

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 23 May 2011 at 6.30 pm

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

Councillor Ken Atack
Councillor Norman Bolster
Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Michael Gibbard
Councillor James Macnamara
Councillor Nigel Morris
Councillor Nicholas Turner

Also Present: Councillor Colin Clarke
Councillor Kieron Mallon
Councillor Leslie F Sibley
Councillor Andrew Beere
Councillor Patrick Cartledge

Apologies for absence: Councillor D M Pickford

Officers: Sue Smith, Chief Executive
Ian Davies, Strategic Director - Environment and Community
John Hoad, Strategic Director - Planning, Housing and Economy
Karen Curtin, Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer
Nigel Bell, Solicitor and Interim Monitoring Officer
Gillian Greaves, Head of Housing Services
Paul Marston-Weston, Head of Recreation & Health
Ed Potter, Head of Environmental Services
Alison Davies, Project Manager
Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager
Shona King, Planning Officer
Craig Knight, Strategic Housing Facilitator
Richard McIntyre, Senior Housing Options Officer
Philip Rolls, Recreation & Health Improvement Manager
Martyn Swann, Strategic Housing Manager
Helen Town, Strategic Housing Officer
James Doble, Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager

1 **Declarations of Interest**

Members declared interests in the following agenda items

6. Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Voluntary Car Driving Schemes in Cherwell.

Councillor G A Reynolds, Personal, as a County Councillor.

Councillor John Donaldson, Personal, as a management board member of CCBS and WRVS.

Councillor Ken Atack, Personal, as a board member of Oxfordshire Rural Communities Council and CCBS.

Councillor Michael Gibbard, Personal, as a County Councillor.

Councillor Nicholas Turner, Personal, as a County Councillor.

Councillor Norman Bolster, Personal, as a County Councillor.

8. Local Development Framework (LDF) - Next Steps.

Councillor Barry Wood, Personal, due to persons known to him having a land interest in land outside but in the vicinity of Eco-Bicester.

Councillor G A Reynolds, Personal, as Drayton Parish Clerk.

Councillor Nicholas Turner, Personal, due to interest in Drayton Manor Golf, should this issue arise a prejudicial interest will be declared.

Councillor Nigel Morris, Personal, due to interest in a site within the report.

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

The Chairman confirmed there were no petitions and that he had agreed to Councillors Beere, Cartledge and Clarke to address the meeting.

3 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

4 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 April 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 **Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Voluntary Car Driving Schemes in Cherwell**

The Head of Housing Services submitted a report to consider a commissioning exercise to deliver a consistent and equitable approach to the funding of advice, volunteering and volunteer driving services in Cherwell and to consider the implications for a potential countywide Dial-a-Ride service.

Councillor Cartledge addressed the Executive as a ward member and officers agreed to provide further details to him on the issues he raised.

In the course of the debate the Leader of the Council confirmed that he would like the Council to look hard at the relationship between the council and Banbury Community Transport and additionally he would like Overview and Scrutiny to help ensure the engagement of all councillors on this issue.

Resolved

- (1) To signify a likely cessation of existing funding arrangements for organisations funded through the Council's Voluntary Sector (Community Development) Grants Programme and Community Transport Grants Programme as from 31 March 2012.
- (2) To commence a commissioning process to fund strategically relevant Advice, Volunteering and Volunteer Car Driving services across three geographical areas within Cherwell.
- (3) To note ongoing officer discussions with Oxfordshire County Council regarding County Council proposals to develop a countywide Dial-a-Ride Service and how this might serve District residents most in need of this service.
- (4) To receive a further report on the outcome of this exercise as part of the 2012/13 Service and Financial Planning process in the Autumn.

Reasons

This proposal marks a shift from grant funding organisations to commissioning strategically relevant services. We are in a time when it is important that the Council funds services which target those most in need, are delivered on an equitable basis and support the Council to deliver its statutory responsibilities. This proposal sets out to do this in the context of a national agenda of Localism and Big Society.

Options

Option One Continue current arrangements. This would not deliver the 24% savings nor provide an opportunity to target funding at services which support the Council's statutory responsibilities and improve cost effectiveness and a more equitable distribution of resources.

Option Two

Delay the proposed commissioning arrangements until the County Reviews for both Community Transport and Advice Services are complete. It should be noted though that the risk of entering into a county procurement exercise are a) further delays, b) significant officer time, c) potential compromise between county and district priorities.

Option Three

- To cease existing funding arrangements for organisations funded through the Council's Voluntary Sector (Community Development) Grants Programme and Community Transport Grants Programme as from 31 March 2012 – as listed in Appendix One
- To commence a competitive commissioning process to fund a strategically relevant Advice, Volunteering and Volunteer Car Driving Service across three Community Advice Centres in Cherwell.
- Through undertaking the above achieve an efficiency saving.

6 **Planning Obligations Draft Supplementary Planning Document**

The Strategic Director, Planning, Housing and Economy submitted a report to report back on the progress of the Planning Obligations Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and to approve the use of the draft SPD as informal guidance with immediate effect. The Strategic Director, Planning, Housing and Economy drew members' attention to the Planning Obligations Draft Supplementary Planning Document, which had published separately

Resolved

- (1) That the use of the draft Supplementary Planning Document (annex 1 to the minutes as set out in the minute book) as informal guidance with immediate effect be approved.

Reasons

There is an urgent need to replace the now outdated current guidance 'Planning Obligations – Interim Planning Guidance 2007'. The draft SPD can be used as a practical and up to date basis for development control negotiations whilst the document is finalised and formalised through the LDF process. The draft SPD replaces and supersedes all previous documents relating to planning obligations including the Affordable Housing Code of Practice Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 2004 (with addendum 2007) and the Residential and Amenity Open Space Provision SPG (2004 and revised adoption procedures 2006)

Options

- Option One** To approve the use of the draft SPD as informal guidance for development control purposes with immediate effect.
- Option Two** To approve the use of the draft SPD as informal guidance for Development Control purposes following amendment.
- Option Three** Not to approve the use of the draft SPD as informal guidance for Development Control purposes.

7 Local Development Framework (LDF) - Next Steps

The Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development submitted a report to agree to undertake an informal consultation on locally generated population and household growth projections, a responding development strategy and other revisions to the Draft LDF Core Strategy.

Resolved

- (1) That a revised development strategy as set out below be agreed and to include the PPS Eco-Town Standards as a new policy element of the Core Strategy also be agreed:

“Work be undertaken regarding revisions to Policy RA2 (Distribution of Housing in the Rural Areas) in the Draft Core Strategy. This option incorporates all of the proposed strategic sites in the Draft Core Strategy:

Eco-Town NW Bicester 3000 dwellings - during plan period

Canalside Banbury 1200 dwellings

Bankside Phase 2 Banbury 400 dwellings

Bretch Hill Banbury 400 dwellings

This gives a total development programme on identified sites of 5000 dwellings to set against projections which show a potential need of approximately 5600. The balance (c600) would be met within the rural areas and Kidlington.

Neighbourhood planning initiatives will be encouraged in rural locations. This, combined with the expectation of acceptable planning application proposals, will deliver sufficient new village housing and ensure that there is some scope for continued rural development.

No further strategic employment land allocations are proposed other than land included in the Eco-Town proposal.”

- (2) That it be agreed to progress an informal public consultation on a Revised Draft Core Strategy which incorporates locally generated population and household growth projections and a revised development strategy set out in this report and:
- (3) That the preparation of the detailed wording of the Revised Draft Core Strategy and any consultation material to the Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development be delegated in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing.
- (4) That the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development in consultation with the Lead member for Planning be delegated to agree the presentation and apportionment of the housing numbers for Kidlington and rural areas within the ceiling as set out in the report.

Reasons

The preparation of the Local Development Framework is a statutory requirement. However, the Government has proposed that changes to the statutory procedures for the preparation of Local Development Frameworks will be introduced in April 2012. These changes are expected to include greater responsibility for local planning authorities in assessing their local housing needs.

Options

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| Option One | To agree the recommendations as set out in the report. |
| Option Two | To amend the recommendations |
| Option Three | Not to agree the recommendations. |

8 Use of Natural Resources Project

The Head of Environmental Services submitted a report that considered the progress of the Use of Natural Resources Delivery Group and the overall progress of the Council in responding to climate change and energy efficiency within its own operations.

Resolved

- (1) That the achievements of the Use of Natural Resources project be noted.
- (2) That Cherwell's Carbon Management Plan (annex 2 to the minutes as set out in the minute book) reducing 22% of the Council's carbon emissions by 2014/15 through improving the energy efficiency of its own operations be supported.

- (3) That the Energy Policy (annex 3 to the minutes as set out in the minute book) which sets out the how the Council will use energy efficiently be approved.

Reasons

A co-ordinated cross-service approach has been employed to take action and to drive forward and support Cherwell's Carbon Management Plan reducing 22% of its carbon emissions by 2014/15. The strategic themes of the Carbon Management Plan will derive largely from the Use of Natural Resource Delivery Group and its work streams. A new Energy Policy will help further the success of carbon reduction work as part of the Carbon Management Plan.

Options

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| Option One | To approve the proposed Carbon Management Plan and Energy policy, and agree the 22% target reduction in CO ₂ emissions by 2014/15 |
| Option Two | To reject the proposed Carbon Management Plan and Energy policy and rely on improvements in energy consumption and carbon emissions made to date. This is forecast to cost the council £1,000,000 more by 2015. |
| Option Three | To ask officers to modify the proposals to set a lower emissions target, recognising that this would conflict with public and national government expectations |

9

Bicester Multi-Sport Village

The Strategic Director Environment and Community submitted a report o provide an update on the development of the Bicester Multi-Sports Village project, to award the contract for the construction of Phase 1 (construction of grass pitches and landscaping) and to consider the revenue implications of the project when it becomes operational in 2014.

In the course of consideration the Executive noted the exempt annex to the report.

Resolved

- (1) That a contract for the construction of Phase 1 of the Sports Village, subject to planning consent for the outstanding reserved matters, be awarded to Agripower Ltd.
- (2) That Bicester Town Council be requested to consider funding for the revenue implications from 2014/15.

- (3) That the design of Phase 2 be progressed and funding opportunities investigated to deliver the full scheme.

Reasons

The Sports Village development is soon to begin the construction phase and a realistic timetable to deliver the project has been established. The project is being progressed in three phases, Phases 1 and 2 would ensure that planning obligations are met with Phase 1 commencing this summer. Phase 3 will only be progressed if the relevant funding can be secured.

Options

Option One Award the contract for Phase 1 and continue to investigate options for the delivery of Phases 2 and 3.

Option Two To consider alternative schemes which, because of planting seasons, would delay any work on site until June 2012.

Option Three Not to progress the project but to provide a reduced scheme that would only meet the needs of the Kingsmere Development meeting the legal obligations of the Section 106 agreement.

10

Brighter Futures in Banbury Programme

The Strategic Director Environment and Community submitted a report to consider a review of the first year of the Brighter Futures Programme in Banbury and the proposed emphasis in the second and subsequent years.

Councillor Clarke addressed the meeting at the discretion of the Chairman as the former portfolio holder with responsibility for Brighter Future in Banbury.

Councillors Beere and Cartledge addressed the Executive as ward members and officers agreed to provide them with further details on the issues they raised.

Resolved

- (1) That the very good progress made in the first year of the Brighter Futures Programme be noted.
- (2) That the areas of emphasis and proposed activity in 2011/12 be supported.
- (3) That further reports be received as appropriate on progress.

Reasons

The proposals in this report are about making a difference to those families and individuals in greatest need. They include continued effectiveness of multi-agency working, helping those in greatest need, having a common purpose and understanding, taking a long-term approach, making best use of current and anticipated reducing resources and engaging with local people and communities in Banbury.

Options

- Option One** Adopt the recommendations as set out
- Option Two** Amend/add to the areas of focus for 2011

11 **Review of Reserves**

The Head of Finance submitted a report to seek endorsement from the Executive, following a review by the Head of Finance – in association with the Portfolio Holder for Resources – of the Councils revenue reserves, to determine whether they are set an appropriate level with regard to purpose, anticipated timing of need, degree of risk and level of potential expenditure.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted and endorsed.
- (2) That the transfers between earmarked reserves and the creation of 1 new reserve detailed in annex 4 to the minutes (as set out in the minute book) be approved.
- (3) That the Head of Finance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, be delegated to transfer sufficient funds from earmarked reserves to general fund balances as part of the closedown processes for 2010-11 to avoid general fund balances falling below the minimum amount stated in the medium term financial strategy.

Reasons

Cherwell District Council is required to maintain adequate financial reserves to meet the needs of the organisation. The purpose of the reserves policy is to set out how the Council will determine and review the level of general fund reserves. The Council's general fund is where all the revenue income and expenditure of the Council is accounted for. It does not include specific funds such as the collection fund or the housing revenue account. Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require local authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement.

Options

- Option One** To endorse the review of reserves undertaken and the proposed adjustments.

Option Two To reject the recommendation above.

12 **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 Schedule 12A of that Act.

13 **Community Led and Self-Build Housing**

The Head of Housing Services submitted a report to update the Executive on work on community led and self build housing development opportunities following the approach agreed in a report to January Executive on “Housing in Cherwell and the Current Economic Climate”.

Resolved

That the resolutions as set out in the exempt minute be approved.

The meeting ended at 9.04 pm

Chairman:

Date: