

## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Executive**

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 7 June 2021 at 6.30 pm

#### Present:

Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), Leader of the Council  
Councillor Ian Corkin (Vice-Chairman), Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Customers and Transformation  
Councillor Phil Chapman, Lead Member for Leisure and Sport  
Councillor Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning  
Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Financial Management and Governance  
Councillor Andrew McHugh, Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing  
Councillor Richard Mould, Lead Member for Performance  
Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Economy, Regeneration and Property  
Councillor Dan Sames, Lead Member for Clean and Green  
Councillor Lucinda Wing, Lead Member for Housing

#### Also Present:

Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group  
Councillor John Broad, for agenda item 6

#### Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive  
Bill Cotton, Corporate Director Environment and Place  
Steve Jorden, Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets & Investment  
Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers and Organisational Development  
Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer  
Anita Bradley, Director Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer  
Robert Jolley, Assistant Director: Growth & Economy  
Ed Potter, Assistant Director: Environmental Services  
Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes  
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

## **1 Declarations of Interest**

10. Appointment of Shareholder Committee for the municipal year 2021/2022. Councillor Dan Sames, Non Statutory Interest, as a CDC appointed non-Executive Director on Graven Hill Management Company and Graven Hill Development Company and would leave the meeting for the duration of the item.

Councillor Ian Corkin, Non Statutory Interest, as a CDC appointed non-Executive Director on Graven Hill Management Company and Graven Hill Development Company and would leave the meeting for the duration of the item.

16. Graven Hill Update.

Councillor Dan Sames, Non Statutory Interest, as a CDC appointed non-Executive Director on Graven Hill Management Company and Graven Hill Development Company and would leave the meeting for the duration of the item.

Councillor Ian Corkin, Non Statutory Interest, as a CDC appointed non-Executive Director on Graven Hill Management Company and Graven Hill Development Company and would leave the meeting for the duration of the item.

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

There were no petitions.

The Chairman advised the meeting that he had agreed to Councillor Broad addressing the meeting at item 6, Car Parking.

**3 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**4 Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

**5 Car Parking**

The Assistant Director Environmental Services submitted a report which updated the Executive on the Car Parking Strategy & Action Plan and proposed new car parking charges to be implemented by August 2021.

At the discretion of the Chairman, Councillor Broad addressed Executive, in relation to motorcycle parking and requested that proper secure parking be provided for motorcycles in the future.

In response to Councillor Broad's address, the Chairman and Lead Member for Clean and Green confirmed that this was an area that could be looked at going forward.

## **Resolved**

- (1) That the progress on delivery of the car parking strategy and action plan be noted.
- (2) That changing Bolton Road car park to a short stay car park once Cherwell Drive long stay car park is completed be approved.
- (3) That the change of Chapel Brook car park to a long stay car park be approved.
- (4) That it be approved to increase car park charges by August 2021 (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book).
- (5) That the progress on the move to Civil Parking Enforcement be noted.

## **Reasons**

The Car Parking Strategy and the associated action plan has been developed with the input of elected members and other key stakeholders. The strategy was approved last autumn and the action plan is regularly reviewed & updated

The number of pay on exit car parks are gradually increasing, Civil Parking Enforcement will be implemented in late 2021 and electric charging facilities are starting to be installed. The charges in car parks have been reviewed and are below comparable nearby towns

The recommended changes in charges brings the charges in line with towns in the neighbouring areas. This change if it had been implemented from April 2021 would have raised £400k during 2021/22. The proposed change during July will generate around £260k in 2021/22 and £400k in 2022/23 subject to car parking numbers recovering after the pandemic. To achieve higher levels of increased income in 2021/22 would require steeper rises in charges which would move parking charges above some neighbouring towns and even some other existing providers in the district.

## **Alternative options**

Option 1: To adopt the recommendations.

Option 2: To reject the recommendations and to ask officers to review matters including the revised parking charging levels

## **Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan**

The Assistant Director - Growth and Economy submitted a report for the Executive to formally support and endorse the Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan (ERP).

In considering the report, Members requested that an All Member workshop be arranged at the appropriate time to enable Members to have input into the emerging Recovery and Prosperity Strategy for Cherwell.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan be supported and endorsed.
- (2) That officers be requested to ensure that key elements of the Economic Recovery Plan are incorporated into the emerging Recovery and Prosperity Strategy for Cherwell (formerly the Cherwell Industrial Strategy) and it be noted it will incorporate key projects such as job fairs as part of a comprehensive response to the District's economic recovery from the pandemic.

### **Reasons**

The publication of the Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) is welcomed as a positive response to tackling the serious detrimental impact of COVID-19 on the Oxfordshire economy.

The request to HM Government for £437m is a positive and ambitious one; realistically, the chances of achieving this level of funding are unlikely but even a fraction of this will be a good achievement. The critical thing is how the funding which is attracted is invested. The ERP Action Plan and the Recovery and Prosperity Strategy for Cherwell will set out the various projects and activities required to help deliver economic recovery.

### **Alternative options**

Option 1: To do nothing and not participate in the development of the ERP. This was rejected because the economic impact of COVID-19 was so great that positive action was needed. It was not realistic.

Option 2: To go it alone – this was rejected because HM Government had asked LEPs to lead on developing Economic Recovery Plans not tier 2 local authorities.

## **7 Monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report**

The Director of Finance and Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes submitted a report which summarised the Council's performance, risk and finance monitoring positions as at the end of March 2021.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring report be noted.

- (2) That the Annual Performance Report 2020/21 (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be noted.

### **Reasons**

The Council is committed to performance, risk and budget management and reviews progress against its corporate priorities on a monthly basis.

This report provides an update on progress made during March 2021 and also reflects on the past 12 months in delivering the Council's priorities through reporting on Performance, the Leadership Risk Register and providing an update on the financial position.

### **Alternative options**

Option 1: This report illustrates the Council's performance against the 2020-21 business plan. As this is a monitoring report, no further options have been considered. However, Members may wish to request that officers provide additional information.

## **8 Appointments to Outside Bodies and Member Champions 2021/2022**

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report to appoint representatives to Partnerships and Outside Bodies and Member Champions where these are executive functions, for the municipal year 2021/2022.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That appointments to partnerships, outside bodies, Member Champions and advisory groups for 2021/2022 be made and ceased as set out in the annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book).
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Director of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to appoint Members to any outstanding vacancies and make changes to appointments as may be required for the 2021/2022 Municipal Year.
- (3) That the Director of Law and Governance be requested to undertake a review of the Member Champion terms of reference and areas appointed to.

### **Reasons**

It is proposed that representatives are appointed to Partnerships, Outside Bodies and as Member Champions to ensure that the Council is represented and maintains links with partnerships and outside bodies.

Delegation to the Director of Law and Governance in consultation with the Leader provides flexibility for the remainder of the Municipal Year to appoint to

any outstanding vacancies, or if amendments are required to any appointments, and ensures they are made in a timely manner.

A review of the Member Champions roles and appointments will ensure that the function remains fit for purpose.

### **Alternative options**

Option 1: Not to appoint representatives to outside bodies, partnerships and as Member Champions. This is not recommended as the internal working groups would be ineffective and the Council would not be represented on these outside bodies and could miss valuable information and opportunities.

## **9 Appointment of Shareholder Committee for the municipal year 2021/2022**

Executive considered appointments to the Shareholder Committee, a sub-committee of Executive, for 2021/2022.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That Councillors Ilott, Wing and Wood be appointed to the Shareholder Committee for 2021/2022.

### **Reasons**

The Shareholder Committee is a sub-committee of Executive comprising three Executive members. The membership of the Shareholder Committee in 2020/21 was Councillors Wood, Ilott, Donaldson. As Councillor Donaldson is no longer on Executive, it is necessary for Executive to confirm the membership of the Shareholder Committee for 2021/2022.

### **Alternative options**

Option 1: Not to appoint to the Shareholder Committee. This is not recommended as the Committee would not be able to fulfil its functions.

## **10 Notification of Decision taken by the Corporate Director - Environment & Place under Urgency Powers: Weston-on-the Green Neighbourhood Plan**

The Assistant Director – Planning & Development submitted a report which informed the Executive of a decision taken under urgency powers by the Corporate Director – Environment & Place regarding the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the urgent decision taken by the Corporate Director – Environment and Place regarding the Weston-on-the-Green Neighbourhood Plan be noted.

### **Reasons**

In line with the Constitution this report is informing Executive of a decision that was taken by the Corporate Director – Environment & Place under urgency powers.

### **Alternative options**

There are no alternative options as this report is submitted in line with the Constitution to inform Executive of a decision that was taken by the Corporate Director – Environment & Place under urgency powers.

## **11 Notification of Decision taken by the Corporate Director - Environment and Place under Urgency Powers - Garden Town Government Grant Programme**

The Corporate Director - Environment and Place submitted a report which informed the Executive of a decision taken under urgency powers by the Corporate Director - Environment and Place regarding the Garden Town Government grant programme.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the urgent decision taken by the Corporate Director - Environment and Place regarding the Garden Town Government grant programme be noted.

### **Reasons**

Due to the urgency of the Government wanting the funding to be provided and spent in 2020/21 it was not possible to wait for the next Executive meeting for a decision to progress these proposals. The schemes already had tacit approval as phase 1 is included in the 2020/21 capital programme. Including the schemes in the 2020/21 capital programme provided the necessary authority to spend the funding by 31 March 2021.

### **Alternative options**

There are no alternative options as this report is submitted in line with the Constitution to inform Executive of a decision that was taken by the Corporate Director – Environment & Place under urgency powers.

## **12 Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

13 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**Resolved**

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

14 **Summary of Bad Debt Write Offs**

The Director of Finance submitted an exempt report which provided a summary of the accounts proposed for write-offs and requested approval for the write-offs.

**Resolved**

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the proposed bad debt write offs recommended for write-off relating to Business Rates be approved.
- (2) That, having given due consideration, the proposed bad debt write offs recommended for write-off relating to other sundry debts be approved.
- (3) That, having due consideration, the proposed bad debt write offs recommended for write-off relating to Housing Benefit Overpayments be approved.

**Reasons**

There are certain circumstances where it is practically or legally impossible to collect outstanding debts due to the Council. The Council's financial procedure rules require that recommended write offs with an outstanding balance of £5,000 and above for Council Tax, Overpayment of Housing Benefit or Sundry Debtors, and £10,000 and above for Non- Domestic Rates must be approved by the Executive.

**Alternative options**

Option One: Not to agree the recommendations. This is not recommended as it is good practice to write off any irrecoverable debts on a regular basis.

15 **Graven Hill Update**

The Corporate Director – Commercial Development, Asset and Investment submitted an exempt report which updated Executive in relation to the

decision, in relation to Graven Hill, taken under urgency powers by the Corporate Director – Commercial Development, Asset and Investment on 16 February 2021 and reported to the Executive on 1 March 2021.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That an update to the urgent exempt decision taken on 16 February by the Corporate Director – Commercial Development, Assets and Investment as detailed in the exempt Minutes be noted.

### **Reasons**

In accordance with the Constitution, this report is being submitted to the Executive advising of the change to the previously reported arrangements, as detailed in the exempt Minutes.

### **Alternative options**

Option 1: Not to note the report. This is not recommended as the action has been taken and it is a constitutional requirement for it to be reported to the Executive

The meeting ended at 7.25 pm

Chairman:

Date: