereby the council was working with local partners to provide a comprehensive and complementary warm space offer across the district.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the work that the Council is undertaking be noted.
- (2) That the Council's Food Champion and the work of the Food Insecurity Working Group be supported.
- (3) That the allocation of £250k from the COVID fund to support the Food Voucher Scheme be supported and authority to approve further expenditure be delegated to the Corporate Director Resources, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities.

- (4) That it be agreed to successfully deliver new Central Government funding initiatives that support our communities.

### **Reasons**

This report provides an update on work the Council is undertaking with respect to the Cost of Living Situation. The Council is committed to supporting our residents where we can help them through this current period of economic uncertainty.

### **Alternative options**

Option 1: To reject the recommendations.

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### **Air Quality Action Plan**

The Assistant Director Regulatory Services and Community Safety submitted a report which provided an update on the air quality monitoring carried out across the district in 2021 and the air quality data obtained, the current district Air Quality Action Plan, and other air quality related matters.

Air quality monitoring data showed significant air quality improvements over a 5-year period in the air quality management areas of the District. The Council's Business Plan included a specific commitment to "Work with partners to improve air quality" within the Supporting Environmental Sustainability priority.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the work undertaken by the Council its partners in relation to air quality in the District and the 2021/22 air quality monitoring data be noted.

### **Reasons**

The Council will continue to work in partnership with the County Council to monitor air quality in the district and update the district AQAP. Proposals for the new air quality targets are being monitored and the implications will be assessed once those targets are finalised. A further annual update will be provided in 2023.

### **Alternative options**

The council has a statutory duty to work with partners to review and assess air quality in the district and to develop air quality action plans for areas where air quality limits are exceeded. This report provides an update on the work carried out by the Council in this function and therefore there are no alternative options to be explored.

## **Domestic Abuse - Strategic Briefing and Support Services Contract Commissioning**

The Assistant Director Regulatory Services & Community Safety submitted a report which updated the Executive on progress in Oxfordshire to meet the new statutory duties in relation to support for domestic abuse victims and to commission a new domestic abuse support services contract.

The report explained that Cherwell District Council worked in partnership with the other local authorities in Oxfordshire and the Police and Crime Commissioner to commission support services for domestic abuse victims in the county. Cherwell contributed £25k per annum to the current domestic abuse support services contract with A2 Dominion. This current contract would expire in April 2023 and therefore work was underway in preparation to tender for a new domestic abuse support services contract.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced new statutory duties on local authorities in relation to support for domestic abuse victims in safe accommodation. Subsequent national guidance published in the Domestic Abuse Plan 2022 included additional recommendations for prevention and perpetrator services to help reduce domestic homicides, suicides, risks, and harm to victim-survivors.

Ensuring there was an effective response to domestic abuse in Cherwell contributed to the corporate priority to promote healthy, resilient and engaged communities. In particular it supported the commitment to work with partners to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour, and it also supported the council's commitment to equalities, diversity and inclusion and work with partners to address the causes of health inequality and deprivation.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the work taking place across Oxfordshire to meet the new statutory duties and to commission a new domestic abuse support services contract be noted.
- (2) That it be agreed that Cherwell District Council will maintain its contribution to the costs of this contract.

### **Reasons**

The new statutory duties relating to domestic abuse and the need to commission a new support service contract for Oxfordshire are driving considerable partnership activity in Oxfordshire. Work is progressing to bring in additional capacity to support Cherwell with this work.

The Executive is recommended to:

- a) Agree that we will continue to contribute to the cost of the Domestic Abuse support services contract for Oxfordshire at current funding levels.
- b) Agree that proposals for seeking White Ribbon Accreditation should be

developed if the council is successful in appointing a suitable candidate to the new Domestic Abuse Lead Officer post.

**Alternative options**

The Council could withdraw its funding for the Domestic Abuse Support Services Contract. This was discounted since this would result in the Council not meeting its statutory duties and would also lead to a significant reduction in domestic abuse support services in the district.

45 **Monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report August 2022**

The Assistant Director of Finance and Interim Assistant Director – Customer Focus submitted a report which summarised the Council’s Performance, Risk and Finance monitoring positions as at the end of August 2022.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Reports for August 2022 be noted.
- (2) That it be agreed to create an income and expenditure budget of £0.503m for the Homes for Ukraine Grant be created.
- (3) That an additional Capital Project to be included within the Capital Programme for a new mains electrical connection to accommodate the newly installed Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) to operate at Kidlington Leisure Centre be agreed.
- (4) That the following changes to reserves as detailed in the Annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book) be approved:

| Directorate | Type      | Description              | Amount<br>£m |
|-------------|-----------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Communities | Earmarked | Works in Default         | 0.040        |
| Communities | Earmarked | Castle Quay              | 0.671        |
|             |           | Total Earmarked Reserves | 0.711        |

**Reasons**

This report provides an update on progress made during August 2022, to deliver the Council’s priorities through reporting on Performance, Leadership Risk Register and providing an update on the Financial Position. 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 2022-23 Business Plan. Regarding the monitoring aspects of the report, no further options have been considered. However, members may wish to request that officers provide additional information. Regarding the recommendation to approve changes in use of reserves, members could choose not to reject the change of use, however, the request is in accordance with the councils Reserves Policy and within existing budgets. If Members chose not to agree to the changes in transfers to reserves, then this would mean resource would need to be found for these projects separately in future years.

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### **Budget and Business Planning Process 2023/24 - 2027/28**

The Assistant Director of Finance submitted a report which informed the Executive of the proposed approach to the 2023/24 Budget and Business Planning Process and provides context and background information on the existing Medium-Term Financial Strategy and information on latest government announcements relevant to the Strategy.

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That the Budget and Business Planning Process for 2023/24 be approved.
- (2) That a five-year period for the Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2027/28 and five-year period for the Capital Programme to 2027/28 be approved.

#### **Reasons**

The Council has a legal obligation to set a balanced budget and ensure it maintains a suitable level of reserves each year. The process laid out in this report will allow Cherwell District Council to develop budget proposals that will allow it to meet these legal obligations.

### **Alternative options**

The Council has a legal obligation to set a balanced budget and evaluate its level of reserves to ensure they are held at a suitable level. Therefore, there are no alternative options other than to carry out a budget process that reviews the levels of reserves and identifies a budget proposal that can be delivered within the overall level of resources available to the Council.

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### **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.



The meeting ended at 7.25 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Executive**

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 7 November 2022 at 6.30 pm

#### Present:

Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), .Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Policy and Strategy  
Councillor Ian Corkin (Vice-Chairman), Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economy  
Councillor Phil Chapman, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities  
Councillor Colin Clarke, Portfolio Holder for Planning  
Councillor Richard Mould, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services  
Councillor Adam Nell, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services  
Councillor Lynn Pratt, Portfolio Holder for Property  
Councillor Eddie Reeves, Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities

#### Apologies for absence:

Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Housing  
Councillor Dan Sames, Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities

#### Also Present:

Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group

#### Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive  
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities  
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer  
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law, Governance & Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer  
Ed Potter, Assistant Director Environmental Services  
Simon Hope, Interim Head of Communications and Marketing  
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

#### Officers Attending Virtually:

Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources  
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing

48 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Dallimore, Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny Committee, to the meeting. Councillor Dallimore would be reporting the Committee's feedback on item 10, Cherwell Sports Studies.

50 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

51 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

52 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

53 **Annual Delivery Plan 2022/24**

The Chief Executive submitted a report which recommended the Annual Delivery Plan for 2022/24 to achieve the vision, aims and ambitions of our Council as contained in our Council's Business Plan on behalf of the local communities and businesses we are here to serve.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the key Strategic Priorities for our Council be agreed.
- (2) That the Annual Delivery Plan 2022/24 (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (3) That the requirement for future amendments to our Council's Finance, Performance and Risk reporting to incorporate progress on the key Strategic Priorities be approved.

**Reasons**

Through the agreement of the recommendations contained in this report the Council is ensuring the focussed delivery of the priorities contained within the Business Plan on behalf of the local communities we are here to serve.

### **Alternative options**

Option One: No Annual Delivery Plan – given the challenges and opportunities facing the Council the need for a clear plan which enables the Council's achievement of the Business Plan is essential.

Option Two: Annual Delivery 2023/24 - given the challenges and opportunities facing the Council the need for a timely plan which enables the Council's achievement of the Business Plan is essential.

## 54 **Monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report September 2022**

The Assistant Director of Finance and Interim Assistant Director Customer Focus submitted a report which summarised the Council's Performance, Risk and Finance monitoring positions as at the end of September 2022.

At the discretion of the Chairman, Councillor Woodcock addressed Executive.

In response to Councillor Woodcock's comments regarding action being taken to address net housing completions, the number of affordable homes being delivered and the number of households in temporary accommodations that were reporting amber or red, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services explained that there were labour issues, supply chain issues with builders were having difficulties getting supplies but, if there were no more supply chain issues, it was hoped targets would be achieved by year end. The Chairman added that the question could be rephrased to ask if there was anything to do to help providers and developers. The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing undertook to provide a written response to Councillor Woodcock and copy to the Executive.

In response to Councillor Woodcock's comments regarding car park income, the Portfolio Holder for Finance explained that this area was still recovering from the covid pandemic and in Banbury, the impact of Castle Quay had been difficult to forecast. The Assistant Director Environmental Services highlighted that the council's Car Parking Strategy expired at the end of March 2023 and was therefore due for review.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report September 2022 be noted.
- (2) That the following changes to reserves be approved:
  - Directorate: Communities

- Type: Earmarked
- Description: Heat Networks
- Reason: Return of Heat Networks funding no longer required
- Amount £m: (0.017)
- Total Earmarked Reservices £m: (0.017)

- (3) That the release of the remaining funds from capital budget 40238 “IT Shared Services” be approved.

### **Reasons**

This report provides an update on progress made during September 2022, to deliver the Council’s priorities through reporting on Performance, Leadership Risk Register and providing an update on the Financial Position. The Council is committed to performance, risk and budget management and reviews progress against its corporate priorities on a monthly basis.

With regards the release of the remaining funds from capital budget 40238 “IT Shared Services”, the original proposal in 2019 was to complete activities to support the IT Strategy revolving around the joining up with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). Cherwell District Council (CDC) decoupling from OCC has marked that chapter of the IT Strategy as complete. However, ahead of the creation of CDC’s Digital Strategy, we are exploring areas of improvement to reduce the demand on services and provide proactive services to our citizens. This aligns with the original proposal of exploring revenue savings and adding efficiencies.

### **Alternative options**

Option 1: This report illustrates the Council’s performance against the 2022-23 Business Plan. Regarding the monitoring aspects of the report, no further options have been considered. However, members may wish to request that officers provide additional information. Regarding the recommendation to approve changes in use of reserves, members could choose to reject the change of use, however, the request is in accordance with the councils Reserves Policy and within existing budgets. If Members chose not to agree to the changes in transfers to reserves, then this would mean resource would need to be found for these projects separately in future years.

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### **Garden Waste Charges for 2023/24**

The Assistant Director Environmental Services submitted a report which set the garden waste collection charges for 2023/24.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That it be agreed to launch the Garden Waste Subscription service for 2023/24 from 1 December 2022.
- (2) That the following revised prices be implemented:

- Annual Charge: £43/year
- 'Early bird' Charge (order before 1 March 2023): £39/year
- Additional bins: £33/year for each additional bin

## **Reasons**

The garden waste subscription will be launched on 1 December 2022 to give residents certainty on prices in 2023/24 and to smooth demand for licences over a reasonable period.

## **Alternative options**

Option 1: Launch the garden waste subscription service for 2023/24 from a later date with revised prices. This has been rejected as it compresses timescales and makes administration of the process more difficult & mistakes are more likely.

Option 2: Launch the garden waste subscription service for 2023/24 with unchanged prices. This has been rejected due to the rising costs of service delivery, especially fuel costs.

Option 3: Launch the garden waste subscription service for 2023/24 with higher prices than set out. This has been rejected as subscriptions are likely to fall resulting in less overall income

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## **Cherwell Sports Studies**

The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing submitted a report which presented the emerging evidence of the District Sports Studies findings. These will be used as an evidence base for the new Local Plan, and provide the basis of future sports facility developer contribution requests. It was not the intention that all the recommendations should be acted upon by the Council alone, and this report focussed on those where the Council could have an influence. The study modelled sport facility needs in Cherwell up to 2040.

Councillor Dallimore, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented the comments of the Committee who had received a presentation of the item at their 11 October 2022 meeting.

Councillor Dallimore advised that the Committee had endorsed the recommendations had asked officers for clarification on the process regarding how a balanced weighting had been reached, given the varying requirements across the district. Clarification was also requested in relation to commercial facilities. Specific comments were made regarding: smaller sports clubs not being overlooked when discussions were taking place with developers for contributions, as participants frequently come from a wider area than the town/village the facility is located; the importance of suitable changing

facilities for women and disabled people; and, the environmental impacts of 3G pitches.

At the discretion of the Chairman, Councillor Woodcock addressed Executive. Councillor Woodcock commended the Member Briefing session he had attended in relation to Banbury. Referring to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's comments, Councillor Woodcock highlighted that many small village sports clubs have a wider catchment area beyond the village and can therefore have a bigger impact on the village.

In response to Councillor Woodcock's comments regarding the development of a new ground for Banbury United, the Chairman explained that the council was facilitating meetings between the club and developers. The Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities advised he was in regular contact with the Chairman of Banbury United.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the 2022 Sports Studies be recognised as influential strategic documents and it be agreed they should be used to seek developer contributions / influence capital bids / seek external funding.
- (2) That it be agreed that the documents are shared with partners to ensure wider understanding and influence.
- (3) That officers, Sport England and National Governing Body representatives be requested to annually review the documents and Members be kept abreast of key changes.

### **Reasons**

The final Sports Study documents will be used to work with partners and other organisations on delivery models to improve and develop sports facilities where needed, to ensure the effective provision of sport and leisure opportunities across the District. The main aim is to ensure that a network of sports facilities is in place to cater for the health and wellbeing of the current and future population.

### **Alternative options**

Option 1: To reject the findings of the Sports Studies, and to seek an alternative means of assessing current and future facility provision. This is not recommended, as it will be costly and will not meet Sport England assessment criteria, which is required for planning compliance and funding bids.



The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing submitted a report to delegate authority to Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing Service to award the contract for the provision of “General Information and Money Advice Services”.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing to award the contract for the provision of an Agency and Temporary Staff Managed Service in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and s151 Officer.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to enter into the agreement with the successful provider.

### **Reasons**

As the setting of the 2022 budget required a saving in the commissioning of a Money Advice service, an extension of the current provision was not an option to explore in ensuring a continued Money Advice Service. For this reason, it was agreed that an entirely new commission would take place. The process was open to any operator in the market with a “general information” and “money advice” specialism.

The current contract ends on 31 December 2022. To achieve the required savings, the new contract must begin at the lower rate on 1 January 2023.

An exhaustive procurement exercise was undertaken whereby value for money research was undertaken, a specification that met current and future needs of Cherwell residents was formulated, and in conjunction with Oxford County Council, procurement team, a tender was launched to the market.

Two respondents submitted tenders and these tenders were assessed by the CDC procurement specialist for eligibility and by the Housing Commissioning officer, Housing Manager and by Cherwell’s Housing consultant to assess quality assurance.

It was unanimously agreed that Tender 2 has met and exceeded the stated tender requirements.

### **Alternative options**

Option 1: Do not award a Contract. This option has been rejected because Cherwell District Council is in need of a Free money Advice and General information service for its residents

Option 2: Extend Current contract at current cost. This option has been rejected because Cherwell District Council is Committed to making savings in 2021/2022. The current cost is unsustainable and when considering comparable public services, not optimal value for money

58 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

There being no questions on the exempt appendix, it was not necessary to exclude the press and public.

59 **Commissioning of the General Information and Money Advice Service 2023 - 2024 - Exempt Appendix**

**Resolved**

(1) That the exempt appendix be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.30 pm

Chairman:

Date:

## Council

### Record of Portfolio Holder Decisions for the period 7 October to 9 December 2022

| <b>Area of Responsibility</b> | <b>Decision Subject Matter</b>  |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Portfolio Holder for Planning | Application for the Designation of a Neighbourhood Area for the Parishes of Hampton Gay and Poyle, and Bletchington |

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## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee**

Minutes of a meeting of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 28 September 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Donna Ford (Chairman)

Councillor Patrick Clarke  
Councillor Andrew Crichton  
Councillor Ian Middleton  
Councillor Chris Pruden  
Councillor Sean Woodcock  
Councillor Barry Wood

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Hugo Brown

Also Present:

Councillor Adam Nell, Portfolio Holder for Finance

Also Present (virtual)

Maria Grindley, Audit Partner, Ernst & Young (External Audit)  
Alison Kennett, Audit Manager, Ernst & Young (External Audit)

Officers:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer  
Joanne Kaye, Strategic Finance Business Partner  
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Officers (virtual)

Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor  
Celia Prado-Teeling, Interim Assistant Director Customer Focus  
Liam Semugabi, Interim Democratic Services Officer

28 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

30 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 July 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

31 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chair announced that there would be a Fraud Awareness training session directly after the conclusion of the committee meeting.

32 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

33 **External Audit - Audit Planning Report 2021/22**

The Assistant Director submitted a report which set out the External Audit Planning Report for 2021/22. The report was duly presented by the Audit Manager (External Audit).

In response to comments from the Committee regarding delays on the part of External Audit to starting the audit of the council's accounts, the Audit Partner (Eternal Audit) explained that there had been delays with the previous year's accounts which had an impact on scheduled. The council's Finance Team had worked hard to respond to all queries and the timing of the audit was agreed between the External Auditor and the Assistant Director of Finance. The Audit Manager confirmed that the Committee would be kept updated on the timetable.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the External Audit Planning Report for 2021/22 from our External Auditors, Ernst & Young (EY) be noted.

34 **August 2022 Risk Monitoring Report**

The Interim Assistant Director submitted a report which summarised the Councils Risk monitoring position of August 2022.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked officers for the revised report format which separated that risk aspects of the report. In response to

comments regarding the poor accessibility of the appendix, the Assistant Director Customer Focus advised that the format was under review.

In response to Members' questions regarding Business Continuity and Graven Hill, the Assistant Director Customer Focus undertook to liaise with the lead officers and update the Committee accordingly.

**Resolved**

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the Risk Monitoring report be noted.

35 **Treasury Management Report - April to August 2022**

The Assistant Director and the Strategic Finance Business partner submitted a report which provided an update on Treasury Management performance and compliance from April to August 2022 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

In response to Members' questions regarding whether the changes in interest rates were reflected in the report, the Strategic Finance Business Partner confirmed that a forecast had been released by the council's treasury advisers and the plan would be adapted to minimise risk moving forward.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the Treasury Management Report be noted.

36 **Internal Audit Progress Report 2022/23**

The Assistant Director presented an update on Internal Audit Progress for 2022/23.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the progress with the 2022/23 Internal Audit Plan and the outcome of the completed audits be noted.

37 **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report 2021/22**

The Interim Monitoring Officer submitted a report which presented the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Report for Cherwell District Council for the financial year 2021/22.

**Resolved**

- (1) That, having due consideration, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review of Cherwell District Council for 2021/22 be noted.

38 **Work Programme**

The Strategic Finance Business Partner provided a Work Programme update and confirmed that the Committee's meetings with the Chief Internal Auditor and External Auditor would be held in private at the conclusion of the next meeting, 16 November 2022.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the work programme update be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.25 pm

Chairman:

Date:



## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee**

Minutes of a meeting of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 16 November 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Donna Ford (Chairman)  
Councillor Hugo Brown (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Patrick Clarke  
Councillor Andrew Crichton  
Councillor Ian Middleton  
Councillor Chris Pruden

Substitute Members:

Councillor Andrew Beere (In place of Councillor Sean Woodcock)  
Councillor Sandy Dallimore (In place of Councillor Barry Wood)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Sean Woodcock  
Councillor Barry Wood

Officers:

Joanne Kaye, Strategic Finance Business Partner  
Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor  
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Officers Attending Virtually:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance and Insight Team Leader  
Andy Leadbeater, Counter Fraud Officer  
Natalie Welsh, Counter Fraud Trainee  
Liam Semugabi, Interim Democratic Services Officer

#### **39 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **40 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

41 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 28 September 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

42 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

43 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

44 **Treasury Management Report - Q2 2022/23 (September 2022)**

The Assistant Director Finance submitted a report which provided information on treasury management performance and compliance with the treasury management policy for 2022-23 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

In response to Members' questions regarding the Councils net borrowing, the Strategic Finance Business Partner explained that the net borrowing of the Council had reduced by £10 million. In recognition of interest rate increases and volatility around rates, the council had achieved greater interest rate certainty by replacing short-term with medium-term borrowing.

In response to Members' questions regarding potential risk to the council's investments, the Strategic Finance Business Partner explained that in July work had been undertaken to mitigate risk. All current investments were relatively short term with institutions that had a good credit rating.

**Resolved**

(1) That the contents of this Treasury Management Report be noted

45 **Update on Counter Fraud Annual Plan 2022/23**

The Assistant Director Finance submitted a report which presented a summary of activity against the Annual Plan for the Counter Fraud service at CDC for 2022/23, which was previously presented to the Accounts, Audit & Risk July 2022 Committee meeting. The Plan supported the council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy by ensuring that the Council has in place proportionate and effective resources and controls to prevent and detect fraud as well as investigate those matters that do arise.

In response to Members' queries, the Chief Internal Auditor explained that fraud across the country was increasing which was considered largely as a result of the pandemic and cost of living crisis. Pro-active work undertaken had focussed on staff training and awareness session, with a fraud awareness and risk identification session being delivered to the Revenues and Benefits team.

**Resolved**

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the summary of activity against the Annual Counter Fraud Plan for 2022/23 be noted.

46

**September / Quarter 2 2022 - Risk Monitoring Report**

The Assistant Director Customer Focus submitted a report which summarised the Council's Risk monitoring position of September / Quarter 2 2022.

In considering the report, Members were requested to send questions to the Performance and Insight Team Leader who would respond to accordingly.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the monthly Risk Monitoring Report September / Quarter 2 2022 be noted.

47

**Work Programme**

The Strategic Finance Business Partner update the Committee on their Work Programme update. The Committee was advised that their private session with the External Auditor would take place at the conclusion of the 25 January 2023 meeting rather than this meeting.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the work programme update be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.28 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, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 25 October 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Patrick Clarke (Chairman)  
Councillor Douglas Webb (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor Hugo Brown  
Councillor Phil Chapman  
Councillor John Donaldson  
Councillor Donna Ford  
Councillor David Hingley  
Councillor Matt Hodgson  
Councillor Angus Patrick  
Councillor Chris Pruden  
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Substitute Members:

Also Present:

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Fraser Webster

Officers:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer  
Sharon Hickson, Democratic and Elections Officer  
Matt Swinford, Democratic and Elections Officer

#### 10 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 11 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 July 2022 were confirmed as correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

12 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

13 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

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

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Director of Finance that summarised the Council's forecast revenue and capital outturn for 2022/23 as of 31 August 2022.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding the Policy contingency figures, the Assistant Director of Finance advised that the release of £332,000 was an inflation contingency and the release of £458,000 comes from a commercial risk element of policy contingency in relation to the under recovery of income in car parks.

In response to the following questions from the Committee, the Assistant Director of Finance advised that further information would be sought from the relevant departments and circulated to Committee members after the meeting:

- The Council's car parking income assumptions for pre-Covid and for 2022/2023 and the impact of the Council's decision to no longer charge in council owned car parks between 18:00-19:00.
- If there were difficulties recruiting permanent staff in Waste and Recycling.
- Request for statistics for 2019 and 2022 showing the footfall to see if the reduction in anticipated car parking income was indicative of potential budget implications with services provided by the Council within Banbury.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.

15 **Financial Management Code - Forecast Self-Assessment Update**

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer that gave an update on the Council's forecast self-assessment position as of February 2023 against the requirements of CIPFA's Financial Management Code.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the Council's self-assessment against the requirements of CIPFA's Financial Management Code be noted.

## **Review of Committee Work Plan**

The Assistant Director of Finance gave a verbal update regarding the Budget Planning Committee Work Plan.

The Assistant Director of Finance advised that the next committee meeting agenda would have one agenda item, consideration of 2023/24 budget proposals including pressures and savings

In response to a question from the Committee asking if the next meeting would be prior to public consultation, the Assistant Director of Finance advised that the consultation would commence prior to the Budget Planning Committee meeting however the Committee comments would be reported to Executive along with public consultation response to inform their budget recommendations.

### **Resolved**

(1) The verbal Committee Work Plan update be noted

The meeting ended at 6.54 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, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 11 October 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Sandy Dallimore (Chairman)

Councillor Mike Bishop  
Councillor John Broad  
Councillor Ian Harwood  
Councillor David Hingley  
Councillor Matt Hodgson  
Councillor Ian Middleton  
Councillor Perran Moon  
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke  
Councillor Bryn Williams

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Douglas Webb  
Councillor Maurice Billington

Also Present:

Councillor Phil Chapman, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities and Food Champion

Also Present Virtually:

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Policy and Strategy

Officers:

Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources  
Ed Potter, Assistant Director Environmental Services  
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing  
Shahin Ismail, Interim Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager  
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers (Virtual)

Liam Didcock, Leisure Contracts and Sports Hubs Officer  
Tom Darlington, Leisure Projects Officer  
Liam Semugabi, Democratic and Elections Officer

26 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

27 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 September 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

28 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman commented on the positive and constructive direction of travel of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the detailed work being undertaken by the Food Insecurity and Climate Action working groups.

29 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

30 **Playing Pitch Strategy**

The Chairman welcomed the Assistant Director of Wellbeing and Housing, the Leisure Contracts and Sports Hubs Officer and the Leisure Projects Officer to the meeting to give a presentation on the Playing Pitch Strategy.

The Committee was advised the Sports Studies comprised of the Built Facilities Strategy and Playing Pitch Strategy. The final Sports Study documents would be used to work with partners and other organisations on delivery models to improve and develop sports facilities where needed, to ensure the effective provision of sport and leisure opportunities across the district. They would be used as an evidence base for the new Local Plan and provide the basis of future sports facility developed contribution costs.

The consultants who had undertaken the study recommended the development of sustainable new sites and investment in existing infrastructure. The Leisure Projects Officer gave an overview of the key recommendations for Kidlington, Bicester and Banbury and explained that the work still required final sign from Sports England and National Governing Bodies and confirmed that there would be an annual review process. . In response to Members' questions regarding future growth and the weighting and balance between current and future needs, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing explained that the District Council's money for this work came from developer contributions unless the council made a capital investment, which had not been the case in recent years. It was therefore important to have an evidence base to inform the development of facilities for use by current and future residents.

During discussion, the Committee highlighted that smaller sports clubs should not be overlooked when seeking developer contributions as participants at the clubs frequently come from a wider area rather than just the town or village a facility is located in. The Committee also highlighted the importance of ensuring sites had suitable changing facilities for women and disabled people. The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing that officers were having discussions with Banbury Town Council and Bicester Town Council regarding accessibility.

In response to Members' comments regarding expanding the number of sports that facilities were provided for and where non-council facilities were provided, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing advised that developers could submit planning applications for sports sites which would be considered in line with planning policy. The council focussed on sports where there was most interest and residents would benefit from and was not seeking to set aside land for minor sports.

The Committee also discussed the rise of artificial 3G pitches to replace grass and, whilst noting that they facilitated year-round use of sites and therefore enabled residents to participate in activities year-round, there were environmental impacts in reducing the number grass sites.

In response to Members' questions regarding the influence Town and Parish Councils could have in requesting facilities and the size of development that triggered contributions, the Leisure Projects Officer explained that the current threshold for residential developments to make contributions was 10 dwellings. Town and Parish Councils were consultees on planning applications.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the Sports Studies be recognised as influential strategic documents, and it be agreed that they should be used to seek developer contributions / influence capital bids / seek external funding.
- (2) That it be agreed that the documents be shared with partners to ensure wider understanding / influence.
- (3) That it be agreed that the documents are reviewed annually, and Members kept abreast of key changes.

31

### **Food Insecurity Working Group - Update**

The Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities, in his capacity as Food Champion, gave an update on the work of the Food Insecurity Working Group. The Group had held its first meeting and agreed it would focus on three areas: Tackle food poverty and diet-related ill health; Build vibrant food communities with the capacity and skills to enjoy food together; and grow the

local economy through local enterprises, local jobs, and local wealth generation.

The Portfolio Holder advised that the Group had supported the approach to undertake two streams in parallel. One stream was in progress and about securing the food supply in the longer term and it was anticipated this would be reported on in January. The second stream related to providing immediate support to residents including a voucher scheme and ensuring all information was available both on the council's website and in printed format. The Committee was advised that the work overlapped with the Warm Spaces Initiative that the council was establishing with partners as safe spaces and to create a local community whilst ensuring that residents were supported. The joined up working that had started during the pandemic was continuing to support residents during the current cost of living crisis.

In response to the update, Committee members highlighted and praised the use of wording such as Warm Welcome as opposed to food banks and spaces that other local authorities were using as this helped reduce stigma in seeking support and recommended that this council follow that approach. The Committee also highlighted the importance of longer-term work including education on food and food waste and cooking from scratch.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the Food Insecurity Working Group update be noted.

### 32 **Climate Action Working Group - Update**

Cllr John Broad, Chairman of the Climate Action Work Group gave an update on the work of the Group.

At their first meeting the Group had received a presentation from representatives from Bioregional on the "One Planet Living" principles and how the work of the council had been evaluated against the principles.

The Group had agreed they would focus on three areas: Aligning policies, such as the Local Plan, to accommodate the climate emergency declared by Council in 2019; Identifying priorities to get to net zero by 20230; and, how the measure success of the above points. Considering the agreed work focus, the Group agreed they needed to update the Terms of Reference to reflect the relationship of the Group with the Local Plan Review.

### **Resolved**

- (2) That the Climate Action Working Group update be noted.

### 33 **Work Programme 2022/2023**

The Democratic and Elections Officer provided a brief update to the committee on the indicative work programme for 2022/2023 and reported that

the date of the Special Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting at which the Local Plan would be considered would move from 1 November. The revised date would be confirmed as soon as practicable.

**Resolved**

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the indicative work programme 2022-23 be noted.
- (2) That, having given due consideration, the update on items previously considered by the Committee be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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