

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 14 March 2023 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Douglas Webb (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair)
Councillor Mike Bishop
Councillor John Broad
Councillor Ian Harwood
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Perran Moon
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke
Councillor Bryn Williams

Substitute Members:

Councillor Amanda Watkins (In place of Councillor Matt Hodgson)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Sandy Dallimore (Chairman)
Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Matt Hodgson
Councillor Ian Middleton

Officers:

Ed Potter, Assistant Director Environmental Services
Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead
Matt Swinford, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers Attending Virtually:

Richard Webb, Assistant Director Regulatory Services & Community Safety
Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus
Mark Mills, Policy Officer
Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Jo Miskin, Climate Action Manager
Emily James, Community Safety Manager
Katey Humphris, Community Safety Development and Engagement Officer

65 **Declarations of Interest**

9. Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan.

Councillor Perran Moon, Other Registerable Interest, advised that he works for an electrical vehicle charging company and the subject of EV charging may be discussed during the agenda item.

66 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 11 January 2023 and 24 January 2023 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

67 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Vice-Chairman, in the Chair for the meeting, made the following announcements:

1. That agenda item 9, Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action plan would be brought forward and heard before agenda item 6. The rest of the agenda order would stay the same.
2. On behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman, Councillor Dallimore, thanked everyone for their work during the year.

68 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

69 **Community Safety Update**

The Assistant Director Environmental Health and Licensing, Assistant Director Regulatory Services and Community Safety and Engagement and Deployment Officer gave a presentation updating the Committee on work being undertaken in relation to Community Safety.

The Assistant Director Environmental Health and Licensing advised the Committee that the Council's in-house Community Safety Team consisted of four Community Wardens, a Community Safety Development and Engagement Officer and a Team Manager. The team worked with and supported county-wide strategic community safety partnerships and thematic groups.

The Assistant Director Regulatory Services and Community Safety explained that the Community Safety Wardens had received additional training and vetting to obtain accreditation from the Thames Valley Police Community

Safety Accreditation Scheme. The accreditation gave the Wardens extra powers to deal with issues within the community.

The Committee was advised that, following consultation, in June 2022 the Executive has agreed to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in Bicester Town Centre to deal with nuisance or problems that could cause harm to the quality of life of the local community. The Assistant Director Regulatory Services and Community Safety advised that there was an existing PSPO for Banbury Town Centre, and a consultation would be starting in due course to refresh the Order. The Bicester PSPO differed to the Banbury PSPO as different issues affected the two towns.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Assistant Director Environmental Health and Licensing explained that the power delegated from the Police for the Council to issue penalty notices for cycling on a pavement could only be issued when cycling was taking place on a designated pavement, not in a pedestrianised area that was restricted to vehicular traffic for certain times of the day.

Resolved

- (1) That the verbal update be noted.

70

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plans

The Assistant Director – Customer Focus submitted a report to seek the Committee’s views on the draft action plans for delivering the council’s equality, diversity and inclusion commitments for creating inclusive communities and inclusive services, which were set out in its Equalities Framework, Including Everyone.

In introducing the report, Councillor Hingley, Chair of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) working group, advised the Committee that the EDI working group was a joint working group with the Personnel Committee. The working group had reviewed the three draft action plans – Inclusive Communities, Inclusive Services and Inclusive Workforce.

Councillor Hingley explained that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was asked to provide comments on the Inclusive Communities and Inclusive Services action plans. The Personnel Committee would be considering the Inclusive Workforce action plan at their meeting on 15 March. All three action plans would be considered by Executive at their meeting on 3 April.

Councillor Hingley proposed the following comments be referred to the Executive in relation to the Inclusive Communities Action Plan, this was seconded by Councillor Broad:

- An additional action be added to EDI 1.02, Promote inclusive behaviour with residents and service users:
 - ‘to develop and agree a policy for supporting national events that support our corporate priorities’.

- Additional wording in italics below be added to EDI 1.03, Work directly with communities to identify inequality and tackle disadvantage:
 - Second action listed: “Review our approach to supporting refugees, asylum seekers and other vulnerable migrants *of all nationalities* in the district...”.

In response to questions from Councillor Okeke querying why suggested actions he had put forward at working group meetings not being included in the plans before Committee, the Assistant Director for Customer Focus explained that the proposed additional actions would change the action plans quite considerably. They would have required detailed consideration of budgetary and personnel implications to enable full consideration of the proposals.

The Assistant Director for Customer Focus added that officers were aware of the comments and it maybe they could be included in the future however this would be subject to the necessary information and due process being followed for a business case to be developed.

Resolved

- (1) That the following comments be made to the Executive in relation to the Inclusive Communities Action Plan
 - a. An additional action be added to EDI 1.02, Promote inclusive behaviour with residents and service users: *to develop and agree a policy for supporting national events that support our corporate priorities.*
 - b. Additional wording, in italics, be added to the second action of EDI 1.03, Work directly with communities to identify inequality and tackle disadvantage: “Review our approach to supporting refugees, asylum seekers and other vulnerable migrants *of all nationalities* in the district...”
- (2) That Executive be recommended to delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Customer Focus to make minor amendments to the agreed Inclusive Communities and Services action plans, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for equalities and the Chair of the EDI working group.

Performance Outcomes Framework 2023/24

The Performance & Insight Team Leader gave a presentation presented on the proposed performance outcomes framework for the financial year 2023/24.

The Performance & Insight Team Leader explained that business and service planning took place once a year to determine the Council’s goals and objectives. The performance management framework outlined how progress against the goals and objectives would be monitored and reported to this Committee and the Executive.

The Committee was advised that 2023/24 was the last year of the current business plan. A new business plan and annual delivery plan would be developed for 2024/25, informed by budget requirements and census data.

Resolved

- (1) That the presentation be noted.

72

Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan

The Assistant Director Environmental Services submitted a report to provide an overview of the "Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan". The report set out the context for the production of the Route Map and Action Plan, along with detail of the structure and key areas of activity, such as decarbonising buildings and transport across the district. The Route Map and Action Plan sought to deliver the ambitions of the Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire (PaZCO) 2021 report.

In introducing the report, the Climate Action Manager explained that the document detailed three scenarios for reaching the zero net carbon target by 2050. Key performance indicators had been proposed within the action plan to track progress which would be included in an annual update to Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) FOP was the responsible body for the Action Plan, with advisory groups as sponsors providing oversight and guidance to each of the five areas highlighted for phase 1 actions.

Councillor John Broad, Chairman of the climate action working group, advised the Committee that the working group would be working through the PaZCO report and supporting officers where possible.

In response to Committee questions regarding the existing County Council electric vehicle charging points and whether Cherwell District Council had sought its own advice on projects that would affect the district, the Corporate Director Communities explained that if an authority proposed a particular project within the route map then a detailed business case, assessment and legal advice would need to be developed for consideration.

In response to questions from the committee seeking clarification on the goal for carbon net zero for Cherwell District Council, the Assistant Director Environmental Services explained that the goal of 2030 related to the Council's own operations, and the target of 2050 was for the whole of Oxfordshire.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposed Route Map and Action Plan be supported.

73

Working Groups Update

The Principal Officer – Scrutiny and Democratic Lead updated the Committee on the work of the food insecurity working group.

The group had assisted officers with the food voucher scheme and work on the new food strategy had recently started. An update report had been submitted to the Executive in March, and the proposed approach to the food strategy had been endorsed.

The Principal Officer – Scrutiny and Democratic Lead advised that all three working groups - the food insecurity, EDI and climate action - would have work to continue in the new municipal year.

Resolved

- (1) That the update be noted.

74

Work Programme 2023/24

The Committee considered the indicative work programme for 2023/24.

The Principal Officer – Scrutiny and Democratic Lead advised the Committee that more items would be added to the work programme at the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

Following questions from the Committee regarding the introduction of Voter ID and a working group to discuss publicity of Voter ID, the Principal Officer – Scrutiny and Democratic Lead explained that national and local communication was underway, including information in different languages.

Resolved

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

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm

Chairman:

Date: