

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 7 November 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), .Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Policy and Strategy
Councillor Ian Corkin (Vice-Chairman), Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economy
Councillor Phil Chapman, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities
Councillor Colin Clarke, Portfolio Holder for Planning
Councillor Richard Mould, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
Councillor Adam Nell, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
Councillor Lynn Pratt, Portfolio Holder for Property
Councillor Eddie Reeves, Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Housing
Councillor Dan Sames, Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities

Also Present:

Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group

Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law, Governance & Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer
Ed Potter, Assistant Director Environmental Services
Simon Hope, Interim Head of Communications and Marketing
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Officers Attending Virtually:

Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing

48 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Dallimore, Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny Committee, to the meeting. Councillor Dallimore would be reporting the Committee's feedback on item 10, Cherwell Sports Studies.

50 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

51 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

52 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

53 **Annual Delivery Plan 2022/24**

The Chief Executive submitted a report which recommended the Annual Delivery Plan for 2022/24 to achieve the vision, aims and ambitions of our Council as contained in our Council's Business Plan on behalf of the local communities and businesses we are here to serve.

Resolved

- (1) That the key Strategic Priorities for our Council be agreed.
- (2) That the Annual Delivery Plan 2022/24 (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (3) That the requirement for future amendments to our Council's Finance, Performance and Risk reporting to incorporate progress on the key Strategic Priorities be approved.

Reasons

Through the agreement of the recommendations contained in this report the Council is ensuring the focussed delivery of the priorities contained within the Business Plan on behalf of the local communities we are here to serve.

Alternative options

Option One: No Annual Delivery Plan – given the challenges and opportunities facing the Council the need for a clear plan which enables the Council's achievement of the Business Plan is essential.

Option Two: Annual Delivery 2023/24 - given the challenges and opportunities facing the Council the need for a timely plan which enables the Council's achievement of the Business Plan is essential.

54 **Monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report September 2022**

The Assistant Director of Finance and Interim Assistant Director Customer Focus submitted a report which summarised the Council's Performance, Risk and Finance monitoring positions as at the end of September 2022.

At the discretion of the Chairman, Councillor Woodcock addressed Executive.

In response to Councillor Woodcock's comments regarding action being taken to address net housing completions, the number of affordable homes being delivered and the number of households in temporary accommodations that were reporting amber or red, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services explained that there were labour issues, supply chain issues with builders were having difficulties getting supplies but, if there were no more supply chain issues, it was hoped targets would be achieved by year end. The Chairman added that the question could be rephrased to ask if there was anything to do to help providers and developers. The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing undertook to provide a written response to Councillor Woodcock and copy to the Executive.

In response to Councillor Woodcock's comments regarding car park income, the Portfolio Holder for Finance explained that this area was still recovering from the covid pandemic and in Banbury, the impact of Castle Quay had been difficult to forecast. The Assistant Director Environmental Services highlighted that the council's Car Parking Strategy expired at the end of March 2023 and was therefore due for review.

Resolved

- (1) That the monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report September 2022 be noted.
- (2) That the following changes to reserves be approved:
 - Directorate: Communities

- Type: Earmarked
- Description: Heat Networks
- Reason: Return of Heat Networks funding no longer required
- Amount £m: (0.017)
- Total Earmarked Reservices £m: (0.017)

- (3) That the release of the remaining funds from capital budget 40238 “IT Shared Services” be approved.

Reasons

This report provides an update on progress made during September 2022, to deliver the Council’s priorities through reporting on Performance, Leadership Risk Register and providing an update on the Financial Position. The Council is committed to performance, risk and budget management and reviews progress against its corporate priorities on a monthly basis.

With regards the release of the remaining funds from capital budget 40238 “IT Shared Services”, the original proposal in 2019 was to complete activities to support the IT Strategy revolving around the joining up with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). Cherwell District Council (CDC) decoupling from OCC has marked that chapter of the IT Strategy as complete. However, ahead of the creation of CDC’s Digital Strategy, we are exploring areas of improvement to reduce the demand on services and provide proactive services to our citizens. This aligns with the original proposal of exploring revenue savings and adding efficiencies.

Alternative options

Option 1: This report illustrates the Council’s performance against the 2022-23 Business Plan. Regarding the monitoring aspects of the report, no further options have been considered. However, members may wish to request that officers provide additional information. Regarding the recommendation to approve changes in use of reserves, members could choose to reject the change of use, however, the request is in accordance with the councils Reserves Policy and within existing budgets. If Members chose not to agree to the changes in transfers to reserves, then this would mean resource would need to be found for these projects separately in future years.

55

Garden Waste Charges for 2023/24

The Assistant Director Environmental Services submitted a report which set the garden waste collection charges for 2023/24.

Resolved

- (1) That it be agreed to launch the Garden Waste Subscription service for 2023/24 from 1 December 2022.
- (2) That the following revised prices be implemented:

- Annual Charge: £43/year
- 'Early bird' Charge (order before 1 March 2023): £39/year
- Additional bins: £33/year for each additional bin

Reasons

The garden waste subscription will be launched on 1 December 2022 to give residents certainty on prices in 2023/24 and to smooth demand for licences over a reasonable period.

Alternative options

Option 1: Launch the garden waste subscription service for 2023/24 from a later date with revised prices. This has been rejected as it compresses timescales and makes administration of the process more difficult & mistakes are more likely.

Option 2: Launch the garden waste subscription service for 2023/24 with unchanged prices. This has been rejected due to the rising costs of service delivery, especially fuel costs.

Option 3: Launch the garden waste subscription service for 2023/24 with higher prices than set out. This has been rejected as subscriptions are likely to fall resulting in less overall income

56

Cherwell Sports Studies

The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing submitted a report which presented the emerging evidence of the District Sports Studies findings. These will be used as an evidence base for the new Local Plan, and provide the basis of future sports facility developer contribution requests. It was not the intention that all the recommendations should be acted upon by the Council alone, and this report focussed on those where the Council could have an influence. The study modelled sport facility needs in Cherwell up to 2040.

Councillor Dallimore, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented the comments of the Committee who had received a presentation of the item at their 11 October 2022 meeting.

Councillor Dallimore advised that the Committee had endorsed the recommendations had asked officers for clarification on the process regarding how a balanced weighting had been reached, given the varying requirements across the district. Clarification was also requested in relation to commercial facilities. Specific comments were made regarding: smaller sports clubs not being overlooked when discussions were taking place with developers for contributions, as participants frequently come from a wider area than the town/village the facility is located; the importance of suitable changing

facilities for women and disabled people; and, the environmental impacts of 3G pitches.

At the discretion of the Chairman, Councillor Woodcock addressed Executive. Councillor Woodcock commended the Member Briefing session he had attended in relation to Banbury. Referring to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's comments, Councillor Woodcock highlighted that many small village sports clubs have a wider catchment area beyond the village and can therefore have a bigger impact on the village.

In response to Councillor Woodcock's comments regarding the development of a new ground for Banbury United, the Chairman explained that the council was facilitating meetings between the club and developers. The Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities advised he was in regular contact with the Chairman of Banbury United.

Resolved

- (1) That the 2022 Sports Studies be recognised as influential strategic documents and it be agreed they should be used to seek developer contributions / influence capital bids / seek external funding.
- (2) That it be agreed that the documents are shared with partners to ensure wider understanding and influence.
- (3) That officers, Sport England and National Governing Body representatives be requested to annually review the documents and Members be kept abreast of key changes.

Reasons

The final Sports Study documents will be used to work with partners and other organisations on delivery models to improve and develop sports facilities where needed, to ensure the effective provision of sport and leisure opportunities across the District. The main aim is to ensure that a network of sports facilities is in place to cater for the health and wellbeing of the current and future population.

Alternative options

Option 1: To reject the findings of the Sports Studies, and to seek an alternative means of assessing current and future facility provision. This is not recommended, as it will be costly and will not meet Sport England assessment criteria, which is required for planning compliance and funding bids.

The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing submitted a report to delegate authority to Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing Service to award the contract for the provision of "General Information and Money Advice Services".

Resolved

- (1) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing to award the contract for the provision of an Agency and Temporary Staff Managed Service in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and s151 Officer.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to enter into the agreement with the successful provider.

Reasons

As the setting of the 2022 budget required a saving in the commissioning of a Money Advice service, an extension of the current provision was not an option to explore in ensuring a continued Money Advice Service. For this reason, it was agreed that an entirely new commission would take place. The process was open to any operator in the market with a "general information" and "money advice" specialism.

The current contract ends on 31 December 2022. To achieve the required savings, the new contract must begin at the lower rate on 1 January 2023.

An exhaustive procurement exercise was undertaken whereby value for money research was undertaken, a specification that met current and future needs of Cherwell residents was formulated, and in conjunction with Oxford County Council, procurement team, a tender was launched to the market.

Two respondents submitted tenders and these tenders were assessed by the CDC procurement specialist for eligibility and by the Housing Commissioning officer, Housing Manager and by Cherwell's Housing consultant to assess quality assurance.

It was unanimously agreed that Tender 2 has met and exceeded the stated tender requirements.

Alternative options

Option 1: Do not award a Contract. This option has been rejected because Cherwell District Council is in need of a Free money Advice and General information service for its residents

Option 2: Extend Current contract at current cost. This option has been rejected because Cherwell District Council is Committed to making savings in 2021/2022. The current cost is unsustainable and when considering comparable public services, not optimal value for money

58 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

There being no questions on the exempt appendix, it was not necessary to exclude the press and public.

59 **Commissioning of the General Information and Money Advice Service 2023 - 2024 - Exempt Appendix**

Resolved

(1) That the exempt appendix be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.30 pm

Chairman:

Date: