Cherwell District Council

Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board

Minutes of a meeting of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 27 March 2012 at 7.00 pm

Present:	Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Chairman)
	Councillor Alyas Ahmed Councillor Maurice Billington Councillor Patrick Cartledge Councillor Andrew Fulljames Councillor Melanie Magee Councillor Lawrie Stratford Councillor Patricia Tompson Councillor Martin Weir Councillor Douglas Williamson
Apologies for absence:	Councillor Douglas Webb Councillor Margaret Cullip
Officers:	Martin Henry, Director of Resources / Section 151 Officer Claire Taylor, Corporate Performance Manager Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections

39 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

40 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

41 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2012 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

Minute 35: Budget Scrutiny 2012/13
ii. Discretionary Expenditure 2012/13 Budget Scrutiny: Communications and Cherwell Link

Amend final paragraph: The Board considered each of the proposals in turn. "It was proposed and seconded that savings be sought through joint working with South Northamptonshire Council and a reduction in the number of issues of Cherwell Link from 4 to 3. The proposal was voted on and lost. It was subsequently proposed, seconded and agreed that option three: retain four issues of Cherwell Link per year and target savings through joint working with South Northamptonshire Council, represented the best option to seek savings in this area at the present time."

42 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

Resolved

That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded form the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that they could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

43 **Business Case For A Shared Finance And Procurement Team**

The Chairman welcomed the Director of Resources to the meeting.

The Director of Resources presented the report, which sought consideration of the business case for Finance and Procurement functions and potential for sharing with South Northamptonshire Council (SNC), to the Board and highlighted the key elements of the business case. He advised Members that a number of options had been considered in relation to finance and procurement functions at both Councils. The joining of services and locations was pursued as the preferred option that would best support the Joint Management Team in a timely manner, deliver the required savings and permit further review once the impact of the Local Government Resources Review, welfare reform and Localism Act 2011 became clear.

As part of the extensive consultation process the business case had also been considered by the SNC Community and Resources Review and Development Committee. A final version of the business case would be considered at CDC Executive and SNC Cabinet in April 2012.

Members considered the financial, legal and staffing implications of the business case for both sovereign authorities and questions to specific points were provided by the Director of Resources.

In conclusion the Board unanimously agreed that the business case should be supported and they commended the work of the officers across both authorities for their hard work in bringing the case forward.

Resolved

(1) That the implementation of some shared Finance and Procurement functions with South Northamptonshire Council be supported.

44 **Readmittance of the Public and Press**

Resolved

That the public and press be readmitted to the meeting.

45 **Quarter Three Financial Monitoring**

The Board considered the Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring report, which had been considered at the 6 February 2012 Executive meeting. The report summarised the Council's Revenue and Capital performance for the 9 months of the financial year 2011/12 and projections for the full 2011/12 period.

In introducing the report, the Director of Resources advised Members that the revenue and capital position at 31 December 2011 projected an overspend, however this could be covered by reserves and was within the Council's stated tolerances. In terms of efficiencies, as part of the 2012/13 budget preparation, £2m worth of budget reductions against the corporate pledge of £1m had been secured. Additionally, the Board was advised on progress against on the Procurement Action Plan. A growing range of cashable savings had been secured through a range on initiatives, including shared procurement projects.

In response to Members' questions, the Director of Resources explained that procurement partners were each taken on their own merit and assessed on a case by case basis.

In response to Members' questions relating to capital scheme slippages, the Director of Resources offered to circulate an update to Board members providing additional detail on the slippages.

Resolved

(1) That the Quarter Three Financial Monitoring report be noted.

(2) That officers be requested to circulate an update to Board members on capital slippages.

46 **Performance Management Framework Third Quarter Report**

The Board considered the Quarter 3 Performance Management Framework report, which had been considered at the 6 February 2012 Executive meeting. The report summarised the Council's performance for the period 1 October to 31 December 2011 as measured through the Performance Management Framework.

In introducing the report, the Corporate Performance Manager advised the Board that during the third quarter the new Joint Management Team (JMT) had received training on performance management as part of their induction and subsequently reviewed strategic and operational performance measures. Directors and Heads of Service had embarked on business planning for 2012/13 which included reviewing performance measures and targets for 2012/13.

In considering the report, Members noted that progress with the disabled grants facilities grants programme had slowed due to a decline in referral rates and meetings with the county council had been scheduled to explore the matter. It was noted that disabled facilities grants remained on the Board's work programme for consideration as part of the 2013/14 budget scrutiny process.

Members noted that there had been a reduction in customer satisfaction with street cleansing had reduced. The Corporate Performance manager advised the Board that the team's own inspection did not indicate a reduction in service and as part of its 2012/13 service plan was considering the need for effective communication and awareness. Members agreed that street cleansing should be added to their work programme and officers invited to attend a future meeting.

The Board noted that the Council had successfully completed self-assessment against the Equalities Achieving Framework and agreed that training for Members of equalities, fair and aware be provided in due course.

Resolved

(1) That the Performance Management Framework Third Quarter report be noted.

(2) That street cleansing be added to the Board's work programme and officers be invited to attend a future meeting.

47 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Update

The Board considered a report of the Head of Law and Governance which updated Members on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2011/12.

The Board reviewed the work programme and agreed that Bicester Vision and Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership should be deleted from the work programme. Members requested that the Democratic and Elections Team Leader liaise with relevant officers for updates on the Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, Oxfordshire Waste Partnership, the Landscape Maintenance contract and a briefing of the Local Government Resources Review to be presented to future Board meetings.

Resolved

(1) That the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board element of the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2012/13 be noted.

(2) That Bicester Vision and Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership be deleted from the work programme.

(3) That officers be requested to provide updates on Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, Oxfordshire Waste Partnership, Landscape Maintenance contract and a briefing of the Local Government Resources Review to a future meeting of the Board.

(4) That a review of progress against previous budget scrutiny recommendations be submitted to a future Board meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm

Chairman:

Date: