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Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at 39 Castle Quay, Banbury, OX16 5FD, on 1 July 2025 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Lesley McLean, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Property & Regeneration (Vice-Chair, in the Chair)

Councillor Tom Beckett, Portfolio Holder for Greener Communities

Councillor Chris Brant, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services

Councillor Jean Conway, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management

Councillor Nick Cotter, Portfolio Holder for Housing

Councillor Ian Middleton, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services

Councillor Rob Pattenden, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities

Present virtually (no voting rights):

Councillor David Hingley, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership

Councillor Robert Parkinson, Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities

Also Present:

Councillor Lynne Parsons, Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor John Broad

Also Present Virtually:

Councillor Amanda Watkins, Leader of the Labour Group

Officers:

Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities

Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer

David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning & Development

Christina Cherry, Planning Policy, Conservation & Design Manager

Denzil Turbervill, Head of Legal Services

Maria Dopazo, Principal Planning Policy Officer

Holly Jones, Planning Policy Officer

Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Officers Attending Virtually:

Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive

Mona Walsh, Assistant Director - Property

Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Housing and Wellbeing
Richard Smith, Head of Housing

12 **Declarations of Interest**

12. The Granting of a New Lease at 36/37 Bridge Street, Banbury.
Councillor Rob Pattenden, Other Registerable Interest, as a trustee of
Banbury Charities and would leave the meeting for the duration of the item.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

14 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2025 were agreed as a correct
record and signed by the Chair.

15 **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair reminded Members that a Special Executive meeting had been
scheduled for 6.30pm on Tuesday 22 July.

16 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

17 **Submission of the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042**

The Assistant Director Planning and Development submitted a report to
present the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 for approval and subsequent
presentation to Council as a draft 'Submission' Local Plan. Subject to approval
by Council the Proposed Submission Local Plan would be submitted to the
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for
independent examination. This report also sought approval of an updated
Local Development Scheme (LDS). An up-to-date LDS must support
submission of the Plan.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development
Management thanks officers for their hard work bringing the Cherwell Local
Plan Review 2042

The adopted Local Plan was the main part of the statutory Development Plan,
the starting point for considering development proposals. The review of the
Cherwell Local Plan had commenced in 2020 with three public consultations

were undertaken prior to the publication of the Proposed Submission Local Plan in December 2024. Following Executive approval in December 2024, consultation on the Proposed Submission Local Plan commenced on 19 December 2024 and closed on 25 February 2025.

The 345 consultation responses had been considered by officers in reviewing whether the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 (the 'Plan') was 'sound' and legally compliant, the tests of the independent examination of the Plan started when the Proposed Submission Local Plan was submitted.

The view of officers was that the Plan was sound but that a number of 'proposed changes' and 'minor modifications' should be suggested to the examining inspector(s) in the interests of its improvement, clarification and updating and to address minor presentational, grammatical and typographical issues.

In response to Executive Member comments, the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management confirmed that the Plan was sound, and evidence based and worthy of submission for independent examination.

The Leader, having apologised for being unable to attend the meeting in person due to being at the LGA Conference in Liverpool, highlighted that the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 was one of the most important documents for the district and added thanks to officers for their hard work. The Leader also thanked the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management, and other political Groups for their engagement in the process through the Member Advisory Group. Thanks was also extended to parishes, residents and parties who had engaged in the process.

The Labour Group Leader commended officers and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management and confirmed the Labour Group supported the Proposed Submission Local Plan, the sooner it was adopted, the better for the Cherwell district.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposed submission Regulation 19 draft of the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 (December 2024) be recommended to Council.
- (2) That Council be recommended to approve the submission of the draft (the "Proposed Submission Local Plan") to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for independent examination with all necessary prescribed and supporting documents.
- (3) That the responses to the consultation on the Proposed Submission Local Plan draft of the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 summarised in the Statement of Consultation be noted.
- (4) That the supporting documents relevant to the preparation of the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 be noted.

- (5) That the Schedule of Proposed Changes and Minor Modifications to the Proposed Submission Local Plan draft of the Cherwell Local Plan Review be approved.
- (6) That the Local Development Scheme (July 2025) be approved.
- (7) That the use of £300,000 from the Council's reserve for the costs of the examination be approved.
- (8) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Planning and Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management and Corporate Director Communities:-
 - a) to make any necessary presentational changes to the Submission draft of the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 and to necessary prescribed and supporting documents before submission to full Council.
 - b) to propose changes and corrections to the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 and supporting documents, including policy updates, editorial changes, and correction of typographical and grammatical errors during the examination.
 - c) to invite the examining inspector(s), post submission, to recommend any modifications they consider to be necessary in accordance with section 20(7C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Reasons

The Cherwell Local Plan Review has been prepared in the interest of having up to date planning policies which respond positively and effectively in meeting development needs and the planning issues that the district and our local communities face. An up-to-date Local Plan is important for a plan-led approach to decision making and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Preparation of the Proposed Submission Local Plan has been informed by three formal public consultations (Regulation 18), continuous engagement and cooperation and evidence gathering.

Consultation on the Proposed Submission Local Plan commenced on 19 December 2024 and closed on 25 February 2025. A total of 345 representations were received in response to the consultation. They have been considered by officers in reviewing whether the Proposed Submission Local Plan is 'sound' and legally compliant – the tests of the independent examination of the Plan that commences on the Proposed Submission Local Plan's submission.

The view of officers is that the Proposed Submission Local Plan is sound but that a number of proposed changes and 'minor modifications' should be made

to it in the interests of its improvement, clarification and updating, and to address minor presentational, grammatical and typographical issues.

An updated Local Development Scheme has also been prepared and this is presented for the Executive's approval.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not to approve the Proposed Submission Local Plan for Submission
Not approving the Proposed Submission Local Plan would mean that the Proposed Submission Local Plan would potentially require significant amendments. These amendments and the need to consult on them prior to Submission would result in the Proposed Submission Plan failing to meet the transitional arrangements set out in NPPF paragraph 234(a). The Council would then be obliged to prepare a revised Local Plan in accordance with the December 2024 NPPF. In addition to creating considerable delay, the revised Local Plan would have to meet the full objectively assessed housing need based on the December 2024 Standard Method figure for Cherwell.

Option 2: To approve the Proposed Submission Local Plan and seek significant changes.

Approving the Proposed Submission Local Plan with significant changes would mean that we would need to reconsult on these changes as an addendum to the Regulation 19 Local Plan. This would result in the Proposed Submission Local Plan failing to meet the transitional arrangements set out in NPPF paragraph 234(a). The Council would then be obliged to prepare a revised Plan in accordance with the December 2024 NPPF. In addition to creating considerable delay, the revised Plan would have to meet the full objectively assessed housing need based on the December 2024 Standard Method figure for Cherwell.

Option 3: Seek further proposed changes in response to specific issues raised in consultation on the Proposed Submission Local Plan draft.

Officers are mindful that the Council must consider the Proposed Submission Local Plan to be submitted to be a 'sound' and legally compliant Plan. Officers have proposed changes that do not affect the soundness of the Plan. Officers advise that any additional proposed changes and the reasons for them are given consideration by officers before they are presented to Council.

Temporary Accommodation Policy

The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing submitted a report to seek approval for a new Temporary Accommodation Policy.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Housing explained that the Council had a duty to provide temporary accommodation for certain households who approach the Council for assistance and who are in housing crisis. The policy outlined the Council's approach, including how placements were made and managed providing clarity for those requiring assistance and a framework for officers in deploying resources.

Resolved

- (1) That the new Temporary Accommodation Policy be approved.

Reasons

It is important that the Council has up to date policies and procedures for its statutory and key service areas and it is important that they are legislatively and operationally sound.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not to bring forward a Temporary Accommodation Policy. There is no statutory need to have a Temporary Accommodation Policy, so this is an option that could be considered. It is however considered good practice for Council's to have a Temporary Accommodation Policy in the Council's conversations with its homelessness advisors from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and also is an approach that is and has been replicated by other Council's across the Country. This is therefore rejected.

19

Finance Monitoring Report May 2025

The Assistant Director Finance (S151 Officer) submitted a report to report to Executive the council's forecast yearend financial position as at the end of the May 2025.

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

Resolved

- (1) That the council's financial management report as at the end of May 2025 be noted.
- (2) That the Use of Reserve and Grant Funding Requests (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (3) That the proposed write offs be approved.

Reasons

The report updates the Committee on the projected year-end financial position of the council for 2025/26. Regular reporting is key to good governance and demonstrates that the council is actively managing its financial resources sustainably.

Alternative options

Option 1: This report summarises the council's forecast revenue financial position up to the end of March 2026, therefore there are no alternative options to consider.

20 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved

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

21 **Finance Monitoring Report May 2025 - Exempt Appendix**

There being no questions on the exempt appendix, this item had been agreed as set out under Minute 19.

22 **The Granting of a New Lease at 36/37 Bridge Street, Banbury**

The Assistant Director Property submitted an exempt report in respect of the granting of a new lease at 36/37 Bridge Street, Banbury.

Resolved

(1) As set out in the exempt Minutes.

(2) As set out in the exempt Minutes.

Reasons

As set out in the exempt Minutes.

Alternative options

As set out in the exempt Minutes.

23 **Relocation of Greggs PLC from Unit 30 to Unit 6&7 Castle Quay**

The Assistant Director Property submitted an exempt report in respect of the relocation of Greggs PLC from Unit 30 to Unit 6&7 Castle Quay.

Resolved

(1) As set out in the exempt Minutes.

Reasons

As set out in the exempt Minutes.

Alternative options

As set out in the exempt Minutes.

The meeting ended at 7.41 pm

Chair:

Date:

Annex to Minutes - Reserves and Grant Funding

Uses of/ (Contributions to) Reserves

Specific requests

Directorate	Type	Description	Reason	Amount £m
Communities	Reserve	Project Reserve	Unspent budget to be released back into Kidlington for 2025/26	0.051
Resources	Reserve	Projects Reserve	Move £0.050m from Projects reserve to create a Shareholder Reserve	0.050
Resources	Reserve	Interest Rate Equalisation Reserve	Whilst interest rates remain high, it is prudent to contribute surpluses to the interest rate equalisation reserve as the reserve can be used to mitigate interest rate pressures in the future.	(1.957)
Resources	Reserve	Shareholder Reserve	move £0.050m from projects reserve to create a Shareholder reserve	(0.050)
Resources	Reserve	Non-ringfenced Grants Timing	Non-ringfenced timing - to support grant for 2025-26 period 1 received 31/3/25	0.033
Resources	Reserves	Home Improvement Agency	To fund graduating post to Grants Surveyor	0.021
Resources	Reserves	LGR	Draw down on reserve to fund Local Government Reform	0.250
			Total Earmarked Reserves (including timing difference)	(1.602)
Communities	Grant	Containing Outbreak Management Fund	Release unspent COMF into 2025-26 to pay over to Banbury Town Council for girls' area in Princess Diana Park (part of development activity zones)	0.030
Communities	Grant	Domestic Abuse Grant	Release unspent grant into 2025-26 to fund domestic abuse co-ordinator post	0.024
Communities	Grant	UK Resettlement Scheme Reserve	Release of settlement scheme funding from Home Office for staff costs on the project	0.111
			Total Grants	0.165