

Committee: Executive
Date: Monday 12 July 2010
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA

Membership

Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman)	Councillor G A Reynolds (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Ken Atack	Councillor Norman Bolster
Councillor Colin Clarke	Councillor Michael Gibbard
Councillor James Macnamara	Councillor Nigel Morris
Councillor D M Pickford	Councillor Nicholas Turner

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest that they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.

3. **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

The Chairman to report on any requests to submit petitions or to address the meeting.

4. **Urgent Business**

The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any item of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.

5. **Minutes**

** To follow **

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2010.

Service Delivery and Innovation

6. **The Case for Considering Close Joint Working between Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Councils** (Pages 1 - 10) **6.35 pm**

Report of Leader of the Council

Summary

To agree to establish a Joint Member Working Party to examine the business case for sharing senior management structures between Cherwell District Council (CDC) and South Northamptonshire Council (SNC), recognising that this may well lead to joint teams for service delivery in the future.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To establish a Joint Member Working Party to examine the business case to create a shared senior management structure between Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council with a view to reporting its findings to the Executive and then to full Council on 18 October 2010.
- (2) To approve the Terms of Reference for this Joint Member Working Party (attached as Appendix 1).
- (3) To nominate Cllrs Wood, Reynolds, Macnamara, Atack and Cotter to the Joint Member Working Party with Councillors Turner and Williamson as substitutes.

Value for Money and Performance

7. **Kidlington Pedestrianisation Scheme and Traffic Regulation Order** (Pages 11 - 22) **6.55 pm**

Report of Head of Regeneration and Estates

Summary

To confirm the Council's approval for the release of the capital funds for the feasibility work on proposed changes to Kidlington's High Street via an improved Traffic Regulation Order.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To approve a supplementary capital bid of £25,000 to finance the feasibility work on proposed changes to Kidlington's High Street via an improved Traffic Regulation Order.

Urgent Business

8. Urgent Business

Any other items which the Chairman has decided is urgent.

(Meeting scheduled to close at 7.15 pm)

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or (01295) 221587 prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item. The definition of personal and prejudicial interests is set out in Part 5 Section A of the constitution. The Democratic Support Officer will have a copy available for inspection at all meetings.

Personal Interest: Members must declare the interest but may stay in the room, debate and vote on the issue.

Prejudicial Interest: Member must withdraw from the meeting room and should inform the Chairman accordingly.

With the exception of the some very specific circumstances, a Member with a personal interest also has a prejudicial interest if it is one which a Member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest.

Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare the fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact James Doble, Legal and Democratic Services james.doble@cherwell-dc.gov.uk (01295) 221587

Mary Harpley
Chief Executive

Published on Friday 2 July 2010

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Executive

The Case for Considering Close Joint Working between Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Councils

12 July 2010

Report of the Leader of the Council

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To agree to establish a Joint Member Working Party to examine the business case for sharing senior management structures between Cherwell District Council (CDC) and South Northamptonshire Council (SNC), recognising that this may well lead to joint teams for service delivery in the future.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To establish a Joint Member Working Party to examine the business case to create a shared senior management structure between Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council with a view to reporting its findings to the Executive and then to full Council on 18 October 2010.
- (2) To approve the Terms of Reference for this Joint Member Working Party (attached as Appendix 1).
- (3) To nominate Cllrs Wood, Reynolds, Macnamara, Atack and Cotter to the Joint Member Working Party with Councillors Turner and Williamson as substitutes.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 Both CDC and SNC face significant medium term financial deficits, as well as short term financial challenges. These need to be addressed, but at the same time, both Councils want to protect valued front-line services for as long as possible. They also want to retain the capacity to serve their respective Districts over and above the normal work of District Councils, as both already do.
- 1.2 Many District Councils have already put in place arrangements to share

management teams, and have then moved on to consider sharing specific services and/or procuring jointly from others while remaining separate and sovereign organisations and securing savings.

Proposals

- 1.3 To establish a Joint Member Working Party to examine the business case to create a shared senior management structure between Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council.

Conclusion

- 1.4 There is now considerable evidence from successful shared arrangements across the country to suggest that CDC and SNC would also be able to achieve efficiencies.

Background Information

3 Financial Challenges faced by both Councils

Both Councils are considering this same report at their respective 12th July Executive and Cabinet meetings.

3.1 Both CDC and SNC have successfully reduced their running costs in recent years by securing efficiencies and transforming services. Both have taken out costs and looked to find new income streams.

- CDC has reduced its revenue costs by £5m (21%) in the last 4 years, from £23.5m in 2007/08 to a budget of £18.5m in 2010/11. Reductions in total staff costs have driven this almost entirely, reducing from £21.1m in 2007/08 to £16.9m in 2010/11. Only minor cuts have been made to services along the way. At the same time CDC has deliberately reduced its exposure to investment income, relying in 2010/11 on investment income for 6% of the revenue budget, compared to 29% in 2007/08.
- SNC revenue costs have increased very slightly over the last 4 years from £11.5m in 2007/08 to £12.1m in 2010/11. This was due in part to a decision to invest in senior capacity (following stock transfer) in order to develop an outward facing, policy led, advocacy organisation. The Council has achieved this by making significant revenue savings and by increasing revenue income (£5.4m since 2008/09 with further measures in the 2010/11 budget of £1.3m). The budget reliance on investment income has been significantly reduced although the Council has achieved a 3% return on four packages totalling £20m which mature over the next three years. All of this has enabled the impact on frontline services to be kept to a minimum.

3.2 But despite this good work, both Councils face significant shortfalls in their Medium Term Financial Strategies (MTFS). Both Councils are working to three MTFS scenarios, which in turn project total shortfalls for 2011/12-2014/15. The shortfalls are of similar order; although the detailed assumptions around cuts to government grant (RSG), concessionary travel pressures and other issues are slightly different.

	Cherwell	South Northants
Best case	£4.3m (assumes RSG freeze)	£6.1m (assumes RSG freeze)
Realistic case	£11.3m (assumes RSG cut 5% per year for 3 years)	£9.3m (assumes RSG cut 10% in 2011/12)
Worst case	£15.8m (assumes RSG cut by 6.5% per year for 3 years)	£13.7m (assumes RSG cut by 6.5% per year for 3 years)

3.3 The emergency budget on 22nd June made it clear that unprotected Whitehall departments such as Communities and Local Government (DCLG) will face cuts of at least 25% over the next 4 years. Depending which departments secure a degree of protection over the next few weeks, and assuming DCLG is not one of those, we may be facing cuts in the order of 30% over the next 4 years.

However, it should be noted that cuts of this order are 'real terms' reductions after taking into account an element of growth for inflationary pressures in the future. The 'cash' reductions will be lower than the 'real terms' reductions being quoted. Both authorities have incorporated 'cash' reduction into their MTFS's.

- 3.4 We are unlikely to have further news until details of the Comprehensive Spending Review are announced on 20th October 2010, although final settlements will not be confirmed until November/December.
- 3.5 In seeking savings to date both Councils have worked in partnership with other local authorities:
- SNC has a major partnership with three other councils to prepare the Local Development Framework, which is the responsibility of the West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee supported by a Joint Planning Unit. It has a joint Community Partnership Unit (and a joint, statutory Community Safety Partnership) with Daventry District Council and also provides payroll services to DDC. It also works closely with Aylesbury Vale DC and Buckinghamshire CC on issues related to Silverstone Circuit, which straddles the districts' boundaries.
 - CDC tendered and procured its internal audit services and its treasury management services jointly with Oxford City Council and is increasingly using the Oxford Procurement Hub to procure utilities and other services. Cherwell is currently sharing a 151 officer on an interim basis with SNC.
- 3.6 However, while both Councils continue to pursue cost-saving opportunities with others where opportunities arise, the size of the potential shortfalls in both MTFs means a more strategic and more focussed approach to joint working is needed to make larger-scale opportunities possible, some of them in the short-term. In the meantime, neither Council will need to undo any of these partnership arrangements. If SNC and CDC move forward to much closer working it might be appropriate to review these as and when the right opportunities arise.
- 3.7 Both Councils are embarking now on their service and financial planning for 2011/12. Should both Councils agree to explore a shared management team, some of the short-term savings from such a move could prevent shorter-term cuts to services. It is unlikely that bringing the management teams together would remove the need for any other cuts. However, it would open up options previously unavailable to either Council.

4 Increasingly District Councils are creating combined management and support teams to help address financial and other issues

- 4.1 The IDeA report Shared chief executives and joint management: a model for the future, published in October 2009, lays out the joint arrangements under which nine pairs of District Councils (and one District and one County Council) share a group of senior officers as well as some teams: all have achieved efficiencies as a direct result. The report demonstrates that safeguarding services through greater efficiencies is now the main motivation for pursuing joint management arrangements and shared services. It concludes that the benefits go beyond the financial savings to be made from taking the first step to move to one management team to greater opportunities for efficiencies from shared services, savings from joint procurement and a higher profile for the pairs of councils who now represent between them combined populations of up to 250,000 people. The report is also clear that such savings are achievable much faster than they would otherwise be after the creation of one shared top team.
- 4.2 There will be many lessons to be learned from members and officers who have already trodden this path and we suggest identifying three pairings and focussing on understanding what they have saved from their new, focussed joint working and what they would do differently given another opportunity and why. Good candidates look to be the High Peak

and Staffordshire Moorlands Councils who sit in different counties and regions, plus South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Councils who are nearby and would be willing to share their experiences.

5 Separate and sovereign organisations

- 5.1 Under all the current shared management arrangements, the two organisations remain separate and sovereign organisations, directed by two separate councils. There is absolutely no question that SNC and CDC would remain anything but separate, sovereign organisations.

6 More in common than our financial challenges

- 6.1 One of the necessary starting points for a successful partnership is a degree of commonality between the Councils and the Districts they serve, allowing a shared group of officers to serve two different Councils effectively and with sufficient common ground to open up the potential for efficiencies to flow from shared services.
- 6.2 SNC and CDC have a significant amount in common in terms of the Districts we serve and our ambitions for service delivery and enhancing the quality of life of our residents.

The following tables draw out some of the common characteristics:

	Cherwell	South Northants
Land area	230 square miles	250 square miles
Current population	137,400	90,300
Population estimate (2031)	169,900	113,700
Number of Councillors	50	42
Staff (FTEs)	524	227
Revenue budget 2010/11	£18.5m	£12.1m
Band D Council Tax, 2010/11	£123.50	£170.37

Our strategic priorities are similar:

Cherwell	South Northants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cherwell: A District of Opportunity ▪ A Cleaner, Greener Cherwell ▪ A Safe, Healthy Cherwell ▪ An Accessible, Value for Money Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preserve what is special – the natural environment and character of the district ▪ Protect the vulnerable – lives and homes ▪ Encourage potential – transport and jobs ▪ Enhance performance – one council, one district and one county (Affordable Excellence)

- 6.3 In particular we are both trying to manage significant housing growth with the infrastructure challenges this brings. South Northamptonshire is part of the Milton Keynes South Midlands (MKSM) area – the largest national growth area – and part of Cherwell (Bicester and the surrounding area) is included in one of the South East's Diamonds for Growth.
- 6.4 We both have ambitions for delivering for our Districts in ways which go beyond the usual remit of District Councils, working with partners to deliver members' and residents' priorities. Such work takes up significant staffing capacity which both Leaders would like to preserve for as long as possible.

For example:

Cherwell	South Northants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing a flood alleviation scheme for Banbury • Achieving national eco town status for Bicester • Protecting maternity and paediatric services at the Horton Hospital, Banbury • Working to maintain the right fit between employers needs and local workforce skills – in good times and through recession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping shape the future of West Northamptonshire’s growth • Securing the future of Towcester by the Moat Lane regeneration scheme • Regenerating Brackley Town Centre – implementing the agreed Masterplan • Ensuring sustainable rural communities (Interim Rural Housing Strategy)

7 The potential scale of the opportunity

- 7.1 The IDeA report gives a good indication of the potential scale of early savings which are achievable from such joint senior management arrangements, while being clear that the greater prize is to be had from sharing services in the appropriate parts of the organisation. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils estimate £1.1m savings per year between them from joint management arrangements. Staffordshire Moorlands and High Peak District Councils’ joint management team will generate total savings of £560,000 per year from 2012.
- 7.2 At the moment we employ 751 staff between us at a total cost of £26.1m (524 full time equivalent staff costing £16.9m at CDC and 227 full time equivalent staff costing £9.2m at SNC).
- 7.3 Potential savings come from three potential steps which some pairs of Districts have taken sequentially over a period of time:
- A shared Chief Executive and senior management team
 - Shared “back office functions” such as Finance, HR, Legal, ICT and others
 - Shared delivery of frontline services
- 7.4 The Joint Member Working Party would examine the financial benefits from moving towards a joint senior management team. It would also examine how the costs and benefits of a joint team would be apportioned between the two organisations.

8 Potential issues

- 8.1 There are many issues to be explored. Again, those who have already taken this step will have much advice to give as a starting point on these and other issues.
- How will savings and up-front costs be allocated to the two Councils? (there are models for this developed by others which need exploring)
 - How will we meet the upfront redundancy costs?
 - How similar or different are our employee terms and conditions and what are the challenges that these might present?

- What governance arrangements will be needed to provide joint direction to the shared officer team once it is established?

9 Potential timetable

9.1 Both Councils are planning now for the actions they will have to take to meet expected cuts to government grants. By moving quickly there is potentially an opportunity to reduce the scale of required short-term service cuts by buying time to consider shared services and other options as a first source of savings, while protecting frontline services. The maximum possible benefit will come from agreeing the way forward *before* the 2011/12 service and financial planning round is much further advanced.

The proposed timetable is:

September/October	Working party provides recommendations to the CDC Executive and SNC Cabinet
Late October/early November	CDC and SNC full Councils consider Executive/Cabinet recommendations
Followed by, if appropriate:	Joint appointment of one Chief Executive
	Joint appointment of one team of Directors and Heads of Service
	Development of business cases for new arrangement for specific services

10 Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One Not to proceed to appoint Members to the Joint Member Working Party.

Option Two Establish the Joint Member Working Party

Implications

Financial: The financial savings from this initiative are potentially considerable. There will be significant one off costs associated with the transition. The business case will calculate these and use a to-be-agreed cost sharing model to determine the financial resources which would be needed for this project.

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance, 01295 221551

Legal: The legal implications of this project will be considered in detail in the business case. It will be important to learn

lessons from other Councils who have successfully established shared management teams early on.

Comments checked by Nigel Bell, Solicitor, 01295 221687

Risk Management:

The risk management implications of this project will be considered in detail in the business case.

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance, 01295 221551

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

All

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Barry Wood
Leader of the Council

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	CDC/SNC Joint Member Party on Shared Senior Management and Services: Proposed Terms of Reference
Background Papers	
IDeA Shared Chief Executives and joint management – a model for the future? (October 2009)	
Report Authors	Mary Harpley, Chief Executive Jean Morgan, Chief Executive, SNC
Contact Information	Mary Harpley, 01295 221573 mary.harpley@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk Jean Morgan, 01327 32201 Jean.Morgan@SouthNorthants.gov.uk

Appendix 1

CHERWELL/SNC JOINT MEMBER WORKING PARTY ON SHARED SENIOR MANAGEMENT AND SERVICES PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE

MEMBERSHIP

- 5 elected members from each council – 4 from each controlling group and one from each opposition group
- Substitute members to be appointed – 1 for each controlling group and one for each opposition group

OFFICER SUPPORT TO THE WORKING PARTY

- Two Chief Executives (or Directors as substitutes)
- Two Heads of Finance (and shared Section 151 Officer)
- Two Monitoring Officers
- Two Heads of Human Resources
- A dedicated and specifically identified Administrative Support Officer

OFFICERS/OTHERS TO BE CONSULTED BY THE WORKING PARTY

- Directors, Heads of Service and other officers as necessary
- Trade Union/staff representatives

OBJECTIVES

- Oversee the development and delivery of a detailed business case for the creation of a single senior management team (CEX, Directors and Heads of Service) to serve both Cherwell and SNC and present conclusions/recommendations to the Cherwell Executive and SNC Cabinet and both Councils
- Understand the benefits gained and lessons learned from three other pairs of District Councils which have already created a joint management team and present the findings/resulting recommendations to the Cherwell Executive and SNC Cabinet and both Councils
- Scope the financial baselines and potential savings to both Councils of extending the concept of shared teams to the level below Head of Service for 'back office' support services and present the findings/resulting recommendations to the Cherwell Executive and SNC Cabinet and both Councils
- Recommend a mechanism/formula for the allocation of associated costs and efficiencies across the two organisations
- Detail the risks to both Councils of taking this step and recommend mitigating actions to the Cherwell Executive and SNC Cabinet and both Councils

- Propose a communications plan to elected members in both councils, to staff in both councils, to media and (when appropriate) to residents in both Districts

QUORUM

The Working Party meetings will be considered quorate if three elected members from each council are present.

DECISION-MAKING POWERS

Decisions regarding the implementation of any recommendation rest separately with each Council.

METHOD OF APPROACH

The Working Party will convene every two weeks on an evening convenient to a majority of the Members. The first meeting is to be held in the week ending 16 July 2010. The meetings will alternate between Towcester and Banbury. Officers will facilitate a standard agenda for the meetings and maintain a record of decisions and actions, together with a risks and issues log which will be updated in time for each meeting.

INTERFACES & ASSUMPTIONS

There is a strong assumption that the product of the Working Party will interface with budget construction for both Councils for 2011/12 and the respective Medium Term Financial Strategies. A corollary of this is that care must be taken not to take separate (other) decisions about top tier(s) officer structures that might hamper or confuse the potential of this proposal while the Working Party is meeting to draw conclusions.

TIMETABLE

Week ending 16 July	Working Party to meet for the first time and agree workplan (officers to provide a draft workplan).
Mid September	Working Party members to report draft findings/recommendations to controlling and opposition groups
11 October	Formal reports to Cherwell Executive and SNC Cabinet
Late October/early November	Formal decisions made by both Councils

NOTE: This timeframe enables the results to be included in 2011/12 budget preparations and effectively allows any resulting recruitment/selection processes to be completed by the end of January 2011

30th June 2010

Executive

Kidlington Pedestrianisation and Traffic Regulation Order

12 July 2010

Report of Head of Regeneration and Estates

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To confirm the Council's approval for the release of the capital funds for the feasibility work on proposed changes to Kidlington's High Street via an improved Traffic Regulation Order.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To approve a supplementary capital bid of £25,000 to finance the feasibility work on proposed changes to Kidlington's High Street via an improved Traffic Regulation Order.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Kidlington Pedestrianisation capital bid (value £25,000) was referred to scrutiny for further consideration by Council in February 2010. The bid was rejected as part of the 2010/11 budget process due to the overall financial constraints facing the Council. However the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Communication had indicated that a supplementary estimate could be made if the scrutiny review considers that it is justified. The review was considered on the 22 June 2010 and recommended approval to the Executive.

Proposals

- 1.2 Please refer to the attached Overview and Scrutiny Committee report and minutes of the 22 June 2010.
- 1.3 A further breakdown on the expenditure for the capital bid are as follows:

- Advertising/public notices in regards to the new proposed new Traffic Order: £2000
 - Legal costs of the agency agreement with the County Council: £2,000
 - Anticipated public enquiry fee: £11,000.
 - New signage: £7,000. This includes: 4 new illuminated signs, 2 at either end of the pedestrianised road and repeater signs along the route. This does not include any electrical supplier costs for connection to the power supply.
 - Consultation event: £700 for two artist's impressions, £250 for land registry information, and £200 for printing or other miscellaneous consultation costs.
 - Hire of small marquee/stall for the consultation. Could be found in-house or a possibility it will need to be hired - £100
 - Any other slight highway amendments, extra floral units, removal of double yellow lines, small highways works (e.g. road narrowing) - inc labour up to £2,000
- 1.4 Once the scheme is implemented a review will be made on the success of its objectives. If it is felt non-permitted traffic is accessing the pedestrianised area a further capital bid will be made for a rising bollard on the western side of the junction with Watts Way. Access to the High Street would then only be given to permit holders who had the correct card to activate the bollard.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 2.1 This project is identified as a priority in the Regeneration and Estates Service plan and is a key partnership project undertaken at the request of the Kidlington Village Centre Management Board and Kidlington Parish Council
- 2.2 The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward.

Option One	Approve the capital bid for the scheme to move forward
Option Two	Reject the bid. However this will result in the postponement of any further work on the scheme and a failure to meet Service Plan targets.

Implications

Financial:	If this scheme is to go ahead, it will require a 2010/11 supplementary capital estimate of £25,000 funded from Council capital receipts. The lost opportunity cost equates to £250 at 1% interest rate. Comments checked by Eric Meadows, Service Accountant 01295 221552
Legal:	The Council would need to enter into an agency agreement with the County Council before it could

promote or make any Traffic Regulation Order. The regulations require a consultation process to be carried out when the proposals are still at a formative stage and, if objections are made to the published proposals, a public inquiry must be held.

Comments checked by Malcolm Saunders, Senior Legal Assistant 01295 221692

Risk Management: If the bid is accepted, a public inquiry may still lead to the project not going ahead. If the bid is rejected, it will result in the postponement of any further work on the scheme

Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Insurance Officer 01295 221566

Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services A revised TRO for Kidlington High Street is considered to be essential to bring vitality to the village centre; develop improved pedestrian access; and to exclude, in the core period, all but essential delivery vehicles.

Comments checked by Chris Rothwell, Head of Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services 01295 221712

Wards Affected

All wards in Kidlington

Corporate Plan Themes

A District of Opportunity

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Norman Bolster
Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Estates

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	<i>Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report of 22 June 2010</i>
Appendix 2	<i>Minutes from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report of 22 June 2010</i>
Appendix 3	<i>Indicative site plan</i>
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Lisa Chaney, Urban Centres Development Officer
Contact Information	01295 221843 lisa.chaney@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Kidlington Pedestrianisation Capital Bid

22 June 2010

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the background to the Kidlington Pedestrianisation capital bid.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to confirm:

- (1) Whether they wish to recommend to the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Communication that he should make available a supplementary estimate for the Kidlington Pedestrianisation capital bid (value £25,000).

Details

Introduction

- 1.1 The Kidlington Pedestrianisation capital bid (value £25,000) was referred to scrutiny for further consideration by Council in February 2010. The bid was rejected as part of the 2010/11 budget process due to the overall financial constraints facing the Council. However, the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Communication has indicated that a supplementary estimate could be made if the scrutiny review considers that it is justified.

Proposals

- 2.1 The project is intended to enhance the pedestrianisation of the village centre for a core period during the day. This would be achieved through the use of traffic orders.
- 2.2 The expansion of pedestrianisation in the village is an aspiration of the Kidlington Village Centre management board. It is also a Cherwell District Council service plan objective to deliver such a scheme.
- 2.3 Should it be possible to secure a traffic order, there will be costs associated with any public inquiry, and in implementing a new order in terms of signage and road markings.
- 2.4 The project is about increasing the commercial attractiveness of the village centre. Implementation of a pedestrianisation scheme would bring Kidlington in to line with the other urban centres of the district.
- 2.5 Details of the capital bid, the business case and the project brief are set out in the appendices to this report.
- 2.6 If capital funds are released the scheme is scheduled to go to out to informal public consultation on Friday 24 September 2010 for 6 weeks, which will mean it will finish Friday 5 November 2010. This would allow the project board to review the consultation feedback and to take a decision as to whether to proceed to a formal stage of a revised Traffic Regulation Order by the end of December 2010.

Conclusion

- 3.1 The Portfolio Holder for Resources and Communication has indicated that a supplementary estimate could be made available from the 2010/11 budget to fund the Kidlington Pedestrianisation scheme.

Implications

Financial: If this scheme is to go ahead, it will require a 2010/11 Supplementary Capital Estimate of £25,000 funded from Council Reserves.

Comments checked by Eric Meadows, Service Accountant, 01295 221552

Legal: [Click here and insert comments of consultee]

Comments checked by Paul Manning, Solicitor, 01295 221686

Risk Management: There are no risks arising directly from this report.
Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Insurance Officer, 01295 221566

Wards Affected

North and South Kidlington

Corporate Plan Themes

A district of opportunity

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Morris
Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural

Councillor Bolster
Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Estates

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Capital appraisal
Appendix 2	Business case
Appendix 3	Project Brief
Background Papers	
N/A	
Report Author	Catherine Phythian, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
Contact Information	01295 221583 Catherine.phythian@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

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Extract from Minutes – Overview & Scrutiny Committee 22 June 2010

6. Kidlington Pedestrianisation Capital Bid

The Chairman welcomed Parish Councillor Betts, Chairman Kidlington Parish Council and Parish Councillor Pack, Chairman of the Kidlington Village Centre Management Board, the local district ward members, Councillor Williamson and Councillor Emptage and the county council ward member, Councillor Gibbard, to the meeting.

The Scrutiny Officer explained that the Kidlington Pedestrianisation capital bid (value £25,000) had been referred to scrutiny for further consideration by Council in February 2010. The bid had been rejected as part of the 2010/11 budget process as it failed to reach the minimum score threshold for approval. However, the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Communication indicated that a supplementary estimate could be made if the scrutiny review considered that the project was justified. The Committee was advised that the expansion of pedestrianisation in the village is an aspiration of the Kidlington Village Centre Management Board and that it was also a Cherwell District Council service plan objective to deliver such a scheme.

The Chairman invited Councillors Betts and Pack to explain the background to the capital bid. They made the following arguments:

- The problem with traffic control in the High Street at Kidlington was a long standing and significant concern to the residents and shoppers and was identified as a key issue in the 2008 village health check.
- A project team had been established in 2009 to address the problem. This included member and officer representatives from the Parish, District and County Councils and from Thames Valley Police.
- Technically the High Street in Kidlington was already a pedestrian area with delivery/residential access but lack of traffic enforcement and the physical appearance of the street (paved and removal of curbs) had resulted in long term and widespread abuse of the traffic regulations. A recent survey revealed some 106 traffic movements in the High Street in a single one hour period. Recently there had been a near fatal accident in the area and there were significant safety concerns, particularly for the elderly and young families wanting to shop.
- These problems represented a threat to the commercial vitality of the village centre and lessened the benefits that could be derived from previous investment in the new shopping centre.

- The project was intended to enhance the pedestrianisation of the village centre for a core period (10 am – 4.30 pm) during the day;
- In the first instance pedestrianisation would be achieved through the use of traffic orders and improved signage.

The Chairman then asked the County Councillor for Kidlington and Yarnton and the District Council ward members if they wished to comment. They endorsed all of the points made by the representatives from the Parish Council and the Village Centre Management Board and stressed the importance of this project in addressing the perceived disparity between Kidlington and the other urban centres in the district. They commended the pedestrianisation scheme to the Committee on the basis that it would bring Kidlington in to line with the other urban centres of the district.

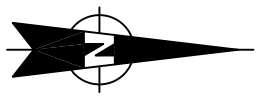
The Head of Finance informed the Committee that this capital bid had been excluded purely on the basis that it did not meet the minimum score threshold. She explained that approval of the scheme would result in a loss in interest income of £250 per year.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Urban Centres Development Officer explained that the £25,000 capital bid was to fund the public consultation and legal services on the preparation of the traffic order and that this was what was meant by the reference to contractors in the capital bid paperwork.

Members of the Committee cited the success of the bollard schemes in Parsons Street, Banbury and Sheep Street, Bicester and asked why a similar approach was not being advocated in Kidlington. The Urban Centres Development Officer explained that the wording of the existing traffic regulation order would not permit the installation of a bollard. A new and more tightly defined traffic regulation order was required before it would be possible to consider installing a bollard scheme. She confirmed that the installation of a bollard scheme would be one of the options presented in the public consultation. The Committee noted that the costs of a bollard scheme were of order £30,000 plus on-going maintenance. These arguments notwithstanding the Committee urged the representatives from the Kidlington High Street Pedestrianisation Board to pursue the possibility of installing a bollard as a priority as they considered that this was the only realistic method of controlling the traffic in the High Street.

Resolved

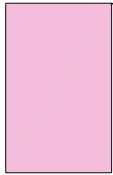
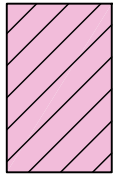
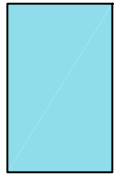

That the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Communication be recommended to make available a supplementary estimate for the Kidlington Pedestrianisation capital bid (value £25,000) in order to bring the village in to line with the other urban centres of the district.

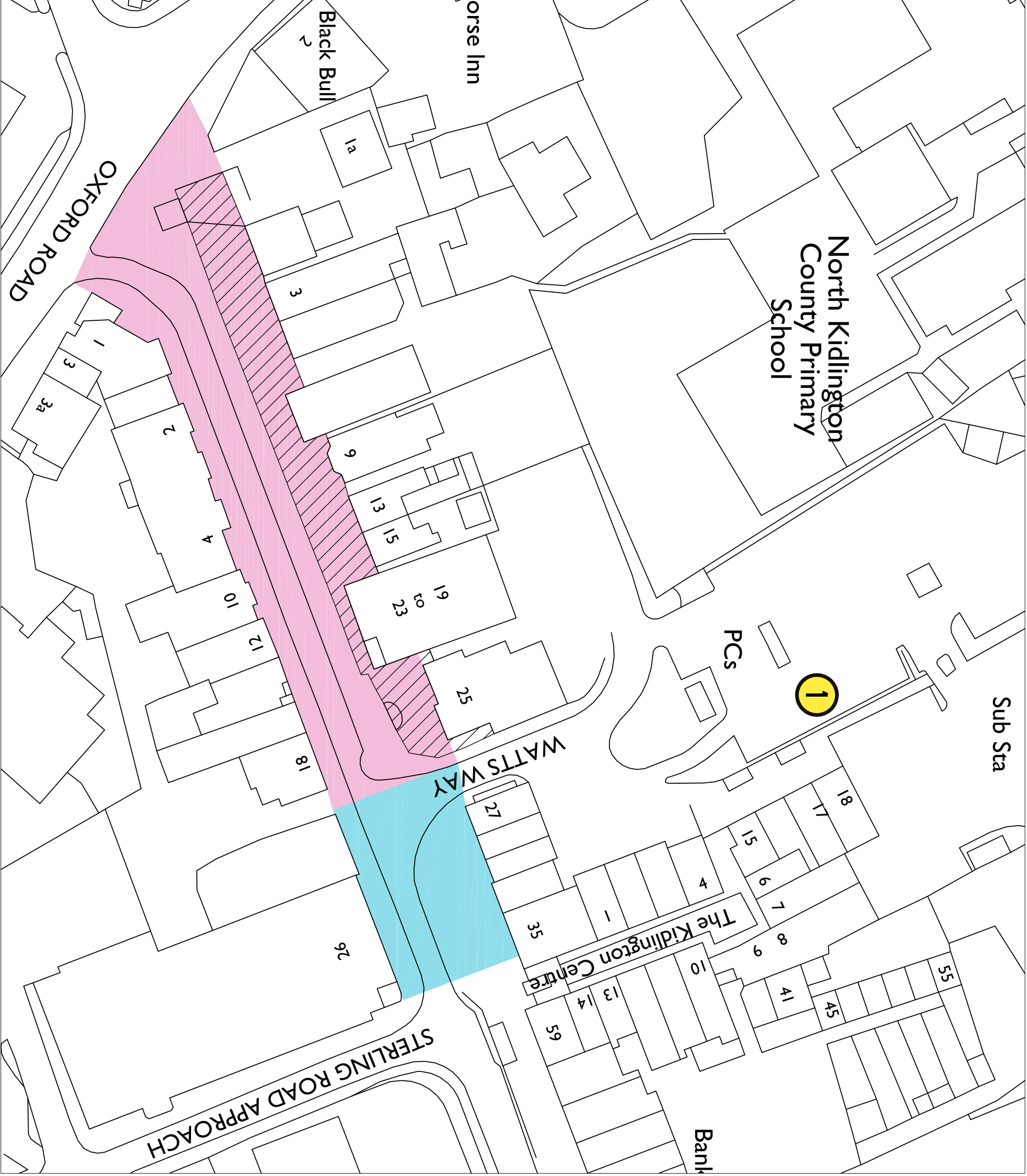


Revised Kidlington High Street Traffic Regulation Order: Options to Consider.

Plan 1: Vehicle and Pedestrian Management.

KEY.

-  Proposed pedestrianised area 10 am-4:30pm (no public parking). Permits for access will be granted to business and residential occupiers. No 'blue badge' parking. Deliveries before 10 am and after 4:30 pm.
-  Land in private ownership.
-  Measures to deter parking.
-  Increased 'blue badge' parking in Curtis Place Car Park.



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