

Cherwell District Council

Budget Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Planning Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 14 September 2021 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Chairman)

Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Shaida Hussain
Councillor Andrew McHugh
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Fraser Webster
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Substitute Members:

Councillor Maurice Billington (In place of Councillor Carmen Griffiths)
Councillor Sandy Dallimore (In place of Councillor Lucinda Wing)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Carmen Griffiths
Councillor Conrad Copeland
Councillor Lucinda Wing

Officers:

Anita Bradley, Director Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

9 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

10 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 July 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

12 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

13 **Monthly Performance, Finance and Risk Monitoring Report**

The Assistant Director Finance presented the report of the Director of Finance which summarise Cherwell District Council's forecast revenue and capital outturn position for 2021/22 as at July 2021 to give the Committee the opportunity to consider the financial aspects of the report.

In considering the report, Members referred to the layout of the capital expenditure information and requested officers review and improve the layout for future reports to include profiling, more detail on longer term projects and track change updates to enable the Committee to easily see where there have been changes, better understand the process and when the capital funds will be spent.

In response to Members' queries regarding aged debt and at what stage debts would be written off, the Assistant Director Finance explained that each debt needed to be considered on a case by case basis in line with the council's financial procedure rules. A breakdown of values would be provided to the Committee.

In response to Members' comments regarding planned savings not being achieved and the impact on future budgets, the Assistant Director Finance confirmed that there would be an impact and this was under review by the senior management team. The Assistant Director Finance clarified the distinction between capital and revenue budgets and explained that capital savings did not translate to revenue savings. An update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy would be submitted to the October Executive meeting.

In the course of discussion, Members referred to the Castle Quay overspend and requested that additional information be provided on the plans to address this in light of potential financial implications on the council.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (2) That officers be requested to review and improve the presentation of and information provided on capital expenditure in future monitoring reports.

Review of Committee Work Plan

The Committee considered it's work plan.

The Chairman referred to the comments made under the previous item regarding Castle Quay and the financial impact on the Council. Members requested that officers provide an update to the next meeting of the Committee.

In response to Members' comments regarding a future item on the financial benefits and savings of homeworking, the Assistant Director of Finance advised that the revised 2020/2021 budget in August 2020 had picked up benefits for that financial year and homeworking savings assumptions had been included as part of the 2021/2022 budget setting. The Assistant Director of Finance undertook to provide an update on specific savings proposals to a future meeting of the Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to the addition of "Financial Impact of Castle Quay on the Council" to the October meeting and "Financial Benefits and Savings of Homeworking" to a future meeting, the Committee work plan be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.37 pm

Chairman:

Date: