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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, OX15 4AA, on 21 November 2017 at 6.45 pm

Present: Councillor Neil Prestidge (Chairman)
Councillor Jolanta Lis (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Claire Bell
Councillor Mike Bishop
Councillor Chris Heath
Councillor Sean Gaul
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Andrew McHugh
Councillor Jason Slaymaker

Substitute Members: Councillor Barry Richards (In place of Councillor Mark Cherry)

Also Present: Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Estates and the Economy
Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council
Councillor Hugo Brown
Councillor Ian Corkin

Apologies for absence: Councillor David Anderson
Councillor Mark Cherry

Officers: Scott Barnes, Director of Strategy and Commissioning
Paul Sutton, Executive Director: Finance and Governance / Section 151 Officer
Nicola Riley, Shared Community Services Manager
Maria Wareham, Safeguarding Officer
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer

33 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

34 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

35 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 October 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

36 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

37 **Lead Member Attendance - Councillor Lynn Pratt**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Estates and the Economy, to the meeting, to give an overview of her portfolio.

Councillor Pratt explained that the portfolio was extremely diverse, and involved working closely with the Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy and the interim Property Investment Manager.

Due to the level of economic growth across the district, Councillor Pratt explained that it was an exciting time to be involved with the portfolio.

The recent Banbury Business Improvement District (BID) process had returned a yes vote, meaning that further work would be undertaken in the coming months to establish the BID board.

In addition to the economic growth, Councillor Pratt explained that Cherwell District Council was the headline sponsor for the 2018 Cherwell Business Awards, which had been officially launched in October.

The Committee thanked Councillor Pratt for the overview.

Resolved

(1) That the overview be noted

38 **Quarter Two Performance Update**

The Committee considered a report from the Director – Strategy and Commissioning that detailed the Council's performance during Quarter Two, 1 June to 30 September 2017.

With regard to indicators 3.2.2 a to c, average time taken to process new Housing benefit claims, change of circumstances, and new claims and changes to Housing benefit, the Committee asked for further information regarding the length of time customers had to wait and what the longest wait was. The Chief Finance Officer agreed to circulate the information.

In connection with indicator 3.3.1, deliver the actions identified within the revised Homelessness prevention strategy, the Committee asked if there was

any homelessness provision within the district. The Director – Strategy and Commissioning agreed to find out and circulate information to the Committee.

With regard to the Equalities Action plan sunburst, ‘to ensure Cherwell District Council meets all government requirements’, the Committee asked for more information concerning the areas reporting as amber, and which government requirements were not being met. The Director – Strategy and Commissioning agreed to circulate the information.

Resolved

- (1) That the exceptions highlighted be noted
- (2) That no performance related matters be referred to Executive

39 **Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board/Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adult Board Section 11 Review and Approval**

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Operational Delivery, which detailed the draft Section 11 return for the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

The Community Services Manager explained that the Council was submitting a good return, and good progress had been made since the last audit return in 2016. A part time safeguarding officer had been appointed at the start of the year, and work was well underway regarding training for all staff and Members.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Community Services Manager confirmed that a formal information sharing agreement and procedure was in place with all of the relevant partners, and the procedure would be reviewed to ensure it was up-to-date.

The Committee asked if taxi drivers were covered by the requirement for safeguarding training. The Community Services Manger confirmed that they were, and agreed to gather further information from the Licensing Manager regarding the numbers of those who had and had not been trained.

Resolved

- (1) That the Cherwell District Council Section 11 return be noted and endorsed for submission, alongside the results from the staff survey currently underway

40 **Work Programme 2017-18**

The Committee considered the draft work programme.

With regards to the Mobile Phone Signal review, it was agreed that the survey should be sent to parish councils, with a request for it to be further distributed amongst residents. It would be sent in January for a period of 6 weeks, with completion being encouraged via Survey Monkey in the first instance.

Resolved

- (1) That the work programme be noted
- (2) That the Mobile Phone Survey Signal be distributed to parish councils in January 2018, for a 6 week completion period

41 **The acquisition of Castle Quay Shopping Centre**

The Chairman advised the Committee that in light of legal advice this item was exempt and therefore would not be considered in the public part of the meeting.

42 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved

- (1) That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraph 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information .

43 **The Acquisition of Castle Quay Shopping Centre - Exempt Report and appendices**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted an exempt report on the Acquisition of Castle Quay Shopping Centre.

Resolved

- (1) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (2) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (3) As set out in the exempt minutes.

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm

Chairman:

Date:

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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