



Council Minute Book

Monday 15 July 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 5 February 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 Sandy Dallimore, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
Councillor Donna Ford, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration
Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Housing
Councillor Eddie Reeves, Portfolio Holder for Property
Councillor Dan Sames, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development
Councillor Nigel Simpson, Portfolio Holder for Sport and Leisure

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Andrew McHugh, Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities

Also Present:

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

Also Present Virtually:

Councillor Jean Conway
Councillor Lesley McLean
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Dorothy Walker

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
David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning & Development
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing

Joanne Kaye, Head of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Officers Attending Virtually:

Mona Walsh, Assistant Director - Property
Richard Smith, Head of Housing

87 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The Chairman advised there were no petitions.

The Chairman welcomed non-Executive Members to the meeting, Councillor Hingley, Progressive Oxfordshire Group Leader and Cllr Woodcock. Labour Group Leader, Councillor Broad, Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chairman, was attending following the Committee's consideration of items 7 and 8 and the performance aspects of item 11. There were no recommendations to Executive on any of the items.

The Chairman also welcomed Councillors Conway, McLean, Walker and Middleton to the meeting who had requested to address the meeting and he would invite them to speak at the relevant items.

89 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

90 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman advised that the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) had met on Tuesday 30 January and he had given an update to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at their meeting of the same date.

The Chairman explained that FOP had received an update on progress with delivery of health place shaping across Oxfordshire and the new Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy for Oxfordshire as well as updates from the advisory groups, and partners supporting the delivery of the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision.

FOP had also considered recommendations from the FOP Scrutiny Panel. The Scrutiny Panel had asked officers to initiate a review of its Terms of Reference prior to its first meeting in the 2024/25 municipal year.

The next FOP meeting was on 20 March. Items scheduled for that meeting include the Annual Report of the Oxfordshire Director of Public Health; and, Quarter 3 Oxfordshire Housing & Growth Deal.

91 **Budget Setting for 2024/25 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy up to 2028/29**

The Assistant Director of Finance (S151) submitted a report to consider and approve the Budget Setting for 2024/25 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2028/29 as per the recommendations.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Finance explained that this report was the culmination of the Budget and Business Planning process for 2024/25 to 2028/29 and set out the Executive's proposed Business Plan, Annual Delivery Plan and related revenue budget for 2024/25, medium term financial strategy to 2028/29, capital programme to 2028/29 and all supporting policies, strategies, and information to recommend to Council.

The proposed net budget for the council was £26.9m, which was a decrease of £1.4m from 2023/24. The council planned to fund £0.6m of budget pressures and would deliver £1.8m of savings proposals and operational efficiencies as part of the 2024/25 budget. A Band D Council Tax of £153.50 was proposed for the year which was an increase of £5 compared to 2023/24. The Capital Programme for the period 2024/25 – 2028/29 was proposed to be £40.4m.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance thanked all respondents to the budget consultation, the Budget Planning Committee and all members who attended the December meeting of the Committee for their review of the budget. The Portfolio Holder for Finance thanks the Assistant Director Finance (S151 Officer) and the Finance Team for their hard work on the proposed budget.

In response to a question from Councillor Hingley regarding the additional funding the Government had advised local authorities would be receiving, the Leader advised that CDC had received confirmation earlier that afternoon. The Assistant Director Finance (S151 Officer) advised that the additional funding CDC would receive would be added to the contingency budget.

Resolved

- (1) That authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Member for Finance, to complete the legal Council Tax calculations once all the information required has been received and submit a separate report to Council.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the S151 Officer, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Member for Finance, to

make appropriate changes to the Executive's proposed budget to Council including policies and plans.

- (3) That Council be recommended to approve the proposed Fees and Charges schedule for 2024/25 and statutory notices be placed where required.
- (4) That Council be recommended to consider and note the Equality Impact Assessments of the Budget.
- (5) That Council be recommended to approve the Business Plan.
- (6) That, in relation to the Revenue Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), Council be recommended to approve:
 - i. The net revenue budget for the financial year commencing on 1 April 2024, as set out below, and further analysed in the Budget Book.

Directorate; Net budget 2024/25 £m

Communities: 8.917

Resources: 4.314

Chief Executive: 5.355

Service Sub-total: 18.586

Corporate Costs: 4.475

Policy Contingency: 3.872

Net Cost of Services: 26.933

- ii. The MTFS and Revenue Budget 2024/25, including the Savings Proposals and Pressures.
- (7) That, in relation to Council Tax, Council be recommended to approve an increase in the Basic Amount of Council Tax for Cherwell District Council for the financial year beginning on 1 April 2024 of £5, resulting in a Band D charge of £153.50 per annum.
- (8) That, in relation to the Capital Programme and related strategies, Council be recommended to approve:
 - i. The Capital Bids and Capital Programme.
 - ii. The Capital and Investment Strategy 2024/25, including the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy, and the revised 2023/24 MRP Policy.
 - iii. The Treasury Management Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators, and Affordable Borrowing Limit for 2024/25.
- (9) That, in relation to reserves, Council be recommended to approve:
 - i. A minimum level of General Balances of £6.1.
 - ii. The Reserves Policy.
 - iii. The medium-term reserves plan.

- (10) That, in relation to the Pay Policy Statement, Council be recommended to approve the Pay Policy Statement, as required by the Localism Act 2010.

Reasons

This report provides information around the various building blocks that make up the proposed budget for 2024/25 and beyond, allowing members to consider and scrutinise the elements of the budget and provide advice and guidance to council to help further shape both budget setting for 2024/25 and the MTFS up to 2028/29.

Alternative options

Option 1: To reject the current proposals and make alternative recommendations. Members will not be aware of the medium-term financial forecast or implications of alternatives if they choose to take this option.

92

Annual Delivery Plan 2024/25

The Assistant Director of Finance and Assistant Director – Customer Focus submitted a report which presented the proposed Annual Delivery Plan for 2024/25, aspiring to be a tool to achieve the Council's vision, aims and ambitions as contained in the Council's Business Plan on behalf of the local communities and businesses we are here to serve.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised that the Committee had reviewed and supported the Annual Delivery Plan at their 30 January meeting with no recommendations to Executive.

Resolved

- (1) That the Annual Delivery Plan 2024/25 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.

93 **Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029**

The Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Housing submitted a report to consider and approve the Council’s new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029.

Resolved

- (1) That the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 and accompanying Action Plan be approved.

Reasons

The Council is committed to providing a quality housing options, advice and homelessness service in accordance with our statutory duties. The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 will provide a strategic framework to enable this.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not to bring forward a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
This option is not considered as reviewing homelessness and producing a strategy every 5 years is part of the Council’s statutory duties and part of the statutory duties of providing housing options and advice services.

94 **Developing a Kidlington Infrastructure and Community Asset Strategy**

The Corporate Director Communities submitted a report to respond to the question raised at council in December 2023 to provide resource and budget to enable the development of a new vision for Kidlington cognisant of the growth allocated in the 2020 Local Plan Partial Review and to provide ongoing oversight of development.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration thanked Councillor McLean for raising the question at the December Council meeting. In response, the Leader had committed to the development of a holistic strategy for the Kidlington area.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration explained that the development of a Kidlington Vision would complete the need for a place based vision for each of the three main urban areas of Cherwell. It would build upon the work of the Banbury Vision which had undertaken widespread and detailed stakeholder engagement to identify key themes, and on the Reimaging Bicester work which has a focus on the achievement of exemplary development as part of the Garden Town vision and the integration of new communities with existing.

Having raised the question at the December Council meeting, Councillor McLean addressed Executive commenting that she was pleased the work was being taken forward and hope it would progress in a timely manner.

Councillor Middleton addressed Executive and referred to the questions he had submitted earlier that day confirming he would await a written response.

Resolved

- (1) That it be agreed to develop a Kidlington Infrastructure Strategy in 2024/25 and resource to provide oversight to its ongoing delivery.

Reasons

The development of a Kidlington Vision would complete the need for a place based vision for each of the three main urban areas of Cherwell. It would build upon the work of the Banbury Vision which has undertaken widespread and detailed stakeholder engagement to identify key themes, and on the Reimaging Bicester work which has a focus on the achievement of exemplary development as part of the Garden Town vision and the integration of new communities with existing.

Alternative options

Option 1: Do Nothing. Under this option, development would come forward site by site through the planning process and infrastructure and community assets would be coordinated by existing resources in the respective tiers of Local Government and other agencies.

95

Researching Solar Energy Requirements

The Corporate Director Communities submitted a report to seek funding support for the 2024/25 budget to provide resource and budget to better understand the requirements for solar energy within Cherwell District

Councillor Walker, who had proposed the motion at the December Council meeting, addressed Executive and sought clarification regarding the proposed research in relation to the motion that had been agreed which stated that research needed to be criteria based. .

In response to Councillor Walker's comments, the Corporate Director Communities explained that the report focussed on commissioning a piece of work to look at solar across the district and secure the required budget.

The Chairman requested that officers keep Councillor Walker updated on the research work.

At the discretion of the Chairman, Councillor Woodcock, Councillor Broad and Councillor Middleton addressed Executive.

Resolved

- (1) That it be agreed to plan in the 2024/25 budget for the undertaking of research into the requirements for solar energy within Cherwell.

Reasons

Amending the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to include the allocation of resource and budget will support the development of a research paper on solar energy generation for Cherwell and the environmental impacts of solar generation options.

Alternative options

Option 1: Do Nothing. Under this option, there would be limited understanding of the impact of solar energy generation across the District.

96

Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report Quarter 3 2023

The Assistant Director of Finance and Assistant Director – Customer Focus submitted a report to give Executive an update on how well the council was performing in delivering its priorities, managing potential risks, and balancing its finances for 2023/24 up to the end of Quarter 3 2023.

Resolved

- (1) That the Council's Performance, Risk and Financial report for the current financial year up to the end of Quarter 3 2023 be noted.
- (2) That the following reserve requests be approved.

Directorate: Resources
Type: Earmarked
Description: Market Risk Reserve
Reason: Over-recovery of Treasury Income
Amount £m: (0.170)

Directorate: Resources
Type: Earmarked
Description: Transformation Implementation
Reason: Underspend withing Policy Contingency
Amount £m: (0.500)

Total Earmarked Reserves £m: (0.670)

- (3) That the use of Policy Contingency of £1.476m to mitigate the lower than budgeted in-year income of S31 grant be approved.

- (4) That the repurposing of £0.030m from the Fairway Flats Refurbishment project for the works at Cope Road Banbury approved by S151 under delegation powers be noted.

Reasons

This report provides an update on progress made during Quarter 3, 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 up to the end of Quarter 3, therefore there are no alternative options to consider. However, Members may wish to request further information from officers for inclusion.

97

Deddington Neighbourhood Plan

The Assistant Director – Planning and Development submitted a report to consider the Examiner's report on the draft Deddington Neighbourhood Plan (the "Draft Neighbourhood Plan") to determine whether the Draft Neighbourhood Plan, incorporating modifications should proceed to referendum.

Resolved

- (1) That all of the Examiner's recommendations and modifications be approved to enable the Plan, incorporating the recommended modifications to proceed to a referendum.
- (2) That the issue of a 'decision statement' confirming the Executive's decision including that the Plan will now proceed to a referendum be authorised.
- (3) That the Assistant Director – Planning and Development be authorised to make any minor presentational changes and corrections necessary to ready the Plan for referendum.

Reasons

Having considered the Examiner's report, officers are of the view that all of his recommendations should be accepted. Officers consider that the Draft Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions with the Examiner's proposed modifications and also agree with the Examiner that the referendum area should be based on the Designated Area and that the referendum area does not need to be extended.

It is recommended that the Executive agrees the submission of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan (as modified) for referendum and that a Decision Statement be issued. This Council would then be responsible for making the

necessary arrangements for the referendum to be held. A notice of the referendum will need to be issued. In line with the Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012, Schedule 1, the following question would be asked: “Do you want Cherwell District Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Deddington to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

If a majority of votes are in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan, it would come into force as part of the statutory Development Plan for the District. This Council must then ensure that the plan is “made” within eight weeks of the referendum for it to take effect.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not to accept all the Examiner’s recommendations.

Where a local planning authority proposes to make a decision that differs from the Examiner’s recommendations it is required to set out these reasons in a Decision Statement which would be subject to further consultation.

Reason: Officers agree with all the Examiner's recommendations.

Option 2: Not to accept the Examiner’s recommendations and not to proceed to a referendum. This option could only be justified if the Examiner recommends that the Draft Neighbourhood Plan should not proceed to a referendum, or the Council is not satisfied that the Draft Neighbourhood Plan has met the procedural and legal requirements.

Reason: Officers agree with the Examiner's recommendations and are of the view that the local planning authority have met the procedural and legal requirements.

98

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

The Corporate Director of Resources submitted a report in respect of the sale of Bodicote House.

In introducing the public version of the report, the Portfolio Holder for Property explained that Bodicote House site having been marketed for sale, to facilitate the Council moving to new offices the report sought delegated authority and approval to proceed with the Heads of Terms attached to the Exempt part of the report and enter negotiations for the sale contract.

The Portfolio Holder for Property explained that there was an exempt version of the report which included commercially sensitive information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council and others.

99

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 item 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, Paragraph 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.

100

Sale of Bodicote House, White Post Road, Bodicote, OX15 4AA

The Corporate Director Resources submitted an exempt report which sought delegated authority and approval to proceed with the Heads of Terms and enter negotiations for the sale contract for the Bodicote House site which had been marketed for sale, to facilitate the Council moving to new offices.

Resolved

- (1) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Resources in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Property and the S151 Officer, to proceed with the Heads of Terms and enter into negotiations for the sale contract with Lucy Developments Ltd.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Law and Governance to enter into Head of Terms.

Reasons

The offer from Company C (Lucy Developments Ltd) as the preferred bidder is recommended because;

- They have offered the best bid for the site, upon receiving planning permission.
- The offer is considered to provide the best value, in that it meets the Councils affordable housing policy.
- The proposal is considered to provide a better likelihood to achieve the highest density of units and obtaining planning permission for the proposed redevelopment.
- They are a regional developer, with a proven track record.
- They have confirmed the purchase and development can be funded from existing resources and without the need to borrow funds.

The Council meets its obligations under S123 of the LGA 1972 to sell land at the best price reasonably obtainable in the marketplace at the time and not at an undervalue. We have been advised that a "Red Book" valuation from a RICS qualified surveyor cannot be obtained due to the variables involved. However, the property has been widely marketed with marketing appraisals including valuation advice from Knight Frank, throughout the process who have confirmed that the offer from Company C (Lucy Developments Ltd) is the best obtainable.

Alternative options

Option 1: Do Nothing

- Not granting the delegated approval for the negotiation of the sale contracts via the Heads of Terms will mean a delay in the receipt of monies and create a funding issue for the relocation.
- Continued ownership of the property will
 - The property continues to be a significant cost to the Council.
 - There is substantial excess space which is not well utilised and difficult to sublet.
 - Surplus to requirement space will continue to need to be maintained for the duration of any occupation.
 - Significant capital costs are required to maintain the building.

This option is therefore not considered a viable alternative.

Option 2: Seek an alternative purchaser

- This will result in serious delay in the disposal and therefore the funding of the relocation
- The holding costs of the property as well as all of the points raise in Option (1) above.

101 **Readmittance of the Press and Public**

Resolved

That the press and public be readmitted to the meeting.

102 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 4 March 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 Donna Ford, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration
Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Portfolio Holder for Housing
Councillor Andrew McHugh, Portfolio Holder for Cleaner and Greener Communities
Councillor Edward Fraser Reeves, Portfolio Holder for Property
Councillor Dan Sames, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development
Councillor Nigel Simpson, Portfolio Holder for Sport and Leisure

Apologies for absence:

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

Also Present Virtually:

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

Officers:

Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive
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

Officers Attending Virtually:

Mona Walsh, Assistant Director - Property
Richard Smith, Head of Housing
Tim Hughes, Head of Regulatory Services & Community Safety

103

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed non-Executive members attending the meeting and asked them to indicate if they wished to speak on any item.

105 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

106 **Chairman's Announcements**

On behalf of Executive, the Chairman congratulated Councillor Woodcock on his marriage the week before and wished him and his wife all the best.

107 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

108 **Air Quality Update**

The Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety submitted a report to approve the updated Air Quality Action Plan and confirm the revocation of two Air Quality Management Areas.

Resolved

- (1) That the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) No.2 (Horsefair/North Bar, Banbury) and Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) No.3 (Bicester Road, Kidlington) be revoked.
- (2) That Air Quality Action Plan 2024 be approved.

Reasons

In AQMA No.2 (Horsefair/North Bar, Banbury) and AQMA No.3 (Bicester Road, Kidlington) the measured levels of nitrogen dioxide have been below the air quality objective of 40µg/m³ for the last five years. The guidance from Defra is that revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of compliance with the relevant objective, and where there have been no exceedances for the past five years, the AQMA should be revoked. The Executive are therefore recommended to approve the revocation of these two AQMAs.

Where an AQMA has been declared for an exceedance of an air quality objective, it is a legal requirement for the Council to have an AQAP in place and then review it every five years. The current AQAP, approved by the Executive on 6 March 2017, has been updated in consultation with partners and to reflect the latest monitoring and traffic data. The Executive are therefore recommended to approve the Air Quality Action Plan 2024.

Alternative options

Option 1: To not revoke AQMA No.3 (Bicester Road, Kidlington) and AQMA No.2 (Horsefair/North Bar, Banbury). This option was rejected because local authorities are required to revoke AQMAs where there have been no exceedances of the relevant objective for the past five years.

Option 2: To not approve the Air Quality Plan 2024. This option was rejected because where there is an AQMA declared for an exceedance of an air quality objective, it is a legal requirement for the Council to have an AQAP in place (Environment Act 1995 as amended), and to review it every five years.

109

Fixed Penalty Notices

The Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety to review and agree the fixed penalty notice fines that can be charged for various environmental crimes.

Resolved

- (1) That the following increase to the fixed penalty fine levels for fly tipping, household duty of care, and littering offences be approved:
 - Description of offence: Unauthorised deposit of waste (fly tipping)
 - Penalty: £1000
 - Penalty if paid within 10 days: £500
 - Description of offence: Failure in household duty of care
 - Penalty: £600
 - Penalty if paid within 10 days: £300
 - Description of offence: Depositing litter
 - Penalty: £500
 - Penalty if paid within 10 days: £250

Reasons

Fixed penalties can be an effective and visible way of responding to environmental crimes and provide a quicker and proportionate alternative to prosecution through the courts. The receipts from fixed penalties can be retained by the council and used to support the investigation of environmental offences. The Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023 increased the upper limits for some fixed penalty notices

Alternative options

Option 1: To leave the fixed penalty fine levels unchanged at current levels. This option was rejected as the current fine levels do not reflect the seriousness of the offences.

Option 2: To not issue fixed penalty notices but to proceed with prosecutions. This option was rejected because issuing a fixed penalty notice is a proportionate approach for dealing with lesser offences in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy.

Option 3: To remove the early payment discount. This option was rejected in order to encourage and provide an incentive for early payment.

110 **Extending Temporary Accommodation Lease Arrangements**

The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing submitted a report to activate the extension within the existing lease with Punch Taverns (Jubilee) Limited for 1 year.

Resolved

- (1) That it be agreed to exercise of an option within the existing lease allowing the Council to take a further lease of the premises for one year.

Reasons

Exercising the option within the existing Musketeer lease and entering a new lease for use of these premises would avoid a short term rise in costs attributed to temporary accommodation linked to the use of other commercial hotels. This would also allow for other opportunities to be explored for temporary accommodation in the medium and long term.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not agree to exercise the option in the existing lease to take a new lease of the accommodation at the Musketeer for one year and to vacate these premises at the end of the existing lease. This is a consideration but is rejected because it would lead to a short term rise in costs due to placements of households in more expensive commercial hotels.

Option 2: Enter negotiations for a new lease for a term longer than one year. This is a consideration but is rejected at the current time due to the review of our own stock and other potential opportunities outlined in the report. Following the review, it may be a result that a new lease is required as the best way to assist in the discharge of the Council's temporary accommodation function.

111 **Food Action Plan**

The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing submitted a report which sought approval of a Food Action Plan for Cherwell. Following the adoption of the Oxfordshire Food Strategy by Executive on June 6 2022 (minute 7 refers) there had been a series of meetings and consultations led by Good Food Oxfordshire, which included community food network members and local food businesses, and informed the proposed Food Action Plan.

Resolved

- (1) That the Food Action Plan for the Cherwell area be agreed.
- (2) That the approval of any grants to qualifying organisations be delegated to the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities.

Reasons

Endorsing the Food Action Plan for Cherwell, which is the result of community consultation and shared ambition, allows groups involved to be confident in their plans for development. Furthermore it allows Cherwell District Council to receive funding from Oxfordshire County Council to support the delivery of the identified actions.

Alternative options

Option 1: To not endorse the action plan

This course of action has been rejected as there are no substantive reason why the council should not enter into a formalised action plan with regard to the vision of the Oxfordshire Food Strategy 'Where everyone in Oxfordshire can enjoy the healthy and sustainable food they need every day'.

112 **Period Poverty**

The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing submitted a report to respond to the following motion which had been adopted by Full Council on 18 December 2023:

“To combat period poverty, this Council asks the Executive

- a) to investigate and report back on the number of accessible locations across the Council’s estate where free sanitary products can feasibly and sensitively be provided.
- b) to consider the report and the recommendations therein to make a decision on implementation.”

In response to a question from Councillor Woodcock regarding the possibility of Town and Parish Councils being included in the community partner

discussions, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing agreed to liaise with the clerks at Banbury Town Council, Bicester Town Council and Kidlington Parish Council.

In response to a question from the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration regarding what Oxfordshire County Council in respect of combatting period poverty, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing advised that she understood they would be providing free sanitary products in toilets at libraries but this had not yet commenced.

Resolved

- (1) That it be agreed that free sanitary products be provided in Bodicote House in the publicly accessible women's lavatories.
- (2) That it be agreed to provide an opportunity for community partners from the warm spaces network, community food network and community centres to opt in to providing female hygiene products at no cost to customers.
- (3) That it be agreed to provide a grant of £150 for up to 80 community locations who opt in.

Reasons

Period poverty is a local issue and the recommendations continue the spirit of the motion in providing products at Bodicote but recognises that women struggling to meet everyday costs of living are more likely to access community buildings and community food provision making support of these spaces the best way to get district coverage of free hygiene products.

Alternative

Option 1: To do nothing. Given the motion that was passed at Full Council and the potential impact on health and economic independence period poverty can have, this option has not been recommended.

Option 2: Consider providing more sustainable products rather than free disposable ones. The prohibitive costs of more sustainable products and the administrative resource needed to offer them makes this a commitment beyond our current means and so hasn't been recommended.

113

Property Asset Management Strategy

The Corporate Director Resources submitted a report to approve the Property Asset Management Strategy.

Resolved

- (1) That the Property Asset Management Strategy be approved.

Reasons

The Property Asset Management Strategy will support Council decision making, priorities and service delivery. It outlines the principles and framework underpinning decisions to make best use of property assets and is the first Property Asset Management Strategy since the Council decoupled from Oxfordshire County Council in 2022. The need for a strategic property asset review formed part of the action plan arising from the 2022 LGA Peer Review and the Property Asset Management Strategy will support this need.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not to approve the Property Asset Management Strategy. This option has been rejected as the need for a Property Strategy was highlighted in the LGA 2022 Peer Review and the Council requires a Strategy to support decision making, priorities and service delivery.

114 Finance, 115 Performance and Risk Report January 2024

The Assistant Director 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 for the month of January 2024.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the Council's Performance, Risk and Financial report for the month of January 2024 be noted.
- (2) That a change in the frequency of reporting from the new financial year onwards from monthly to quarterly be approved.
- (3) That the following reserve requests of the report be approved.

Directorate	Type	Description	Reason	Amount £m
Resources	Earmarked	Market Risk Reserve	Treasury over-recovery of income to Market risk reserve.	(0.072)
Chief Executive	Earmarked	Projects Reserve	Return unspent funding allocated to 'work in default' on properties to make them safe.	(0.021)
Chief Executive	Earmarked	Cherwell Lottery Reserve	Income from the sale of Cherwell Lottery tickets to be then paid out to successful bidders of community organisations	(0.006)
Chief Executive	Earmarked	Projects Reserve	Return unspent allocation of awards given to community groups to celebrate the King's	(0.015)

			coronation.	
Resources	Earmarked	Dilapidations, Garage Project & Canalside Reserve	Transfer £95K of unspent back to reserve to be released in 24/25.	(0.095)
Communities	Earmarked	Development Management Casework Reserve	Return unspent reserve monies due to delays in recruitment therefore not required.	(0.050)
Communities	Earmarked	Local Plan Charges Reserve	This budget will need to be released in 24/25 as the Local Plan gets underway to cover related legal costs that may arise.	(0.100)
Communities	Earmarked	Licensing	The surplus of licensing budget must be ringfenced for future fee setting.	(0.032)
Total Earmarked Reserves				(0.391)
Chief Executives	Ringfenced Grant		Return unspent SPARK grant to reserves.	(0.010)
Chief Executives	Ringfenced Grant		Return unspent COMF to reserve for release in 24/25	(0.071)
Communities	Ringfenced Grant		move unspent Bicester Garden Town to reserve for utilisation in 24/25	(0.221)
Resources	Ringfenced Grant		Match funding received from OCC, ringfenced for spend on Discretionary Housing Payments only. Will be allocated in 2024-25	(0.187)
Ringfenced Grants				(0.489)

- (4) That the approval of £0.011m S106 monies for the refurbishment works to Steeple Aston Village Hall under S151 delegation powers be noted.

Reasons

This report provides an update on progress made during January 2024, to deliver the council's priorities, manage potential risks and remain within the agreed budget.

Alternative options

There is no alternative option to consider as this is an update report on the council's performance, risk, and financial positions up to the end of January 2024. However, members may wish to request further information from officers for inclusion.

115 **Silverstone Loan**

The Assistant Director of Finance submitted a report to update Executive on the status of the loan to Silverstone Heritage Limited and agree a rephased payment plan.

In introducing the report, the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance advised that there was a public and private version of the report due to aspects of the information containing commercially sensitive information. Executive would therefore make their decision following the exclusion of the press and public.

116 **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 item 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, Paragraph 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.

117 **Silverstone Loan**

The Assistant Director of Finance submitted a exempt report to update Executive on the status of the loan to Silverstone Heritage Limited and agree a rephased payment plan.

Resolved

- (1) That the extension of the payment term of the loan given to Silverstone Heritage Limited to March 2034 be agreed.
- (2) As set out in the exempt Minutes.

Reasons

It is considered that the most likely way for the council to safeguard its resources is to agree to a revised payment profile of the loan with Silverstone Heritage Limited (SHL) and as set out in the exempt Minutes.

Alternative options

Option 1: Make no changes to the loan agreement. This has been discounted on the basis that an alternative funder cannot be identified. Further information as set out in the exempt Minutes.

Option 2: As set out in the exempt Minutes.

The meeting ended at 7.05 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 April 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Policy and Strategy
Councillor Adam Nell (Vice-Chairman), Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance
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 Edward Fraser Reeves, Portfolio Holder for Property
Councillor Dan Sames, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Nigel Simpson, Portfolio Holder for Sport and Leisure

Officers:

Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer
David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning & Development
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing
Mona Walsh, Assistant Director - Property
Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus
Christina Cherry, Planning Policy, Conservation & Design Manager
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Officers Attending Virtually:

Simon Barlow, Principal Planner - Infrastructure Lead (Interim)

118

Declarations of Interest

11. Whitelands Farm Sports Centre - Grant of Lease and Transfer of Commuted Funds.

Councillor Donna Ford, Other Registerable Interest, as a member of Bicester Town Council.

Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Other Registerable Interest, as a member of Bicester Town Council.

13. Whitelands Farm Sports Centre - Grant of Lease and Transfer of Commuted Funds - Exempt Appendix.

Councillor Donna Ford, Other Registerable Interest, as a member of Bicester Town Council.

Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Other Registerable Interest, as a member of Bicester Town Council.

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

There were no petitions.

The Chairman advised that Councillor Reynolds had requested to address the meeting on agenda item 7, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

120 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

121 **Chairman's Announcements**

Noting this was the last Executive meeting of the 2023/2024 municipal year, the Chairman thanked Members and officers for their work over the past twelve months.

As the Council's representative on the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, the Chairman gave an update on the meeting that was held on 20 March. Items included the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Update for Quarter 3, Advisory Group updates and the Local Enterprise Functions transition arrangements, which would have no change for residents.

It was the last Future Oxfordshire Partnership meeting of the 2023/2024 municipal year. The next meeting was on 25 June with the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel meeting on 18 June.

122 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Assistant Director Planning and Development submitted a report to present, for consideration and approval, a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule, and Draft Instalments Policy for consultation purposes.

Councillor Reynolds addressed Executive commenting that CIL had been awaited for a long time but did not seem to be as beneficial to villages as the District Council, particularly as it was paid in two lots.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Reynolds for his comments.

Resolved

- (1) That public consultation on the draft CIL Charging Schedule, Draft Instalments Policy, and supporting documents be approved.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director - Planning and Development, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development, to make any minor amendments and corrections to the draft document he considers necessary prior to formal publication.
- (3) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director – Planning and Development, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development, to finalise and publish supporting documents.

Reasons

A CIL Draft Charging Schedule and Instalments Policy is presented for approval to proceed to formal consultation. This is a required step ahead of the introduction of the Levy within the district.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not consulting on the proposed Charging Schedule and supporting documents.

The introduction of CIL is within the Council's LDS. Consultation is a legal requirement in the process.

Option 2: Amending the proposed documents.

The documents proposed for consultation were prepared having regard to national policy guidance, informal engagement with key stakeholders and updated development evidence. Consultation will provide a further opportunity for stakeholders and members of the public to address matters formally and inform the preparation of both documents.

Discretionary Housing Payments Policy 2024-2025

The Assistant Director Finance & Section 151 Officer submitted a report to inform Executive of the reviewed policy for Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) and proposed updates.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration the reviewed policy for Discretionary Housing Payments be noted.
- (2) That the policy for Discretionary Housing Payments be approved.

Reasons

Discretionary Housing Payments are vital for residents in the current economic climate and help to support our most vulnerable residents with housing costs. It is recommended that the policy is endorsed by Executive to continue delivering support to these customers.

Alternative options

Option 1: Returning the funds to Department for Works and Pensions and Oxfordshire County Council

This has been rejected as this would not be in line with Cherwell's objectives of responding to the cost-of-living crisis and working to prevent homelessness.

125

Performance Outcomes Framework 2024-2025

The Assistant Director Customer Focus submitted a report to share the proposed approach for measuring, monitoring, and reporting on the council's performance towards its priorities and objectives for 2024/25 and to capture any recommended changes for Executive consideration.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposed approach for managing the council's performance for 2024/25, specifically the 36 performance indicators and their respective targets, be approved.

Reasons

This report sets out a suggested framework for measuring and monitoring the council's performance and progress towards achieving better outcomes for its communities. The framework will ensure there is a clear pathway to achieving success, and the committee's views are important for ensuring its effectiveness.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not to agree a performance management framework

Without a performance framework the council cannot monitor its progress towards its desired outcomes and therefore agree any corrective action that might be necessary to keep them on track. Therefore, the council would risk not delivering its desired outcomes for its communities. This option has therefore been rejected.

126

Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plans - Inclusive Communities, Services and Workplaces

The Assistant Director – Customer Focus submitted a report to seek approval of the action plans for delivering the council's equality, diversity, and inclusion commitments for creating inclusive communities, services, and workplaces, which are set out in its Equalities Framework, Including Everyone.

Resolved

- (1) That the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) action plans for Inclusive Communities, Services and Workplaces be approved.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director for Customer Focus, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and the Chair of the EDI working group, to make minor amendments to the agreed Inclusive Communities and Services Action Plans

Reasons

The council is committed to going above and beyond our statutory responsibilities in creating inclusive communities and services and an inclusive workforce. To do this effectively we need to have the right resources and infrastructure in place to:

- capture the latest EDI data and trends
- use the data available to identify and address any barriers
- ensure EDI implications are identified and considered at the earliest opportunities through our service planning and decision-making processes

The Inclusive Communities, Inclusive Services, and Inclusive Workplaces Action Plans provide a structure in which this can be delivered and a basis on which work to deliver these commitments can be undertaken.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not to agree the action plans

This will not ensure the council delivers on its EDI commitments.

127

Whitelands Farm Sports Centre - Grant of Lease and Transfer of Commuted Funds

The Assistant Director Property submitted a report which sought consideration of a proposal for the future operation and long-term management of

Whitelands Farm Sports Centre and grant of a long leasehold interest of Whitelands Farm Sports Centre to Bicester Town Council.

In considering the report, Bicester Executive members commented that the proposal was welcomed by the vast majority of residents in Bicester. In response to Members' questions, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing Services explained she had been in contact with Bicester Town Council clerk who was comfortable with the transfer arrangements.

Resolved

- (1) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Property to enter into a 90-year lease of Whitelands Farm Sports Centre at a peppercorn rent to Bicester Town Council subject to completion of the legal formalities and advertising requirements described below.
- (2) That the transfer of a commuted sum of £30,000 to Bicester Town Council upon completion of the lease be approved.

Reasons

Bicester Town Council (BTC) currently lease other property from the Council used for sports and pitch provision. The addition of Whitelands Farm Sports Centre to their portfolio would enable them to offer a wider and more holistic sports provision to local teams and residents.

The Council acquires land from developers, usually through Section 106 agreements, to ensure there is an adequate supply of sports pitch provision available for the growing population of Cherwell. These acquisitions place long-term financial burdens on the Council to maintain and operate the sites, long after the commuted sum is spent. The grant of a long lease to BTC who will have full operational and management responsibility removes the ongoing financial burden to the Council.

Members have agreed to review policies associated with acquiring sports pitches and their onward ownership and maintenance. Consultation with Town and Parish Councils, where development is likely will determine the willingness of third tier authorities to take on responsibility for community amenities, as negotiations continue with developers. Towns and larger villages are showing some appetite for an approach which ensures operation is at the closest level to residents. Grant of a long lease to BTC aligns with this approach.

A yearly tenancy was granted to BTC in March 2022 to operate the facility while terms for a longer lease were agreed. BTC have broadened sports and social provision during this time for the benefit of local residents.

Alternative options

Option 1: To revert to an operator model.

This option has been rejected as it fails to provide BTC with control over how their resources are deployed in the delivery of the service at the site. Furthermore, this option does not provide the Council with any certainty over the longer-term viability, management and maintenance of the facility.

Option 2: Work with a local sports club to operate and maintain the facility.

This option has been rejected as it would negatively impact on those teams from other sports who currently use the site and would probably take the site out of public ownership contravening the Section 106 agreement.

128 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

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

129 **Whitelands Farm Sports Centre - Grant of Lease and Transfer of Commuted Funds - Exempt Appendix**

Resolved

(1) That the exempt appendix be noted.

(Reasons and Alternative options as set out under Minute 127)

The meeting ended at 6.50 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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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 10 June 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor David Hingley (Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership) (Chairman)

Councillor Lesley McLean (Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources) (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Tom Beckett, Portfolio Holder for Greener Communities

Councillor Chris Brant, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services

Councillor Jean Conway, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management

Councillor Ian Middleton, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services

Councillor Rob Pattenden, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities

Councillor Chris Pruden, Portfolio Holder for Housing

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Rob Parkinson, Portfolio Holder for Regulatory

Also Present:

Councillor John Broad

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

Christina Cherry, Planning Policy, Conservation & Design Manager

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader

Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Officers Attending Virtually:

Mona Walsh, Assistant Director - Property

Ed Potter, Assistant Director Environmental Services

David Spilsbury, Head of Digital and Innovation

Kevin Larnar, Information Governance and Localism Manager

1 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions. The Chairman advised that he had agreed to one request to address the meeting, from Parish Councillor Tim Coggins, Chair of Heyford Park Parish Council on agenda item 6, Application for the Designation of a Neighbourhood Area for the parish of Heyford Park.

3 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 April 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first Executive meeting of the municipal year, the first meeting of the new administration and was looking forward to achieving a great deal during this period

5 **Application for the Designation of a Neighbourhood Area for the Parish of Heyford Park**

The Assistant Director Planning and Development submitted a report to consider the application for the Designation of a Neighbourhood Area for the Parish of Heyford Park.

Heyford Park Parish Council had submitted an application for the designation of the whole of their parish as a Neighbourhood Area, in order to prepare a neighbourhood development plan. The Council must determine the application.

Parish Councillor Tim Coggins, Chair of Heyford Parish Council, addressed Executive.

Resolved

- (1) That the Parish of Heyford Park be designated as a Neighbourhood Area.
- (2) That it be determined that the Neighbourhood Area should not be designated as a business area under Section 61(H) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- (3) That the existing designated Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Area boundary be amended to exclude Heyford Park parish, as shown in the map in the Annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book).

Reasons

The area application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area for the parish of Heyford Park has been made in accordance with Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended). As such a designation would result in the need to amend the boundary of an existing designated neighbourhood area, namely Mid Cherwell, the Council has had to consider the desirability of making such an amendment. After reviewing all the representations received, and acknowledging that the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan cannot proceed without the consent of Heyford Park PC, it is considered desirable to amend the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood area boundary by removing Heyford Park parish from it. The creation of two separate neighbourhood areas will allow both communities to progress neighbourhood plans.

Alternative options

There are no grounds to refuse the application. The application has been made in accordance with the regulations and subject to consultation. Moreover, such a refusal will prevent the preparation of neighbourhood plans for the parish and the wider Mid Cherwell area.

6 Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report End of year 2023 - 2024

The Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Assistant Director – Customer Focus submitted a report on the council's performance, risk, and financial positions at the end of the financial year 2023-2024.

Resolved

- (1) That the council's performance, risk and outturn for the financial year ended 31 March 2024 be noted.
- (2) That the use of reserve requests set out the Annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (3) That the reserves movements made under the S151's delegated powers as part of the audit of prior years' statement of accounts be noted.
- (4) That the reprofiled capital budget described the Annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book), including corresponding financing from capital reserves, be approved and the 2024/25 capital programme be adjusted accordingly.

- (5) That outturn for 2023/2024, which is a balanced position after a contribution to reserves of £4.461m, be noted.
- (6) That the use of £0.285m of the Commercial Risk element of Policy Contingency to mitigate the delay in forecast lettings for some properties within 2023/24 be approved.

Reasons

This report provides a summary of the council's delivery against its business plan priorities including its, risk, and financial positions for the 2023/24 financial year.

Alternative options

Option 1: This report summarises the council's performance, risk and financial positions for the 2023/2024 financial year, therefore there are no alternative options to consider.

7 Oxfordshire Councils Charter

The Assistant Director Law and Governance submitted a report to brief Executive on the Oxfordshire Councils Charter ('Parish Charter')

Resolved

- (1) That the Oxfordshire Councils Charter be endorsed and it be agreed that Cherwell District Council become a signatory to it.
- (2) That Officers be instructed to bring a follow-up report in July 2025 assessing the impact of the charter.

Reasons

Endorsement of the Charter will be an additional assurance to Cherwell parishes that CDC remains committed to communicating and working collaboratively with them. It will encourage Cherwell parishes to become signatories and adopt the Charter principles. The Cherwell Parish Liaison Meeting is a demonstration of CDC's commitment to the charter principles.

Alternative options

Option 1: Develop a CDC/Parishes charter as an alternative to the Oxfordshire Councils Charter. This is not recommended because at the earliest stages of Charter development CDC was the prime mover in securing partnership involvement of the district and city councils on the Oxfordshire Charter.

Option 2: Propose substantial pre-launch changes to the content of the

Oxfordshire Councils Charter. This is not recommended because the Charter principles were developed through an extensive consultation process.

8 **Appointments to Partnerships, Outside Bodies, Member Champions and Shareholder Committee 2024/2025**

The Assistant Director Law and Governance submitted a report to appoint representatives to Partnerships, Outside Bodies, where these are executive functions, Member Champions and the Shareholder Committee, for the municipal year 2024/2025.

Resolved

- (1) That appointments to partnerships, outside bodies, the Shareholder Committee, Member Champions and advisory groups for the 2024/2025 municipal year be made as set out at the Annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book).
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Law and Governance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to appoint Members to any outstanding vacancies and make changes to appointments, including new appointments, as may be required for the 2024/2025 Municipal Year.
- (3) That appointed Members be reminded to update their Register of Interests as may be required, to reflect these appointments.

Reasons

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

Delegation to the Assistant Director 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.

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 **Notification of Urgent Item - Making of the Deddington Neighbourhood Plan**

The Assistant Director Planning and Development submitted a report to inform Executive of a decision taking under urgency powers by the Corporate Director Communities regarding the making of the Deddington Neighbourhood Plan.

Resolved

- (1) That the referendum result of 2 May 2024 where 93% of those who voted were in favour of the Deddington Neighbourhood Plan, which is above the required 50%, be noted.
- (2) That the urgent decision taken by the Corporate Director Communities to recommend to Council that the Plan “be made” be noted.

Reasons

In line with the constitution, this report is informing Executive of a decision that was taken by the Corporate Director – Communities under urgency powers.

Alternative options

A formal decision was required to be made. There was no known breach or incompatibility with, any EU or human rights obligations. The Council had no options or alternatives to making the Plan.

10 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

11 **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 item 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, Paragraph 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.

12 **Cherwell District Council Microsoft Enterprise Licensing Agreement**

The Head of Digital and Innovation submitted an exempt report in relation to Cherwell District Council’s Microsoft Enterprise Licensing Agreement.

Resolved

- (1) As set out in the exempt Minutes.

Reasons

As set out in the exempt Minutes

Alternative options

As set out in the exempt Minutes

13 **Letting of Unit 5 at Castle Quay 2**

The Assistant Director Property submitted an exempt report for the letting of Unit 5 at Castle Quay 2.

Resolved

- (1) As set out in the exempt Minutes.
- (2) As set out in the exempt Minutes.
- (3) As set out in the exempt Minutes.

Reasons

As set out in the exempt Minutes

Alternative options

As set out in the exempt Minutes

The meeting ended at 7.00 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 17 January 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Simon Holland (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair)

Councillor Besmira Brasha

Councillor Andrew Crichton

Councillor Donna Ford

Councillor Simon Lytton

Harry Lawson, Independent Person (non-voting)

Sarah Thompson, Independent Person (non-voting)

Substitute Members:

Councillor Barry Wood (In place of Councillor Lynn Pratt)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Lynn Pratt

Councillor Harry Knight

Councillor Ian Middleton

Also Present:

Councillor Adam Nell, Portfolio Holder for Finance

Also Present Virtually:

Alison Kennett, External Audit

Maria Grindley, External Audit

Katherine Kitashima, Audit Manager (internal Audit)

Officers:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer

Joanne Kaye, Head of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer

Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead

David Rogers, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers Attending Virtually:

Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader

46 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

48 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 November 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

49 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

50 **Internal Audit Progress Report 2023/24**

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Director – Finance which provided an update on Internal Audit progress since September 2023.

Three audits had been finalised since the last update, relating to Climate, Revenues and Benefits IT Applications and Business Continuity.

The implementation status of previously agreed management actions continued to be positive across the organisation, with good rates of implementation and evidence that other actions were being actively progressed.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance Councillor Adam Nell congratulated Internal Audit on their progress, and thanked Councillors Pratt and Ford who had been interviewed during the completed audits.

In response to a question from Independent Person Harry Lawson regarding future Internal Audit arrangements at the conclusion of the existing contract, the Assistant Director – Finance advised that discussions were ongoing and he was confident a new provider and contract would be in place for 1 May 2024.

Resolved

(1) That the Internal Audit Progress Report 2023/24 report be noted.

51 **External Audit Update**

The Committee considered a report from external auditors Ernst & Young (EY) that presented Draft Audit Results for 2021/22.

In presenting the report, Maria Grindley of EY explained that the Executive Summary gave details on the current status of the audit, including prior year adjustments. As this was a progress report there was still the opportunity for Members to ask questions on any aspects of the work to date.

With regards to value for money it was reported that there were no risks of weakness or matters to report by exception.

In addition to the adjustments referred to in the 'audit differences' section, Alison Kennet advised that following receipt of the 2022 pensions evaluation, a balance sheet adjustment of £5.3 Million was required against pension liability.

In response to a question from Independent Person Harry Lawson regarding the delay in auditing accounts from previous financial years, Maria Grindley explained that the matter affected all local authorities and was being considered by the Minister. Legislation was expected to address the issue and outline what action would be taken to catch up.

Resolved

- (1) That the Draft Audit Results Report for 2021/22 report be noted.
- (2) That authority be granted to the Assistant Director of Finance, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee (or Deputy Chair in their absence), can make any further changes to the draft letters of representation agreed with the auditors that may arise during completion of the audit.

52 Treasury Management Report - Q3 2023/24 (December 2023)

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

All treasury management activities undertaken to date during the 2023-24 financial year complied with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the council's approved Treasury Management Strategy, and all of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators had been met during the reporting period.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding non-treasury investments to subsidiaries and the status of dividends and repayments to the council, Councillor Nell advised that the Graven Hill Company had recently paid £9M as a result of sale of land at the development site. Detailed loan agreements were in place with the company, and the council would also shortly be receiving the first dividend payment in line with those agreements.

The Committee thanked officers for the hard work undertaken in relation to Treasury Management.

Resolved

(1) That the Treasury Management Report - Q3 2023/24 (December 2023) report be noted.

53 **Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies 2024-25**

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Director of Finance that detailed draft Capital & Investment Strategy, and Treasury Management Strategy for 2024-25.

The Capital and Investment Strategy was introduced in 2019-20, and must satisfy the requirements of government legislation and CIPFA guidance.

It was proposed by Councillor Barry Wood and seconded by Councillor Donna Ford that the draft Capital & Investment Strategy, and Treasury Management Strategy for 2024-25 be recommended to Executive for approval.

Resolved

(1) That the draft strategies for 2024-25 be recommended to Executive for approval.

54 **Work Programme**

The Committee considered the indicative work programme for the remainder of 2023-24.

Resolved

(1) That the work programme be noted.

55 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 7.19 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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 20 March 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Lynn Pratt (Chairman)

Councillor Donna Ford

Councillor Simon Lytton

Councillor Ian Middleton

Sarah Thompson, Independent Person (no voting rights)

Substitute Members:

Councillor Adam Nell (In place of Councillor Simon Holland)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Simon Holland

Councillor Besmira Brasha

Councillor Andrew Crichton

Councillor Harry Knight

Harry Lawson, Independent Person (no voting rights)

Also Present Virtually:

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council

Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services

Officers:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer

Joanne Kaye, Head of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer

Jacey Scott, Head of Revenues and Benefits

Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Officers Attending Virtually:

Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

Sarah Cox, Chief Internal Auditor

Declan Brolly, Corporate Fraud Officer

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader

Alex Rycroft, Strategic Finance Business Partner

56 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

58 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 January 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

59 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

60 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

61 **Risk Based Verification Policy 2024/2025**

The Assistant Director Finance submitted a report to seek approval of the reviewed Risk Based Verification (RBV) Policy for 2024/25.

In response to Members' questions regarding how the policy operated in practice, the Head of Benefits and Revenues Services gave an overview of the process. RBV was a method of applying different levels of checks to new claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction dependent upon a complex risk profile given to each customer. The profile was determined by specific software using statistical information and experience about what type of claim represents what type of risk. The higher the risk, the greater the checks used to establish that the claim was genuine.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the Risk Based Verification Policy for the financial year 2024/2025 be approved.

62 **Internal Audit Contract Procedure**

The Head of Finance advised the Committee that Oxfordshire County Council would cease to provide the Internal Audit service to Cherwell District Council. Following due process, arrangements were being put in place for provision from May 2024. The Internal Audit Plan 2024/2025 would be submitted to the 29 May meeting of the Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That the verbal update be noted.

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

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

The Committee commended the work being undertaken by the service.

In response to a question regarding the resource required to receive the outputs, the Chief Internal Auditor explained that the work undertaken was discussed with the Assistant Director Finance to ensure it was in the best interests of the Council and its residents. The Assistant Director Finance highlighted that the work also served as a prevention tool as it demonstrated that the Council did investigate as part of its zero approach to fraud.

In response to a question regarding handover of work to the new provider, the Chief Internal Auditor explained that Oxfordshire County Council would cease to provide the service to Cherwell District Council (CDC) at the end of April 2024. There would be some residual work and a pragmatic approach would be taken as the new provider would be delivering both the Internal Audit and Counter-Fraud service for CDC.

Resolved

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

64 **Draft Annual Report of Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee**

The Assistant Director of Finance submitted a report which presented the draft Annual report of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee.

In introducing the report, the Chief Internal Auditor confirmed that following the draft report being circulated to Committee members in February, the report had been updated to reflect changes suggested.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, it be agreed that the draft Annual Report of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee be finalised in preparation for presentation to Council by the Chair of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee.

65 **Risk Monitoring Report January 2024**

The Assistant Director Customer Focus to update the Committee on how well the Council was managing its strategic risks.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services confirmed that there were no score changes in the Leadership Risk Register during January 2024.

Resolved

- (1) That the Risk Monitoring Report for January 2024 be noted.

66 **2021/22 Final Audit Results Report**

The Assistant Director Finance submitted a report to ask the Committee to note the final audit results and annual report of the council's external auditors in relation to the 2021/22 statement of accounts. The report also asked the Committee to note the final Letter of Representation and the final 2020/21 Statement of Accounts.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Finance thanked the Finance Team for achieving great progress with the External Auditor.

In response to a question regarding the classification of Castle Quay, the Assistant Director Finance explained that the External Auditor had been provided with the paperwork at the time of purchase. The External Auditor had acknowledged that Castle Quay was in the wrong category, and it had been restated in previous years' accounts to provide a like-for-like comparison.

Resolved

- (1) That the final 2021/22 Audit Results Report be noted.
- (2) That the final 2021/22 Annual Audit Report of the External Auditor be noted.
- (3) That the final Letter of Representation be noted.

- (4) That the final Statement of Accounts for 2021/22 be noted.

67 **Draft Statement of Accounts 2022-23**

The Assistant Director Finance submitted a report to provide an opportunity for review of the draft 2022/23 Statement of Accounts which were published on 2 February 2024.

Resolved

- (1) That the report and publication of the draft statement of accounts 2022/23 be noted.
- (2) That the current consultations from Central Government to implement 'backstop' dates to combat the backlog of outstanding audits across England be noted.

68 **2023/24 Accounting Policies**

The Assistant Director of Finance submitted a report to review and approve the Accounting Policies for inclusion in the 2023/24 Statement of Accounts which were due to be published by 31 May 2024. The council was required to set accounting policies which set out the specific principles, bases, conventions, rules, and practices applied by an authority in preparing and presenting financial statements.

Resolved

- (1) That the accounting policies as recommended by the Chief Finance Officer be approved.

69 **Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023 - Update on Actions**

The Monitoring Officer & Assistant Director of Law & Governance submitted a report to consider an update on actions from the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2022/2023.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the update on the actions arising from the Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023 be noted.

70 **Work Programme**

The Head of Finance advised that the first meeting of the Committee in 2024/205 would take place on Wednesday 29 May. Mandatory training for Members appointed to the Committee would take place on the same date.

Resolved

- (1) That the work programme update be noted.

71

Chairman's Thank You

As this was the last meeting of the municipal year, the Chairman thanked Committee members and officers for their work during the cycle of meetings. The Chairman also thanked the Independent Persons for their diligence in their roles.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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 22 May 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Nick Cotter (Chairman)
Councillor David Rogers (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Jean Conway
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Alisa Russell
Councillor Dom Vaitkus
Councillor Sean Woodcock

1 Appointment of Chairman for the municipal year 2024/2025

It was proposed by Councillor Cotter and seconded by Councillor McLean that Councillor Cotter be elected Chairman of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee.

There were no further nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Cotter be elected Chairman of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee for the municipal year 2024/2025.

2 Appointment of Vice-Chairman for the municipal year 2024/2025

It was proposed by Councillor Mawer and seconded by Councillor Vaitkus that Councillor Rogers be elected Vice-Chairman of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee.

There were no further nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Rogers be elected Vice-Chairman of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee for the municipal year 2024/2025.

The meeting ended at 7.48 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 23 January 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Patrick Clarke (Chairman)
Councillor Douglas Webb (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Tom Beckett
Councillor Becky Clarke MBE
Councillor Donna Ford
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Matt Hodgson
Councillor Simon Lytton
Councillor Adam Nell
Councillor Dorothy Walker
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Officers:

Joanne Kaye, Head of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer
Leanne Lock, Strategic Business Partner - Business Partnering & Controls
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager
Matt Swinford, Democratic and Elections Officer

36 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

37 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

38 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

39 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

40 **Capital and Investment Strategy 2024-25**

The Assistant Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer submitted a report for the Committee to consider the draft Capital and Investment Strategy for 2024/25. The Strategy must be approved by Full Council annually and must satisfy the requirements of government legislation and CIPFA guidance.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced the report and advised the Committee that the Capital Strategy demonstrated how the council took capital expenditure decisions in line with service objectives and properly took account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance advised that there had been a change in the strategy to the Council's minimum revenue provision which was an amount that had to be set aside by Council's in respect of any capital borrowing that it had previously incurred each year. The Council had changed from a straight-line basis to an annuity basis.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance explained that the Investment strategy related to non-treasury management investments. Investments covered by this strategy include loans to third parties, purchased of shares (in subsidiaries, businesses etc) and property.

Following questions from the Committee querying if the change in the minimum revenue provision was in line with other local authorities, the Head of Finance advised that there were four recognised methods for minimum revenue and the one chosen was the most appropriate for the Council to use.

Following a question asking why higher value investments like Castle Quay were mis-classified and had been re-classified in the report, the Portfolio Holder for Finance advised that officers would provide a written response to the Committee.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding the Council's investment in banks and if they were investing in oil and gas, the Portfolio Holder for Finance advised that in stewarding investments, the Council was required to get best value for the tax-payer which had a strong effect on what the Council could invest in. The Portfolio Holder for Finance advised that officers would provide a written response to the Committee following the meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the draft Capital and Investment Strategy for 2024/25 be recommended to Executive.

41 **Reserves Review**

The Assistant Director of Finance submitted a report to update Budget Planning Committee (BPC) on the Review of Reserves that had taken place in preparation of the budget for 2024/25 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024/25 – 2028/29.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance advised the Committee that the review proposed that the Council retain its current minimum level of general reserves of £6.129m however advised that if this reserve was to be used then it would need to be replenished.

In response to a question from the Committee asking how the general reserve would the reserve be replenished if used, the Portfolio Holder for Finance advised that it would be difficult however the Council policy was to hold prudent reserves so business would continue if this were to happen.

Resolved

- (1) That the outcome of the review of reserves and the forecast over the MTFS period be noted
- (2) That, having given due consideration, Executive be advised that the Budget Planning Committee supports the draft reserve allocations.

42

Monthly Finance Performance Report

The Assistant Director of Finance submitted a report that summarised the Council's forecast revenue and capital outturn for 2023/2024 as at 30 November 2023.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance explained that the Council's forecast outturn position for 2023/24 was an overspend of £0.259m.

In relation to the capital budget, the Portfolio Holder for Finance advised that there was a forecast in-year underspend of £12.439m of which £12.435m was to be reprofiled into future years. The Portfolio Holder of Finance explained this was primarily due to factors outside of the council's control, for example, in relation to the waste and recycling vehicle replacement programme, there was a national delay in vehicle supply and delivery. The programme had therefore been reviewed and the capital budget reprofiled accordingly.

Following a question on why there was an overspend on gate fees for waste and recycling, the Portfolio Holder for Finance advised that the CDC was required to pay the market price which fluctuated. Officers would provide a written response regarding the overspend.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.

43

Review of Committee Work Plan

The Strategic Business Partner - Business Partnering & Controls gave an update on the Committee work plan.

The Strategic Business Partner - Business Partnering & Controls advised that the Committee would consider the Finance Monitoring Report – Quarter three – December 2023 and a work programme update at their March meeting.

Resolved

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

The meeting ended at 7.36 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 30 January 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor John Broad (Chairman)
Councillor Ian Harwood
Councillor Simon Holland
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Dorothy Walker
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Bryn Williams

Substitute Members:

Councillor Sean Woodcock (In place of Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Dr Isabel Creed
Councillor Patrick Clarke
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke

Also Present:

Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
Councillor Adam Nell, Portfolio Holder for Finance

Also Present Virtually:

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council
Councillor Donna Ford, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration

Officers:

Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources
Jacey Scott, Head of Revenues and Benefits
Edward Frape, Senior Healthy Place Shaping Officer
Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead
Patrick Davis, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers Attending Virtually:

Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing
David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning & Development
Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader
Tony Brummell, Building Control and Flood Risk Manager
Jan Southgate, Health Protection Compliance & Business Support Manager

53 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

54 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 November 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

55 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made one announcement:

1. Immediately prior to the next meeting of the Committee on 12 March, there would be a Housing drop-in session where Members would have the opportunity to meet officers from the different areas of the Housing Team and ask any questions in relation to the service. More information including specific timings would be sent out to all Members in due course.

56 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

57 **Attendance of Thames Valley Police Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner**

The Chairman welcomed the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley, Matthew Barber, Chief Constable Jason Hogg and Superintendent Jen Hogben Detective Inspector James Holden-White, Thames Valley Police, to the meeting and invited them to update the Committee regarding policing in Thames Valley.

The Police and Crime Commissioner updated the Committee on officer numbers and plans for recruitment of additional officers. These included doubling the number of neighbourhood police officers by the end of this financial year and recruiting a further 150 officers in the next financial year.

The Police and Crime Commissioner advised the Committee on the measures that had been undertaken to improve the response times on the non-emergency 101 police contact service. This included the introduction of new methods of contact such as social medial channels, webchat functionality and an online victim portal.

The Chief Constable gave a presentation which provided more details on the scale of the Thames Valley Police Force, the challenges it faced and the operations currently being undertaken. The Committee was also advised that a Force Review was in progress which involved a restructuring of the Force in an attempt to mitigate the current funding shortfall.

Superintendent Hogben provided the Committee with more details on some of the operations currently taking place to reduce knife crime, anti-social behaviour, retail theft and rural crime in the Cherwell district. The Committee was advised that the emphasis was on prevention of such activities and often involved a highly targeted approach working with other agencies and partners.

Following the presentation, the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable and Superintendent answered questions from Members of the Committee.

In response to a question regarding the approach to the carrying of knives by boys in the 10 to 17 age group, the Police and Crime Commissioner provided more details on targeted operations and intervention policies piloted by Thames Valley Police in other parts of the Thames Valley area. It was hoped that subject to funding this would be rolled out across all communities.

In response to a question regarding the theft of van tools in Banbury, the Committee was advised of the various prevention strategies in place such as tool marking schemes.

In response to a question regarding wildlife crime, the Chief Constable provided more details of the Rural Crime task force that was believed to be a deterrent to potential criminals coming in to the Thames Valley area.

In response to a question regarding retail theft, the Committee was advised that although there had been an increase in the number of offenders brought to justice more work was required in this area.

It was agreed that written responses to questions regarding the success of the Public Spaces Protection Order in Bicester, and contact details for Neighbourhood Police Officers in Kidlington would be provided after the meeting.

The Chairman thanked the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable and Superintendent for their attendance.

58

Future Oxfordshire Partnership - Scrutiny Panel Update

The Chairman provided an update on the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) Scrutiny Panel meeting of the 22 January 2024 which he and Councillor Woodcock had attended as two of the three CDC appointed reports to the Panel.

The Committee was advised that the FOP Scrutiny Panel had considered reports on Healthy Place Shaping across Oxfordshire and the Wellbeing Board Strategy for Oxfordshire. The FOP Scrutiny Panel had recommended that appropriate Key Performance Indicators be used to measure the success of the initiatives and that there were relevant connections with the National Health Service for health care provision.

The update also included information on feedback from the main FOP Board to the Scrutiny Panel regarding Vision Zero. The Committee was informed that the Scrutiny Panel's recommendations had been rejected by the main board but these had been re-submitted for further consideration.

Councillor Wood, the CDC representative on the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, advised the Committee that he had attended the FOP meeting earlier that day and that the Healthy Place Shaping initiative had been endorsed. Councillor Wood also advised that the FOP Scrutiny Panel had requested that officers initiate a review of its Terms of Reference prior to its first meeting in the 2024/25 municipal year.

Resolved

- (1) That the update regarding the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) Scrutiny Panel and Future Oxfordshire Partnership meetings be noted.

59

Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 3, 2023-2024

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Director, Customer Focus, that detailed the quarter three performance for 2023/2024.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services advised the Committee that the Council had achieved 92% of its targets for quarter three. The Committee was advised that sixty measures had reported green, three amber and two red and all but one of the measures were expected to reach the year end targets.

The Committee asked for clarification on measure BP2.2.01 the percentage of Waste Recycled & Composted. The Performance Team Leader advised that a meeting had been arranged with the Environmental Services team to review all of the key performance indicators that were currently being used with a view to improving the measures to be used in the next financial year.

The Committee requested further information regarding the Techno Feasibility Study for a Heat Network in Banbury - Priority ADP02 on the 2023-24 Annual

Delivery Priorities. It was agreed that this would be distributed after the meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That having given due consideration, the Council's Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 3 2023-24 performance be noted and that no recommendations be submitted for Executive consideration.

60

Annual Delivery Plan 2024-25

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services introduced a presentation of the draft Annual Delivery Plan for 2024-25 and explained that it supported delivery of the objectives set out in the Council's business plan.

There were 14 prospective plan priorities across the four main business plan priorities: Healthy, resilient and engaged communities; Housing that meets your needs; Enterprising economy with strong and vibrant centres; and, Supporting environmental sustainability. The 15th priority related to Corporate objectives.

The Corporate Director – Resources gave an overview of the priorities and associated milestones that had been set against each business plan priority.

The Committee raised a question regarding the possibility of creating a metric to measure the delivery of affordable housing within the District in addition to quantifying the total number of houses being built. The Assistant Director Planning and Development advised that the information had been reported to Executive in December 2023 as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.

The Committee requested that more information be provided regarding the amount of affordable housing that had actually been delivered rather than the volume planned to be delivered and on the split between affordable rents and social rents on actual completions. It was agreed that this information would be provided after the meeting.

The Committee raised concerns regarding the potential revocation of the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Kidlington and the removal of air quality monitoring tubes. The Health Protection Compliance and Business Support Manager advised that the tubes were still in place, but the data showed that air quality had improved in this area and the AQMA was no longer needed. A detailed annual report with more information would be submitted to the 4 March Executive meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the Annual Delivery Plan 2024-25 be noted and no recommendations be submitted for Executive consideration.

Cost of Living Crisis - Action Plan Update

The Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing and the Senior Healthy Place Shaping Officer gave a presentation on the progress made against the Cost of Living action plan that had been submitted to Executive in October 2023. The update covered the December 2023 and January 2024 period.

The Committee was advised that the Council had funded seven community food grants across the District including in Fritwell and Tadmarton with a further five grants pending award. A variety of projects had been funded including assistance on the use of slow cookers, the provision of cooking and recipe sessions and work on improving the accessibility at the venues.

The Senior Healthy Place Shaping Officer outlined a new initiative that had been introduced to provide advice to residents on debt and money issues. In addition to the information available on the Council's website, leaflets had also been distributed at local GP surgeries.

The Committee was provided with details of the Household Support Equipment Grant which enabled community groups to apply for grants to purchase equipment such as blankets, thermal clothing, air fryers and other energy efficient appliances and LED lightbulbs to hand out to residents affected by the cost of living crises.

The Senior Healthy Place Shaping Officer advised the Committee that there was a plan to introduce a Banbury food hub similar to the one in Botley to distribute surplus food. In response to a question from a member of the Committee querying whether Bicester would be a better location, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing advised that the Oxford food hub had proposed that Banbury should be the location of their second site due to its location in the north of the county but she would ask them to consider Bicester as an option.

In response to a question seeking clarification regarding oil co-operatives, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing advised that this was run by Community First Oxfordshire and that the Council funded the membership fee on behalf of the residents so that they did not have to pay to have the option of purchasing cheaper oil.

In response to a question regarding the effectiveness of the use of thermal imaging cameras to identify draughts in houses, the Assistant Director Wellbeing and Housing advised that the initiative was a low cost community run project which made it a good scheme to support.

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

Resolved

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

62 **Climate Action Working Group - updated Terms of Reference**

The Principal Officer – Scrutiny and Democratic Lead updated the Committee on the amended Terms of Reference that had been discussed and agreed by the Climate Action Working Group at its meeting on the 17 January 2024.

The Terms of Reference agreed when the group was initially established required updating, to reflect changes regarding work completed so far, upcoming work and changes in membership of the Working Group as a result of elections.

Resolved

- (1) That the amended Terms of Reference for the Climate Action Working Group be approved.

63 **Working Group Updates - January 2024**

The Principal Officer – Scrutiny and Democratic Lead presented the update on the work of the Climate Action, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Food Insecurity working groups.

Resolved

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

64 **Work Programme 2023-24**

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

Resolved

- (1) That the indicative work programme be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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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 12 March 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

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

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Simon Holland

Also Present:

Councillor Phil Chapman, Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Safe Communities
Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor Sandy Dallimore, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services

Also Present Virtually:

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council

Officers:

Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing
Shona Ware, Assistant Director Customer Focus
David Peckford, Assistant Director Planning & Development
Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead
Patrick Davis, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers Attending Virtually:

Ed Potter, Assistant Director Environmental Services
Mona Walsh, Assistant Director - Property
Tim Hughes, Head of Regulatory Services & Community Safety

Tom Gubbins, Wellbeing Manager

65 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

66 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 January 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

67 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcement:

1. That current Committee members Councillors Clarke and Williams and previous Committee Chairman Councillor Donaldson would be standing down at the forthcoming elections. The Chairman thanked them for their hard work during their time on the Committee and the wider Council.

68 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

69 **Future Oxfordshire Partnership - Scrutiny Panel Update**

The Chairman provided an update on the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) Scrutiny Panel meeting of the 11 March 2024 that he had attended.

The Committee was advised that from the 31 March 2024 the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) would no longer exist and that the existing LEP functions would transfer to Oxfordshire County Council. The Chairman explained that this would lead to changes to the structure of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership and to the FOP Scrutiny Panel going forward.

Councillor Broad also provided an update on the work of the FOP advisory groups including the Planning advisory group, Planning for Health Infrastructure advisory group and Joint working on Biodiversity Net Gain. The Committee was updated on the report regarding the Local Transport Connectivity Plan (LTCP) which had shown that the number of bus and cycle journeys were not as high as had been anticipated but it was believed that this was due to the fact that the data had been collected in the winter period.

The Committee was advised that due to the changes arising from the cessation of the LEPs, the work programme for the FOP Scrutiny Panel would need to be re-evaluated.

Resolved

- (1) That the update regarding the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) be noted.

70

Performance Outcomes Framework 2024/25

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services introduced the update on the Performance Outcomes Framework 2024/25. The Committee was advised that the framework set out the basis of how the Council measured its performance against both the strategic priorities set out in its Business Plan and the corporate objectives that were recently agreed in the Annual Delivery Service Plan.

The Assistant Director - Customer Focus provided the Committee with an update on some of the targets that had not been available when the report was published as part of the agenda. These included:

- the yearly target of 1,142 for Net Additional Housing Completions to meet Cherwell's needs
- the percentage of Climate Action plan delivering to target had previously been a monitored measure but had now been changed to a target of 66%
- the amount of greenhouse gas emissions for the year which had been updated to 3,900 tonnes.

The Corporate Director - Communities provided the Committee with an update on the proposed Economic and Regeneration indicators. It was explained that as part of the Enterprising economy priority, the success of the implementation of projects that were funded from the UK Prosperity fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund (plan reference EEV1) would be measured by the number of businesses and local residents that the projects engaged.

In response to a question regarding the potential monitoring of the number of new businesses set up in the District, the Corporate Director – Communities advised the Committee that this was difficult to achieve due to the lag in time of obtaining the data from the Office of National Statistics. Other methods of reporting this metric were being investigated.

In response to a question seeking clarification on the milestones for Business Plan priority EV3 – to develop a plan for reimagining Bicester and ensure existing and new communities benefit from short and long term measures of the garden Town principles - in Quarter 3 and a possible conflict of finalising a design that was still under consultation, the Corporate Director – Communities advised that the draft masterplan was for Bicester as a whole whereas the Market Square Final scheme design was for that particular area only. The two milestones related to the two separate projects.

In response to a question of whether the target of a 1% reduction in the fleet fuel consumption was ambitious enough, the Corporate Director –

Communities explained that there whilst route optimisation helped to reduce fuel consumption, the increase in the size of the District meant that routes were getting longer and this limited the impact of efficiencies from optimisation. The Committee was also advised that the switch from combustion vehicles to electric ones was still some time away. The Assistant Director – Environmental Services provided more information on some of the other actions that had been taken to reduce fuel consumption such as monitoring driver behaviour and introducing systems for pre-heating vehicles in the winter months rather than leaving the engines running. The Committee was advised that the technology and price was not at a point where the Council could switch larger vehicles from diesel to electric.

In response to a question regarding the terminology used in the Business Plan and whether the 2030 climate target under 'supporting environmental sustainability' should be net zero rather than carbon neutral the Corporate Director – Communities agreed to check the wording with the Climate Action Manager.

In response to a question regarding the metrics for measuring the move to the Council's new offices in Castle Quay (plan reference SES3) and in particular the timescale for disposing of Bodicote House, the Assistant Director – Customer Focus advised that Committee had commented on the plan, including the measures and milestones, earlier in the year and it had now been approved by Executive. It was agreed that further discussion would take place outside of the meeting to clarify the wording of this particular measure.

In response to a question regarding whether the value of 66% was ambitious enough as the percentage of the Climate Action plan delivering to target, the Corporate Director – Communities advised the Committee that it was a realistic figure considering the resource challenges the Council faced but it was hoped that the target would be exceeded. It was explained that the progress on the delivery of the Climate Action Plan would be reported to the Committee through the quarterly performance review reports.

Resolved

- (1) That having given due consideration, the approach to managing the council's performance for 2024/25 be noted.
- (2) That having given due consideration, no changes be recommended to Executive for consideration.

71

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plans 2024-25

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services introduced the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) action plan for 2024-25 and advised that this had been produced in consultation with the EDI working group. The Chairman of the working group, Councillor Coton, provided an update on the group's work over the last year and provided some examples of how the action plan had been delivered across the district. This included the Everybody's Wellbeing

strategy, the establishment of the Resettlement team to help support refugees, asylum seekers and other vulnerable migrants and the production of updated Human Resource policies to reflect the key EDI principles.

Regarding the structure of the plan, the Committee was advised that the working group proposed to deliver nine actions to deliver Inclusive Communities with the focus on reaching out to underrepresented communities and vulnerable residents, eight actions as part of the Inclusive Services Action Plan to ensure services are accessible to all and seven actions to deliver Inclusive Workplace with the emphasis on training to support employees with different needs. The Inclusive Workplace action plan had been reviewed and agreed by the Personnel Committee at its meeting on the 7 February 2024.

Following a detailed discussion regarding action plan commitments EDI 1.03, Work directly with communities to identify inequality and tackle disadvantage and EDI 1.04 Promote equality, diversity and inclusion through our supply chain and strategic partnerships, it was agreed that the proposed actions for these two items, currently shown as “No actions for 2024/25” should be reconsidered and the plan updated accordingly. The Committee acknowledged that the plan was a starting point and further work would take place in the future to enhance and improve the plan.

The Committee thanked Councillor Coton and the rest of the Working Group for their hard work over the last year in producing the EDI action plan.

Resolved

- (1) That having given due consideration, the following comments be referred to Executive for consideration at their 8 April meeting:
 - Inclusive Communities action plan Commitments EDI 1.03 and 1.04 – consideration be given to amending the wording in the ‘proposed action’ column to acknowledge the work undertaken so far and providing a commitment to build on that work going forward.
- (2) That Executive be recommended to delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Customer Focus to make minor amendments to the agreed Inclusive Communities and Services Actions Plans, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Chair of the EDI working group.

72 Community Safety Update and Brighter Future Initiatives Presentation

The Head of Regulatory Services provided the Committee with an update on Community Safety work in response to previous discussions that had taken place regarding performance indicator BP4.1.02 support community safety and anti-social behaviour prevention activities.

The presentation provided an overview of the Regulatory Services and Community Safety statutory functions which included environmental

protection enforcement, food hygiene inspections, premises licensing for the sale of alcohol and anti-social behaviour work carried out by the Community safety team.

The Committee was advised that the Regulatory Services team took an approach that balanced the needs of protecting the environment and local residents whilst also supporting business and the local economy. This was achieved by using a combination of monitoring and evaluating standards and compliance and where necessary taking enforcement action to address any issues that were identified.

The presentation also outlined the service activity that the Community safety team undertook in the District which included running the Community Safety partnership, dealing with anti-social behaviour witnessed on patrol and issuing fixed penalty notices within the prescribed powers. The team also worked in partnership with other agencies that had led to initiatives such as the Safer Streets project funded by Oxfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner and Violence Against Women and Girls project funded by the Home Office.

The Wellbeing Manager provided the Committee with an update on the Brighter Futures Partnership. The Committee was advised that the Partnership has been active for over 12 years and worked with over 50 local community organisations across a range of disciplines including health, education, business and faith groups. The scheme focussed on the three most deprived wards in Banbury, Grimsbury, Ruscote and Neithrop.

The Committee was advised that the Partnership concentrated on six themes: Stronger communities and volunteering; Health, wellbeing and physical activity; Safer communities; Housing; Economy, education and skills; and Start well (early years development). These were underpinned by a structure of Stakeholder Steering Groups, Partnership events and Local networks.

The Committee was shown data that demonstrated the reasons for targeting the three wards in Banbury. In the Ruscote and Neithrop wards, eight out of 32 indicators were ranked worse than the England average and this included factors such as overall income deprivation, emergency hospital admissions. In Grimsbury 16 out of 32 indicators were ranked worse than the England average.

The Wellbeing Manager concluded the presentation with some examples of some of the success stories of the initiative which included the Safer Street Projects and Breakfast initiative located at The Hill.

In response to a question requesting more information on data by ethnic group, it was agreed that the Wellbeing Manager would provide the information after the meeting.

In response to a question regarding the possibility of extending the project to Kidlington and Bicester, the Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Housing advised that the Healthy Place Shaping team had implemented the K5 Better

Together initiative in Kidlington and Healthy Bicester in Bicester to provide help to residents in those areas. The Committee was also advised that a Local Area Coordinator had been identified for the Bicester East ward and that the work done as part of the Brighter Futures Initiative would now be introduced to the Bicester West ward.

The Chairman thanked the presenters and their respective teams for the good work that had been carried out by them to address the challenges faced in the Banbury wards.

Resolved

- (1) That the Community Safety update and Brighter Future Initiatives presentations be noted.

73 **Working Group Update - March 2024**

The Principal Officer – Scrutiny and Democratic Lead presented the update on the work of the Climate Action, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Food Insecurity working groups.

With regard to the Food Insecurity working group and the Cherwell Food action plan, the Committee were advised that Executive had approved the action plan at its meeting on 4 March 2024.

The Chairman thanked members of all working groups for their work throughout the year.

Resolved

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

74 **Work Programme 2023-24**

The Principal Officer – Scrutiny and Democratic Lead advised the Committee that as it was the end of the Municipal year the current work programme had concluded. A new work programme would be produced once the Committee had been re-appointed following the Full Council meeting on 22 May.

The Chairman thanked the Committee for their participation throughout the municipal year.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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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 13 June 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Dr Isabel Creed (Chairman)
Councillor Nigel Simpson (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Gordon Blakeway
Councillor John Broad
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Grace Conway-Murray
Councillor Andrew Crichton
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Simon Lytton
Councillor Barry Wood

Substitute Members:

Councillor Dr Kerrie Thornhill (In place of Councillor Lynne Parsons)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Frank Ideh
Councillor Lynne Parsons

Officers:

Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer
Emma Faulkner, Principal Officer - Scrutiny and Democratic Lead
Martyn Surfleet, Democratic and Elections Officer

1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2 Appointment of Chairman for the Municipal Year 2024/2025

It was proposed by Councillor Crichton and seconded by Councillor Dr Thornhill that Councillor Dr Creed be elected Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

There were no further nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Dr Isabel Creed be elected Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2024/2025 Municipal Year.

The Monitoring Officer opened the meeting and dealt with agenda items 1, 2 and 3. Upon being appointed, Councillor Dr Creed then took the chair.

3 **Appointment of Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2024/2025**

It was proposed by Councillor Chapman and seconded by Councillor Wood that Councillor Simpson be elected Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

There were no further nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Nigel Simpson be elected Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2024/2025 Municipal Year.

The meeting ended at 6.33 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 7 February 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

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

Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor George Reynolds
Councillor Bryn Williams
Councillor Barry Wood

Substitute Members:

Councillor Sandy Dallimore (In place of Councillor Lynn Pratt)
Councillor Rob Pattenden (In place of Councillor Gemma Coton)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Lynn Pratt
Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Officers:

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

Officers Attending Virtually:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader

41 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

42 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

There were no petitions or request to address the meeting.

43 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20 November 2023 and the reconvened meeting held on 27 November 2023 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

44 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

45 **Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plans - Inclusive Workplace**

The Assistant Director – Customer Focus submitted a report to seek approval of the draft action plan for delivering the council's equality, diversity and inclusion commitments for creating an inclusive workplace, which are set out in its Equalities Framework, Including Everyone.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the action plan for an Inclusive Workplace for 2024/25 be recommended to Executive for agreement.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director for Customer Focus to make minor amendments to the agreed action plans in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Chair of the Equalities Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group.

46 **Gender Pay Gap Report**

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to provide the Personnel Committee with the latest Gender Pay Gap report for information

Resolved

- (1) That the Gender Pay Gap report 2023 be noted.

47 **Policy Updates**

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to seek approval from the Personnel Committee on proposed changes to existing HR policies.

Resolved

- (1) That the following policies be approved for implementation:

- Learning and Development Policy
- Smoke Free Policy
- Use of E-Cigarettes at Work Policy

48 **Workforce Statistics for Quarter 3 2023-24**

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to provide the Personnel Committee with an update on CDC's workforce including measuring staff well-being and to highlight the actions officers were taking to address any issues.

Resolved

- (1) That the workforce data for Quarter 3 2023/2024 be noted.

49 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Cherwell District Council

Personnel Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 22 May 2024 at 7.56pm

Present:

Councillor Amanda Watkins (Chairman)
Councillor Gemma Coton (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Chris Brant
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor Barry Wood

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Phil Chapman

1 Appointment of Chairman for the municipal year 2024/2025

It was proposed by Councillor Parsons and seconded by Councillor Biegel that Councillor Watkins be appointed Chairman of Personnel Committee.

There were no further nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Rebecca Biegel be appointed Chairman of Personnel Committee for the municipal year 2024/2025.

2 Appointment of Vice-Chairman for the municipal year 2024/2025

It was proposed by Councillor Hingley and seconded by Councillor Pruden that Councillor Coton be appointed Vice-Chairman of Personnel Committee.

There were no further nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Gemma Coton be appointed Vice-Chairman of Personnel Committee for the municipal year 2024/2025.

The meeting ended at 7.57 pm

Chairman:

Date: