

Council Minute Book
Monday 18th October 2010

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Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 12 July 2010 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman)
Councillor G A Reynolds (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ken Atack
Councillor Norman Bolster
Councillor Colin Clarke
Councillor Michael Gibbard
Councillor Nigel Morris
Councillor D M Pickford

Apologies for absence: Councillor James Macnamara
Councillor Nicholas Turner
Councillor Nick Cotter

Officers: Mary Harpley, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service
Ian Davies, Strategic Director - Environment and Community
John Hoad, Strategic Director - Planning, Housing and Economy
Liz Howlett, Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
David Marriott, Head of Regeneration & Estates
Tony Brummell, Head of Building Control & Engineering Services

32 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

33 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

34 Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

35 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2010, were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record with the amendment that the declarations listed should relate to agenda item 10 Eco-Town Arrangements – Local Authority Funding Arrangements.

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

The Leader of the Council submitted a 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.

Resolved

- (1) That a Joint Member Working Party be established 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 a special meeting of full Council on 3 November 2010.
- (2) That the Terms of Reference for this Joint Member Working Party (attached as Annex 1 to the minutes as set out in the minute book) be approved.
- (3) That Councillors Wood, Reynolds, Macnamara, Atack and Cotter be nominated to the Joint Member Working Party with Councillors Turner and Williamson as substitutes.

Reasons

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. 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.

Options

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Option One | Not to proceed to appoint Members to the Joint Member Working Party. |
| Option Two | Establish the Joint Member Working Party |

37 **Kidlington Pedestrianisation Scheme and Traffic Regulation Order**

The Head of Regeneration and Estates submitted a 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.

Resolved

- (1) That 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 be approved.

Reasons

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 by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and recommended approval to the Executive.

Options

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.

The meeting ended at 6.44 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 6 September 2010 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman)
Councillor G A Reynolds (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Norman Bolster
Councillor Colin Clarke
Councillor James Macnamara
Councillor Nigel Morris
Councillor D M Pickford
Councillor Nicholas Turner

Apologies for absence: Councillor Ken Atack □ Councillor Michael Gibbard

Officers: Mary Harpley, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service
Ian Davies, Strategic Director - Environment and Community
John Hoad, Strategic Director - Planning, Housing and Economy
Pam Wilkinson, Principal Solicitor
Martin Henry, Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer
Philip Clarke, Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development
David Marriott, Head of Regeneration & Estates
Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager
Steven Newman, Economic Development Officer
Gareth Jones, Information Systems Manager
James Doble, Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager

38 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

40 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

41 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

42 **Local Economic Partnerships (LEP)**

The Chief Executive and Strategic Director Planning, Housing and Economy submitted a report to understand the implications of the Government's proposals to create Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) and to seek approval for Cherwell District to be included in the submissions being made to the Secretary of State by two prospective LEPs.

Resolved

- (1) That the inclusion of Cherwell District in both the Oxfordshire City Region Enterprise Partnership and the South East Midlands Enterprise Partnership as they are submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government for consideration be supported.
- (2) That a further report be requested when the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government responds to all the LEP submissions he has received and when he provides final information on any rules which might be put in place which would prevent Cherwell District being part of two LEPs simultaneously (should the Secretary of State accept both the Oxfordshire City Region and South East Midlands LEP bids).

Reasons

The Coalition Government has announced its intention to abolish Regional Development Agencies (including the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)) and enable the setting up of "local enterprise partnerships". The role of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) is to provide strategic leadership within their areas and set out local economic priorities. The Government has asked local business and civic leaders to put forward proposals for new LEPs by 6 September 2010. There is no single model for an LEP that is uniquely suited to Cherwell District. For the time being it is considered right to pursue membership of two and to review the situation once more is known from the Secretary of State.

Options

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Option One | To support the recommendation and pursue membership of both the Oxfordshire City Region and South East Midlands LEPs. |
| Option Two | To not support the recommendation but to pursue membership of either the Oxfordshire City Region LEP or the South East Midlands LEP. |
| Option Three | To not support the recommendation and not to |

pursue membership of either LEP.

43

Review of the ICT Service

The Strategic Director Environment and Community and Head of Customer Service and Information Systems submitted a joint report to seek Executive consideration of the outcomes of the Member and Officer IT Review Group and approval for the way forward. The Executive thanked the ICT team for their support and flexibility with regard to the review.

Resolved

- (1) That measures to reduce the cost of the Council's ICT Service through the implementation of an integrated, scalable and flexible staffing structure, selective external hosting of systems and improved procurement be agreed
- (2) That by the end of 2012/13, it be agreed to make savings of a minimum of £300,000 resulting in a minimum 15% reduction to the base budget and which brings the costs of the function to 2.3% total Council spend (based on 2010/11 estimated total spend)
- (3) That further cost reductions through shared service and joint opportunities with other Councils continue to be explored
- (4) That the proposed change to the ICT service desk availability from 8am – 6pm, to 7am – 5.15pm Monday to Friday be agreed
- (5) That it be agreed not to implement an additional Out Of Hours support service based on an assessed low risk of failure and impact plus additional cost
- (6) That the setting up of an Information Systems Corporate Governance group with a remit to provide a corporate overview to the use of ICT resources, approve projects for delivery and realise targeted savings identified in the project business cases be agreed.

Reasons

It is the view of the Member and Officer ICT Review Group that outsourcing the whole of ICT Service Delivery is not a realistic option; the possible benefits do not outweigh the costs, and the national picture, and our local strategy is such that within three years other procurement options for data storage and communications will become available.

Structural changes are needed to reduce the management overhead and recognise the shifting requirements of the ICT team that will both reduce costs and put in place an integrated and scalable Information Systems team.

Establishing an IS Corporate Governance group to oversee ICT decisions with strategic significance including how we procure applications and systems

in the future will improve the service overall, tying it more closely to Council objectives and priorities.

The benefits of a comprehensive out of hours monitoring and support service do not yet outweigh the costs; the proposed IS Corporate Governance group will review this as more customer services are delivered through online channels.

Options

Option One Improved service governance

Establish an IS Corporate Governance Group to identify and realise "whole Council" benefits from the use of technology, ensuring best value and proper prioritising of the corporate IT Infrastructure resource.

This option is recommended to be implemented

Option Two Improved value for money both in the function and across the whole council

Seek to reduce the base revenue budget, reduce further the capital investment in the infrastructure, and secure one off savings to bring ICT costs as a proportion of total council spend to under x% this year and for the next three years. This to be achieved through

- structural change and staff reduction
- ICT automation, with savings in other services identified and realised through the IS Corporate Governance Group
- More self service through the online channel, reducing service-delivery resource need in other services. There are additional costs and risks attached to this approach, including security of data. However, a strategy of transferring out, over time, key public facing service will mean that the security requirements are transferred also, while the Council retains control of the strategic direction.
- better asset management, ensuring the Council is not over-licensed, have equipment or applications that are not used etc.
- increased flexible working (fewer desks than staff) across the whole Council, with clearly identified savings to be achieved;
- further rationalisation of printing
- better portfolio management through application reviews

- long term commitment to virtualisation and thin client
- further simplification of the ICT infrastructure
- reviewing how the Council sources its external services

This option is recommended to be implemented.

**Option
Three**

Outsource the Council's datacentre, releasing the server room and the need to maintain and monitor it, power it and cool it.

The virtualisation project will, when complete this summer, allow the Council greater flexibility with regards to its physical infrastructure, including the possibility of moving the physical hardware elsewhere. Virtualisation will greatly reduce the physical space that is required to host its infrastructure.

The usual reason for choosing to locate servers elsewhere is to transfer the risk arising from a poor environment. The Council has good power into the building, has a site generator, has good power into the server room etc the current physical setup is appropriate for our requirements.

Additional costs would be incurred from staff travelling to the off-site location, or contracting the host to carry out work.

In the medium term, it is likely that applications used by the Council are increasingly provided direct centrally, or from a supplier; this will reduce the future requirement for the Council to "own" services and hardware. Therefore it does not make sense to commit and limit flexibility now by entering into a costly and long-lived hosting agreement.

In addition, there are no staffing savings to be made by taking this approach; physically looking after the hardware is the smallest part of the roles in the ICT team.

Finally, the good quality of our datacentre makes it possible to consider seriously a shared service with another authority.

The option to outsource the hardware is not recommended

**Option
Four (a)**

Out of hours provision: outsource the monitoring our systems, and the taking action if an agreed list of services fail, out of hours.

This is an unbudgeted extension of the service we currently provide to the Council but would address the risk of service loss, and can be accommodated in the savings that will accrue from the staffing structure changes.

This would extend the supported day for a sub-set of applications to match the published flexible working day of 07:00 to 22:00, Monday to Friday and to extend that support through the weekend and other non-supported days, Bank Holidays etc.

The Council already possesses the required tools to allow for event monitoring by a third party outside of the current supported hours of 08:00 to 18:00.

Feedback from users and members has indicated that support outside of the standard day is best targeted at the mail and web services including Blackberries. Business application availability is not expected by most users. However, certain systems do feed information or make services available to the public via the web site so it is proposed that these systems are also monitored.

Exploratory discussions with providers indicate this kind of service is available for around £36,000 locally, around double that from a larger, regional operation. To extend the cover to include overnight between 22.00 and 07.00 would increase this cost to over £70,000.

This option is desirable but not recommended as the need is not currently deemed sufficient to warrant the level of spend associated with it.

**Option
Four (b)**

Out of Hours provision: Staff-up the in-house team to provide the out of hours standby and callout in respect of the services set out in Option Two.

To deliver what is described at Option Two, through use of in-house staff, would require 2 FTE technicians at approx £50,000 pa, plus additional costs arising from the need to move to a different pattern of working – 5 days from 7 rather than Monday to Friday, and a shift pattern spanning 07.00 to 22.00.

However, dependent upon the Council's needs, known weekend working such as patching and major system upgrades could be accommodated without recourse to overtime, offsetting the cost.

A far greater range of extended support could also be managed than through a third party, as well as more actual working hours in which "work" could be done.

However, this approach requires a critical mass of FTEs and can only work within a larger single technical team. It is vulnerable to sickness and leavers, and given that we do not yet have a robust picture of out of hours needs

This option is not recommended at this time.

**Option
Four (c)**

Change the working patters of the service desk team

This will allow earlier morning starts to meet the needs of Capita and pick up overnight failures earlier in the day, reducing the impact on public availability hours.

This option is seen as proportionate and is recommended.

**Option Five Exploration of the shared services opportunities with
neighbouring and other local authorities.**

The Review Group found that while there is not currently a like for like partner which would offer the maximum shared service benefit, efforts should continue both in seeking shared procurement, collocation of data centres and shared service provision.

This option is recommended.

44 **Overview and Scrutiny: (1) Committee Report on Democratic
Engagement with Young People and (2) Task and Finish Group Report
on Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee submitted a report to consider the following overview and scrutiny reports:

- Democratic Engagement with Young People (Appendix 1)
- Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (Appendix 2)

Resolved

- (1) That the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutiny review into the Council's approach to Democratic Engagement with Young People be noted.
- (2) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendation regarding the Council's approach to Democratic Engagement with Young People as detailed below be agreed:

Recommendation 1:

That the Council should adopt a more pro-active and structured approach to youth engagement in local democracy and that the Young People's Champion and officers should be invited to develop a formal policy and action plan to achieve this.

- (3) That the work of the Task & Finish Group scrutiny review into Crime and Anti Social Behaviour be noted.
- (4) That the Task & Finish Group recommendation regarding Crime and Anti Social Behaviour as detailed below be agreed:

Recommendation 1:

That the Council take an active role in promoting the positive activities which young people in the district are involved in.

Recommendation 2:

That the Council promote the success of the Street Wardens in Bicester and Banbury and that the possibility of developing the scheme in other areas of Cherwell be investigated.

Recommendation 3:

That Overview and Scrutiny investigate how the Council engages with young people in the District in more detail.

Recommendation 4:

That the Council embarks on intergenerational activities to tackle the perception of crime in the District.

Recommendation 5:

That the Council develop a policy on youth engagement and involvement as part of the Council's consultation and decision making arrangements.

Reasons

These two reports present the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2009/10 and of a Task & Finish Group from the summer of 2008 to the winter of 2009. The reports are presented together because the themes emerging from these two separate reviews are complementary and focus our attention on the fundamental importance of creating a meaningful role for young people in our society.

Options

Option One

To accept all of the recommendations contained in the two Overview and Scrutiny reports.

Option Two

To accept some of the recommendations contained in the two Overview and Scrutiny reports.

Equality Performance Review & Self Assessment

The Chief Executive and Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager submitted a joint report which provided an overview of the Council's achievements relating to our equalities work during 2009/2010 and report the results in relation to the internal self assessment which has been completed under the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) 'Achieving' standard.

Resolved

- (1) That the progress in delivering the Corporate Equalities Action Plan and the Corporate Equalities Improvement Project be noted.
- (2) That the completed 'Achieving' Equality Self Assessment' be agreed
- (3) That the council continue with the equalities work programme for 2010/2011
- (4) That it be agreed not to seek external accreditation of our performance under the equalities standard for local government at this time and take the costs of this inspection as an efficiency saving.

Reasons

By completing the Equality Framework for local Government 'Achieving' Self Assessment we have been able to build a comprehensive picture of the success of our equalities work programme over the last year which will ensure we focus and streamline our future objectives which will benefit all of our local communities. We are confident that we have a structured and robust work programme which will continue to ensure that Cherwell District Council is ensuring fair access to all its services. The cost of the external inspection would have been met by the Corporate Strategy, Performance and Partnerships Team and will now act as an efficiency saving

Options

Option One Agree recommendations as outlined above

Option Two Executive to request that an external inspection to take place in November 2010 using the Self Assessment attached.

46

Asset Management Plan

The Head of Regeneration and Estates submitted a report which presented the Council's Asset Management Plan for 2010/11

Resolved

- (1) That the Asset Management Plan for 2010 be approved.
- (2) That the proposal that vacant small industrial units be used for economic development purposes through lettings on flexible terms, and that this policy be monitored through future reporting on the Asset Management Plan be approved.

Reasons

The Council's investment portfolio provides a significant revenue income, at a yield which is much greater than that achievable on cash investments. The Council has agreed to increase these investments in order to ensure that the

Bicester town centre redevelopment is progressed. Other small commercial investments are proving hard to let in current circumstances. In the past these assets have been let on commercial terms, but it is proposed that vacant industrial units be offered to small businesses on flexible terms, with support from Oxfordshire Business Enterprises, in order to ensure that these properties are utilised in line with the Council's economic development objectives. Flexible terms are likely to comprise a reduced rental for a limited period of up to a year, the inclusion of break clauses operable by tenants at an early date, or the ability to share premises. The precise detail will be subject to negotiation according to circumstances, but agreements will be relatively short term and without security of tenure.

Options

Option One The Plan is presented for approval subject to any amendments the Executive may wish to make. The only change in policy presented comprises the use of vacant small industrial units for economic development purposes, and option available is to continue to seek lettings on conventional commercial terms.

47 **Performance and Risk Management Framework 2010/11 First Quarter Performance Report**

The Chief Executive and Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager submitted a joint report which covered the Council's performance for the period 1 April to 30 June 2010 as measured through the Performance Management Framework. The Leader of the Council requested Paragraph 1.4 of the report to be summarised in short bullet points for members to use.

Resolved

(1) That the following achievements:

A Cleaner Greener Cherwell

- The recycling rate for the first quarter is 62.5% and expected to be within a range of 58-60% at year end. As such we are currently well within range of meeting the target.
- 10 parish councils have benefited from recycled items from the former Spiceball Sports Centre, including doors, flooring and sanitary ware this has helped to improve community facilities.
- The Council has met its data centre power consumption targets and reduce costs from £33513 per year to £11,300.

A Safe and Healthy Cherwell

- Wood Green Leisure Centre opened as planned for Whitsun and

has remained open throughout June to take advantage of the good weather.

- The Banbury Area Cohesion Group held its second community event. A large community marquee at the Banbury Show was run by the group to showcase the work of diverse community groups in Banbury. The event was well attended and supported Banbury Town Council through participation in the Banbury Show, community groups also benefited from the fund raising opportunity.

An Accessible Value for Money Council

- The performance for processing new benefits claims and changes to circumstances remains on target following the work to improve performance during 2009/10.

- (2) That officers be requested to report in the second quarter on the following items where performance was below target or there are emerging issues:

A Cleaner Greener Cherwell

- The recycling rate for the first quarter is 62.5% and expected to be within a range of 58-60% at year end. As such we are currently well within range of meeting the target.
- 10 parish councils have benefited from recycled items from the former Spiceball Sports Centre, including doors, flooring and sanitary ware this has helped to improve community facilities.
- The Council has met its data centre power consumption targets and reduce costs from £33513 per year to £11,300.

A Safe and Healthy Cherwell

- Wood Green Leisure Centre opened as planned for Whitsun and has remained open throughout June to take advantage of the good weather.
- The Banbury Area Cohesion Group held its second community event. A large community marquee at the Banbury Show was run by the group to showcase the work of diverse community groups in Banbury. The event was well attended and supported Banbury Town Council through participation in the Banbury Show, community groups also benefited from the fund raising opportunity.

An Accessible Value for Money Council

- The performance for processing new benefits claims and changes to circumstances remains on target following the work to improve performance during 2009/10.

- (3) Agree the responses identified to issues raised in the end of year performance report in paragraph 2.1 of the report or to request additional action or information.
- (4) That officers be requested to prepare a synopsis of the changes to performance management and national performance indicators and what changes this will involve at a local level to the Cherwell Performance Management Framework.

Reasons

The Performance Management Framework allows Councillors to monitor the progress made in delivering our objectives and to take action when performance is not satisfactory or new issues arise.

Options

- Option One**
1. To note the many achievements referred to in paragraph 1.3.
 2. To request that officers report in the first quarter on the items identified in paragraph 1.4 where performance was below target or there are emerging issues.
 3. To agree the responses identified to issues raised in the end of year performance report in paragraph 2.1 or to request additional action or information.
- Option Two** To identify any additional issues for further consideration or review.

48 2010/11 Projected Revenue and Capital Outturn at 30 June 2010 and 2009/10 Treasury Management Annual Report

The Head of Finance submitted a report that summarised the Council's Revenue and Capital performance for the first 3 months of the financial year 2010/11 and projections for the full 2010/11 period. These are measured by the budget monitoring function and reported via the Performance Management Framework (PMF) informing the 2010/11 budget process currently underway.

Resolved

- (1) That the projected revenue & capital position at June 2010 be noted.
- (2) That the changes in the 2010/11 capital programme be approved as follows:

- Slip £4.8m of project funding into the 2011/12 capital programme (detailed in Appendix 1) and consider this as part of the 2011/12 budget process
- (3) That the performance against the 2009/10 investment strategy and the financial returns from each of the 3 funds be noted and that it be recommended that this report is considered by Full Council in line with CIPFA best practice.
 - (4) That the Q1 performance against 2010/11 investment strategy be noted
 - (5) That the change in cumulative counterparty limits from £8m to £15m be noted.

Reasons

In line with good practice budget monitoring is undertaken on a monthly basis within the Council. The revenue and capital position is reported monthly to the Corporate Management Team and formally to the Executive on a quarterly basis. The revenue and capital expenditure in Q1 has been subject to a detailed review by Officers and reported monthly to management as part of the corporate dashboard. An additional benchmark has been included this year to measure the accuracy of projections by budget holders on a month by month basis. The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management which this Council has adopted requires an Annual Report to be presented to the Executive at the end of each financial year.

Options

Option One	To review current performance levels and consider any actions arising.
Option Two	To approve or reject the recommendations above or request that Officers provide additional information.

49

Strong Leader Model

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report to consider arrangements for adopting the so called 'Strong Leader' model of Executive governance as required by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, until this clause is repealed later in the year.

Resolved

- (1) That it be noted that the Government intend to repeal these requirements later in the year and consequently to agree a minimal response to ensure legislative compliance as set out in the following recommendations and endorsed by the minister in his letter.
- (2) That it be noted that Cherwell already operates a Strong Leader Model

- (3) That the proposals set out below, including the changes to the approval process for the Scheme of Delegation, the appointment of Leader and Annual Council and recommend them to Council for approval be agreed:
- That the following minimal actions be taken to ensure the council complies with legislative requirements until the requirements are repealed.
 - That the constitution be amended to confirm the Leader of the Council's power to determine the size of the Executive, appoint members of the Executive, allocate all Executive functions and serve for a four year term of office.
 - That the constitution be amended to confirm the method by which the Leader may be removed from office.
 - That the constitution be amended to allow the Leader of the Council to make changes to the scheme of delegation, however these will not take effect until, they are reported to Council.
 - That the constitution be amended with regard to the procedure to be followed at Annual Council in light of the above proposals.
- (4) That a summary of the proposed changes be placed on the internet and any responses be reported to Council.
- (5) That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be requested to draft constitutional amendments for consideration by Council to implement the changes.

Reasons

Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, local authorities which had previously adopted an Executive and Leader model of governance are required to consult on changing to either a directly elected mayor or new style leader and Executive. This was part of a rolling 3 year programme beginning with counties, then unitaries and finally districts by 31 December 2010.

The Local Government Act 2000 requires local authorities to consult on any such change to governance arrangements; however the coalition government has informed all district council's that this consultation should not incur significant expenditure and should be minimal, as it is intended to repeal the legislation later in the year. However it is the law now and the council must comply with it.

Options

Option One To agree the recommendations

Option Two To amend the recommendations

The meeting ended at 8.03 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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**COUNCIL MEETING –
RECORD OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISIONS**

SCHEDULE

August 2010 – October 2010

Portfolio	Ref.	Decision Subject Matter
Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural Policy, Community Planning & Community Development	a)	Bicester Car Parking
	b)	Appointments to Outside Bodies
	c)	Bicester Residents Parking

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Cherwell District Council

Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 22 September 2010 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor John Donaldson (Chairman)

Councillor Trevor Stevens (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ken Attack

Councillor Tim Emptage

Councillor Nicholas Mawer

Councillor Barry Wood

Also Present: Maria Grindley, District Auditor, Audit Commission

Nicola Jackson, Audit Manager, Audit Commission

Katherine Bennett, Audit Team Leader, PricewaterhouseCoopers

Apologies for absence: Councillor Lawrie Stratford

Councillor Rose Stratford

Officers: Mary Harpley, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

Martin Henry, Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer

Chris Dickens, Chief Internal Auditor

Karen Curtin, Head of Finance

Jessica Lacey, Technical Accountant

Natasha Clark, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

22 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

23 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

24 Communications

The Chairman advised the Committee that the Head of Finance had successfully passed her Accountancy exams. The Committee joined the Chairman in congratulating the Head of Finance on her magnificent achievement. The Chief Executive echoed the sentiments of the Committee and added her congratulations to the Head of Finance.

The Chief Executive thanked the Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer for his hard work with the Finance Team and support to Cherwell District Council over the past 6 months. In particular, she thanked the Chief Finance Officer and Head of Finance for all their hard work supporting Cherwell District Council. The Chairman also thanked the Finance Team for the tremendous amount of preparatory work that had already taken place as part of the 2011/12 budget setting process.

25 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

26 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

27 **2009/10 Statutory Accounts**

The Head of Finance submitted a report which presented the 2009/10 Audited Financial Statements and Annual Governance Statement for consideration and sought to obtain official sign-off by the Chief Financial Officer, Chairman of Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee, Chief Executive, Leader of the Council and District Auditor.

The Head of Finance reported the Finance Team had implemented 4 changes that had been requested by external audit and 17 minor presentation changes to the Statement of Accounts "Subject to Audit" 2009/10 as adopted by the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee on 23 June 2010.

The Committee noted the continued improvement the Council had made in the closedown process and commended the Finance Team for all their hard work and efforts throughout the process and requested that the entire the Team be advised of Members' satisfaction with the documents presented. The Committee assured the External Auditors that the Council would not be satisfied with merely maintaining the current standard, rather it would continue to look forward and continually seek to improve further.

Resolved

- (1) That the adjustments to the financial statement made subsequent to the adoption of the draft accounts on 23 June 2010 be noted.
- (2) That the 4 changes requested by external audit be noted.
- (3) That the continued improvement in the closedown process and positive impact on the audit opinion and Value For Money judgement be noted.
- (4) That, subject to reviewing the contents of the Annual Governance Report, the 2009/10 financial statements be approved.

28 **Annual Report and Summary of Accounts 2009/10**

The Head of Finance submitted a report which sought approval for the combined Annual Report and Summary of Accounts 2009/10. The Technical Accountant distributed an updated version which incorporated changes that had been made since the publication of the agenda.

Members of the Committee commented that the Annual Report and Summary of Accounts provided an invaluable opportunity to present its achievements to local businesses and residents. The Committee requested a copy of the Annual Report be sent to all elected Members for information.

The Committee thanked the Finance Team for their hard work in producing the Annual Report and Summary of Accounts 2009/10. The Chief Executive echoed the sentiments of the Committee and thanked the Finance Team for producing an excellent set of accounts.

Resolved

- (1) That the Annual Report and Summary of Accounts 2009/10 be approved for publication.
- (2) That a copy of the Annual Report and Summary of Accounts 2009/10 be sent to all elected Members.

29 **External Audit Annual Governance Report**

The District Auditor, Audit Commission presented the External Auditors Annual Governance Report to the Committee, which included comments on the audit of the 2009/10 Statement of Accounts and judgement against the Value for Money (VFM) criteria.

The District Auditor reported that Cherwell District Council had carried out an excellent closedown process and produced the best working papers and set of accounts of all the sets she had signed off. The Council would receive an unqualified opinion on the 2009/10 financial statements and a positive value for money conclusion. The District Auditor thanked the Finance Team for all their hard work in producing an exemplary set of accounts.

Members of the Committee commented that they were very pleased to receive such positive feedback and echoed the sentiments of the District Auditor in praising the Finance Team. The Committee and Chief Executive also thanked the External Auditors for their guidance and support.

In response to Members' questions, the District Auditor updated the Committee on the future external audit arrangements in light of the Government's announcement in August that the Audit Commission would be disbanded. She reported that until 2012 the Audit Commission would continue to provide the same service to Local Authorities in terms of auditing accounts and Annual Governance reports. It was anticipated that draft legislation would

be published in the autumn which set out the design of the future regime and arrangements for local audit.

Resolved

- (1) That the 2009/10 financial statements be approved.
- (2) That the adjustments to the financial statements be noted.
- (3) That the letter of representation on behalf of the Council be approved.
- (4) That it be noted that all of the Criteria for the Value for Money Assessment have been met.
- (5) That the proposed action plan be agreed.

Note: Following consideration of this item and in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, the Chairman signed the letter of representation on behalf of the Council, the Chairman and Chief Finance Officer signed the 2009/10 Statement of Accounts and the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council signed the Annual Governance Statement and the District Auditor signed the Independent Auditor's report to members of Cherwell District Council.

30

Internal Audit Progress Report

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Internal Auditor which summarised the progress made against the internal audit plan for 2010/11 for the period from June to September 2010. The Committee was advised that 36% of the plan had been completed and the remainder would be completed by the end of the financial year.

The Audit Team Leader reported that since the start of the financial year five final reports had been issued, assurance provided on one area and draft reports had been issued and/or fieldwork had commenced in five areas.

The Audit Team Leader updated the Committee with a summary of the activity of the Benefits Investigation Team from April – July 2010. The Team had received 112 referrals and had a sanctions success rate of 58.50% against a target of 50%

The Chief Internal Auditor advised the Committee that the Internal Audit Charter had been updated to reflect the requirements of the Audit Commission Triennial Review. This would be presented to the Committee's December meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the Internal Audit Progress report be approved.

31 **Overview of Treasury Management Performance April - August 2010**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Finance which updated Members on the actual return on investments for the period from 1 April 2010 to 31 August 2010, detailed the counterparties that have been used for investments and considered compliance with the investment strategy.

The Head of Finance reminded Members that as part of the Council's Investment Strategy the Committee had responsibility for considering the investment performance to date and the Council's compliance with counterparties being used. The Committee was advised that the performance for to August 2010 showed a small positive variance and, at present, the interest received looked set to stay on track for the remainder of 2010/11.

The Head of Finance advised the Committee that on the advice of the Council's treasury advisors, the Portfolio Holder Resources and Communication had agreed that the cash limit the Council invests with any bank one banking group be increased from £8m to £15m. This was due to a reduction in the Council's counterparty list which had resulted in difficulties finding places to invest funds.

The Head of Finance reported that the Treasury Management function had undergone its internal audit during the first quarter of 2010/11. The audit had given a 'high assurance' rating. The report had noted an improvement in the performance of the Treasury Management function since 2009/10.

The Head of Finance updated Members on the current situation regarding the Council's investments with the failed Icelandic bank Glitnir. The Council had not been given preferential status and would therefore only recover 31% of the £6.5m investment balance. The objections of all Local Authorities to their creditor status would be considered under Icelandic insolvency law and legal arguments to support the preferred creditor status for 14 test cases (3 of which represented Cherwell deposits) had been presented to Icelandic Courts in September 2010. A further update would be provided to the Committee's December meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report and treasury performance to date be noted.

32 **Update on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Finance which updated Members on the Council's progress towards International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and completing the 2010/11 Statement of Accounts under these new standards.

The Head of Finance advised the Committee that the IFRS Project Group was holding regular meetings to ensure the smooth transition of the accounts, which would be facilitated by the publication of the CIPFA Guidance Notes in

December 2010. She reported that the District Auditor had offered to present an overview of the IFRS to Members at the Committee's December meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report and the officers' proposed actions to deal with the implementation of International Financial Reporting Standards be noted.
- (2) That an IFRS training session facilitated by District Auditor be held at the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee's December meeting.

33 **AARC Forward Plan**

The Head of Finance gave a verbal update on the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee's work programme.

34 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved

That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from 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 Part 1, Schedule 12A of that Act.

35 **Treasury Report - Exempt Appendix 1**

The Committee considered the exempt annex to the report of the Head of Finance updating Members on Treasury Management Performance, which listed the investments that Cherwell District Council had across all funds at 31 August 2010.

Resolved

- (1) That the exempt annex be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Town Hall, Bridge Street, Banbury, OX16 5QB, on 20 July 2010 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Daniel Sames (Chairman)
Councillor Lynda Thirzie Smart (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Andrew Fulljames
Councillor Alastair Milne Home
Councillor Chris Smithson
Councillor Keith Strangwood

Substitute Members: Councillor Simon Holland (In place of Councillor Ann Bonner)

Also Present: Councillor Colin Clarke

Apologies for absence: Councillor Ann Bonner
Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Lawrie Stratford

Officers: Catherine Phythian, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

10 **Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

11 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

12 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

13 **Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation**

Councillor Colin Clarke, Portfolio Holder for Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation, attended the meeting to brief the Committee on the Banbury Brighter Futures project. He explained that this was a complex multi-agency project focusing on three wards in Banbury and that the project had some very long lead times

before there would be tangible results. The project began in the spring of 2009 and the initial work had centred on information gathering and data analysis whereas the focus of activity in 2010 would be on practical action planning and public consultation and communication.

In discussion the Committee reflected on the importance of maintaining data protection standards, the important role that the voluntary sector would play in the success of the project and the need for strict enforcement of the powers available to the project partners.

The Committee thanked Councillor Clarke for his presentation and reaffirmed their offer of support should it be needed as the project progressed. They concluded that there were no issues for them to review at this stage and agreed that it would be appropriate to revisit the Banbury Brighter Futures project in early 2010 to note progress and developments.

Resolved

That the Portfolio Holder for Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation be invited to attend the January 2011 meeting of the Committee to brief them on the progress of the Banbury Brighter Futures project.

14 **Completed scrutiny reviews: Democratic Engagement with Young People and Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour**

The Chairman introduced the scrutiny reports on Democratic Engagement with Young People and Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour. He explained that these reports were now ready for submission to the Executive on 6 September 2010 and that this would be the last opportunity for the Committee to make any final observations. The Committee agreed that both reports had relevance to the Council's work on breaking the cycle of deprivation and that the work of the street wardens and the rest of the safer communities team should be recognised.

Resolved

That the scrutiny reports on Democratic Engagement with Young People and Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour be noted and referred to the Executive.

15 **Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010 - 2011**

The Committee considered the report on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/11.

Preparations for an Ageing Population

The Committee noted that this topic had been carried forward from the previous year. The Committee noted the conclusions of the county wide scrutiny review of this area and agreed that there was little merit in undertaking a similar review as it was unlikely to produce any different or tangible results. They agreed that the topic should be deleted from the work programme.

Forward Plan

The Committee noted that the Executive was due to consider a progress report on Civil Parking Enforcement and Banbury Residents' Parking in October 2010. They asked that the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural be invited to bring the report to the Committee for discussion prior to its submission to the Executive.

Kidlington Pedestrianisation Capital Bid

The Committee were pleased to note that the Executive had accepted the scrutiny recommendation to approve the release of funding for the Kidlington Pedestrianisation project. The Scrutiny Officer undertook to keep the Committee informed of progress on the implementation of the project.

Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual Conference

The Committee asked that the Committee member who had attended the Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual Conference in June 2010 bring a written report on the conference to their next meeting.

RAF Bicester

The Committee noted the recent sale of the Domestic Site at RAF Bicester and the Council's ongoing concerns about the condition of the structures and buildings on the Technical Site. They agreed that the Chairman should ask the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing to write to the new minister setting out the basis of the Council's concerns and asking him to intervene with the Ministry of Defence.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting on 21 September 2010

The Committee noted that there were two main topics for discussion at the September meeting and agreed that the consideration of the project plan for the Built Environment Conservation Area Policy should be scheduled as planned. However, some members of the Committee remained concerned about the proposal to review secondary education attainment levels in Cherwell and questioned its relevance to the work of a District Council.

In conclusion the Committee agreed to proceed as proposed and invite the County Council Cabinet Member and lead officer to attend the September meeting to present the findings of their scrutiny review. The Committee agreed that the discussion should be broadened to include consideration of the work on NEETS (the acronym for the government classification for people currently "Not in Employment, Education or Training") and that local employers should be invited to attend the meeting so that their views on the local job and labour market could be considered.

Resolved

- (1) That the current Overview and Scrutiny Committee element of the work programme for 2010/11 be agreed.
- (2) That "Preparations for an Ageing Population" should be deleted from the work programme.

- (3) That the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural be invited to bring the progress report on Civil Parking Enforcement and Banbury Residents' Parking to the Committee for discussion prior to its submission to the Executive (Forward Plan item ~ October 2010).
- (4) That the Executive approval of the Kidlington Pedestrianisation Capital Bid be noted.
- (5) That the Committee member who had attended the Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual Conference in June 2010 be asked to bring a report on the conference to the next meeting.
- (6) That the Chairman request the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing to write to the new minister asking him to intervene with the Ministry of Defence regarding the Council's concerns about RAF Bicester.
- (7) That the proposed agenda items for the 21 September 2010 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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 September 2010 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Daniel Sames (Chairman)

Councillor Ann Bonner
Councillor Andrew Fulljames
Councillor Alastair Milne Home

Substitute Members: Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE (In place of Councillor Lawrie Stratford)

Also Present: Councillor Michael Gibbard

Apologies for absence: Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Chris Smithson
Councillor Trevor Stevens
Councillor Lawrie Stratford

Officers: Philip Clarke, Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development
Catherine Phythian, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

16 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

17 Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

18 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Built Environment Conservation Area Policy Scrutiny

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing and the Head of Planning and Economic Development joined the Committee for the discussion on the plans and timetable for the scrutiny review into the council's policies for conservation areas.

In discussion the Committee concluded that there were two main elements to this review. Firstly, the review should help councillors understand the powers and responsibilities that conservation area designation gives to an area and the extent to which it can and may wish to use any powers available to it (including the powers of enforcement) to improve the quality of conservation areas. Secondly, it should consider the scope for the Council to develop new or amend existing policies regarding conservation areas through the Local Development Framework.

The Committee noted that it was possible that the proposed changes to the planning system by the Coalition Government would have a direct impact on the way in which the council would deal with conservation areas. The detail of these changes was still unknown but the Committee learnt that the MP for Henley was actively involved in the Government's reform of the planning system. The Committee agreed that the Chairman should liaise with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing to invite the MP for Henley to visit the council for discussions on planning policy reform.

The Committee agreed that officers should provide a briefing on this topic at the meeting on 26 October 2010. The briefing documents should cover the following topics:

- ♦ Details of the types and number of conservation areas in Cherwell
- ♦ Current national legislation as it applies to conservation areas (what it allows and what it does not allow)
- ♦ Possible changes to national legislation
- ♦ The current procedures for the designation of a conservation area and examples of existing conservation area appraisals and the guidance documents made available to residents
- ♦ An example of the current procedure for planning applications within a conservation area and the type of advice/support provided by officers to the public
- ♦ Information on the number and incremental cost of processing conservation area consent applications
- ♦ Information on the frequency of instances where the advice of the Conservation Officer is overruled by colleagues or Planning Committee
- ♦ Details of the relationships with local amenity groups (e.g. the local Civic Society) with regard to conservation areas
- ♦ Clarity on the council's legal powers with regard to enforcement and cost recovery

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing observed that the proposed timescale for this scrutiny review might prove difficult in the context of the council's current work on the 2011/12 Budget and the implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review. The Committee noted the potential resource constraints and agreed to finalise the timetable for the conduct of this scrutiny review following the meeting on 26 October 2010. The

Committee supported the Chairman's proposal to move the final report and recommendation stage of the review from January to a later meeting in the spring of 2011.

20

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/11

The Committee considered the report on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/11.

Forward Plan

The Committee agreed that there were no items on the Forward Plan for September to December 2010 which they wished to include on their work programme in 2010/11.

Executive consideration of scrutiny reports

The Committee noted that the Executive had accepted the scrutiny reports on Democratic engagement with young people and Crime & Anti-social behaviour at their meeting on 6 September. The Chairman reported that in his role as Young People's Champion he had been tasked to work with officers to deliver the recommendation to develop a formal policy and action plan to promote youth engagement in local democracy.

Civil Parking Enforcement and Banbury Resident's Parking

The Committee noted that the Executive report on this topic was on hold. They asked that, if the issue of resident's parking was to go back to the consultation stage, the Committee should be involved in the design and development of the consultation process.

RAF Bicester

The Chairman and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing reported that they had attended the recent public exhibition at RAF Bicester regarding development options for the domestic site. The new owners had made a strong presentation and appeared to be fully committed to recognising the historic importance of the site in any development. It was expected that a planning application would be submitted by December 2010.

The Committee were disappointed to note that there had been no response to the Chief Executive's 21 July letter regarding the future of the technical site. They asked that the matter be followed up by officers.

Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual Conference

The Committee noted the feedback from the Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual Conference in June 2010.

R&PSB Work Programme

The Committee noted that the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board would be reviewing member and staff training as part of their 2011/12 Budget scrutiny exercise.

Future Meetings

The Committee noted that there would be a joint meeting of the two scrutiny committees on 6 October to consider the draft business case for the shared management arrangements between South Northamptonshire Council and Cherwell District Council.

The Committee agreed that the meeting on 26 October 2010 should cover a detailed briefing for the scrutiny review into Built Environment Conservation Policy and an update on Olympics 2012 and the Kidlington Pedestrianisation project.

Resolved

- (1) That the current Overview and Scrutiny Committee element of the work programme for 2010/11 be agreed.
- (2) That there were no items in the current version of the Forward Plan (September - December 2010) to be included on the work programme for 2010/11.
- (3) That the Executive agreement to the recommendations in the scrutiny reports on Democratic Engagement with young people and Crime & Anti-social behaviour be noted.
- (4) That the current status of the Civil Parking Enforcement / Banbury Resident's Parking schemes be noted and that the Committee should be involved in the design and development of any further consultation stages.
- (5) That the update regarding RAF Bicester be noted.
- (6) That the feedback from the Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual Conference be noted.
- (7) That the agenda items for the 6 and 26 October 2010 meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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 20 July 2010 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Chairman)
Councillor David Hughes (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Alyas Ahmed
Councillor Rick Atkinson
Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Tim Emptage
Councillor Neil Prestidge
Councillor Patricia Tompson
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Martin Weir

Substitute Members: Councillor Mrs Diana Edwards (In place of Councillor Carol Steward)

Apologies for absence: Councillor Margaret Cullip
Councillor Carol Steward

Officers: Karen Curtin, Head of Finance
Viv Hichens, Corporate Strategic Procurement Manager
Natasha Clark, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

10 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

11 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

12 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendments:

Minute 5: Disabled Facilities Grant ~ Briefing

Resolution 1: That Councillors Steward, Billington and Cullip be nominated to meet with Housing Services staff to consider aspects of Cherwell District Council's Disabled Facilities Grant Policy.

Minute 8: Draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/11

Resolution 3: That Councillors Steward, Weir, Ahmed and Emptage be nominated to participate in the fees and charges policy review group.

13 Report on the Council's Contract Management Procedures, Policies and Strategies

The Board considered a report of the Head of Finance which explained the current contract management procedures in place across the Council, presented the Council's contracts register which included all contracts with a value greater than £10k and proposed four upcoming tenders from which the Board could choose to focus upon over the coming year.

The Head of Finance explained that the Corporate Procurement Team was formed in 2008. A key role of the Team is to work in co-operation with departments to ensure value for money procurement practice is being exercised by departments and support them as necessary to promote best practice in line with Corporate Procurement Procedure Rules.

With regard to contract management, the Head of Finance explained that procedures vary depending upon the needs of the service and by whom the contract has been set up. The Board was advised that as part of the Corporate Procurement Strategy Action Plan 2010/11 the Procurement and Assured Services Teams would be clarifying the contract management role for the Council and the resources required for effective monitoring with a view to centralising the contract management function.

The Head of Finance gave an overview of the Contracts Register which aims to list all contracts with a lifetime value of £10k or more and advised the Board that the Register was available on the Council's website. In response to Members' questions, the Strategic Procurement Manager explained that there were measures in place within Finance to ensure people use the suppliers with whom there are formal contracts. Members asked questions on a number of particular contracts, to which answers were duly provided.

The Head of Finance highlighted four contracts that were coming up for tender that the Board may wish to focus on as part of their work programme: Bodicote Old House Refurbishment; Buildings Maintenance; Supply of Tyres for Vehicle Fleet; and, Landscape Maintenance. The Board considered each contract and agreed that they would focus on Old Bodicote House Refurbishment in autumn 2010 and Landscape Maintenance in 2011. They would not focus on Buildings Maintenance or Supply of Tyres for Vehicle Fleet.

The Board noted that the options appraisal and sourcing and pre-tender steps of the procurement cycle for the Old Bodicote House Refurbishment had already been completed. However, they felt that focussing on this contract would provide a valuable learning experience for Members and they could still contribute to the process. The Head of Finance and the Strategic

Procurement Manager agreed to circulate a background briefing paper on the process to date to the Board.

The Board agreed that they would like to be involved in the entire procurement cycle for the Landscape Maintenance contract and noted that the options appraisal was due to begin in December 2010.

Resolved

- (1) That the current contract management procedures be noted.
- (2) That the Board focus on the Old Bodicote House Refurbishment and Landscape Maintenance tenders in 2010/11.

14 **Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/11**

The Board considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which presented the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/11. Members noted the Board's elements of the work programme.

Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board Meeting, 7 September 2010

The Board noted the following agenda items for the 7 September meeting.

Partnership Scrutiny: Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership

The Board noted that the Chairman of the Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership, the Cherwell Local Police (LPA) Commander and the Head of Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services would attend the Board's September meeting to brief Members of the Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership. This would also be an opportunity for the Board to consider an approach to a scrutiny review of the Partnership.

Budget Scrutiny 2011/12

The Head of Finance explained that the Executive and Corporate Management Team had held an awayday at which they had considered various scenarios for the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy based on achieving different levels of savings. An analysis was underway of statutory and discretionary services to consider potential areas for cuts in light of the assumption that Government will cut grants to Local Authorities.

The Head of Finance noted that Members of the Board had raised the cost of the Council employing consultants as a potential topic for budget scrutiny and advised the Board that the Executive had also suggested a number of areas that the Board may like to consider as part of their budget scrutiny 2011/12:

- Training
- Fees and charges
- Webcasting
- Capital programme

The Board discussed the suggestions and agreed that they would need to decide where their scrutiny process could add value to each area. Members

requested that the Head of Finance bring more detailed proposals for the scrutiny of the 2011/12 Budget to the Board's September meeting.

Finance Scrutiny Working Group Update

The Chairman reported that the Finance Scrutiny Working Group had met on 12 July 2010 and considered the latest financial indicators, the 2009/10 year end revenue and capital outturn and the end of project appraisal for the sports centre modernisation project. The Group had no issues to raise.

Performance Scrutiny Working Group Update

The Chairman reported that the Group had postponed its June meeting as Members wished to consider the draft Development Control and Major Developments Value for Money review. The Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer advised the Group that this had been delayed, however it would be ready for the Group to consider at its September meeting. Members of the Group agreed that they would not rearrange the June meeting and would consider all outstanding items at the September meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board element of the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/11 be noted.
- (2) That the agenda items for the 7 June meeting of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board be noted.
- (3) That the Head of Finance be invited to bring more detailed proposals for the scrutiny of the 2011/12 Budget to the Board's September meeting.
- (4) That the updates from the Finance Scrutiny Working Group and Performance Scrutiny Working Group be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.15 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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 7 September 2010 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Chairman)

Councillor Alyas Ahmed
Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Margaret Cullip
Councillor Tim Emptage
Councillor Neil Prestidge
Councillor Carol Steward
Councillor Patricia Tompson
Councillor Douglas Webb

Also Present: Councillor Nigel Morris
Superintendent Howard Stone, Local Police Area (LPA) Commander,
Thames Valley Police

Apologies for absence: Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Rick Atkinson
Councillor Martin Weir

Officers: Mary Harpley, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service
Chris Rothwell, Head of Safer Communities, Urban & Rural Services
Karen Curtin, Head of Finance
Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager
Natasha Clark, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

15 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

16 Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

17 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Partnership Scrutiny: Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership

The Chairman welcomed the Chairman of the Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership (CSCP), the Cherwell Local Police Area (LPA) Commander, the Portfolio Holder Community Safety, Urban and Rural, the Head of Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services and the Community and Corporate Planning Manager to the meeting.

The Chairman explained that this was an opportunity for the Board to learn more about the Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership and specifically to establish an understanding of the work of the Partnership, to receive information on the structure and organisation of the Partnership and to establish a better understanding of the relationship between Cherwell District Council and the Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership. Following the discussion the Board would reflect on the evidence presented and if there were any issues that they wished to explore further, these should be added to the 2010/11 Work Programme.

The Chairman of the Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership began by explaining that the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 had established the formation of statutory Crime and Disorder Reductions Partnerships in recognition of the idea that crime reduction should be tackled by a variety of agencies working together in partnership. By law the partnership must include some organisations (local authorities, local police force and authority, Primary Care Trust, fire brigade, probation services) but can also include additional organisations who can help the partnership deliver its priorities. In the case of the CSCP, the Board was advised that in addition to the statutory partners (Cherwell District Council, Thames Valley Police, Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Probation Service and Thames Valley Police Authority) there were five further organisations in the partnership: Oxfordshire County Council, youth offending service, drug action team, Crown Prosecution Service and the Chairmen of the Neighbourhood Action Groups in the district.

The Cherwell Local Police Area (LPA) Commander advised the Board that the CSCP Strategy contains the priorities and vision that all partners will work to deliver. The Strategy is updated every three years and all partners are involved in the process, including Cherwell District Council officers and the Portfolio Holder. The Board was advised that the Strategy linked to other plans and strategies on a district, county and national level. The Partnership was constantly looking forward and seeking better ways to ensure a coordinated multi-agency approach.

The Board heard that four action groups had been established to assess the progress against fulfilling the priorities in the CSCP Strategy 2008-11. In response to Members' questions, the Head of Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services explained that of the 50 actions 42 were complete, 1 was ongoing and 7 were incomplete. The incomplete actions were largely due to funding no longer being available.

The Head of Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services explained that in 2010/11 funding for the partnership came from three sources: Thames Valley Police Basic Command Unit; a county council area based grant; and, a Local

Area Agreement funding stream. Cherwell District Council did not contribute funding directly to the partnership, rather it gave substantially in other ways, notably through officer and member time.

It was anticipated that in 2011/12 funding would be significantly reduced notably with the removal of the funding from the Thames Valley Police and uncertainty over the availability of grants. The Board heard that as the coalition government expected Safer Community Partnerships to continue, the partners were currently discussing reprioritising their activities and other ways of working together to address issues and achieve the priorities of the partnership.

The Board was advised that since coming to power in May, the coalition government had already scrapped the performance target NI21 which related to dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police and the policing pledge. It had not yet been announced what would be replacing these areas but it was anticipated that it would have a more local focus and less bureaucracy.

In response to questions from Board members, the Cherwell Local Police Area (LPA) Commander explained that the CSCP meetings were held quarterly and usually at Bodicote House. Cherwell District Council acted as the secretariat to the partnership. Due to the nature of the business, the meetings were held in private however the meetings were properly accountable with formal agendas and minutes. The partners had agreed that the Cherwell District Council Chief Executive and Cherwell Local Police Area Commander should rotate annually as Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Between the formal meetings, performance monitoring meetings convened, the Head of Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services and the Cherwell Local Police Area Commander met regularly and the Safer Communities Manager was in regular contact with the police and Neighbourhood Management Boards. In addition, the Board heard that the CSCP was part of a wider county and local network of organisations and that it did not act in isolation. For example, the Board was advised about JATAC (Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordinating Group) which has a wider membership than the CSCP and whose purpose is to enable problems common to a range of agencies to be identified and tackled on a multi-agency basis.

The Chairman of the CSCP explained that the partnership met Cherwell District Council's partnership definition contained within the Council's Constitution. The Board was advised that in 2007 the CSCP had adopted the former Government's best practise standards. Whilst the partnership was not reviewed annually, there have been triggers that have led to the need for a review, most recently in July 2010 when the Coalition Government launched a public consultation on key features of the government's reform programme for the policing. The reform programme focussed on changing the face of policing, re-establishing the link between the police and the public, tackling organised crime and protecting the countries borders. It was anticipated that Safer Communities Partnerships would continue, however there would be less bureaucracy and more flexibility for Partnerships to develop local solutions for local problems.

In response to Members' questions about whether residents were aware of the partnership between CSCP and CDC, the Community and Corporate Planning Manager explained that they generally would not be as the partnership was not branded as an independent entity/brand. There were however clear arrangements for consulting the public within the 'Duty to Involve.' Consultation activities included the Cherwell District Council Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey, public workshops, community engagement activities and liaising with Street Wardens, PSO's and Neighbourhood Action Groups to disseminate information.

In terms of elected Member involvement in the partnership, the Portfolio Holder Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural explained that he had been appointed to represent Cherwell District Council on the partnership. He enjoyed being involved in the Partnership and it also provided an opportunity for a two-way dialogue between the Executive and CSCP.

The Chairman thanked the guests for their comments which had been informative and a valuable basis for the Board's consideration of the partnership between Cherwell District Council and the Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership.

In conclusion the Board noted that there was a strong working relationship between the Council and the Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership which supported the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities and strategies. This was underpinned by a formal structure to manage and measure the effectiveness of the partnership. As a result, the partnership was delivering practical benefits to residents in the district. On the basis of the information presented the Board confirmed that there was no need to undertake any further scrutiny of this subject, however Members requested that they receive an update in spring 2011 once the proposals in the Government's policing reform programme consultation have been published and the budget position of the partnership is clearer.

The Board determined that a brief report summarising the information presented should be submitted to the Executive commending the Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership for its work on addressing crime and community safety matters in the district.

Resolved

- (1) That representatives of the Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership be requested to provide an update on the Partnership following the end of the Government's consultation on policing reform and once budget positions of the partners are clearer, to a meeting of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board Officers in spring 2011.
- (2) That a report be submitted to the Executive commending the Cherwell Safer Communities Partnership for its work on addressing crime and community safety matters in the district.

2011/12 Budget Scrutiny Planning

The Board considered a report of the Head of Finance which presented the areas for 2011/12 budget scrutiny. The Head of Finance and the Community and Corporate Planning Manager gave a brief presentation on the context and background to the 2011/12 budget. The Community and Corporate Planning Manager began by explaining the corporate and financial planning process which included consultation with residents, a Citizen's Jury and consideration of current data of the district, such as unemployment and deprivation, and the strategic challenges facing the district. The Board was advised that the consultation had demonstrated a greater public understanding that cuts were needed and a willingness to consider which areas should be cut and which should be protected. This process informed the service ranking prioritisation framework which gave Council services an aggregate priority ranking of 1 – 7 (1 being the highest).

The Head of Finance advised the Board that the Council had cut revenue costs by £5m over the past four years with resources being focussed on frontline services. The 2010/11 budget was currently £18.5m which currently sourced through a Government grant, investment income, council tax and collection fund. The Head of Finance reminded Members that the main challenge facing the Council was the Government's intention to reduce local authority grants as part of its Comprehensive Spending Review, the outcomes of which would be announced by the Chancellor on 20 October 2010.

The Head of Finance updated the Board on the latest position on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the level of budget cuts required based on 25 – 30% government grant cuts. She outlined various ways that would need to be considered to address the shortfall, including budget re-prioritisation, greater clarity on spend on statutory and discretionary services to inform decisions, shared/outsourced services, workforce planning, reduced management costs, enhanced contract management, enhanced asset management, collaborative procurement and increased income opportunities.

In discussion with the Head of Finance, the Board explored the options for their scrutiny of the 2011/12 budget. The Board agreed that they would scrutinise the Council's revenue and capital budget proposals for 2011/12 with specific focus on the building blocks, fees and charges and capital programme. It was agreed that during late September, October and November members of the Board would meet in private with officers to review and discuss these areas in more detail. The Board would then meet on 7 December 2010 to review the conclusions of the meetings and to agree a series of recommendations to go to the Executive in January/February 2010 as part of the second Draft Budget.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (2) That it be agreed that all Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board Members and named substitutes be invited to join all of the budget scrutiny meetings: Building Blocks; Fees and Charges; Capital Review.

- (3) That it be agreed that the following dates and meetings to be used for the budget scrutiny meetings:
- 28 September 2010 (FSWG) – Building Block Scrutiny – focus on training and leisure development
 - 12 October 2010 (RPSB) – Fees and Charges Review
 - 23 November 2010 (PSWG) – Capital Programme Review
 - 30 November 2010 (FSWG) – 2011/12 Budget Scrutiny Review
 - 7 December 2010 (RPSB) – Agree recommendations

20

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/11

The Board considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which presented the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/11. Members noted the Board's elements of the work programme.

Contract Scrutiny

The Board considered a briefing paper of the Head of Finance and Corporate Strategic Procurement Manager and Head of Finance which provided a concise brief on the process and background for the Bodicote Old House Refurbishment tender.

The Head of Finance updated Members on the current position advising Members that background checks were being undertaken on 3 bids and the evaluation panel would be marking the tenders. The Board nominated Councillors Billington, Emptage and Steward to participate in the contract evaluation and award process.

Partnership Scrutiny: Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

The Board considered an update from the Head of Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services which provided an overview of progress against the recommendations that were agreed by Executive in April 2010 following the Board's scrutiny review of the Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council.

The Portfolio Holder Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural reported that he was satisfied with the progress against the recommendations. He had been meeting regularly with the Head of Safer Communities, Urban and Rural Services and the Council's appointed member representative for Oxfordshire Rural Community Council who would be attending the ORCC AGM and Conference in October.

Members noted that in light of emerging budget and service pressures all of the Council's partnerships were being kept under review. The Board requested that a further update on progress against the recommendations be presented to the Board in the spring and that this update include a short briefing from Council's appointed member representative for Oxfordshire Rural Community Council.

Performance Scrutiny Working Group Update

The Chairman advised Members that the Performance Scrutiny Working Group would be meeting on 21 September 2010. The meeting would consider the draft Development Control and Major Developments Value for Money report, the 2009/10 year end and the 2010/11 Quarter 1 Performance Management Framework reports and a briefing note on absenteeism/staff sickness.

Future Meetings Schedule

The Chairman updated Members on the meeting schedule. Members noted that there would be a joint meeting of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board and Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6 October 2010 to consider the draft business case for joint management arrangements between Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council.

Members of the Board noted that all other meetings in the autumn would be used for budget scrutiny and that the R&PSB meeting scheduled for 12 October would now be an informal meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board element of the work programme for 2010/11 be noted.
- (2) That Councillors Billington, Emptage and Steward be nominated to participate in the contract evaluation and award process for the Bodicote Old House Refurbishment tender.
- (3) That the update on the progress against the recommendations of the 2009/10 scrutiny review of Cherwell District Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council be noted.
- (4) That Officers be requested to provide a further update on the progress against the recommendations of the 2009/10 scrutiny review of Cherwell District Council's partnership with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council in spring 2011 and that the Council's appointed member representative for Oxfordshire Rural Community Council be requested to brief the Board on his views.
- (5) That the update on the Performance Scrutiny Working Group be noted.
- (6) That the update on the autumn meeting dates of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board, Finance Scrutiny Working Group and Performance Scrutiny Working Group be noted.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Cherwell District Council

Standards Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 8 July 2010 at 6.30 pm

Present: Dr Sadie Reynolds (Chairman)
Jim McBeth (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Fred Blackwell
Councillor Chris Heath
Councillor Russell Hurle
Councillor James Macnamara
Derek Bacon
Kenneth Hawtin
Councillor David Carr
Councillor Alan Greenslade-Hibbert

Substitute Members: Councillor John Coley
Councillor Lawrie Stratford (In place of Councillor Rose Stratford)

Apologies for absence: Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Councillor George Parish
Councillor Rose Stratford
Councillor Douglas Williamson

Officers: Liz Howlett, Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Natasha Clark, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

1 **Appointment of Chairman**

Resolved

That Dr Sadie Reynolds be elected Chairman of the committee for the 2010/11 Council year. (Dr Reynolds took the Chair)

2 **Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

Resolved

That Mr Jim McBeth be appointed Vice-Chairman for the Council year 2010/11.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

5 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

6 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March were agreed subject to the inclusion of the following additional minute:

“60. Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
The Chairman advised the Committee that this was Alexa Coates last meeting. The Committee thanked her for her support to the Committee and wished her well in her new post.”

7 **Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 8th June, 2010 of Standards Assessment Sub-Committee**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Assessment Sub-Committee held on 8 June 2010 were noted.

8 **Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 22nd June, 2010 of Standards Assessment Sub-Committee**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Assessment Sub-Committee held on 22 June 2010 were noted.

9 **Requests for Member Dispensations - Barford St John and St Michael Parish Council**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer submitted a report which sought consideration of a request from the seven members of Barford St John and St Michael Parish Council for dispensations to enable them to participate in meetings of the Parish Council when matters relating to Barford St Michael Village Hall are considered, despite having personal and prejudicial interests.

Resolved

- (1) That dispensations, limited to a period expiring on the date of the next Parish Council elections for Barford St John and St Michael in May 2014, be granted to the present Barford St John and St Michael Parish Councillors (namely Rodney Silvester, Tracey Bullard, Sandi Turner, Robin George Woolgrove, Peter Leslie Eden, Sarah Louise Best and

Lisa Jane Styles) to enable them to participate in meetings of the Parish Council when matters relating to Barford St Michael Village Hall are considered be approved.

- (2) That the dispensation mentioned in (1) above also be given to any new Parish Councillors joining the Parish Council in the meantime, subject to the Parish Clerk providing the relevant details to the Monitoring Officer be approved.

10 **Requests for Member Dispensation - Wroxton Parish Council**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer submitted a report which sought consideration of a request from members of Wroxton Parish Council for dispensations to enable them to participate in meetings of the Parish Council when all matters relating to the proposed Sports Pavilion and Community Hall in Wroxton and the proposed Village Hall in Balscote, are considered despite having a personal and prejudicial interest.

Resolved

- (1) That dispensations, limited to a period expiring on the date of the next Parish Council elections for Wroxton in May 2014, be granted to the present Wroxton Parish Councillors (namely Barry Allen, David Endicott, Robert Jesson, David McNaught, Michael Roberts, Carl Nicholson and Michael Whelan) to enable them to participate in meetings of the Parish Council when matters relating to the proposed Sports Pavilion and Community Hall in Wroxton and the proposed Village Hall in Balscote are considered be approved.
- (2) That the dispensation mentioned in (1) above also be given to any new Parish Councillors joining the Parish Council in the meantime, subject to the Parish Clerk providing the relevant details to the Monitoring Officer be approved.

11 **Draft Standards Annual Report 2009/10**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer submitted a report which presented the draft Standards Committee Annual Report 2009/10. The Committee noted the section on the Appointments to the Standards Committee and agreed that the report should record the Committees' thanks to Mr Douglas Frewer and Cllr Bernard Lane who had stood down from the Committee at the end of the 2009/10 Council year.

The Committee discussed the Government's proposals "to abolish the Standards Board regime". Members of the Committee noted that the majority of Cherwell District Councillors had welcomed the Government's decision to save the cost of running Standards for England at this difficult economic time.

The Committee considered the publicity arrangements for the Annual Report 2009/10. Members agreed that the report should be sent electronically to the local press together with a press release, that it should be sent to every

Parish Council in the District, where possible electronically, and published on the Council's website.

Resolved

- (1) That the Annual Report 2009/10 be approved subject to the amendments outlined above.
- (2) That the publicity arrangements for the Annual Report 2009/10 would be as follows: send the report electronically to the local media with a press release; send the report, electronically where possible, to every Parish Council in the District; and, publish the report on the Council's website.
- (3) That the Annual Report for 2009/10 from the Standards Committee be recommended to Council to note.
- (4) That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be delegated authority to update the Standards Committee Annual Report 2009/10 in light of any announcements about the Standards Board regime by the Government prior to the publication of the Annual Report.

The meeting ended at 7.10 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Standards Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held in at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 16 September 2010 at 6.30 pm

Present: Dr Sadie Reynolds (Chairman)

Jim McBeth(Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Fred Blackwell
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Councillor Chris Heath
Councillor James Macnamara
Councillor Douglas Williamson
Derek Bacon
Kenneth Hawtin
Councillor David Carr

Substitute Members: Councillor John Coley
Councillor Ken Attack (In place of Councillor Lawrie Stratford)

Apologies for absence: Councillor George Parish
Councillor Lawrie Stratford
Councillor Rose Stratford
Councillor Alan Greenslade-Hibbert

Officers: Nigel Bell, Solicitor
Michael Sands, Trainee Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

12 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

13 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

14 Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

15 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

16 **Minutes of meeting Thursday 29 July 2010 of Standards Assessment Sub-Committee**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Assessment Sub-Committee held on 29 July 2010 were noted.

17 **Request for Member Dispensation - Banbury Town Council**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report which sought consideration of a request from Banbury Town Council, who were also Cherwell District Councillors, for dispensations to enable them to participate in meetings of Banbury Town Council when issues regarding the 2010/11 budget as well as the 2011/12 budget are considered, despite them having a prejudicial interest.

Resolved

- (1) That dispensations, limited to a period expiring on the date of the next Town Council elections for Banbury in May 2011, be granted to the Town Councillors listed below:

Alyas Ahmed, Ann Bonner, Colin Clarke, Margaret Cullip, John Donaldson, Tony Ilott, Kieron Mallon, Alastair Milne Home, Nigel Morris, George Parish, Chris Smithson, Keith Strangwood, Patricia Tompson, Nicholas Turner and Martin Weir.

18 **Request for Member Dispensation - Bicester Town Council**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report which sought consideration of a request from Bicester Town Council, who were also Cherwell District Councillors, for dispensations to enable them to participate in meetings of Bicester Town Council when budget setting 2011/12 is considered, despite them having a prejudicial interest.

Resolved

- (1) That dispensations, limited to a period expiring on the date of the next Town Council elections for Bicester in May 2011, be granted to the Town Councillors listed below:

Nick Cotter, Nick Mawer, Debbie Pickford, Dan Sames, Les Sibley, Carol Steward, Lawrie Stratford, Rose Stratford.

19 **Standards for England Protocol for Local Authority Partnership Working**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report which updated the Committee on the key aspects of the Standards for England Protocol for Partnership Working.

Resolved

- (1) That the Standards for England Partnership Behaviour Protocol be noted.
- (2) That the fact the Cherwell District Council Partnership Protocol already reflects the Standards for England Partnership Behaviour Protocol and that no changes are required be noted.

20

Operation of the Ethical Framework Survey 2010/11

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report which presented the draft Operation of the Ethical Framework survey 2010/11 to Members of the Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That the Operation of the Ethical Framework Survey 2010/11 be approved.
- (2) That the proposals and timescale for conducting the survey be approved.
- (3) That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be delegated the authority to make minor amendments to the Operation of the Ethical Framework Survey 2010/11 in consultation with the Chairman of the Standards Committee in the light of any the announcements about the Standards Board regime by the Government which will be part of the Localism Bill in November 2010.

21

Current Proposals for the Standards Regime

The Solicitor gave a verbal update to the Committee on the current proposals for the Standards Regime.

The meeting ended at 6:40 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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