



Council Minute Book

Monday 26 February 2024

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Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 4 December 2023 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Barry Wood (Leader and Portfolio Holder for Policy and Strategy) (Chairman)
Councillor Adam Nell (Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance) (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Phil Chapman, Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities
Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
Councillor Donna Ford, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration
Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Housing
Councillor Andrew McHugh, Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities
Councillor Eddie Reeves, Portfolio Holder for Property
Councillor Nigel Simpson, Portfolio Holder for Sport and Leisure

Also Present:

Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group
Councillor John Broad, Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Officers:

Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer
David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning & Development
Christina Cherry, Planning Policy, Conservation & Design Manager
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Officers Attending Virtually:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing
Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus
Shahin Ismail, Interim Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Chris Thom, Principal Planning Policy Officer
Simon Barlow, Principal Planner - Infrastructure Lead (Interim)

63

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group and Councillor Broad, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the meeting.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered item 6, Everybody's Wellbeing – a new strategy for Cherwell, and item 10, the performance aspects of the Performance, Finance and Risk Monitoring Report October 2023 but made no specific recommendations to Executive on either item.

65 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

66 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

1. Agenda Item 11, Sale of Bodicote House, had been marked “to follow” as a precautionary measure. However, this had always been an ambitious timeframe in which to agree heads of terms with the preferred bidder and this process had not yet concluded. For these reasons, the item would be deferred until the new year. The associated items, 12 to 15 were also not required.
2. The Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) had met on Tuesday 28 November. As the council's representative on FOP, the Chairman provided an update on the meeting. The FOP Annual Report had been submitted to the meeting and the Chairman undertook to circulate this to all Cherwell District Council members. The meeting had also considered recommendations from the FOP Scrutiny Panel, received the Quarter 2 progress report for the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership Annual report, the Oxfordshire Visitor Economy Vision and Destination Management Plan as well as updates on the Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Acton Plan and from each of the FOR Advisory Groups: Infrastructure; Housing; Environment; and, Planning.

67 **Everybody's Wellbeing - A new strategy for Cherwell**

The Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Housing submitted a report to present the new Wellbeing strategy for 2024 – 2028 ‘Everybody's Wellbeing’.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities commended the Wellbeing Team for their excellent work on the Strategy.

On behalf of Executive, the Chairman thanked the Wellbeing Team for their work on wellbeing across the district. Cherwell District Council was a frontrunner with an excellent track record of delivering a range of programmes and facilities to meet its objective of developing healthy, resilient and engaged communities. The “Everybody’s Wellbeing” strategy was ambitious and would ensure the council remained a frontrunner in this area.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which had reviewed the draft strategy, reported that the Committee had praised the Wellbeing Team for their ongoing hard work across the district.

Resolved

- (1) That the new Wellbeing Strategy for Cherwell – Everybody’s Wellbeing 2024 – 2028 (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

Reasons

The strategy has been developed through insight and consultation. It celebrates the achievements Cherwell District Council has made so far and pushes delivery against 7 goals that will be measured and monitored to capture impact, allowing members to broadly consider the social return on Investment.

Alternative options

Option 1: To rely on system strategies and seek to implement them locally. This was rejected. An option to pursue our own strategy would be based on more detailed local knowledge and circumstance and allow us to reflect the levels of deprivation, rurality and housing growth across the district better.

The local place-based approach Everybody’s Wellbeing captures, is in step with broader Health and Wellbeing strategies but the refinement presented by a district strategy encourages better interaction with Town and Parish Councils and the strong, vibrant relationships the District has with voluntary and community sector locally.

Infrastructure Funding Statement 2022/23

The Assistant Director – Planning and Development submitted a report to seek approval of the Council’s Infrastructure Funding Statement 2022/23 for publication by 31 December 2023 and to note the updated guidance removing the previous requirement to submit accompanying data to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Resolved

- (1) That the Infrastructure Funding Statement 22/23 be approved for publication by 31 December 2023, subject to any minor or presentational changes considered to be necessary by the Assistant Director – Planning and Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development.

Reasons

The publication of an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) is a statutory requirement that provides transparency and accessibility to information about developer contributions secured by the Council through Section 106 Agreements.

The report has been produced in collaboration with Financial Services and the information contained within it is considered to represent the most robust data available at this time.

Alternative options

Option 1 – Not to bring forward and Infrastructure Funding Statement
This is not a lawful option and would leave the Council in breach of its statutory duty.

Option 2 – Seek review of the key statistics and proposed Infrastructure Funding Statement

Officers consider that this is not required as the information is the most available at this time.

69

Annual Monitoring Report 2023

The Assistant Director – Planning and Development submitted a report which sought approval of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2023 including a housing land supply update (November 2023) and the accompanying updates to the Local Plan's Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the Brownfield Land Register.

Resolved

- (1) That with the amendments set out in the annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book), the 2023 Annual Monitoring Report (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) including a housing land supply statement and a 2022/23 Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) update be approved for publication.
- (2) That the 2022/23 Brownfield Land Register (BLR) (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved for publication.
- (3) That Assistant Director - Planning and Development, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder – Planning and & Development, be authorised

to make any necessary minor and presentational changes to the Annual Monitoring Report, and Brownfield Land Register if required prior to publication.

Reasons

The Annual Monitoring Report provides important information to measure the effectiveness of planning policies and to assist policy making and development management decision making. It is the statutory mechanism for monitoring housing delivery.

Its most significant conclusions are that Cherwell is continuing to deliver homes and employment land despite the widely reported national pressures faced by the development industry such as disrupted supply chains, finance costs, and labour shortages.

Alternative options

Option 1: Deferment to seek significant amendment of the: 2023 Annual Monitoring Report, Infrastructure Delivery Plan or Brownfield Land Register. Officers consider the documents to comprise robust factual reporting and updating against relevant indicators and requirements, supported by data and research. Members are therefore asked to consider amendment through delegation and consultation with the Portfolio Holder should they consider significant changes to be necessary.

Option 2: Not to approve the documents for publication
Production of an Authorities Monitoring Report is a statutory requirement and the AMR's wider information supports the Local Plan implementation and review. Updating the Brownfield Land Register is also a statutory requirement. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan is required to monitor and support delivery of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 and its Partial Review.

70

Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024/2024

The Assistant Director of Finance submitted a report to enable members to consider the proposed banded scheme for Council Tax Reduction for 2024-25.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Finance explained that the current scheme was introduced from April 2020 following a period of consultation and engagement. In general, it had been well received with limited contact from customers. It was proposed to continue with the current scheme, updated for inflationary factors.

The current scheme was understood by customers and enabled them to budget for their council tax payments, which was reflected in the Council Tax collection rates with Cherwell being the highest performer across the county for 2022 -23.

The current scheme reduced the number of changes that the customer would experience with less bills and notification letters generated and enabled better personal budgeting. There was still a lot of financial uncertainty for many customers and in the current financial climate with the ongoing cost of living crisis it is therefore recommended that the existing scheme should be retained for 2024.25.

Resolved

- (1) That the report and any financial implications for the Council be noted.
- (2) That the comments of the Budget Planning Committee be noted.
- (3) That Council be recommended to agree that the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme (adjusted for inflationary factors) is retained for 2024/25

Reasons

The current scheme is understood by customers and has enabled them to budget for their council tax payments. One of the main advantages of the banded scheme is that it reduces the number of changes that the customer will experience enabling more effective personal budgeting.

There is still a lot of financial uncertainty for many customers and in the current financial climate with the ongoing cost of living crisis it is therefore recommended that the existing scheme should be retained for 2024 / 25.

Alternative options

The alternative option is to undertake a review of the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme but the reasons for the recommendation explain the rationale for not taking this course of action.

71 Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report October 2023

The Assistant Director of Finance and Assistant Director – Customer Focus submitted a report to update Executive on how well the council was performing in delivering its priorities, managing potential risks, and balancing its finances during October 2023.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the Council's Performance, Risk and Financial report for the month of October 2023 be noted.
- (2) That the following use of reserves (app 5) be approved:

Directorate: Communities

Type: Earmarked
Description: Appeals & Legal Reserve
Reason: To mitigate forecast overspend with appeals and legal challenges
Amount £m: 0.209
Total Earmarked reserves £m: 0.209

- (3) That the use of £0.351m Commercial Risk within Policy Contingency to mitigate the increased recycling processing costs be approved.

Reasons

This report provides an update on progress made during October, to deliver the council's priorities, manage potential risks and remain within the agreed budget.

Alternative options

This report summarises the council's performance, risk, and financial positions for October, therefore there are no alternative options to consider. However, members may wish to request further information from officers for inclusion.

72 **Sale of Bodicote House Site, White Post Road, Bodicote, OX15 4AA**

As advised under the Chairman's announcements, consideration of this item (and the subsequent associated items) had been deferred.

73 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

As advised under the Chairman's announcements, the item "Sale of Bodicote House Site, White Post Road, Bodicote, OX15 4AA" had been deferred, therefore this item was not required.

74 **Sale of Bodicote House Site, White Post Road, Bodicote, OX15 4AA**

As advised under the Chairman's announcements, the item "Sale of Bodicote House Site, White Post Road, Bodicote, OX15 4AA" had been deferred, therefore this item was not required.

75 **Readmittance of the Press and Public**

As advised under the Chairman's announcements, the item "Sale of Bodicote House Site, White Post Road, Bodicote, OX15 4AA" had been deferred, therefore this item was not required.

76 **Sale of Bodicote House Site, White Post Road, Bodicote, OX15 4AA**

As advised under the Chairman's announcements, the item "Sale of Bodicote House Site, White Post Road, Bodicote, OX15 4AA" had been deferred, therefore this item was not required.

77 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 7.16 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 8 January 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Barry Wood (Leader and Portfolio Holder for Policy and Strategy) (Chairman)
Councillor Adam Nell (Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance) (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Phil Chapman, Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities
Councillor Donna Ford, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration
Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Housing
Councillor Andrew McHugh, Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities
Councillor Eddie Reeves, Portfolio Holder for Property
Councillor Nigel Simpson, Portfolio Holder for Sport and Leisure

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
Councillor Dan Sames, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development

Also Present Virtually:

Councillor David Hingley, Leader of the Opposition, Progressive Oxfordshire Group
Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group
Councillor John Broad, Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Officers:

Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer
Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

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Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

79 **Welcome to Chief Executive**

On behalf of Executive, the Chairman welcomed the new Chief Executive to his first Executive meeting on his first day at the council.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Hingley, Leader of the Opposition Group (Progressive Oxfordshire), Councillor Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group and Councillor Broad, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the meeting.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered item 6, the performance aspects of the Performance, Finance and Risk Monitoring Report November 2023 but made no specific recommendations to Executive.

81 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

82 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman invited the Corporate Director Communities to give an update on the recent flooding.

On behalf of Executive, the Chairman thanked officers, highlighting the Duty Director, David Peckford, for their hard work and keeping Members updated.

83 **Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report November 2023**

The Assistant Director of Finance and Assistant Director – Customer Focus submitted a report to update Executive on how well the council was performing in delivering its priorities, managing potential risks, and balancing its finances during November 2023.

Resolved

- (1) That the Council's Performance, Risk and Financial report for the month of November 2023 be noted.
- (2) That the following reserve request be approved:
 - Directorate: Resources
 - Type: Earmarked
 - Description: Market Risk Reserve

- Reason: Over-recovery of Treasury Income
 - Amount £m: (0.130)
 - Total Earmarked Reserves £m: (0.13)
- (3) That the addition of £1.6m capital spend in relation to Grant agreements that have been concluded with two registered providers of social housing, Sanctuary Housing and South Oxfordshire Housing Association (SOHA) to bring homes forward under the central government resettlement scheme Local Authority Housing Fund Round 2 allocation received by Cherwell be approved.
- (4) That authority be delegated to Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing to award grants from the Local Authority Housing Fund Round 2 allocation, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and s151 Officer, to secure additional social housing in the district with the intention that first let is to refugee families.

Reasons

This report provides an update on progress made during November, to deliver the council's priorities, manage potential risks and remain within the agreed budget

Alternative options

This report summarises the council's performance, risk, and financial positions for November, therefore there are no alternative options to consider. However, members may wish to request further information from officers for inclusion.

84

Council Tax Support Fund Payment Policy 2023/2024

The Assistant Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer submitted a report to consider and approve the Council Tax Support fund payments policy. The policy covered the mandatory payments made to Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) customers of £25.00 or less and the additional discretionary amount of £25.00 also paid to LCTS customers with the eligibility criteria mirroring the Government's scheme.

A one off discretionary payment of £85.00 would also be made to those customers in receipt of LCTS on 16 November 2023 this would be credited to the customers 2023 -24 council tax account.

Resolved

- (1) That the Council Tax Support Fund Payment Policy 2023/2024 for distributing the Council Tax Support fund received from Department for Levelling Up and the additional funds to be paid from Oxfordshire County Council be approved.

- (2) That it be noted that a one off discretionary payment of £85.00 will also be made to those customers in receipt of Local Council Tax Support on 16 November 2023.

Reasons

This scheme is recommended as it will ensure the majority of the funds are dispersed quickly to the council tax accounts of those households that are vulnerable whilst also maximising the allocations therefore reducing any unspent funding.

Alternative options

Option 1: Invite applications for the funds based a means tested application regarding income and expenditure. This option has discounted due to the additional work this would add and also delay in dispersing the funds.

85

Council Tax Base 2024-2025

The Assistant Director of Finance and S151 Officer submitted a report to provide the Council Tax Base for 2024-2025.

Resolved

- (1) That the report of the Assistant Director of Finance for the calculation of the Council's Tax Base for 2024-2025 be approved.
- (2) That it be agreed that, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Cherwell District Council as its Council Tax Base for the year 2024-2025 shall be **59,027.2**.
- (3) That it be agreed that for the parishes which form part of its area shown in the Annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book), the amount calculated as the Council Tax Base for the year 2024-2025 in respect of special items shall be as indicated in the column titled Tax Base 2024-2025.
- (4) That it be agreed that for the Flood Defence Areas which form part of its area, the amount calculated as the Council Tax Base for the year 2024-2025 for the purposes of levies on Oxfordshire County Council by River Authorities, shall be:

Thames Flood Defence Area	56,667.7
Anglian (Great Ouse) Flood Defence Area	1,913.9
Severn Regional Flood Defence Area	445.6
TOTAL	59,027.2

Reasons

The Council must legally set a tax base for the following year by 31 January. This will allow the Council to notify its preceptors of the taxbase in order for them (and the Council) to set their budgets for 2024/25.

Alternative options

There are no alternative options. The Council has to set a tax base in order to set its council tax for 2024-2025.

86 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 6.53 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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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, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 15 November 2023 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Lynn Pratt (Chairman)
Councillor Besmira Brasha
Councillor Andrew Crichton
Councillor Donna Ford
Councillor Simon Lytton
Councillor Ian Middleton
Harry Lawson, Independent Person (no voting rights)
Sarah Thompson, Independent Person (no voting rights)

Substitute Members:

Councillor Barry Wood (In place of Councillor Simon Holland)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Simon Holland
Councillor Harry Knight

Also Present:

Councillor Adam Nell, Portfolio Holder for Finance

Also Present Virtually:

Alison Kennett, External Audit
Maria Grindley, External Audit

Officers:

Joanne Kaye, Head of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer
Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor
Declan Brolly, Corporate Fraud Officer
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager
David Rogers, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers Attending Virtually:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer
Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader

34 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

36 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 September 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

37 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman had two announcements:

1.) Two private sessions would take place for Committee members after the meeting, the first with the Internal Audit Team and the second with the External Auditors.

2.) The Council's Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Service was currently provided by Oxfordshire County Council. Oxfordshire County Council had chosen to end the arrangement and submitted 6 months written notice of termination of the agreement with arrangements for Internal Audit and Counter Fraud provided by the County Council coming to an end on 30 April 2024. The Chief Internal Auditor would still attend the May AARC meeting to present the Chief Internal Auditor's annual report and opinion for 2023/24.

Officers would be considering the best option for provision of the Internal Audit and Counter Fraud functions at Cherwell District Council in the future. The Committee would be further updated in due course.

38 **Performance, Finance and Risk Monitoring Report**

The Assistant Director of Customer Focus submitted a report that updated the Committee on how well the council was managing its Strategic Risks.

In introducing the report, the Performance and Insight Team Leader advised the Committee that there were no substantial changes.

Resolved

(1) That the Risk Monitoring Report for September 2023 be noted.

39 **Update on Counter Fraud Annual Plan 2023/24**

The Assistant Director of Finance and S151 Officer submitted a report that presented a summary of activity against the Annual Plan for the Counter-Fraud service at CDC for 2023/24, which had previously been presented to the July 2023 meeting of the Committee. The Plan supported the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy by ensuring that the Council had proportionate and effective resources and controls in place to prevent and detect fraud as well as investigate those matters that did arise.

Resolved

- (1) That the summary of activity against the Annual Counter Fraud Plan for 2023/24 be noted.

40 **External Audit Progress 2021/22**

The External Auditor gave a verbal update and advised the Committee that most fieldwork was complete. Some follow up work was being undertaken including some queries to the technical team which, once resolved, should allow the conclusion of audit.

Resolved

- (1) That the verbal update be noted.

41 **Treasury Management Mid Year Review**

The Assistant Director of Finance submitted a report that updated the Committee on treasury management performance and compliance with treasury management policy for 2023-24 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Finance advised that all treasury management activities undertaken to date during the financial year 2023-24 complied with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Council's approved Treasury Management Strategy, and all Prudential Indicators were met during the reporting period. Over the course of the year, there was an overall Treasury Management forecast underspend of £1.214m compared to the approved budget.

In response to Committee questions in relation to subsidiary companies, the Portfolio Holder for Finance explained that Graven Hill was a commercial business and published its accounts accordingly. The Shareholder Committee was responsible for monitoring the performance of Graven Hill.

In response to Members' questions relating to internal and external borrowing, the Head of Finance explained that internal borrowing was when existing funds to finance the cash flow of the council's capital expenditure rather than

borrowing externally immediately for the programme which saved the council on interest charges.

The Head of Finance undertook to provide a written response on questions regarding the monitoring and dividends of shares invested in non-treasury funds, maturity structure of borrowing and capital expenditure grants.

Resolved

- (1) That the Treasury Management Mid-Year Review Report be noted.

42 **Local Code of Corporate Governance**

The Assistant Director of Law and Governance submitted a report to review of the Local Code of Corporate Governance. The Code was part of the overall system of internal control at the Council and supported the provision of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) which was approved annually by the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That the Local Code of Corporate Governance be agreed.

43 **Financial Management Code - Forecast Self-Assessment Update**

The Assistant Director of Finance submitted a report which updated the Committee on the results of the Council's forecast self-assessment position at February 2024 against the requirements of CIPFA's Financial Management Code. There was continued strong compliance, demonstrating a resilient and sustainable approach to managing the Council's funds.

Resolved

- (1) That the Council's forecast self-assessment position at February 2024 against the requirements of CIPFA's Financial Management Code be noted.

44 **Work Programme**

The Head of Finance updated the committee on the work programme.

Resolved

- (1) That the Work Programme be noted.

45 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 7.27 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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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 5 December 2023 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Patrick Clarke (Chairman)
Councillor Douglas Webb (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Tom Beckett
Councillor Becky Clarke MBE
Councillor Donna Ford (also, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration)
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Matt Hodgson
Councillor Simon Lytton
Councillor Adam Nell (also, Portfolio Holder for Finance)
Councillor Dorothy Walker
Councillor Barry Wood (also, Leader of the Council)
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Also Present:

Councillor Phil Chapman, Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities
Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
Councillor Andrew McHugh, Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities

Also Present Virtually:

Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Housing
Councillor Eddie Reeves, Portfolio Holder for Property
Councillor Dan Sames, Portfolio Holder for Planning & Development
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Ian Harwood
Councillor Lesley McLean
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor George Reynolds
Councillor Amanda Watkins

Officers:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing
David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning & Development

Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager
Matt Swinford, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers Attending Virtually:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer
Mona Walsh, Assistant Director - Property
Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus
Joanne Kaye, Head of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer
David Spilsbury, Head of Digital and Innovation

26 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

27 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

28 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman welcomed all non-Budget Planning Committee Members who were attending the meeting.

29 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

30 **2024/25 Budget Proposals - Revenue and Capital and Fees & Charges**

The Assistant Director of Finance submitted a report which set out the capital bids, revenue savings proposals and budget pressures for Cherwell District Council for the period 2024/25 to 2028/29 and proposed Fees & Charges schedule for 2024/25. This was an opportunity for the Budget Planning Committee to consider the proposals and provide feedback to Executive to consider in finalising its budget proposals which would be presented to the 26 February 2024 Full Council meeting.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced the report and advised the Committee how the budget proposals had been determined and outlined that the forecasts had been updated by Officers by using all information available

at that time. The Portfolio Holder for Finance advised that a number of the grants to the Council were to be confirmed by the Government in late December so some of the proposed plans were liable to change.

The Assistant Director of Finance presented an update on the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and advised that inflation, funding assumptions, pay inflation, the delay in the business rates reset until 2025/26 and the assumption that the new homes bonus will continue on a one-year basis had been included when updating the MTFS position.

The Assistant Director of Finance advised the Committee that as the council was going through a considerable amount of transformation it needed to ensure that there were the right level of support services in the future for the organisation.

In response to questions from the Committee on the current budget and decrease in the budget over future years, the Assistant Director of Finance advised that over the lifetime of the MTFS, the council expected a decrease of £13mil in the net revenue budget and most of that figure would be taken from funding so there would be a reduction in net spend. The Portfolio Holder for Finance explained that the council's Gross Revenue budget included income from fees and charges,

The Assistant Director of Finance also provided an update on the overall capital position advising that of the £10.484m capital bid total, £9.267m was funded from external contributions.

Executive Portfolio Holders, Corporate Directors and Assistant Directors gave an overview of the pressures, proposed saving and capital bids by service area within each directorate and answered questions from the Committee.

In response to Members' questions regarding the future ownership of the proposed 3G sports pitch at North Oxfordshire Academy, the Assistant Director of Wellbeing and Housing Services advised that the council would own the pitch, run it and receive any income received and the contribution from the school is the land. In response to a further question regarding if Banbury United could use the proposed 3G pitch for training, the Assistant Director of Wellbeing and Housing Services advised that the Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities was in regular contact with the Chairman of Banbury United Football Club.

Following a question from the Committee regarding how the proposed net zero capital project funds would be issued, the Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities advised that there would be business cases for each proposal setting out what would be achieved and that how would help achieve the goals within the Climate Action Plan. The Corporate Director of Communities explained that the Climate Action Plan was an annual plan and would therefore be reviewed annually with the proposals needing to meet the initiatives set in the Plan.

In response to a question seeking clarification on what would be included within the council's Digital Futures Programme, the Head of Digital and Innovation advised that the council had been working on some proofs of concept to show what was possible to provide attractive solutions for savings. The Head of Digital and Innovation gave examples of projects that IT were working on and explained that these projects were to save money in the future and transform the council to provide better services.

In response to comments from the Committee regarding the proposed reduced spend on CCTV cameras across the district and who determines which were no longer needed, the Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities advised that with new housing developments, the population shifts around and the focus on what needs to be covered by CCTV changes.

Following a question from the Committee regarding the proposed charge for the replacement of a waste bin, recycling bin or food waste caddy and if the age of a bin would be taken into consideration when a replacement request was submitted, the Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities advised he would speak to officers and provide a written response to the Committee.

In response to a query from the Committee regarding the increase in the cost of bulky waste charge and possible increase in fly tipping, the Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities advised that the proposed increase was to meet the cost of the service however the Committee's concerns were noted.

The Portfolio for Finance advised the Committee that the council had a statutory requirement to agree a balanced budget and at this stage, proposals were being put forward for public consultation to the public. The feedback received during the consultation would be considered and the budget would be submitted to the 26 February 2024 Council meeting.

In response to a question regarding the higher cost of Local Plan examinations to the previous figure given, the Assistant Director for Planning and Development advised it had been some time since the budget had been reviewed and with submission of the new Local Plan expected to be in January 2025, this needed to be reviewed.

It was proposed by Councillor P Clarke and seconded by Councillor Wood that the meeting move into private session to consider exempt appendix 2b, Operational Efficiencies.

31

Exclusion of 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 2 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.

32 **2024/25 Budget Proposals - Revenue and Capital and Fees & Charges - Exempt Appendix**

The Assistant Director of Finance advised the Committee that as part of the council's commitment to delivering value for money, and through a process of continuous improvement, operational efficiencies of £1.221m had been identified for 2024/2025. These did not have an impact on service delivery or impact Cherwell residents so were not included in the public consultation.

Portfolio Holders, Assistant Directors and Corporate Directors presented the operational efficiencies for their services and answered questions from the Committee.

33 **Readmittance of the Press and Public**

Resolved

That the press and public be readmitted to the meeting.

34 **2024/25 Budget Proposals - Revenue and Capital and Fees & Charges**

The Committee continued considering the 2024/2025 budget proposals - revenue and capital and fees and charges.

Following a question from the Committee to why there had been a significant increase to the Building Control charge for installation for a heating appliance, the Assistant Director for Planning and Development advised he would speak to Officers and provide a written response to the Committee.

In response to a question regarding the increase in the fee for a day booking of a holiday activity, the Assistant Director of Wellbeing and Housing Services advised that the increase was to bring the cost in line with similar provision and cover costs of the service. The proposed increased fee was still cheaper than other day offers.

The Assistant Director of Finance advised the Committee of the key dates and next steps regarding the budget which would culminate in Council considering the budget at their 26 February 2024 meeting as recommended by Executive at their 5 February 2024 meeting.

- (1) That, having given due consideration, Executive be advised that the Budget Planning Committee have no feedback, comments or

recommendations in relation to capital bids, revenue savings proposals and budget pressures and fees and charges for inclusion as part of the 2024/25 budget proposal.

(2) That the Budget Proposals 2023/24 - 2027/28 report be noted.

(Councillor Woodcock, Councillor Hodgson and Councillor Becky Clarke MBE requested that their abstention from the vote be recorded in the Minutes)

35

Review of Committee Work Plan

The Assistant Director of Finance gave a verbal update on the Budget Planning Committee Work Plan.

The Assistant Director of Finance advised that the Committee would consider the draft 2024/2025 capital and investment strategy, the 2024/2025 reserve strategy and reserves plan and the finance monitoring report P8 November 2023 at their next meeting on 23 January 2024.

Resolved

(1) That the update on the Committee Work Plan update be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.37 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, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 28 November 2023 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor John Broad (Chairman)
Councillor Dr Isabel Creed (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Patrick Clarke
Councillor Ian Harwood
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Dorothy Walker
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Bryn Williams

Substitute Members:

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Simon Holland
Councillor Ian Middleton

Also Present:

Councillor Phil Chapman, Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities
Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Also Present Virtually:

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Policy and Strategy
Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Housing
Councillor Lynn Pratt

Officers:

Shahin Ismail, Interim Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing
Edward Frape, Senior Healthy Place Shaping Officer
Richard Smith, Head of Housing
Aaron Hetherington, Principal Officer - Electoral Services Lead
Patrick Davis, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers Attending Virtually:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer
Susan Asbury, Safeguarding Officer
Tim Hughes, Head of Regulatory Services & Community Safety
Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead

42 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

43 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24 October 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

44 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

45 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

46 **Future Oxfordshire Partnerships Update**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council, Councillor Sean Woodcock, and Councillor Lynne Pratt, to the meeting to provide an update on the work of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) and its Scrutiny Panel. The Chairman advised that he, Councillor Woodcock and Councillor Pratt were CDC's representatives on the FOP Scrutiny Panel.

The Leader explained that FOP was a joint committee of the six Oxfordshire councils that worked with key strategic partners to deliver a better future for the county. FOP's purpose was to deliver the aims of the Strategic Vision which all six councils had adopted. The Committee was advised that FOP did this by overseeing the delivery of projects that the Oxfordshire councils were seeking to deliver collaboratively in the fields of economic development and strategic planning.

The cooperation had helped Oxfordshire secure over £500m of additional investment. FOP also had an important role in representing Oxfordshire on matters of regional interest.

FOP was supported by four Advisory Sub-Groups which were attended by the relevant CDC Portfolio Holder and a Scrutiny Panel which Councillors Broad, Pratt and Woodcock were the CDC appointed representatives.

The FOP Scrutiny Panel members updated the Committee on various aspects of the Panel including the membership composition and future work programme. The Committee was also advised how the work of the FOP Scrutiny Panel had potential to impact on resourcing of housing and infrastructure projects within the Cherwell district.

Resolved

- (1) That the update regarding the Future Oxfordshire Partnerships Scrutiny Panel be noted.

47

October 2023 Performance Monitoring Report

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Director – Customer Focus that detailed the Council’s performance against its indicators for October 2023.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services explained that all indicators were on target.

In response to a question on indicator BP1.2.01, number of homeless households living in Temporary Accommodation (TA), and how many of the families were the same as had been reported homeless at the previous meeting of the Committee in October, the Portfolio Holder for Housing responded that there were 20 families in that category. The Committee was advised that nine of those households were under offer and awaiting accommodation, with the remaining 11 families waiting for an offer or under assessment.

The Committee was also advised that around 20% of households in temporary accommodation at any one time, were waiting to have their situation assessed. Part of the role of the Housing Options Team was to assess the circumstances of people that approached the Council to understand their reasons for homelessness and whether the Council could offer them an ongoing housing duty.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing advised the Committee that none of the households still in temporary accommodation, were as a result of waiting for Sanctuary Housing to carry out and complete repairs.

Further questions were raised regarding the process for Registered Providers to nominate properties for registration on the Homechoice housing register. The Head of Housing advised that as part of the Nominations Agreement with Registered Providers, they were only able to register properties that would be ready and available within six weeks.

Following further discussion, and in response to a request for clarification regarding the target for the number of homeless households in the Cherwell District, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing advised that the target number was reviewed regularly. The Committee was also advised that in the event of a large increase in the number of homeless households the Council faced capacity challenges but was able to mitigate these to a certain extent using alternative accommodation options such as hotels.

In response to a question regarding the historic data for the indicator, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing confirmed that she would investigate how much historical data was available and respond accordingly.

In response to a question on indicator BP4 1.02, support community safety and anti-social behaviour prevention activities and the outcomes of the Active Leaders Course, the Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities advised that as the first course had only recently finished, none of the participants had yet entered paid employment. The Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety gave an overview of the course objectives and planned outcomes.

Resolved

- (1) That having given due consideration, the Council's October 2023-24 performance be noted and no recommendations be submitted for Executive consideration.

48

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing submitted a report which presented a draft new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing introduced the draft Strategy. The Head of Housing explained that as part of the Council's statutory duties regarding homelessness, the Council must review homelessness in the district area and produce a strategy to tackle the issue and support those affected every five years. The review highlighted the homeless pressures and trends within Cherwell and the findings informed the subsequent strategy and action plan objectives.

In response to a question regarding the funding of resettlement schemes the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing confirmed that the Council did receive funding from the Home Office for each family that came to live in Cherwell under a recognised migration scheme and that there was also a contribution to each bed space for an asylum seeker. It was clarified that this was per bed space rather than per asylum seeker.

In response to questions regarding the level of liaison between the different agencies assisting homeless people who were facing significant challenges,

the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing advised that the Council worked with a number of providers across the County as part of the Oxfordshire Alliance. She explained that the aim was to provide bed spaces in appropriate accommodation to people who needed rehabilitation at the same time and that information was shared, where allowed, between the various agencies to avoid wherever possible, the requirement for the individual having to continuously explain their circumstances.

In response to a question regarding the national increase in the number of Section 21 notices that had been issued, and a request for the council to again write to Central Government regarding the banning of such notices, the Portfolio Holder for Housing confirmed he would discuss with the Member who raised the question outside of the meeting.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Housing and the Housing team for their hard work developing the Strategy.

It was proposed by Councillor Webb and seconded by Councillor Okeke that having given due consideration, the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 be recommended for adoption by Executive

Resolved

- (1) That having given due consideration, the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 be recommended for adoption by Executive.

49

Cost of Living Crisis - Action Plan update

The Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities introduced the Cost of Living Action Plan for Winter 2023/2024 and advised the Committee that the plan provided a framework for all the activities that the Council was pursuing.

The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing and the Senior Healthy Place Shaping Officer gave a presentation which provided an update on the progress made against the action plan that had been submitted to Executive in October

The Senior Healthy Place Shaping Officer provided an update on the Cherwell Warm Welcome Network and explained that there had been increase of 18 new community partners this year, with the team having successfully targeted new spaces in village locations.

The Committee was updated on work that was being done to address food insecurity within the district. This included the delivery of additional food grant schemes and the provision of food during school half term through the Activate and Eat Clubs.

The Senior Healthy Place Shaping Officer advised the Committee that the Council had been successful in negotiating reduced membership fees for local

residents to join the Oil Co-operative, a scheme for rural residents that enabled members to purchase heating oil at a discounted rate with the price determined in advance.

In response to a question regarding the level of discount received, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing confirmed she would provide a response for circulation after the meeting.

The Committee thanked the officers for all their hard work on the Cost of Living Action Plan.

Resolved

- (1) That the Cost of Living Crisis Action Plan update be noted.

50 **Cherwell District Council Safeguarding Self-Assessment 2023**

The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing submitted a report to update the Committee on how well the Council was performing in delivering its safeguarding duties.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities highlighted the importance of all Members completing safeguarding training.

The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead gave a presentation detailing the annual Safeguarding Audit and work of the Safeguarding team.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead explained that the self-assessment audit had to be completed annually and that it was a joint piece of work with the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children and Adults Board. The 2023 return was due to be submitted to the Boards in December 2023.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead reported that in 2022 the main focus for improvement was to increase awareness amongst Parish Councils of safeguarding measures and to increase the use of safeguarding communications in different languages. The Committee was advised that the focus for 2023 had been leadership, strategy and working together, commissioning arrangements and people's experience of safeguarding all of which had been achieved.

The Committee was advised that there had again been a rise in reports made on the internal reporting mechanism 'See It Report It' particularly under themes such as neglect, domestic violence and physical abuse. Training for relevant staff would be updated to reflect this trend.

Mandatory training for CDC staff was provided online via the iHasco platform which was supplemented by internal briefings that the Deputy Designated

Safeguarding Lead had been running. There had been an 87% increase in the number of staff attending these briefings over the last three years.

The Committee reiterated the importance of elected Members completing the Safeguarding Training or providing evidence of training having been completed via another route.

In response to a question regarding a more interactive approach to training for Members, the Assistant Director of Wellbeing and Housing advised that different approaches could be considered based on individual need. Alternative ways of delivering training would be discussed with the Democratic and Elections team.

In response to a request from the Committee that Political Group Leaders be kept informed regarding training levels within their groups, it was agreed the Chief Executive would raise this at the next Political Group Leaders' meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor Okeke and seconded by Councillor Creed that political group leaders be kept informed regarding the number of members from their groups that have completed safeguarding training.

Resolved

- (1) That having given due consideration, the Safeguarding Self-Assessment 2023 report be endorsed.
- (2) That Political Group Leaders be kept informed regarding the number of Members of their respective groups that had completed safeguarding training.

51

Working Group Updates

The Principal Officer, Scrutiny and Democratic Lead, presented the working group updates.

The Committee was informed that since the publication of the agenda, the Monitoring Officer had recommended that the revised Terms of Reference for the Climate Action Working Group be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee in January, to enable the group time to finalise the revisions. There was therefore no requirement for the Committee to consider recommendation 1.2 detailed on the agenda.

Resolved

- (1) That the working group updates be noted.

Work Programme 2023-24

The Committee considered the indicative work programme for 2023/24.

The Principal Officer Scrutiny and Democratic Lead advised that there were a large number of items scheduled for the January meeting, and the Committee might wish to consider how to effectively and efficiently manage the agenda. It was agreed that the Chairman, Vice-Chair, Chief Executive and Principal Officer Scrutiny and Democratic Lead should meet to discuss.

In response to a question regarding the future scrutiny of Sanctuary Housing following the decision to disband the Charter Committee, the Portfolio Holder for Housing agreed that an alternative approach would be needed, but added that although Sanctuary Housing was the largest, they were not the only Registered Provider the council worked with.

It was agreed that the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Parsons and the Principal Officer Scrutiny and Democratic Lead would meet to discuss options for the future format of updates from Sanctuary Housing.

Resolved

- (1) That the indicative work programme be noted.
- (2) That the Portfolio Holder for Housing, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing, Councillor Parsons and the Principal Officer Scrutiny and Democratic Lead meet to discuss the format of future updates from Sanctuary Housing.
- (3) That the Chairman, Vice-Chair, Chief Executive and Principal Officer Scrutiny and Democratic Lead meet to discuss the work programme for January 2024.

The meeting ended at 8.25 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Personnel Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 20 November 2023 at 9.00 am

Present:

Councillor Amanda Watkins (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair)
Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor George Reynolds
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Substitute Members:

Councillor Rob Pattenden (In place of Councillor Fiona Mawson)
Councillor Nigel Simpson (In place of Councillor Bryn Williams)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Lynn Pratt (Chairman)
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Bryn Williams

Officers:

Claire Cox, Assistant Director Human Resources
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Also Present:

Julie Towers, Penna

31 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

32 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

33 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

34 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 1 November 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

35 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

36 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

Resolved

That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

(The Governance and Elections Manager let the meeting at the conclusion of this item)

37 **Interviews for the Post of Chief Executive**

The Committee saw each of the short listed applicants for the post of Chief Executive in turn and asked them a number of questions.

The Committee was supported by Julie Towers, Penna, the external recruiter running the recruitment process and the Assistant Director Human Resources.

38 **Adjournment of Meeting**

It was unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting to 4pm on Monday 27 November to conclude the interview process.

Resolved

(1) That the meeting be adjourned to 4pm on Monday 27 November 2023.

(The Governance and Elections Manager rejoined the meeting for this item)

The meeting ended at 5.40 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Cherwell District Council

Personnel Committee

Minutes of a reconvened meeting of the Personnel Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 27 November 2023 at 4.00 pm

Present:

Councillor Amanda Watkins (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair)

Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor George Reynolds
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Substitute Members:

Councillor Rob Pattenden (In place of Councillor Fiona Mawson)
Councillor Nigel Simpson (In place of Councillor Bryn Williams)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Lynn Pratt
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Bryn Williams

Officers:

Claire Cox, Assistant Director Human Resources
Aaron Hetherington, Principal Officer – Electoral Services Lead

Also present:

Julie Towers, Penna

39

Reconvening of Personnel Committee

The meeting having adjourned in private session with the press and public excluded, it reconvened in private session.

(The Principal Officer – Electoral Services Lead left the meeting at the conclusion of this item)

40 **Interviews for the Post of Chief Executive**

The Committee concluded the interviews. The Committee was supported by Julie Towers, Penna, the external recruiter running the recruitment process and the Assistant Director Human Resources.

Following the interviews the Committee evaluated the applications and considered the supporting information Penna in reaching their recommendation on appointment.

Resolved

- (1) That Council be recommended to appoint the preferred candidate to the post of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

The meeting ended at 5.15 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

The Standards Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 31 January 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor George Reynolds (Chairman)

Councillor Julian Nedelcu

Councillor Lynne Parsons

Councillor Amanda Watkins

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Lynn Pratt

Councillor Sandy Dallimore

Councillor Harry Knight

Councillor Dorothy Walker

Dr Sadie Reynolds, Independent Person (non-voting)

Tom Edwards, Independent Person (non-voting)

Officers:

Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Matt Swinford, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers Attending Virtually:

Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

5 Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 17 March 2022, 18 May 2022 and 23 May 2023 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

6 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

7 **Arrangements for Dealing with Complaints of Alleged Breaches of the Councillors' Code**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report to enable the Committee to note the arrangements for dealing with complaints of alleged breaches of the Councillors' Code under delegated authority.

In responses to Members' questions regarding the availability of the complaints form in languages other than English and raising awareness of this option accordingly, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that the form would be available in other languages and formats on request.

Resolved

- (1) That the arrangements for dealing with complaints of alleged breaches of the Councillors Code of Conduct be noted.

The meeting ended at 6.40 pm

Chairman:

Date: