

Democratic Services

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20 October 2020

SUMMONS TO ATTEND

MEETING: WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
PLACE: TO BE HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING BECAUSE OF SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDANCE (see [note](#))
DATE: WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2020
TIME: 12:30 PM

RECORDING OF MEETINGS

The law allows the council's public meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Committee Officer know before the start of the meeting.

A G E N D A

- 1. Minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2020 ([copy attached](#))**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of interest from Councillors relating to items to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Local Code of Conduct, and any from Officers.
- 4. Receipt of Announcements**

To receive any announcements from The Chairman, Leader, Members of the Cabinet or the Head of Paid Service.
- 5. Participation of the Public**

To receive any submissions from members of the public, in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

6. Resignation and Election of Leader of the Council

Councillor James Mills has notified his intention to resign from the position of Leader of the Council at this meeting.

Accordingly, nominations will be sought for the election of the Leader. Under the terms of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, the elected Leader's term of office will end on the day following his/her normal day of retirement from the Council. Thus, it will be for the period to 10 May 2021; 9 May 2022; or 8 May 2023, depending on who is elected.

7. Appointment of Executive Members

The Leader will make an announcement in relation to the membership of the Executive and the associated portfolios.

8. Recommendations from the Executive

Purpose:

To receive and consider recommendations from the Cabinet in the period since 29 July 2020.

Recommendation:

That the recommendations set out in Annex I to the report be adopted.

9. Reports of the Cabinet and the Council's Committees

To receive the reports of the following meetings of the Cabinet and the Council's Committees. Unless otherwise stated, copies are attached:

- | | | | |
|-----|--|-------------------|------------------|
| (a) | Cabinet | 26 August 2020 | |
| (b) | Urgency Committee | 16 September 2020 | |
| (c) | Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee | 17 September 2020 | |
| (d) | Development Control Committee | 21 September 2020 | |
| (e) | Cabinet | 23 September 2020 | |
| (f) | Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee | 1 October 2020 | |
| (g) | Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee | 7 October 2020 | |
| (h) | Cabinet | 21 October 2020 | To follow |

10. Review of Political Balance – Report of the Head of Democratic Services ([copy attached](#))

Purpose:

To review the allocation of seats on the Committees of the Council to the political groups and non-aligned member, as a consequence of changes in the membership of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups and the reduction in the number of non-aligned members from two to one.

Recommendations:

- (a) That the seats on the Committees of the Council be allocated to the political groups and the non-aligned member in accordance with the rules relating to

political balance, and as indicated in the Table under paragraph 2.2 of the report, subject to the Council deciding (i) on which of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees the Conservative Group will have eight rather than nine seats; and (ii) on which of the two Overview and Scrutiny Committees where the Conservative Group has nine seats the Labour and Co-operative Party Group will have three seats and the Liberal Democrats two, and vice versa;

- (b) That as a consequence of the revised political balance figures, Councillor Richard Langridge be appointed to serve on the Development Control Committee; and
- (c) That it be noted that other changes in the membership of any Committees consequent to the above decisions shall be made in accordance with the wishes of the political groups, and notified to all members of the Council.

11. Review of Video Conference Meetings and Procedures – Report of the Head of Democratic Services ([copy attached](#))

Purpose:

To review the arrangements for virtual meetings, i.e. Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings held via video conferencing.

Recommendations:

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That the Virtual Meetings Procedure Rules approved by Council on 13 May 2020 be amended in accordance with Annex 1 to the report;
- (c) That no changes be made to the Councillor Protocol for Virtual Meetings in Annex 2 to the report; and
- (d) That the Council considers whether it wishes to specify a retention period for the recordings of meetings held via video conferencing.

12. Covid-19 Recovery Plan for West Oxfordshire (Report of the Chief Executive – [copy attached](#))

Purpose:

To outline a draft plan for the Council's approach to recovery from the impacts of Covid-19 in terms of both its leadership role working with West Oxfordshire's communities and the Council's own functioning.

Recommendation:

That the draft Recovery Plan attached as Annex A to the report be approved, subject to the consideration of the recommendation from Cabinet.

13. Carbon Action Plan: The Pathway to Achieving Carbon Neutral by 2030 (Report of the Climate Change Manager – [copy attached](#))

Purpose:

To consider the proposed Carbon Action Plan and pathway to achieving the Council's target of carbon neutral by 2030.

Recommendation:

That the contents of the report be noted and, subject to the consideration of the recommendation from Cabinet, the Carbon Action Plan be approved for publication, as the Council's pathway to achieving carbon neutral by 2030.

14. Motion: Live Streaming of Council and Committee Meetings (Report of the Head of Democratic Services – [copy attached](#))

Purpose:

To consider the motion originally proposed and seconded at Council on 23 October 2019, in the context of the comments and recommendation of the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation:

That the Council considers and determines the motion in the light of the recommendation of the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

15. Motion: Electronic Communications (Report of the Head of Democratic Services – [copy attached](#))

Purpose:

To consider the motion proposed and seconded at Council on 22 January 2020, in the context of the comments and recommendation of the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation:

That the Council considers and determines the motion in the light of the recommendation of the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

16. Motion: Firework Displays (Report of the Head of Democratic Services – [copy attached](#))

Purpose:

To consider the motion proposed and seconded at Council on 26 February 2020, in the context of the comments and recommendation of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation:

That the Council considers and determines the motion in the light of the recommendation from the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

17. Motion: Environmental Awards for Businesses (Report of the Head of Democratic Services – [copy attached](#))

Purpose:

To consider the motion proposed and seconded at Council on 26 February 2020, in the context of the comments and recommendation of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation:

That the Council considers and determines the motion in the light of the recommendation from the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

18. Emergency and Urgency Delegations Decisions (Report of the Head of Democratic Services – [copy attached](#))

Purpose:

To note decisions taken under the emergency and urgency delegation arrangements approved by Council on 13 May 2020.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

19. Sealing of Documents ([copy attached](#))

Purpose:

To note the documents sealed since the last report.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted



Giles Hughes
Chief Executive

This agenda is being dealt with by Keith Butler, Tel: (01993) 861521;
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Note: Councillors will be sent an invitation to the meeting via Cisco Webex. Members of the public may view the meeting via [Facebook Live](#). A Facebook account is not required.

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the
West Oxfordshire District Council
held via video conferencing at 2:00pm on **Wednesday 29 July 2020**

PRESENT

Councillors: Harry Eaglestone (Chairman), Jane Doughty (Vice-Chairman), Jake Acock, Joy Aitman, Alaa Al-Yousuf, Luci Ashbourne, Andrew Beaney, Richard Bishop, Jill Bull, Mike Cahill, Laetisia Carter, Nathalie Chapple, Andrew Coles, Owen Collins, Nigel Colston, Julian Cooper, Derek Cotterill, Suzi Coul, Maxine Crossland, Merilyn Davies, Duncan Enright, Hilary Fenton, Ted Fenton, Steve Good, Andy Graham, Jeff Haine, David Harvey, Gill Hill, David Jackson, Richard Langridge, Liz Leffman, Nick Leverton, Dan Levy, Norman MacRae MBE, Martin McBride, Michele Mead, James Mills, Toby Morris, Kieran Mullins, Neil Owen, Elizabeth Poskitt, Alex Postan, Carl Rylett, Geoff Saul, Harry St John and Ben Woodruff.

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive); Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Chief Executive); Chris Hargraves (Planning Policy Manager); Vanessa Scott (Climate Change Manager); Janice Bamsey (Senior Planner (Policy)); Melanie Dodd (Biodiversity Officer); Andrea Clenton (Principal Planner, Major Developments); Keith Butler (Head of Democratic Services); and Amy Barnes (Senior Strategic Support Officer).

20. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24 June 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rosa Bolger.

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor St John declared an interest as he was a Trustee of the Wychwood Project who were mentioned a number of times throughout the agenda.

23. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

23.1 Former Councillor Chris Dorward

The Chairman advised the meeting that he was sorry to have to report the death of Christina (Chris) Dorward earlier in the month.

Chris was first elected to the Council for the Eynsham Ward in 1983, and served for 12 years, when she did not stand for re-election in 1995.

Chris served on Finance and General Purposes, Policy, Planning and Housing Committees at various times, and was highly regarded and respected by colleague councillors and staff.

Councillor Cooper stated that he had had the privilege of serving with Chris, who he remembered as a proud Scot from Aberdeen. He advised that she had been the secretary to the principal of Hertford College, Oxford and Councillor Cooper had been honoured to have known her as a friend for 35 years.

Councillor Rylett spoke as a fellow Eynsham resident and stated that he had met Chris a number of times and had always been extended a warm welcome. He remembered a number of fascinating talks with her and agreed that she had been well respected.

23.2 Councillor Julian Cooper

The Chairman announced that Councillor Cooper had recently reached a significant milestone as a District Councillor, delivering 30 years' service to the residents of West Oxfordshire. He expressed his gratitude to Councillor Cooper for his dedication and passed on his congratulations.

23.3 Oxfordshire Growth Board

Councillor Mills advised that a meeting of the Growth Board had been held the day prior to this meeting and he had made the OxLEP aware of the Council's disappointment that there was no West Oxfordshire Business Representative on their board.

23.4 Pavement Licensing Policy

Councillor MacRae advised that the Council had introduced a Pavement Licensing Policy in response to the Business and Planning Act which became law on 22 July 2020. It was hoped that the licences would generate footfall for businesses and help to raise the profile of the District. He expressed his thanks to the officers involved for their hard work in progressing the policy so quickly.

23.5 Climate Action Working Group

Councillor Harvey announced the winners of the recent Climate Change Young Peoples Art Competition. The winners of the Activity 1 category were Lexie Boshier and Nicole Harris with their song entry and of the Activity 2 category the winner was Millie Freer with her artwork. He advised that the winners would each receive a native tree for planting and the Council would arrange for the winners to receive their prize during the tree planting season.

23.6 Eat Out to Help Out Scheme

Councillor Morris endorsed the recently rolled out 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme which encouraged the public to support local restaurants and eateries by offering 50% off food between Monday and Wednesday each week, throughout August. He hoped the scheme would work hand in hand with the Pavement Licensing Policy announced by Councillor MacRae earlier in the meeting. Councillor Morris encouraged businesses to sign up and residents to support their community.

24. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

There was no participation by members of the public.

25. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

The Council considered the report of the Head of Democratic Services setting out the recommendations made by the Cabinet and the Audit and General Purposes Committee at their meetings held on 22 and 23 July 2020 respectively.

In proposing the recommendations, Councillor Mills drew attention to the table on Annex I, (a) (i) and advised that reference to the Southill Solar also needed to be included as this had to be rolled over to this year.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations made by the Cabinet and the Audit and General Purposes Committee at their meetings held on 22 and 23 July 2020 respectively be approved in relation to:-

- a) Finance and Service Performance Report 2019/20 Year End (Minute No. CT/25(b)/2020/2021); and
- b) Councillor Gifts and Hospitality (Minute No. AGP/5/2020/2021)

26. REPORTS OF THE CABINET AND THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES

The reports of the meetings of the Cabinet and the Council's Committees held since 24 June 2020 were received.

26.1 Start Time of Meetings

Minute No. F&M/6/2020/2021

Councillor Enright requested if the start time of meetings could be reconsidered in the short term due to the pressures that many councillors were under with the changes to work, family commitments and childcare provision due to Covid-19.

In response, Councillor Cotterill advised that he would put the request to Councillors at the next Finance & Management Overview and Scrutiny meeting.

26.2 Update on Businesses in Witney Town Centre

Minute No. CT/24.4/2020/2021

Councillor Coles asked if the Leader could provide an update on how businesses in Witney Town Centre were faring since the opening up of some roads.

Councillor Mills advised that he would speak to the Business Development Manager and get back to Councillor Coles with a response.

26.3 Woodstock Car Parking Review

Minute No. CT/25/2020/2021

Councillor Cooper asked if there was an update on the car parking review for Woodstock.

In response Councillor MacRae reiterated that many of the officers had been redeployed to work on the response to the Covid-19 pandemic resulting in a delay to this piece of work. However, further delay had been incurred due to the Mayor requesting paper copies of the survey, against officer advice, resulting in the collation of data being more complex and lengthy.

26.4 Naming of Garden Village

Minute No. CT/27/2020/2021

Councillor Haine advised that communication had been received from Eynsham Parish Council, expressing dissatisfaction with the content of the Cabinet minutes in relation to the above item. Therefore, he suggested that paragraph 3 on page 8 of the minutes be removed, to alleviate any ambiguity.

26.5 Section 106 work

Minute No. A&GP/4/2020/2021

Councillor Acock asked the Chief Finance Officer if there was any news on the initial date suggested for this work to be completed.

In response, Elizabeth Griffiths advised that there was no end date as yet. She had attended meetings with staff members and had briefed the project manager. The Project Initiation Document was being created, along with a risk register and project timeline. There were six departments involved in the work at present so it would take some time to coordinate and establish the resources needed.

27. CLIMATE ACTION FOR WEST OXFORDSHIRE: BIENNIAL REPORT

The Council considered the previously circulated report of the Climate Change Manager comprising the biennial report on Climate Action requested by Council in January 2020, and which (i) focussed on progress made during the first six months of the Climate Action work programme and framework; (ii) gave further details of additional Climate Action being taken forward by the Council and already underway as part of an evolving work programme; and (iii) sought approval for new Climate Action work proposed for implementation in the short to medium-term.

The report asked Members to note the contents and agree the next proposed steps.

Councillor Harvey introduced the report and expressed his thanks to the author and Climate Change Manager, Ness Scott. Councillor Harvey outlined the steps that had moved climate change further up the awareness agenda with both officers and councillors and was pleased to report back on regular meetings with a number of outside bodies, all of whom had shown a high level of participation. He proposed the recommendations as laid out.

A number of issues were discussed including a 25% net increase in Biodiversity, the installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Points and the desire to see these issues carried through further into the planning spectrum.

Councillor Coles welcomed the report and acknowledged the high level of work that had been delivered. He was pleased with the results from the Climate Action survey which had placed Biodiversity at the higher level of priority. He referred to the depletion in nature and in particular the dramatic drop in the level of bird life, all of which were noted by Councillor Harvey.

Councillor Doughty passed her congratulations to the team involved and queried the work being undertaken to manage trees, wild flowers, borders, verges and open spaces. Councillor Harvey agreed to liaise with officers and respond accordingly.

Members felt it was important to assist the Climate Change Manager and queried if the team was likely to expand in the future.

The Leader expressed his support for the work done to date and referred to the importance of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and how the Council had an opportunity to be innovative and lead on Climate Change. He felt that Members and officers had an increasingly important role to play and he complimented the officers on the work so far.

The recommendation in the report was seconded by Councillor Al-Yousuf.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the biennial report on Climate Action for West Oxfordshire be noted; and
- (b) That the recommendations for new Climate Action proposed in the short to medium-term be approved.

28. GARDEN VILLAGE AREA ACTION PLAN

The Council considered the recommendations arising from the meeting of the Cabinet held 22 July 2020, in the context of the previously circulated report of the Planning Policy Manager and the draft of the pre-submission Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP) which had been amended and republished on the website since consideration at Cabinet.

Councillor Haine introduced the report and highlighted the inclusion of 31 Policies and the seven core themes. He encouraged Members to respond to the consultation which he

proposed be extended to eight weeks from the standard six weeks as detailed in the report.

This was seconded by Councillor Harvey.

Councillor Levy addressed Members and requested an amendment to recommendation c) as detailed below. He expressed thanks to Members and officers for the work done so far, and to Chris Hargraves for addressing many of the issues raised, but did not feel the recommendations were sufficient.

- c) *In the meantime, the Council mandates the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State and to our MP to seek confirmation that all Section 106 funds derived from the development of Salt Cross must only be used in Salt Cross, in Eynsham or in the provision of links to Hanborough and that if there is money remaining from S106 contributions, it will be used to support other transport initiatives in West Oxfordshire.*

Councillor Leffman seconded the amendment and advised that the County Council had been in discussions regarding the potential that any leftover S106 monies could be clawed back. She was concerned that any leftover money would be put into a pot by the County Council and used for other works across the County. She felt it was important to retain control of the spending of S106 contributions to ensure it was spent in West Oxfordshire, for the benefit of those residents moving to Salt Cross.

Councillors Enright and Graham supported the amendment. Councillor Graham also thanked the Cabinet Member for the consideration in changing the consultation period and highlighted the importance of encouraging participation.

In response to the amendment, the Leader made reference to the advice provided by officers on the issues relating to Land Capture value and did not feel that the residents of Salt Cross would miss out. He urged Members not to support the amendment because residents needed the improvements to the A40 to happen.

Members debated the importance of securing any remaining S106 money for local communities and the strict rules that applied to these legal agreements. There was some feeling that the proposals had been well laid out and were due to go out for public consultation.

In response to the amendment, Councillor Haine thanked Members for their contributions to the debate and reminded them that there was unlikely to be much S106 left over once all of the projects proposed were carried out. He also referred to the email circulated by officers which explained the funding details and read out an email from the Chief Executive summarising the situation. Having considered this information, Councillor Haine did not feel able to support the amendment.

The Monitoring Officer led a named vote on the amendment, which was lost, by 17 votes to 29.

Councillor Rylett thanked officers for their work and residents for their engagement and commended some parts of the AAP which he hoped would be followed through in practice. He expressed his disappointment at the transport strategy report and suggested that an independent report be commissioned.

Councillor Cooper raised a concern that the AAP made little mention of Bladon which he felt would be affected greatly.

The importance of public consultation was highlighted and residents were encouraged to participate. Following a number of comments from Councillors relating to specific villages and towns, Members were urged to respond to the consultation and highlight their points.

Having considered the report and having heard from the Members present, the recommendations were agreed subject to the consultation period being extended to eight weeks.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the previously circulated pre-submission draft Area Action Plan (AAP) be approved for the purposes of formal publication for a statutory period of eight weeks in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012;
- (b) That the Chief Executive be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, to make any minor factual/typographical amendments to the pre-submission draft AAP in conjunction with Officers, prior to formal publication; and
- (c) That, subject to there being no significant issues raised during the statutory eight week period, the pre-submission draft Area Action Plan (AAP) be formally submitted to the Secretary of State in accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 including any minor modifications.

29. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

The Council received and noted the report of the Head of Paid Service which gave details of documents numbered 11813 to 11818a sealed since its last meeting.

The meeting closed at 4.09 pm

CHAIRMAN



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	Council: Wednesday 28 October 2020
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 8
Subject	Recommendations from the Executive
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr James Mills, Leader of the Council Email: james.mills@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Keith Butler Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To receive and consider recommendations made by the Cabinet in the period since the last meeting of the Council.
Annexes	Annex 1 – Schedule of recommendations
Recommendation	That the recommendations set out in Annex 1 to the report be adopted.
Corporate priorities	To support the Council's priorities to protect the environment whilst supporting the local economy, to meet the current and future needs of residents and to provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services.
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Council is required to consider recommendations made by the Cabinet and the Council's Committees since its last meeting.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. The recommendations set out in [Annex I](#) have been extracted from the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held since the last Council meeting.
- 2.2. There is a meeting of Cabinet to be held on 21 October 2020. It is likely that this will give rise to recommendations to Council and the text of the Annex reflects the recommendations contained in the applicable reports. The decisions arising from the meeting will be circulated on Friday 23 October.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. None

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. Not applicable

6. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. Whilst there may be climate change implications arising from specific items within the schedule, there are none arising directly from this report.

7. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

- 7.1. The above are as set out in the relevant reports to the meetings of the Cabinet/Committee, and the decisions or minutes of those meetings.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1. None

	Meeting and Date	Subject and Agenda Item No. or Minute Reference	Recommendations
(a)	Cabinet 23 September 2020	Finance and Service Performance Report 2020/21 Quarter One and Budget Reforecast (Minute no. CT/44(b)/2020/2021)	The recommendation that the Council approves additional Capital Slippage from budget year 2019/20 in the amount of £843,108.
(b)	Cabinet 21 October 2020	Approval of Investment Strategy for the recovery of West Oxfordshire Agenda Item No. 11	The anticipated recommendation that the Council (a) adopts the draft strategy attached as Annex A to the report; and (b) authorises the Chief Executive to establish appropriate governance structures to support the strategy.

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Record of decisions taken at the meeting of the **Cabinet** held via video conferencing on **Wednesday 26 August, 2020** at 2.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillors: James Mills (Leader); Toby Morris (Deputy Leader); Jeff Haine, David Harvey, Norman MacRae MBE and Michele Mead.

Also in Attendance: Councillors Richard Bishop, Rosa Bolger, Jill Bull, Suzi Coul, Harry Eaglestone, Duncan Enright, Hilary Fenton, Ted Fenton, Andy Graham, Gill Hill, Dan Levy, Martin McBride, Kieran Mullins, Alex Postan and Harry St John.

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive); Frank Wilson (Executive Director, Finance); Mandy Fathers (Business Manager Operational Services); Maria Wheatley (Parking Manager); Keith Butler (Head of Democratic Services) and Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer).

29. NOTICE OF DECISIONS

RESOLVED: That the record of the decisions taken at the meeting held on Wednesday 22 July 2020, copies of which had been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers relating to matters to be considered at the meeting.

32. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

No submissions were received from the public in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

33. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

33.1 Councillor James Mills

Councillor Mills made reference to the recent news that he would be stepping down as Leader of the Council at the Council meeting on 28 October. He took the opportunity to thank everyone for all the kind messages he had received. He also wanted to thank his fellow Councillors, officers and residents for being supportive over the years and for working alongside him.

Councillor MacRae wished Councillor Mills and his wife all the best for the future.

33.2 Community Activity Grants

Councillor Mead addressed Members and advised that the Council had been able to award some Community Activity Grants to some organisations which had shown initiative in adapting to a new way of working. The organisations included Dance Creative; a theatre company providing workshops online for younger people; Joss Searchlight; the Thomas Gifford Trust; and Homestart. Councillor Mead provided a brief summary of some of the

activities that the organisations would be providing which would support young and older residents alike.

33.3 Reporting of Fly-Tipping and Dealing with Third Party Contractors

Councillor MacRae explained that he had often directed residents to use 'Fix My Street' to report instances of fly-tipping. However, he wanted to take this opportunity to amend this message and encourage people to use the Council's website or telephone 01993 861000. He advised that there had been some problems with reporting using 'Fix My Street', with unclear responses and he felt that the form on the website would result in a much more direct response.

He also asked Councillors not to contact third party contractors directly in relation to Council business but to speak to the relevant Council officer. Officers needed to keep audit trails of communications and requests and dealing with them directly would avoid confusion and miscommunication.

In response to a query from Councillor Enright, Councillor MacRae advised that communications and requests should go directly to the appropriate team or relevant organisation including the County Council or Parish or Town Council. The system would also provide an appropriate response to the complainant and testing of the process had worked so far. However, if Councillors did encounter any issues, they were asked to contact Bill Oddy, Group Manager – Commercial Development.

Councillor Enright also queried the process for keeping up communications once casework was underway. Councillor MacRae confirmed that the desired route would be via the officer who had initially dealt with the enquiry.

34. APPROVAL OF LOAN TO RAMSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer, which reminded it of the loan of £15,000 to Ramsden Parish Council which had been approved in February 2020, to be used towards the cost of renovating, repairing and improving the roof on Ramsden Memorial Hall, and explained that the Parish Council had now requested that the loan be increased to £80,000, because of an increase in the estimated cost of the scheme.

The report advised that Ramsden Parish Council was the custodial trustee of the Ramsden Memorial Hall and the roof of the hall was in need of essential repair and replacement. The last time work was carried out on the roof was in 1947.

The original budget for planned renovation and improvement works to the hall was estimated at £77,150 and the Council had approved a loan for £15,000 in February 2020 as detailed above.

As work began, it had soon become apparent that extra essential works were required on the hall, in addition to the original plan. The original budget and loan request was therefore insufficient to pay for the revised scheme and Ramsden Parish Council was seeking to increase the loan from the District Council from £15,000 (over 10 years) to £80,000 (over 15 years).

To date the original loan agreed in February 2020 had not been drawn-down by the Parish Council.

Parish Councils were required to obtain approval from the Secretary of State to borrow money. Approval was granted for the original loan, however, no loan would be given by the District Council until the Secretary of State had granted approval for the revised balance.

An alternative option available to the Cabinet would be to not support the scheme, however, this would be inconsistent with the corporate priority to work with communities to meet the current and future needs of residents.

Councillor Morris introduced the report and referred Members to the details relating to the age of the building and the level of work required. He reminded Members that this was a seventeenth century barn, originally converted in the 1940's and the roof had not had any repair work carried out for 73 years.

This was seconded by Councillor Mead who made reference to the high level of use that the building received from not just the local but also the surrounding community.

In response to a question from Councillor Enright, Councillor Mead advised that the costs had escalated due to the level of damage discovered when the roof was first removed.

Unfortunately, this had not been known until the work had started and the damage was more extensive than expected.

Councillor Mullins addressed Members and welcomed the positive approach afforded by Cabinet. The building in question was located in his Ward and the loan to repair this important asset would be very much appreciated by residents of the village and the local community.

Councillor Hill, the other Ward councillor, then expressed her support for the recommendation.

DECISION: That a revised loan to Ramsden Parish Council of £80,000 be approved, to be funded from capital receipts and on the terms outlined in the report.

REASONS: The additional loan would assist with essential repair works and the Council would be working with communities to meet the current and future needs and aspirations of residents.

OPTIONS: Cabinet could decide not to support the scheme.

35. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT – COVID 19 HARDSHIP FUND 2020/21

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Group Manager for Resident Services, which sought approval for the use of any surplus within the Council Tax Covid-19 Hardship fund 2020/21.

In the Budget on 11 March 2020, the Government announced a national £500 million Hardship Fund. The Government's expectation was that all working-age Council Tax Support claimants in 2020-2021 could receive a further discount of up to £150.00.

To achieve this Government had provided a Fund of £474,564 for the Council.

The Government had indicated that the fund should be allocated principally to "working age households" in receipt of Council Tax Support (CTS), both existing recipients and those receiving CTS through 2020/2021. This was because most CTS policies required working age households to pay a certain percentage of their Council Tax.

Based on Government guidance, the Council had awarded up to £150 to all those eligible accounts and would continue to award through 2020/2021 as new CTS claims were received and assessed.

There was an expected, but uncertain level of demand for CTS amongst many residents who may not have claimed before due to the current economic situation but as furlough was due to end, the demand could increase significantly. Estimates had been made on the likely

increase in CTS claimants and the table included at paragraph 2.3 of the report showed the increase, which was so far low. However, these numbers could significantly increase as more residents claimed Universal Credit.

There were a number of alternative options available to Members as detailed below and further details relating to the administration of those options was outlined at paragraph 7.2 of the report.

Councillor Morris outlined the report and was keen that assistance should be provided to help the most vulnerable residents in the District, who had been hit hard by the Coronavirus measures. He was pleased that the Government had provided the funding to allow Councils to support their communities and he proposed the recommendations as laid out.

This was seconded by Councillor Harvey who expressed how proud he was to be a Member of a Council which had provided support to people, residents and businesses in the area.

Councillor Enright thanked officers for the report and commended the Council for its behaviour during the Covid outbreak. He reminded Members that there would be months of hardship ahead for many families and residents and hoped that the Council would be able to retain its swift response and a sense of community cohesion.

Councillor Graham welcomed the report and also made reference to the uncertain future, job losses and tenancy difficulties. He queried how the work referred to in section 7 of the report would be rolled out and who would be taking responsibility for that. In response, Councillor Morris advised that this would be managed by the Revenues and Benefits service. He stated that he would contact the team to find out what their plans were moving forwards and would communicate this information to all Councillors in due course.

Councillor Postan stated that he was very pleased to see this action being carried out but reminded Members that Government funding was created using tax payer funding.

DECISIONS:

- (a) That the options set out in paragraph 7.1(a), (b) and (c) of the report be approved; and
- (b) That the Group Manager for Resident Services be authorised to consider and determine individual grant awards as detailed in paragraph 7.1(b) and (c).

REASONS: The proposal would support the delivery of excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council, supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities and facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone.

OPTIONS: The alternative options were:

- a) Continue to award up to £150 to every new CTS where there is excess Council Tax to pay throughout this financial year (this is the intended principle of Government providing the funding);
- b) In December 2020 review expenditure and if there is forecast to be a surplus and then award an additional amount to all working age CTS recipients who have an excess liability of £150;
- c) Ring-fence a proportion of the grant funding to create a 'Council Tax Hardship Fund' to address those residents who are suffering severe hardship, whether they are in receipt of CTS or not. This would be an application process with evidence supplied to support claim and require a new Policy; and
- d) Ring-fence a proportion of the grant funding to create a 'Local Welfare' support fund.

36. AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC TOILETS

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Parking Manager, which sought agreement for the award of the contract for the cleaning and maintenance of public conveniences.

The council had 13 public convenience sites within the District, specified in Annex A to the report, which were cleaned and maintained under contract by Healthmatic. The current contract was due to end on 30 September 2020 and a procurement exercise had been completed to secure a new contract from 1 October 2020, for a period of three years.

The report advised that a procurement process had been carried out under OJEU, with an open tender method. The contract would benefit from economies of scale as it was a shared contract across the Districts of Cotswold and West Oxfordshire. The submissions had been evaluated 60% for quality and 40% for price. Quality criteria included assessment of the bidders' ability to meet the required standards, arrangements for management and supervision, approach to managing customer complaints, fleet arrangements, resilience and the approach to health and safety and sustainability.

The table at paragraph 2.2 of the report showed the percentage scores for each bidder, with the preferred bidder demonstrating high scores for both quality and price.

Councillor MacRae introduced the report and explained that the existing number of public conveniences would increase to 13 in due course so the contract provided for that number. For clarity, he stated that the public convenience at the Kilkenny Country Park was in the Parish of Brize Norton but for directional and satellite navigation purposes, its address was stated as Carterton. He was pleased that the evaluation had been carried out with an emphasis on quality before price. The winning contractor had shown a great willingness to take the contract on and the contract would result in a saving for the Council.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Haine who reinforced the savings being proposed.

Councillor Harvey addressed Members and congratulated the Cabinet Member and team for a good report and excellent proposal.

Councillor Postan highlighted, that whilst it was important to ensure that the directions to a public convenience were accurate, it was also necessary to make it clear who was responsible for maintaining the toilets and which Parish they belonged to, should individuals need a problem resolving.

DECISION: That the contract for the cleaning and maintenance of public conveniences be awarded to Bidder A, the preferred contractor, for a period of three years effective from 1 October 2020.

REASONS: The proposals would ensure that all services delivered by the council were delivered to the highest standard and would help residents, businesses and communities to access the support they needed to ensure a high level of health and well-being.

OPTIONS: An alternative option was that the Cabinet could choose a different bidder but this would be contrary to officer advice and the tendering results.

The meeting closed at 2.28 pm

Leader of the Council

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Urgency Committee** held
via video conferencing at **3:30 pm** on **Wednesday 16 September 2020**

PRESENT

Councillors: James Mills (Chairman); Toby Morris (Vice Chairman); Joy Aitman; Merylyn Davies, Duncan Enright; Andy Graham; Liz Leffman; Jeff Haine; David Harvey; Norman MacRae MBE and Michele Mead.

Also in Attendance: Councillor Julian Cooper.

Officers in Attendance: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive); Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Chief Executive); Stuart Wilson (Leisure Development Officer); Keith Butler (Head of Democratic Services) and Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer).

7. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 July 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Ted Fenton.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers relating to matters to be considered at the meeting.

10. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

No submissions were received from the public in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That, in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person; and information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings), the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining item of business.

12. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR GLL

The Committee received and considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer/Deputy Chief Executive containing exempt information, which considered a revised proposal of support to GLL.

The Leisure Operator had been in ongoing negotiation with the Council on their request for support in the context of the initial lockdown and ongoing social distancing restrictions.

The Committee had met on 22 July 2020 and agreed a proposed package of support. GLL had refused the proposal and responded with a revised request.

The report outlined an update on the operational success of the Leisure Centre reopening and provided previously calculated costs and proposed funding.

For ease of comparison, the report contained a comparison between the previous proposal and the revised version along with the costings and risks associated with the approach.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Leisure, Councillor Mead, outlined the report, provided an update on the reopening of the centres since lockdown and proposed the recommendations as laid out.

This was seconded by Councillor Morris who reminded Members of the timelines involved.

The Council's Section 151 Officer responded to a number of questions raised relating to the contract and stated that she had been impressed with GLL's attitude from a commercial standpoint.

Members agreed that the proposal appeared to be a good compromise for both parties and the communications already provided encouraging the public back to the leisure centres was praised.

Having considered the report and having clarified points with the officers, the Committee:

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the waiver of management fees from GLL from April 2020 to December 2020 inclusive be approved;
- (b) That, should the centres still be loss making by December 2020, the Chief Finance Officer be authorised to extend the waiver until March 2021;
- (c) That approval be given for funding support to GLL, and not to exceed the figures stated in the report, on an open book basis and to be drawn down in instalments against cash costs; and
- (d) That the ongoing impact of the GLL funding requirements be reviewed in the context of the current budget and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm

CHAIRMAN

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Economic and Social Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
held via video conferencing at **6.30 p.m.** on **Thursday 17 September 2020**

PRESENT

Councillors: Andrew Beaney (Chairman), Laetisia Carter (Vice-Chairman), Joy Aitman, Luci Ashbourne, Jill Bull, Julian Cooper, Harry Eaglestone, Hilary Fenton, Andy Graham, Nick Leverton, Neil Owen, Alex Postan and Carl Rylett.

Also in attendance: Councillor Geoff Saul.

Officers in Attendance: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive); Claire Hughes (Business Manager Corporate Responsibility); Mandy Fathers (Business Manager Operational Services); Keith Butler (Head of Democratic Services); and Kathryn Skill (Senior Strategic Support Officer).

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 February 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Suzi Coul, and it was reported that Councillor Alex Postan was attending for Councillor Jane Doughty.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers in items to be considered at the meeting.

4. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

There were no submissions from members of the public in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised that Agenda Item 7 would be heard before Item 6. He also reported that a representative of the Thames Valley Police would be attending Committee in November and requested that any questions Members may have be sent in prior to the meeting.

6. EQUALITY POLICY

The Committee considered the previously circulated report of the Business Manager Corporate Responsibility, to which were attached a draft Equality Policy and Action Plan; and was invited to make comments which Cabinet could take into account when considering the matter at its meeting the following week.

The Officer explained that the policy would ensure that the Council was meeting the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and linked with the policy for employees, which included a statement regarding dignity in the workplace.

During discussion Members questioned whether training would be provided and how recruitment was fairly carried out. Online training had been provided for all staff and training would be available for Members, although the details were not finalised. In relation to a question on recruitment, no one was discriminated against, and anyone with a recognised disability who made an application for a post would be entitled to an interview for the role. There was concern that recruitment advertisements were reaching all groups, such as BAME and Neuro-divergent groups, as the policy did not mention this, although it was considered that the policy should be all inclusive, without too much detail, to include all groups, reaching diverse people.

RESOLVED: That the Equality Policy 2020-2024 be recommended to Cabinet.

7. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Democratic Services, which updated it on progress on the 2019/20 work programme, and incorporated a proposed work programme for 2020/21. The Committee was advised that the proposal for 2020/21 had sought to take into account the impact of the cancellation of the previous three scheduled meetings of the Committee, had been prepared following consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee, and had an overarching aim of making the programme more focused and relevant.

Questions and comments from Members on the work programme included:

- Housing at RAF Brize Norton. Homes England were working with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation to bring forward the houses and funding options were being explored, although this was linked to the Government spending review which would be forthcoming in the autumn of 2020
- Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire won the bid contract awarded at the beginning of the year, and the cost to the CAWO would have been minimal as they had also submitted a successful bid the previous year
- It was confirmed that there had been no further information from the Home Office on the question of hard to reach groups in the context of the EU Settled Status scheme. The Executive Director (Commissioning) would be asked to respond in more detail.

Annex 2 to the report included the proposed new style work programme, and during discussion the following comments were made:

- A short briefing on the enforcement powers in the Housing and Planning Act would be prepared, and it could be removed from the programme
- A presentation by representatives of GLL Better (Greenwich Leisure Limited), the Council's Leisure Services Provider, was to be provided to Committee in November 2020
- The Strategic Review of the Council's Markets would be removed
- Policing in West Oxfordshire – the Police would be attending Committee in November 2020
- Staffing Levels in Housing and Planning – it was noted that this had been considered in February, but a query was raised as to whether the levels were correct and staff suitably trained.
- The Equality Policy had been dealt with earlier in this meeting so could now be removed

- The Annual Local Plan Monitoring report would be presented to Committee in November 2020
- An annual update on the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme was requested

RESOLVED: That (i) progress on the 2019/20 work programme be noted; and (ii) the proposed 2020/21 work programme be approved, subject to the comments and amendments referred to above.

8. START TIME OF MEETINGS

The Committee gave consideration to the start time of meetings for the remainder of the 2020/2021 municipal year.

It was proposed by Councillor Beaney and seconded by Councillor Leverton that meetings continue to be scheduled to begin at 6.30 p.m.

Concern was expressed that meetings which started at 2.30 p.m. might limit the range of people putting themselves forward to become Councillors.

RESOLVED: That the start time for the remaining scheduled meetings of the Committee in the 2020/21 municipal year shall be 6:30 p.m.

9. MOTION: TENANTS FORUM

The Committee gave consideration to the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Geoff Saul and seconded by Councillor Duncan Enright at the meeting of the Council held 26 February 2020, and referred to this Committee for consideration and comment:-

“The Council welcomes the private landlords forum. To better understand and support this sector, the Council resolves to establish a private tenants forum to hear the voice of residents and understand their concerns and perspective.”

Councillor Saul attended Committee to speak to the Motion. Since it had been proposed in February 2020, due to the pandemic, private sector tenants were in a vulnerable position with rent arrears and evictions. District Councillors and staff had done a good job in reaching out to the community, although the District Council should be a hub at the centre of the Community, and a voice for under-represented tenants. A forum could share experiences and the Council could have a dedicated web-page with advice and awareness, and an individual local private renter’s charter. The District Council should be at the heart of the community.

The Business Manager Operational Services would report back to Committee on the resource and any legal implications.

During discussion the following points were made:

- It was considered that this would be setting up a separate body and the CAWO could achieve the results that the motion was proposing.
- Councillor Carter commented that she was often contacted by residents who were renting, whose landlords/landladies were intrusive, it was not easy to afford rent in the district. This was distinct work which would be something that the CAWO could be involved in.

- Councillor Ashbourne commented that private renting created huge issues for many residents and it would be a benefit to hear from these residents to effect change and promote better ways of working.
- Councillor Graham commented that the concept being proposed was laudable and would be effective for many tenants.
- The District Council had responsibility for standards, to ensure that landlords/landladies complied with private renting charters and should not give advice to tenants, this was a role for the CAWO.

RESOLVED: That a report on the implications of establishing a Tenants Forum be submitted for consideration by the Committee at its meeting on 19 November 2020, following which the Committee would submit comments for the Council to take into account.

10. COUNCIL PRIORITIES AND SERVICE PERFORMANCE FOR QUARTER ONE OF 2020/2021

The Committee considered the previously circulated report of the Chief Executive, which provided details of the Council's progress towards achieving its aims and priorities set out in the Council Plan 2020-2024, and service performance during Quarter One.

Comments and queries on Annexes A and B were as follows:

- Attention was drawn to the fact that the indicators relevant to this Committee started on page 29 of the report
- Climate Action – Councillor Graham commented on whether an issue had been missed out of the plan, namely the impact of farming and farming methods on the district. This was acknowledged as being a significant issue, and the Chief Executive agreed to feed the comment back, and explained that work was being carried out on a broader Climate Change policy looking at the district as a whole, and the farming sector would be included
- A Vibrant District Economy – Carterton Town Council was a potential lead partner in regard to the Carterton Technology Hub.
- Oxfordshire electric vehicle strategy and ihub. Work was being carried out on this strategy, with a new initiative of overnight charging points in lampposts. This was an issue being looked at by the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Strong Local Communities: Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive communities. Councillor Ashbourne asked for some of the language to be revisited, to make it more accessible to the public. She also queried the housing allocation, which had been re-allocated from Oxford City, and concern was expressed about residents losing friends and family if they had to move from Oxford City into the district. Officers explained that careful detailed planning was needed in order to create successful and balanced communities in major new developments, and this would involve a range of different housing types and tenures
- Tourism should be supported when emerging from Covid-19 with new ideas and initiatives being desirable

- A request was made for more information on the number of households living in emergency accommodation for over 28 days to be presented to the meeting of the Committee in November 2020
- The meaning of “other” planning applications determined was queried. The Chief Executive explained that the definition included applications such as those for Listed Building and Advertisement consent.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

11. CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Democratic Services, which gave members the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 25 August 2020.

The Chairman referred to Supplementary Planning Documents and other planning policy related matters, and asked the Committee whether it wished to continue the practice where such documents were considered by the Committee during the applicable consultation period. The consensus was that this was desirable.

Other comments and queries were as follows:

- Councillor Cooper queried the reason for the proposed report on the Woodstock Infrastructure Delivery Strategy, and Officers explained that it arose from discussions with Blenheim, and that the report would put forward options for Cabinet to consider
- There had been a particular complaint which had been dealt with, using language which had been defensive and had escalated the complaint. It was stated that when dealing with complaints, a calm and understanding manner would be preferable to being defensive, even if the information being given was not what the recipient would want to hear
- Councillor Leverton commented that the Planning Inspector had turned down housing near Woodstock, as they were too far away from Oxford City. Officers explained that the housing was on a site on the edge of Woodstock which was in Cherwell District and was proposed development through their Local Plan. The Inspector had ruled that the allocation should be taken out of the Cherwell Local Plan.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the Cabinet Work Programme published on 25 August 2020 be noted.

12. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Councillor Postan questioned the use of the term ‘affordable housing’. A house costing £400,000 was not affordable. He requested that a different term should be used. Officers explained that this term reflected the government definition of affordable housing and included different forms and types of housing. The district was a high cost housing area and it was recognised that there was a need to be imaginative in the housing provided.

There were no further questions and the Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 7:40 p.m.

Chairman

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Development Control Committee**
held via video conferencing at 2:00 p.m. on
Monday 21 September 2020

PRESENT

Councillors: Jeff Haine (Chairman); Ted Fenton (Vice Chairman); Richard Bishop, Mike Cahill, Nathalie Chapple, Julian Cooper, Maxine Crossland, Harry Eaglestone, Duncan Enright, Hilary Fenton, David Jackson, Nick Leverton, Kieran Mullins, Alex Postan, Carl Rylett and Geoff Saul.

Also in attendance: Councillors Andy Graham, Liz Leffman, Dan Levy and Elizabeth Poskitt.

Officers: Chris Hargraves (Planning Policy Manager), Phil Shaw (Business Manager Development Management), Keith Butler (Head of Democratic Services), and Ben Amor (Strategic Support Officer).

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 March 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Merylyn Davies, Neil Owen and Harry St John. There were no temporary appointments.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers relating to items to be considered at the meeting.

4. GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Committee received and considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which would be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 23 September 2020.

The Planning Policy Manager introduced the report and explained that the White Paper promoted a 'shake up' of the planning world with the main proposals separated into three pillars. He explained the first pillar was related primarily to local plans and development management, the second primarily to design, but also including heritage and climate issues and the third, infrastructure provision. He added that in respect of plan making, local plans would be stripped back and delineate three types of planning zone including growth areas (major building permitted), renewal areas (some controlled building) and protected areas (e.g. AONB, green belt) with most policies expected to be deferred to a national level. The Planning Policy Manager continued that the paper promoted much criticism of the current planning system and sought to fast track many planning applications through the removal of the requirement for outline planning applications in many cases. He added that the plans would also see the removal of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 payments which would be replaced by a national infrastructure tariff.

The Chairman reminded the Committee that the contents of the report were to be noted and comments made by the Committee at the meeting would be submitted to Cabinet for consideration at its forthcoming meeting.

Councillor Rylett commented that he shared the fundamental concerns raised by Officers regarding the removal of public involvement in planning decisions and questioned whether Officers could make this point stronger in their response to the Consultation. In response, the Planning Policy Manager suggested that a covering letter could be submitted with the consultation response highlighting concerns raised by Members.

Councillor Enright expressed concern that the proposals could be regarded as a power grab by the Government and that there was a moral and practical case for local authorities to make decisions on local applications. He added that there were issues regarding the practicalities of local communities producing neighbourhood plans and that the plans now proposed by Government were limited in regard to zero carbon targets and generally favoured large developers. He requested that the Council's response was also sent to the Local Government Association (LGA).

Councillor Postan expressed concerns about future lack of control and loss of power to central Government as well as the role of the Planning Inspectorate which he felt should be limited to the due process of plan-making rather than content. He also highlighted the importance of achieving genuine housing affordability including through the use of modern methods of construction.

Members expressed overall support for the Officer's proposed response and highlighted that this was a Government attempt to 'water down' the current planning system which they considered needed the existing checks and balances to ensure control over developers.

Councillor Leverton expressed concerns about the proposals to implement copybook housing developments across the board along the lines of a 'Henry Ford' mentality of 'what colour do you want?'.

Councillor Crossland questioned whether there was an option for unused Ministry of Defence land to be included in the 'surplus public land' referred to. In response, the Planning Policy Manager explained that he expected this would be included but that it was a matter of defining 'surplus' within that context.

Councillor Rylett explained that zonal plans were often actually quite lengthy documents and needed to be supported by extensive evidence. They also resulted in an inflexible approach and one that would require additional financial resource from the Council given that the onus of securing outline permission would now fall to the local authority and not developers. He also highlighted the importance of locally based documents such as the Garden Village Area Action Plan which he felt had been overlooked in the White Paper. He added that there would also be cross boundary issues such as with Oxford City Council, which was unable to meet its required housing targets.

Councillor Poskitt considered that any covering letter should make clear that the Council could not give proper consideration to the Consultation where various matters were still to be confirmed. She also considered that there needed to be a greater recognition of the differences between urban and rural areas and that the blame for any failings in the planning system should not be put on local authorities or local communities.

Whilst recognising the need to respond to the survey, Councillor Postan requested that Officers start to prepare responses to the Consultation, should the proposals constitute an unstoppable process.

Councillor Saul emphasised his concerns about the centralisation of power and a worryingly process-driven approach, as well as the general lack of content on climate issues.

Councillor Rylett highlighted the importance of digital connectivity and the potential for improvements, including in particular the use of decision supporting tools which were becoming increasingly important in a number of settings.

Councillor Mullins expressed concerns about the broad-brush nature of zonal planning and the potential impact on house prices and highlighted that a lack of housing delivery was not down to local authorities, as around 40% of permitted houses were not being constructed by developers.

Councillor Haine queried the response to Question 9b on page 17 of the report and the suggestion that the Council should support a presumption in favour of development. In response, the Planning Policy Manager highlighted that the presumption in favour of sustainable development was not new and was already a central element of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

In response to comments that there might be additional points to be made, the Head of Democratic Services advised the Committee that Members could choose to attend the meeting of the Cabinet on 23 September 2020 to make any further comments. It was anticipated that Cabinet would be recommended to agree the draft response to the Consultation and to grant authority to the Cabinet Member to sign off the final response, which would incorporate any additional points.

The Business Manager Development Management explained that the proposals within the consultation represented the Government's intention to speed up development but the matter of classing every piece of land also raised the issue of legal challenge which would almost certainly take any adoption well over a 30 month period. He added that it would also remove the political, but democratic, process of Members being consulted on and determining local applications and questioned why the Government had not chosen to amend the NPPF to achieve a similar result. He also suggested that in addition to any response being sent to the LGA, it should be sent to Robert Courts MP.

The Chairman concluded the discussion and informed the Committee that in addition to the comments being presented to Cabinet, the response would also be sent to the LGA and Robert Courts MP.

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be noted, and the Committee's comments be reported to Cabinet for consideration.

5. CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO THE CURRENT PLANNING SYSTEM

The Committee received and considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which detailed the proposed response to the Government's consultation on changes to the current planning system.

The Planning Policy Manger introduced the report and explained that the Consultation had been released at the same time as the White Paper and would end on 1 October 2020. He informed the Committee that it related to four main proposals including amendments to the current standard method for assessing housing need, delivery of First Homes as a form of affordable housing targeted at first-time buyers, supporting smaller developers through increasing the threshold for affordable housing and extending permission in

principle from brownfield register and smaller sites to much larger schemes of up to 150 homes.

In terms of the method for assessing housing need he explained that under the current method, the West Oxfordshire District figure was 563 homes per year (less than the Council's Local Plan which was informed by the Oxfordshire SHMA) and that under the revised standard method, this was expected to be increased to 653.

The Planning Policy Manager added that the figure represented a starting point for assessing housing need but that in arriving at a housing requirement, opportunities and constraints such as the AONB would need to be taken into account.

In respect of First Homes the Planning Policy Manager explained that the proposals sought to stipulate a specific percentage of affordable homes as First Homes, representing a risk to the delivery of other affordable tenures including those to rent. He added that the proposals sought to increase the threshold for affordable homes on to 40-50 dwellings thus potentially impacting on affordable housing delivery in West Oxfordshire where many housing schemes fell below this threshold.

He also explained that in respect of 'permission in principle', the proposals sought to extend this from sites on brownfield registers and sites of fewer than 10 homes to much larger schemes. Members expressed support for the Officer's draft consultation response including the concerns raised regarding the increased threshold for affordable housing provision. With specific regard to the proposed standard housing method, it was suggested that the District Council's response should be augmented to emphasise the importance of taking into account the future impacts of COVID-19 on housing need e.g. in relation to new travel patterns and increased home-working as well as highlighting more strongly the significant regional and local differences in housing need that were generated by the standard method including the potential impact this could have on adjoining local authorities.

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be noted, and the Committee's comments be reported to Cabinet for consideration.

6. CONSULTATION ON ENGLAND'S ECONOMIC HEARTLAND DRAFT TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Committee received and considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which detailed the proposed response to the England's Economic Heartland (EEH) Draft Transport Strategy.

The Planning Policy Manager introduced the report and explained that the Strategy was for the area defined as 'England's Economic Heartland' and that the consultation would run until 6 November 2020. He added that the Strategy's commitments were in relation to partnership working; with a strong emphasis on decarbonising the transport system and explained that in the draft consultation response, whilst being generally supportive of the draft strategy, Officers had made recommendations regarding the inclusion of the impact of Covid-19 and the importance of the Garden Village along the A40 corridor. In addition, Officers had also highlighted the lack of reference to healthy place shaping.

Councillor Cooper asked about the process used to determine which consultations warranted a formal response. In response, the Head of Democratic Services explained that this had been referred to the Committee at the request of the Chief Executive who wished

for the Consultation to be considered by the Cabinet, but recognised there was no formal referral process for Consultations to be presented to Members.

In response to Councillor Fenton, the Planning Policy Manager confirmed that the Oxford to Cambridge expressway was not included within the Strategy and had been paused by Government in March 2020 to allow other options within the Oxford to Cambridge corridor to be explored.

Councillor Postan requested that greater emphasis be given to the importance of personal transport in rural areas and digital technology in the response. He also considered that instead of high capital railways, research should be made into autonomous vehicles to create additional capacity on the road network.

Councillor Crossland emphasised that in respect of the A40, any response should highlight the importance of Carterton.

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be noted, and the Committee's comments be reported to Cabinet for consideration.

7. NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

Immediately before closing the meeting, the Chairman indicated that the Committee would need to meet again before Christmas to enable initial consideration of the Garden Village application, which would be determined by this Committee rather than by the Lowlands Area Planning Sub-Committee.

The meeting closed at 3.35 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Record of decisions taken at the meeting of the **Cabinet** held via video conferencing on **Wednesday 23 September, 2020** at 2.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillors: James Mills (Leader); Toby Morris (Deputy Leader); Jeff Haine, David Harvey, Norman MacRae MBE and Michele Mead.

Also in Attendance: Councillors Alaa Al-Yousuf, Richard Bishop, Jill Bull, Julian Cooper, Suzi Coul, Marilyn Davies, Harry Eaglestone, Duncan Enright, Hilary Fenton, Steve Good, Andy Graham, Gill Hill, Liz Leffman, Dan Levy, Martin McBride, Elizabeth Poskitt, Alex Postan and Carl Rylett.

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive); Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer); Frank Wilson (Executive Director, Finance); Chris Hargraves (Planning Policy Manager); Claire Hughes (Business Manager Corporate Responsibility); Keith Butler (Head of Democratic Services) and Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer).

37. NOTICE OF DECISIONS

RESOLVED: That the record of the decisions taken at the meeting held on Wednesday 26 August 2020, copies of which had been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

38. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rosa Bolger and Ted Fenton.

39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers relating to matters to be considered at the meeting.

40. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

No submissions were received from the public in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

41. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

41.1 Growth Board Update

Councillor Mills advised that he had attended the Oxfordshire Growth Board as a representative of the Council and next week he would attend the Oxfordshire LEP.

41.2 West Oxfordshire Business Awards

Councillor Morris advised that this event would be held via a virtual ceremony at 2pm this Friday 25 September, in contrast to the previously arranged gala dinner. He encouraged Members to watch and celebrate West Oxfordshire Business' by visiting the WOBA website. Thank you to WOBA team for their work over the last ten years for promoting business and entrepreneurship in the District.

The Leader reiterated the Councils' support for the WOBA's.

41.3 National Recycling Week

Councillor MacRae took the opportunity to remind everyone of the three 'R's' of waste 'Reduce, Re-use, Recycle' message and he paid tribute to the collection rews who had worked tremendously hard over the past six months. Councillor MacRae reported the very low 'missed collection' rates which were all below 1% for the month of August.

41.4 Track and Trace App

Councillor MacRae advised that posters displaying the QR codes for the Track and Trace App would be displayed in all pubs by the end of the week. He paid tribute to Ruth Levett and her team in Environmental Health for their hard work and reminded Members to report any instances via the 861000 telephone number or the website.

Councillor Graham raised a concern regarding the QR code information, as he felt that many residents would not be carrying or did not have the mobile technology to operate the App. In response, Councillor MacRae advised that he would find out and respond outside of the meeting.

41.5 CCTV

Councillor MacRae explained that a report would be submitted to Cabinet towards the end of the year. In addition, a deployable camera had been placed on The Leas – this was a wireless, mobile camera that operated via 4G and it was hoped that further technology of this type would be included in the forthcoming report.

42. FLOOD DEFENCE WORK FRAMEWORK OF CONTRACTORS

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Principal Engineer, which provided validation of a completed procurement exercise to renew the shared flood defence work contractors' framework.

The original flood defence contractors framework ceased in 2019, at the same time that a procurement exercise was concluded to identify a list of the preferred contractors for the renewal of the framework. To ensure transparency and avoid any risk of challenge it was decided that the new framework required validation by Cabinet before being implemented.

The report explained that the framework consisted of five LOTS and all LOTS had attracted companies that met procurement requirements:

LOT 1 – Reactive work of any description requiring a 2 hour response to any site across the districts.

LOT 2 – Reactive work across any of the districts that requires a response within 48 hours.

LOT 3 – Planned works in the public highway or footway.

LOT 4 – Planned works in third party land.

LOT 5 – Technical consultant, including commenting on planning applications with regard to drainage and flood risk.

Section 2 of the report detailed the companies allocated to their respective LOTS and all companies stated had met the specifications set out by the Publica Procurement Team, with several having previously completed flood defence works across the districts to a satisfactory standard.

An alternative option was that the Council could choose to source a contractor as and when required, however, this could cause delays in the delivery of work and may increase costs due to the potential of inflated 'call out' charges.

The Portfolio Holder for the Environment, Councillor MacRae introduced the report and explained that the system needed to be in place to allow the Council to respond promptly to issues of flooding. He therefore proposed the recommendations as laid out.

This was seconded by Councillor Harvey who felt this was a sensible proposal and a step in the right direction.

DECISION: That the renewal of the framework LOTS be approved, in accordance with the report.

REASONS: To assist with the delivery of a transparent procurement exercise, which would ensure value for money as well as ensuring only quality approved contractors were commissioned.

OPTIONS: The Council could choose to source contractors as and when required.

43. EQUALITY POLICY

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Business Manager Corporate Responsibility, which provided detail on the legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and how we the organisation could comply as it continued to work in partnership. Adoption of an Equality Policy was a good foundation to facilitate this and the updated version was attached as Annex A to the report.

The Equality Act came into force in October 2010 and imposed a duty on public authorities. The duty required all public bodies and private bodies that delivered a public function, to consider the needs of protected groups when designing and delivering services. It ensured that public bodies considered the needs of all individuals in their day to day work, in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

The Equality Duty was also supported by specific duties, set out in regulations which came into force on 10 September 2011. The specific duties required public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty; and to set themselves specific, measurable equality objectives.

The report explained that the policy covered both the Council and Publica and provided a comprehensive overview and action plan (attached as Annex B to the report), needed to cover both the service provider and employer elements. As such the policy sought to clarify Publica and the Council's responsibilities in relation to the general Equality duty and the specific duty. In particular, the report signposted members to Publica's position on 'dignity in the workplace' and this was included at Annex C of the report.

In order to comply with legal obligations, a number of practices had been introduced or emphasised in the Policy, including the use of equality impact assessments which it stated should be used to inform decision making at all levels.

Cabinet was also advised that the proposed policy and action plan had been considered by the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 17 September, and the Committee was supportive of their approval.

Councillor Morris introduced the report and reminded Members that the Council had a legal and moral duty to ensure the equality policy was in place. He also highlighted the impact

assessments to be used moving forwards the non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism which had been adopted and incorporated into the Policy and the gender pay gap data would be published by Publica in due course. Councillor Morris proposed the recommendations as laid out.

Councillor Mead seconded the recommendations and thanked the officers involved in maintaining and improving the Policy.

Councillor Graham thanked officers and queried how Equalities training would be delivered to Councillors moving forwards. He felt that ongoing training was necessary and should not be restricted to an induction session. Councillor Mills agreed that the training should be ongoing and was a sensible amendment to make.

Councillor Enright endorsed Councillor Graham's suggestion and welcomed the areas that dealt with reaching out to diverse groups.

As proposer of the recommendation, Councillor Morris advised that Member training was being looked at and would be rolled out later this year.

DECISIONS: That the Equality Policy 2020-2024 and the Action Plan, attached at Annexes A and B to the report, be approved.

REASONS: To ensure that all services delivered by the Council were delivered to the highest standard alongside helping residents, businesses and communities access the support they need to achieve their ambitions.

OPTIONS: Cabinet could choose not to implement the Policy but in doing so could put the Council at risk.

44. FINANCIAL AND SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020-21 QUARTER ONE AND BUDGET REFORECAST

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Chief Executive, which provided details of the Council's operational and financial performance at the end of 2020-21 Q1, and enabled Councillors to assess financial and operational performance.

Each quarter, the Council monitored its progress towards achieving its aim and priorities, service delivery and financial performance.

The report advised that the Finance team had undergone a reforecasting exercise which involved in-depth discussion and review of the current position and future forecast by all of the Publica Business Managers. The emphasis on the revenue budget was to identify areas of expenditure that could be saved, boost income where possible but also to create a more realistic estimate of the Council's final position this financial year.

A comparison of the Q1 budget to actuals and a revised 20/21 budget forecast was provided, by service, in Annex A to the report along with a table showing which Earmarked Reserves had been released. The service areas most heavily impacted were summarised at section 2.6 of the report, followed by an update on areas of the Council that had seen recovery through or had found savings to cover any shortfall.

Annex B to the report detailed the Capital spend in Quarter 1 with additional 19/20 slippage requests. It was explained in section 3.4 of the report that due to large capital spend in previous years, the Council would need to finance the year's capital work through external borrowing.

The Council Priorities Report for April 2020 to June 2020 was provided at Annex C to the report and reminded Members that during Q1, the Council's main priority was responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, progress had been made on the actions in the plan and full details were included in the annex.

With regard to the Service Performance Report, section 6 of the report highlighted that a significant number of staff had been redeployed when the nation went into lockdown in March 2020. Overall many services had performed well with no visible reduction in quality or standard and full details were in the Performance Indicator report, attached at Annex D to the report.

Councillor Morris introduced the report and thanked officers for the new style and layout which it was hoped was clearer for Members to navigate. He reiterated the points in the report relating to the Council's response to Covid-19 and thanked all staff involved in the response and recovery phases. He assured Members that all budget lines had been revised by Business Managers but reminded the meeting that there was still a lot of uncertainty around and a second lockdown would have serious implications. He encouraged Members to attend the All Member workshop on the Covid-19 Recovery programme.

With regard to the Performance report, Councillor Morris outlined the new key performance indicators which had been refreshed and categorised by scrutiny committee and he congratulated the Chairman of Environment Overview and Scrutiny on the 'amber' status of the Committee's indicators.

This was seconded by the Leader, Councillor Mills who highlighted section 2.7 of the report and the service areas which were showing signs of recovery. He thanked officers to providing the newly styled service performance and council priority reports. Councillor Mills concluded by reiterating his gratitude to all staff for their dedication during the Covid-19 response and signposted Members to section 4.6 of the report which gave a brief outline of the significant impact felt across the Council.

Councillor Postan commended the use of graphic images in the report which were much easier to understand and requested the process be extended to other departments.

DECISIONS:

- (a) That the 2020-21 Quarter One financial and service performance be noted; and
- (b) That Council be recommended to approve additional Capital Slippage from budget year 2019/20 in the amount of £843,108.

REASONS: To ensure the Council is operating in line with its' priorities, including Climate Action, Healthy Towns and Villages, Strong Local Communities, Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population and ensuring Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance.

OPTIONS: None appropriate.

45. WOODSTOCK INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY STRATEGY

The Cabinet received the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which asked them to consider whether or not Officers should proceed with the preparation of a Woodstock Infrastructure Delivery Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The report reminded Members that a large number of new homes were planned at Woodstock including 300 units to the south-east of the town, 120 units at Hill Rise and 180 units to the north of Banbury Road.

Such level of growth required careful consideration in terms of future infrastructure requirements and, in support of the Local Plan 2031, a District-wide Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) was prepared to identify what infrastructure would be needed to support this.

In February 2019 the Blenheim Estate and Woodstock Town Council commissioned Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) to consult the community about the current and future infrastructure needs of the Town. As a result of the consultation there were a number of key local priorities identified and these were listed at section 1.8 of the report.

Following extensive consultation during 2019, the findings of the CFO work were launched at community events held in November 2019.

In light of the extensive community engagement carried out by CFO on behalf of Blenheim and the Town Council, in a subsequent update of its LDS in December 2019, the Council stated that it would seek to prepare a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in the form of a Woodstock Infrastructure Delivery Strategy and this was included in the Council's current LDS published in May 2020.

Given the extensive nature of the consultation carried out by CFO and in order to avoid duplicating effort, Officers had hoped to be able to effectively 'formalise' the CFO report by publishing and adopting it as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

However, it has become clear through recent discussions with the Blenheim Estate that they do not consider the CFO work can or should be given SPD status and that instead, it should remain in its current form and be used to feed into future discussions and negotiations on potential developer contributions as the two remaining Woodstock allocations come forward.

The report therefore outlined two options for Members to consider, along with the reasons behind each option and any potential risks associated with it.

The first option was to update the West Oxfordshire IDP to reflect the findings of the CFO work, as well as discussions with relevant infrastructure providers and statutory bodies including Oxfordshire County Council, OCCG, public transport providers, Thames Water etc.

The second option was to prepare a new SPD dealing with the issue of infrastructure provision at Woodstock. This would effectively be a similar exercise undertaken by CFO in 2019, inviting views from the local community about what they consider to be the main infrastructure needs of the Town to support future growth.

The report concluded with the officers preferred option and an explanation as to why this was the recommended way forward.

Councillor Haine introduced the report and gave an overview of the number of homes likely to be built in the area. He referred to the report produced by Community First Oxfordshire and explained how the results of the consultation had shaped the key local priorities identified at section 1.8 of the report. Councillor Haine therefore proposed that recommendation a) in the report be adopted, in line with officer recommendation.

This was seconded by Councillor MacRae.

In response to a question from Councillor Cooper, Councillor Haine stated that the report did not state that the Blenheim Estate thought the IDP was deficient but did not consider that it should be given SPD status.

Councillor Poskitt supported the claims that the residents of Woodstock would not welcome another questionnaire and felt that results were needed now. She described Woodstock as a

seaside town, with the Blenheim Estate being the coastal line with Woodstock. As a result, development was moving further away from the periphery. Councillor Poskitt requested that a piece of land to the centre of Woodstock, under joint ownership, be discussed as to its future use.

Councillor Haine confirmed that he would look at the land in question and get back to Councillor Poskitt. In response to a question from Councillor Graham, Councillor Haine confirmed that, if agreed at the meeting, option a) would be progressed over the next couple of months.

In response to comments made regarding the parking review, Councillor MacRae reiterated the reasons for the delay in this work which included the redeployment of staff in response to Covid-19 and the consequences of Mayor's decision to distribute the questionnaire in a hard copy rather than electronically.

DECISION: That a minor addendum to the West Oxfordshire Local Development Scheme (LDS) be published to confirm that the District Council no longer proposes to prepare a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on the topic of infrastructure provision at Woodstock.

REASONS: No reasons were detailed in the report.

OPTIONS: Cabinet could choose the alternative option detailed in the report.

46. GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER "PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE"

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which provided a brief overview of the Government's White Paper: Planning for the Future and outlined a potential Council response.

The White Paper set out a number of significant changes which were intended to streamline and modernise the planning system, improve outcomes on design and sustainability, reform developer contributions and ensure that more land was available for development where it was needed.

It also covered a number of issues including plan-making, development management, development contributions and other related policy proposals and was the subject of a 12 week public consultation which would close on 29 October 2020. The White Paper was split into three main pillars which included 22 specific proposals. These were covered in detail in section 2 of the report.

Annex A to the report contained a draft Council response to the White Paper, structured around the proposals and specific consultation questions contained therein. Officers had noted that whilst the proposals had some merit, they also raised a number of significant concerns and these had been separated to correspond to the relevant pillar.

Members noted that the Development Control Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 21 September, and its views would be incorporated into the response, along with any amendments from this meeting.

Prior to the Cabinet meeting a summary of the comments made by the Development Control Committee was circulated to Members. It was noted that a wide range of issues had been discussed and it was suggested that the Council's response to the White Paper should be accompanied by a more general covering letter, summarising the District Council's primary concerns with the proposals including a number of issues detailed in the summary.

The Development Control Committee suggested that the covering letter should be sent to Robert Courts MP and the Local Government Association (LGA) together with the Council's response. In addition a number of typographical errors had been identified and would be corrected prior to submission.

Councillor Haine introduced the report and noted his disappointment at the changes which resulted in local councillors being omitted from the planning process. He stated that the proposed response had been supported by the Development Control Committee and he thanked Mr Hargraves for responding to Members' queries quickly.

Councillor Haine explained that any minor amendments proposed at the meeting, or at the previously held Development Control Committee, would be agreed in consultation with the Planning Policy Manager and himself as Portfolio Holder, prior to the final version being published. He therefore, proposed the recommendation as laid out subject to the inclusion of the comments made by the Development Control Committee.

This was seconded by Councillor Mead who thanked officers for their input and stated that the White Paper was not a 'fit for all'.

Councillor Postan referred to the paper as the most significant change in the last six years and he reiterated the Development Control Committee's support. He felt that the proposals in the White Paper would be harmful and unwelcome and government should be looking at more stringent control, not less. Councillor Postan concluded by highlighting the importance of building more affordable homes and he thanked Mr Hargraves for his work on this.

Members agreed that the proposed response was supported and they shared the concerns of local residents regarding future developments, with particular concerns raised about the use of permitted development rights.

It was hoped that the Government would listen to the responses received. Councillor Mills described that the Planning System should be 'local and accountable' and what was set out would diminish this. He felt that the planning process benefitted hugely from community engagement and raised a number of concerns on the impact this paper would have on the planning system.

Having read the report, and having considered the comments made by the Development Control committee, Cabinet agreed that the recommendations be approved.

DECISION: That the content of the report be noted, and the proposed response to the White Paper attached at Annex A to the report be approved, subject to the inclusion of the comments made by the Development Control Committee and the grammatical amendments highlighted.

REASONS: No reasons were detailed in the report.

OPTIONS: The report and response set out the reasoning for the proposed comments, however, Cabinet could add to or vary those comments.

47. GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION "CHANGES TO THE CURRENT PLANNING SYSTEM"

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which asked Members to agree a response to the Government's consultation on changes to the current planning system.

The Government had recently published a consultation paper which focused on four main topics of the planning system: the standard method for assessing housing need, delivering first

homes (the Government's latest form of affordable home ownership), raising the small sites threshold for affordable housing provision and extending the current system of 'permission in principle' to larger developments.

Each of the four topics was summarised in section 2 of the report along with the overall view of Officers. Members noted that the summary should be read in conjunction with the suggested consultation response.

The public consultation was due to run for eight weeks and would close on 1 October 2020. Officers had compiled a draft Council response to the consultation structured around the proposals and specific consultation questions contained therein and this was attached as Annex A to the report.

Members noted that the Development Control Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 21 September, and its views would be incorporated into the response, along with any amendments from this meeting.

Prior to the Cabinet meeting a summary of the comments made by the Development Control Committee was circulated to Members.

With specific regard to the proposed standard housing method, the Committee had suggested that the District Council's response should be augmented to emphasise the importance of taking into account the future impacts of COVID-19 on housing need. For example, in relation to new travel patterns and increased home-working, as well as highlighting more strongly the significant regional and local differences in housing need that were generated by the standard method including the potential impact this could have on adjoining local authorities.

Councillor Haine outlined the report and proposed the response as detailed at Annex A to the report. He explained that any minor amendments proposed at the meeting, or at the previously held Development Control Committee, would be agreed in consultation with the Planning Policy Manager and himself as Portfolio Holder, prior to the final version being published. He therefore, proposed the recommendation as laid out subject to the inclusion of the comments made by the Development Control Committee.

This was seconded by Councillor Harvey who agreed that this was a robust and measured response.

Councillor Postan raised a number of queries including the idea that incentives could be offered by lenders to those people wanting to buy carbon zero homes. In response, Councillor Harvey advised that the Wessex Building Society had a scheme to lend finances on favourable rates to those wanting to purchase carbon zero homes.

Councillor Mills raised a concern on Question 18, which considered appropriate levels for small sites threshold. He felt that having a set target enabled developers to circumnavigate the system by building just below the threshold of units required. He reiterated that central led targets did not work.

Having read the report, and having considered the comments made by the Development Control committee, Cabinet agreed that the recommendations be approved.

DECISION: That the content of the report be noted, and the proposed response to the consultation attached at Annex A to the report be approved, subject to the inclusion of the comments made by the Development Control Committee.

REASONS: No reasons were detailed in the report.

OPTIONS: The report and response set out the reasoning for the proposed comments, however, Cabinet could add to or vary those comments.

48. CONSULTATION BY ENGLAND'S ECONOMIC HEARTLAND ON A DRAFT TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which asked Members to agree a response to the England's Economic Heartland (EEH) Draft Transport Strategy.

England's Economic Heartland (EEH) brought together the region's Local Transport Authorities in a strategic partnership that worked with the region's local enterprise partnerships to provide leadership on strategic infrastructure.

It was a strategic partnership of political and business leaders, stretching from Swindon to Cambridgeshire and from Northamptonshire to Hertfordshire and included Oxfordshire County Council.

The area covered by EEH was detailed in a map included at section 1.2 of the report. Members noted that the area included the Oxford-Cambridge Arc which had been recognised as a national priority by Government.

EEH was the sub-national transport body for the region and a draft transport strategy had been prepared which aimed to set out a bold new approach to connectivity, enabling the region's transport system to support a green recovery from COVID-19 and sustain economic growth in the future, while reaching net zero carbon emissions no later than 2050.

The draft strategy had been published for public consultation, due to end at midnight on 6 October 2020. The strategy included a number of measures which were listed in detail at section 1.5 of the report and a brief overview of the strategy was provided in the report.

Officers had produced a draft response to the consultation, attached at Annex A to the report, and Members were asked to agree this as the Council's formal submission. The report highlighted that Oxfordshire County Council were proposing to submit a response to the consultation and there would also be a collective response dealing with strategic matters submitted through the Oxfordshire Growth Board.

Members noted that the Development Control Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 21 September, and its views would be incorporated into response, along with any amendments from this meeting.

Prior to the Cabinet meeting a summary of the comments made by the Development Control Committee was circulated to Members.

As a general observation, the Committee had suggested that the Council's draft response be augmented to ensure that greater recognition was given to the importance of personal transport in rural areas where public transport was often very limited, and the role of autonomous vehicles in creating additional capacity on existing roads should also be given stronger emphasis.

More specifically in relation to the importance of key corridors, it was suggested that the Council's draft response be amended to include reference to the importance of Carterton along the A40 corridor.

Councillor Haine introduced the report and felt that whilst it was a good report in principle, there was 'no meat on the bones'. He agreed with the officers' approach to the strategy and

proposed the recommendation as laid out. He explained that any minor amendments proposed at the meeting, or at the previously held Development Control Committee, would be agreed in consultation with the Planning Policy Manager and himself as Portfolio Holder, prior to the final version being published. He therefore, proposed the recommendation as laid out subject to the inclusion of the comments made by the Development Control Committee.

This was seconded by the Leader, Councillor Mills who highlighted the work that was ongoing with Council partners. He made reference to the transport infrastructure and in particular the emphasis on improving the railway network. He requested that any reference in the response to the Cotswold Line should be amended to read 'North Cotswold Line'.

Councillor Leffman agreed with the Leader's comments and felt that emphasis should be given to the areas to the West of Oxford. She highlighted the problems raised by the railway line still being single track beyond Hanborough, which she hoped could be mentioned in the response. She also felt that the comments made by Councillor Crossland at the Development Control Committee with regard to Carterton and its links to Swindon should be included.

In contrast, Councillor Postan reiterated the importance of the motor car to those living in rural areas and was passionate that infrastructure should be planned for the future and not to suit yesterday.

Councillor Graham felt that the digital infrastructure should be supported as it was a cleaner and more efficient process. He commended the use of pilots to trial different projects and raised concerns regarding the level of freight traffic on the roads, which damaged the roads and put cyclists at risk.

Councillor Levy supported the comments made by Councillor Graham and felt the report would be improved with the mention of rural bus services and their importance to the villages in West Oxfordshire. In response, Councillor Mills agreed with the importance of the issue but felt this would be better put forward to the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan in order to get the appropriate attention it deserved.

Councillor Mills advised that there was work going on via the North Cotswold Line Taskforce and Oxfordshire County Council was the lead for the Oxfordshire section of that. In addition, a working party had been set up for the Hanborough Station which the Council had been invited to be part of.

Having read the report, and having considered the comments made by the Development Control Committee, and the amendments proposed at the meeting Cabinet agreed that the recommendations be approved.

DECISION: That the content of the report be noted, and the proposed response to the draft strategy attached at Annex A to the report be approved, subject to the inclusion of the comments made by the Development Control Committee.

REASONS: No reasons were detailed in the report.

OPTIONS: The report and response set out the reasoning for the proposed comments, however, Cabinet could add to or vary those comments.

The meeting closed at 3.17 pm

Leader of the Council

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
held via video conferencing at **2 p.m. on Thursday 1 October 2020**

PRESENT

Councillors: Alaa Al-Yousuf (Chairman), Martin McBride (Vice Chairman), Jill Bull, Mike Cahill, Suzi Coul, Andrew Coles, Owen Collins, Harry Eaglestone, Ted Fenton, Gill Hill, Liz Leffman, Elizabeth Poskitt and Alex Postan.

Also in attendance: Councillor Norman MacRae MBE

Officers in attendance: Phil Shaw (Business Manager, Development Management); Scott Williams (Business Manager, Waste); Vanessa Scott (Climate Change Manager); Keith Butler (Head of Democratic Services); and Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer).

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 February 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence and the Committee was advised that Councillor Suzi Coul was attending in place of Councillor Richard Bishop.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers in matters to be considered at the meeting.

4. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

No submissions were received from the public in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

5. PETITION: SEWAGE AND SEWAGE DISCHARGES

The Committee considered a report which advised that a petition had been received from Ms Ruth Smith of Witney Town Council, containing 1700 signatures.

The petition made a number of requests of the Council with regard to the concerns raised regarding Thames Water and the water systems in the District. The Committee's role was to consider the content of the petition and to make a recommendation as to what, if any, action should be taken by the Council. That recommendation would be to Cabinet, although Council approval could also be needed if, for example, the proposed actions had budgetary implications.

A copy of the covering letter and of the petition were included as appendices to the report and for ease, Annex 2 highlighted the specific requests being made of the Council.

The report advised Members that officers were aware of the reports of the increase in incidents of untreated sewage discharging to the river and agreed with the concerns being raised at the consequent harms to its quality and its role as an ecosystem.

One of the requests proposed in the petition was for petition a greater degree of coordination of development and sewerage infrastructure. However, the report highlighted that it was difficult to see what more could actually happen in that regard. Thames Water were consulted on sites in the Local Plan and on planning applications, could request infrastructure improvements on the back of new development occurring or could suggest conditions to be imposed on any decision issued. In that regard it was felt there was already close liaison, such that integration was not seen as an issue and it was more the matters causing concern largely fall outside the planning/regulatory control of the Council.

There was clearly a need to enforce legislation but this fell outside of the remit of the Council, who did not have a regulatory of enforcement role. That duty fell to the Environment agency. It was recognised that residents would continue to contact WODC members and staff if they did not obtain sufficient response or comment from Thames Water or the Environment Agency.

As many of the solutions lay outside of the Council's remit, it was suggested that the local MP be advised of the need for legislative amendments if the problems were to be properly resolved.

The report therefore recommended that the contents of the petition be noted and the Cabinet Member for the Environment be asked to lobby Thames Water to confirm its plans to combat the problems report and liaise with Robert Courts MP and advise him that Council felt legislative change was required.

The Business Manager, Development Management, Phil Shaw introduced the report and reiterated that officers were very aware of the problems being faced across the District. He was supported by the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Councillor MacRae who reminded Members of the motion proposed to Council at the start of the year, which mirrored many of the issues and possible measures raised in the petition.

Members noted the work undertaken by officers and elected members including holding previous Water Days and the communication already carried out by the Cabinet Member in liaison with the local MP.

The Committee recognised that the petition was a good, community based piece of work and was useful in pushing the message out to the government. However, it was felt that the Council could act more strongly by conducting further lobbying and publicising that Members agreed with the petitioners. Councillor Coul also highlighted that it was important to involve MP's from across the whole of the Thames Valley.

Councillor McBride suggested that Robert Courts MP be sent a recording of the meeting so that he could see and hear the comments made.

The Cabinet Member agreed that a press release could be published and Robert Courts could be sent a link to the meeting recording.

The Committee therefore

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the petition be noted; and
- (b) That the Cabinet Member for the Environment be requested to (i) support the lobbying of Thames Water to confirm its plans to combat the widespread problems

reported; and (ii) copy Robert Courts MP into this report and advise him that the Council considers legislative changes are required in order to enable an effective solution.

6. COMMUNITY RECYCLING: BRING SITES IN WEST OXFORDSHIRE

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Waste, which updated Members on the issues being experienced at the community recycling (bring sites) in West Oxfordshire. The report being submitted to Cabinet sought approval for the bring sites' permanent removal.

The scrutiny committee were being asked to take into account the risks and financial and performance related implications of removing the community recycling (bring site) facilities and submit any comments to Cabinet.

Scott Williams, Business Manager – Waste, introduced the report and highlighted the significant issues being experienced with the misuse of these sites.

Councillor Leffman highlighted the problem encountered by residents of towns and villages located in the North of the District who had to travel tens of miles to reach a recycling centre. Councillor Leffman suggested that the location of the bring sites should be considered before being closed, because forcing residents to drive long journeys to these sites did not correspond with the Council's commitment to Climate Change.

Some Members recognised the misuse of the sites and many had personal experiences of the problems being encountered. It was suggested that residents should be asked their opinion before the sites were closed and it was agreed that education and communication to residents was key.

In response to questions from Members, Mr Williams advised that when the bring sites were closed in the Cotswold District, it did not result in an increase of fly-tipping. General misuse of the sites was by traders who did not want to sign up to the Trade Waste system and the Bulky Waste service proved residents with an alternative, although it was noted there was a cost to this.

With regard to a question regarding the option of installing CCTV and prosecuting individuals, Mr Williams reminded Members that this would come at a cost, as would monitoring the system and the officer time taken to bring cases to court.

Following a query raised regarding clothing banks, Mr Williams advised that the Council was working with the clothing banks to ensure the service continued effectively, following a slow down due to lockdown. He also stated that the income received from recycling cardboard was running at a negative and authorities were having to pay for recycling.

There was a general feeling that there should not be a blanket closure of the sites because residents should not be disadvantaged by the actions of the minority. Councillor Coul felt that it would become known that the Council was prosecuting fly-tippers and this would have an impact on the frequency of instances.

The Committee agreed that closures should not take place across the board until the location of each site had been considered in relation to the travel time needed to reach alternative sites, the option of CCTV had been explored and more focus was placed on prosecuting fly-tippers and carrying out enforcement.

It was also supported that residents should be consulted with before any sites were closed permanently.

The Cabinet Member for the Environment addressed Members and thanked them for the detailed debate. He provided an update on the enforcement measures carried out recently with nine prosecutions being carried out in the form of fixed penalty notices.

Having considered the report and having heard from the officers and Members present the Committee

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the risks and financial, and performance related implications of removing the community recycling (bring site) facilities are noted;
- (b) That Cabinet take into account that the permanent removal of the community recycling (bring site) facilities should not take place until the location of each site has been considered in relation to the travel time needed to reach alternative sites, the option of CCTV has been explored and more focus has been placed on prosecuting fly-tippers and carrying out enforcement. However, effective communication was necessary in order to mitigate the issues being experienced with high levels of contamination, fly tipping and misuse; and
- (c) The Committee considered that residents should be consulted prior to the closure of sites.

7. MOTION: FIREWORK DISPLAYS

The Committee considered the motion proposed by Councillor Toby Morris and seconded by Councillor Suzi Coul, as amended following comments from Councillor Bolger, at the meeting of the Council held 26 February 2020:

“This Council resolves:

- (a) To ask for all public firework displays within the local authority boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people*
- (b) To actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks*
- (c) To write to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the environmental impact and maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays*
- (d) To encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock climate-friendly and ‘quieter’ fireworks for public display*

The Committee was asked to consider the matter and agree on any comments or recommendations to be submitted to Council.

The seconder of the original motion, Councillor Coul, addressed Members and reiterated the difficulties that animal owners experienced when unexpected fireworks were set off. It was noted that discussion on the motion had been delayed due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequential postponement of scrutiny meetings.

The Committee accepted that many organised, public displays were adequately advertised and noted that the District Council did not have a statutory duty to regulate firework displays.

It was felt that the Council could do more to work proactively with event organisers, town and parish councils, and to educate residents to encourage them to consider their neighbours when arranging celebrations. The Committee was also supportive of the proposal to write to businesses and encourage them to stock fireworks with lower decibel levels.

Councillor Leffman proposed that the motion be amended to include specific reference to the Council contacting Parish and Town Councils with a view to them publishing communications in their parish newsletters and advising them of Members' desire to protect people and animals.

The Committee agreed that this should be included and the proposition was put to the vote and was carried.

RECOMMENDED: That the Council works with Parish and Town Councils and

- (a) asks for all public firework displays within the local authority boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people;
- (b) actively promotes a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks;
- (c) writes to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the environmental impact and maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays; and
- (d) encourages local suppliers of fireworks to stock climate-friendly and 'quieter' fireworks for public display.

8. MOTION: ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS FOR BUSINESSES

The Committee considered the motion proposed by Councillor Duncan Enright and seconded by Councillor Rosa Bolger at the meeting of the Council held 26 February 2020:

"In light of the climate emergency, the council will encourage businesses and organisations in the district to adopt more sustainable modes of operation. The council therefore resolves to investigate methods to encourage this by audit and award schemes to recognise good practice. These will include exploring best practice by local authorities, the inclusion of environmental measures in procurement decisions, considering awards similar to environmental health audits for food outlets, and discussion with West Oxfordshire Business Awards (WOBA) about sustainability awards."

The Committee was asked to consider the matter and agree on any comments or recommendations to be submitted to Council.

The Committee was supportive of the motion and noted that some local businesses already promoted their environmental commitment. There was discussion about how the awarding process would be resourced and whether it could be included in existing work streams of the Climate Action Working Group or the Covid-19 Recovery Plan.

It was noted that WOBA already provided awards to local businesses and it was suggested that the Council approach WOBA and ask them to consider including a sustainability award in their programme.

Councillor Enright felt that the motion was a good starting point, worth pursuing and the details could be worked out later.

The Climate Change Manager, Ness Scott, advised that the scheme could be as large or as small as required and quoted some examples of other Local Authorities which ran similar incentives.

Having considered the comments made, the Committee agreed that the motion should be supported and suggested that the awards be included within the work of the Climate Action Working Group.

RECOMMENDED: That the Council encourages businesses and organisations in the district to adopt more sustainable modes of operation. The Council should ask the Climate Action Working Group to investigate methods to encourage this by audit and award schemes to recognise good practice, including exploring best practice by local authorities, the inclusion of environmental measures in procurement decisions, considering awards similar to environmental health audits for food outlets, and discussion with West Oxfordshire Business Awards (WOBA) about sustainability awards.

9. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2020/2021

The Committee was provided with an update on its work programme and was advised that the proposal for 2020/21 had sought to take into account the impact of the cancellation of the previous scheduled meetings of the Committee, had been prepared following consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee, and had an overarching aim of making the programme more focused and relevant.

The Chairman highlighted the changes that had been made with a view to helping the Committee carry out their role more effectively by looking at work that was relevant to their remit and would add value to the decision making process.

9.1 Waste Service

It was noted that whilst the Cabinet Member and the lead officer for this item had been present for the Bring Sites report, they were not in attendance when the work programme was discussed. Members agreed that they would still like to hear a general service update and wished to invite the Area Manager from Ubico to attend their December meeting to discuss and review options for the new waste contract.

Following the December meeting, this item could move to a six monthly update.

9.2 Update on Carbon Action Plan

The Climate Change Manager addressed the meeting and provided a comprehensive update as to where the Carbon Action Plan was in the decision making process. It was agreed that this update should appear as a standing item on the agenda.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) The 'Waste Service' item be deferred to December 2020, then six monthly thereafter; and

- (2) The 'Update on Carbon Action Plan' be added as a regular report to the work programme and agenda; and
- (3) Further items could be added following consideration of the Cabinet Work Programme

10. CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Democratic Services, which gave members the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 22 September 2020.

10.1 Items 11 and 17 – Approval of East Witney & North Witney draft SPD's for consultation

Councillor Postan raised a concern that the naming of development areas could create negative connotations. It was noted that the names detailed in the Cabinet Work Programme were likely to reflect those given to the areas in the Local Plan and although this was an issue that did not fall under the scrutiny committee's remit, Councillor Postan was advised that he could raise his concerns at the next Cabinet meeting.

10.2 Electric Vehicle Charging Points

Councillor Postan was disappointed that there was still little or no progress with this project and queried whether the committee should examine how the project had been handled.

In response, Councillor Al-Yousuf advised that Ness Scott had provided an update on Green and Active Travel at the Climate Action Working Group earlier that day, which had been encouraging.

Ness Scott reiterated the information previously reported with regard to the Park and Charge project and assured Members that further information would be given in due course.

10.3 Item 19 – Litter Bin Replacement Programme

Councillor Bull highlighted this item as she had a number of questions relating to whether this was for damaged units or an entire replacement programme. It was agreed that the item could be added to the Committee's work programme for December as the Cabinet report should be available for officers to advise on.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be amended to include Litter Bin Replacement Programme for December 2020.

11. START TIME OF MEETINGS

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Democratic Services, which invited it to consider the start time for its meetings for the remainder of 2020/20201.

It was noted that concerns had been raised by some Councillors that the staggered collection times brought in by primary schools since the Covid-19 outbreak, was making it difficult to attend 2pm meetings. However, those Members in attendance did not feel this was an issue for them at the present time and

RESOLVED: That the start time remain at 2.00pm on the understanding that this could be reviewed if necessary.

12. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Prior to the meeting Councillor Coles had circulated the following question:

“At the full council meeting held virtually on 24th June, the Chief Executive responded to a question of mine regarding air quality. He agreed with me that now would be an ideal time to re-examine the council's approach to tackling the poor air quality in both Witney and Chipping Norton. Can the committee be updated on what actions or progress has been made since the June meeting please?”

In response, officers advised that the issue of Air Quality was due to be considered and debated at the next meeting of the Committee in December 2020. However, following discussion regarding the importance of the issue and the delay already encountered, it was agreed that officers would be asked to respond to the query and the answer circulated to the Committee prior to the next meeting.

Councillor Coles reiterated the importance of Members being kept updated as to what actions or progress had been made with re-examining the council's approach to tackling this issue.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 4.35 pm

CHAIRMAN

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the
Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee
held via video conferencing at 2 pm on **Wednesday 7 October 2020**

PRESENT

Councillors: Derek Cotterill (Chairman); Alaa Al-Yousuf, Julian Cooper, Maxine Crossland, Harry Eaglestone, Duncan Enright, Richard Langridge, Liz Leffman, Dan Levy, Martin McBride, Harry St John and Geoff Saul.

Also in Attendance: Councillors Andy Graham and Toby Morris

Officers: Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Chief Executive); Frank Wilson (Group Director – Finance); Phil Martin (Group Manager, Business Support Services); Andrew Sherbourne (Accounting Technician); Keith Butler (Head of Democratic Services); and Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer)

11. START TIME OF MEETINGS

At the request of the Chairman, the Committee considered an urgent item which invited it to consider the start time for its meetings for the remainder of 2020/2021.

It was noted that concerns had been raised by some Councillors that the staggered collection times brought in by primary schools since the Covid-19 outbreak, was making it difficult to attend 2pm meetings.

The Chairman proposed that the start time be moved to 12:30pm for the remainder of the year and this was seconded and agreed by Members.

RESOLVED: That the start time of meetings be amended to 12.30pm until the end of the municipal year.

12. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8 July 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Alex Postan, and the following temporary appointments were reported –

Councillor Martin McBride for Councillor Gill Hill

Councillor Duncan Enright for Councillor Rosa Bolger.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers in matters to be considered at the meeting.

15. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

There were no requests received.

16. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2020-2021

The Committee considered the previously circulated report of the Head of Democratic Services, which invited it to consider its Work Programme for the remainder of 2020/2021.

Questions and comments from Members on the work programme included:

- Introduction of Electric Vehicle Charging Points in Council Car Parks - Officers advised that information was needed from the Distribution Network Operator and had been further delayed by the impact of Covid-19 and lockdown. Members noted that officers were investigating changing supplier
- Treasury Management Activity and Performance – Councillor Al-Yousuf reminded Members that the Environmental, Government and Social issues relating to Investment Principles had been discussed prior to Covid-19. He hoped to see a paragraph indicating compliance in the quarterly reports.
- Budget – Councillor Cooper felt that large amendments to the Budget should be passed through the Committee before agreement. Officers reminded him that these went to Council for full agreement. The Chief Finance Officer explained that there would be movement in the budget after the December scrutiny meeting because details on income were awaited and could not be finalised until the New Year.
- Medium Term Financial Strategy – Councillor Langridge queried if this needed an annual refresh following the impact of Covid-19. Councillor St John asked if consideration of the MTFS should be brought forward but was advised that, given the lateness of the government finance settlement, this would need to be a post-Christmas report.
- Ubico Business Plan – The Chairman queried if the committee should pass this item to the Environment O&S committee and the relevant Chair and Vice Chair agreed. Councillor Enright felt that this committee still had a need to scrutinise costs.
- Building Control Targets – Officers advised that there had been a reduced number of applications for the first two months of the Covid crisis, however since then applications had picked up to previous monthly totals. This has led to a reduced income for the service, however, the Business Manager had discussed this with the Section 151 Officer and had given a guide to what income target is likely to be achieved.

RESOLVED: That (i) progress on the 2019/20 work programme be noted; and (ii) the proposed 2020/21 work programme be approved, subject to the comments and amendments referred to above.

17. CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Democratic Services which gave Members the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 22 September 2020.

Questions and comments from Members on the Cabinet work programme included:

- Approval of Investment Strategy for the recovery of West Oxfordshire – Councillor Langridge queried if FMOS would be looking at this. Frank Wilson advised that the Cabinet Advisory Group had considered it and it had been circulated to all Members as part of the recently held workshop. The strategy would be submitted to Cabinet then Council so all Members would have the opportunity to consider it.
- Consideration of principles for a review of the Tourism Service – Councillor Cotterill expressed his interest in this item, with particular interest in the Visitor Information Centre in Burford.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the Cabinet Work Programme published on 22 September 2020 be noted.

18. COUNCIL PRIORITIES AND SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020-21 QUARTER ONE

The Committee received and considered the report of the Chief Executive, which provided details of the Council's progress towards achieving its aims and priorities set out in the Council Plan 2020-2024, and service performance during Quarter One.

Comments and queries from Councillors included:

- Councillor Enright was pleased with the new reporting format and thanked officers for the revised version. He queried how widely the information was shared and officers advised that each scrutiny committee had received a copy for comment. The report was also published to the public on the website.
- It was noted that some of the indicators on the graphs dropped dramatically for WODC compared to the other authorities. Officers explained that this was due to the other authorities being in a different reporting period and their latest figures had not been included.
- It was clarified that the Draft Affordable Housing SPD had been consulted on over the summer and a revised draft was due to be consulted on in the Autumn.
- Councillor Langridge highlighted the red indicator relating to the website. It was noted that the website had improved and further work was ongoing to make it a more transactional tool rather than solely an information provision tool.
- With regard to the number of households living in emergency accommodation, the Committee noted that this matter sat in the remit of the Economic & Social O&S Committee.
- Councillor Crossland expressed her disappointment in a recent encounter using the website. She had submitted a request ten days ago and this had received no response.

Having considered the report and following debate, the Committee

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

19. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE 2020/21

The Committee received and considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer, which advised it of treasury management activity and the performance of internal and external fund managers for the period 1 April 2020 – 31 August 2020.

The Chief Finance Officer, Elizabeth Griffiths outlined the report and was joined by Accounting Technician, Andrew Sherbourne.

Members were advised that given the ongoing scale of the capital programme it was clear that the Council would need to borrow externally or recall pooled investment funds. Arlingclose had advised that nothing needed to be recalled immediately but had advised that the investments continue to be monitored closely. It was noted that there would be a large cash shortfall by the end of the financial year due to funding large capital expenditure in 19/20 and 20/21.

Officers advised that the Council would need to look at borrowing £15m before the end of the year to cover the fall in cash flow.

The Chairman reminded Members that the Council had been fortunate to date to remain debt free and noted the high figure needed.

Members asked a number of queries including whether any investments would be recalled, who the Council may borrow from and the status of the Icelandic investments.

Officers advised that they would continue to be guided by the Council's Treasury Management advisors with regard to the existing investments and that a final dividend from Kaupthing, Singer and Friedlander was expected but any sums were likely to be insignificant now

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Morris explained that this was timing issue with regard to borrowing externally and reminded Members that it was July 2016 when the Council had first borrowed 'internally'.

Councillor Leffman expressed her support for the recommendation and concurred with the comments made by Councillor Morris. She felt that it was a sensible time to borrow when the rates were low.

Having considered the report and having received clarification from officers, the Committee

RESOLVED: That treasury management and the performance of in-house and external Pooled Funds' activity for the period 1 April 2020 – 31 August 2020 be noted.

20. MOTION: LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Group Manager, Business Support Services, which asked that consideration be given to the motion as set out below, and comments or a recommendation be made to Council.

At the Council meeting on 23 October 2019, the following was proposed by Councillor Jake Acock and seconded by Councillor Andy Graham:

“One of the ethos of this council is to be inclusive; not exclusive. We want to welcome people in and get more and more active with local government. This council recognises we are living in an age of technology that can be used to keep in touch, improve communications and change peoples lives for the better. Therefore, in order to improve our communications, we charge that every council and committee meeting is filmed and recorded, then placed on the West Oxfordshire District Council website for West Oxfordshire residents to view and listen to our meetings. Across the country from Manchester, Wandsworth and Bath, council meetings are recorded. Therefore, this council charges that we will now record and stream live all of our council meetings and committee meetings”

It was resolved at the meeting that the motion would stand referred without discussion to the Finance & Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and a copy of the minutes was attached as an appendix to the report.

Council further considered the matter at its meeting on 22 January 2020 and resolved:

- (a) That further study was required on the various methods of recording available, location options and cost of installation;
- (b) That the meetings rooms to be included in the evidence gathering should be Committee Rooms 1 & 2 and the Council Chamber, and that feedback should be sought from other Councils which had installed systems, or were due to do so; and
- (c) That the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to consider the costings and other information prior to further consideration by the Council.

The report noted that this work had been delayed as a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic, including the cancellation of some meetings earlier in the year.

The report outlined a number of options for Councillors to consider which varied in the location that the equipment could be installed in, the type and functionality of the units and whether there were individual or dual units provided.

The indicative, one off costs for each option were broken down and explained in section 6 of the report and varied in value from £92,189 to £270,347. However, there were also maintenance and hosting costs to be taken into account. The report also highlighted that there was not any funding available in existing budgets and any decision would therefore be subject to the budgetary process.

The Group Manager, Business Support Services, Phil Martin, introduced the report and reminded Members of the current legislation relating to virtual meetings that was only in place until May 2021. He also advised that across the Publica partnership, Forest of Dean District

Council had introduced webcasting of its Council and Planning Committee meetings in May 2018; Cheltenham Borough Council introduced webcasting from its Council Chamber only, in October 2019; and Cotswold District Council had recently approved the award of a contract for the purchase and implementation of a hybrid web casting solution.

There were differing opinions across the Committee with some feeling that the costs described were too high to consider at the moment, whereas others supported the investment as it was important to ensure the public could continue to participate in decision making.

It was noted that Council meetings were operating in a different environment compared to when the motion was originally considered and the Webex solution was satisfactory for the time being.

In response to a query from Councillor Leffman, Mr Martin explained that any contract would need to be subject to an open tender process and each authority was operating on differing timelines.

Councillor Langridge proposed that the motion should be deferred for a twelve month period because there were other financial priorities to consider at the present time. This was seconded by Councillor McBride.

Councillor Al-Yousuf suggested that the Committee amend the proposal to include reference to Option 3 which would help give officers a steer as to the style and location of equipment preferred. It was broadly supported that Committee Room 1 was a more suitable location for the equipment as the costs were lower and there could be potential for hiring out the space in the future.

As the proposer of the existing motion, Councillor Langridge did not feel that the officer time involved in supporting Option 3 could be justified and did not want to amend his recommendation.

The Committee therefore

RECOMMENDED: That the motion be deferred for twelve months because there were other financial priorities to consider at the present time.

21. MOTION: ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Group Manager, Business Support Services, which asked that consideration be given to the motion as set out below, and comments or a recommendation be made to Council.

At the Council meeting on 22 January 2020, the following was proposed by Councillor Jake Acock and seconded by Councillor Andy Graham:

“West Oxfordshire District Council places great importance upon communications with councillors, whether that be sending out agendas for meetings or through regular email updates.

West Oxfordshire District Council also places great importance upon environmental credentials and cost-effective projects.

Therefore, this council resolves that we will no longer send paper copies of communications including agendas for all meetings and will issue every councillor with an iPad for council business.

This will allow the council to:

- a) have stronger greener credentials and help to tackle the climate crisis.*
- b) be more cost and staff efficient.*

c) be more GDPR friendly.

This council resolves that this will be added to the 2020 budget and that all councillors will be issued with an iPad by May 2020”.

It was resolved at the meeting that the motion would stand referred without discussion to the Finance & Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A copy of the minutes from the Council meeting was attached as an appendix to the report.

The report noted that this work had been delayed as a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic, including the cancellation of some meetings earlier in the year.

Officers had investigated the option of providing Ipads to all Councillors and the cost implications associated with this were detailed in section 3 of the report. Additional costs were also detailed which needed consideration including the provision of keyboards, screen covers, implementation costs and ICT support time.

Members noted that there was not any funding available for this project and should the Council choose to proceed, it would need to be subject to the budgetary process.

Some Members felt that the move to electronic documents was a positive one and many had experience of this way of working through their town councils. However, some Members also felt that it may not be a sensible use of public money at this time.

Councillor Langridge proposed that Council be advised that the Committee did not feel the motion should be pursued at this time. This was seconded by Councillor St John.

RECOMMENDED: That the motion is not pursued at the present time.

22. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

The Chairman confirmed that he had not received notice of any questions prior to the meeting and none were raised under the agenda item.

There were no further questions and the Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 4:10 pm

Chairman

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Record of decisions taken at the meeting of the **Cabinet** held via video conferencing on **Wednesday 21 October, 2020** at 2.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillors: James Mills (Leader); Toby Morris (Deputy Leader); Jeff Haine, David Harvey, Norman MacRae MBE and Michele Mead.

Also in Attendance: Councillors Alaa Al-Yousuf, Richard Bishop, Jill Bull, Julian Cooper, Derek Cotterill, Suzi Coul, Marilyn Davies, Harry Eaglestone, Hilary Fenton, Ted Fenton, Steve Good, Liz Leffman, Dan Levy, Martin McBride, Alex Postan, Carl Rylett and Harry St John.

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive); Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer); Frank Wilson (Executive Director, Finance); Philippa Lowe (Business Manager Localities); Vanessa Scott (Climate Change Manager); Astrid Harvey (Community Planning Officer); Kim Hudson (Senior Policy Officer); Keith Butler (Head of Democratic Services) and Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer).

49. NOTICE OF DECISIONS

RESOLVED: That the record of the decisions taken at the meeting held on Wednesday 23 September 2020, copies of which had been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

50. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Andy Graham.

51. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers relating to matters to be considered at the meeting.

52. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

No submissions were received from the public in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

53. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

53.1 New Covid Compliance Officer Post

Councillor MacRae advised that the Council had been allocated Covid Compliance enforcement funding in excess of £36,000, from MHCLG. The money was ring-fenced for any activity which would "support compliance and enforcement of measures to support public health measures, including social distancing, to control the spread of COVID-19 across individuals, businesses and in the community".

It had therefore been proposed that the funding be used to employ a full time, Covid Compliance Officer post on a twelve month contract, exclusively for use by West Oxfordshire District Council. Councillor MacRae listed some of the duties that the post would undertake and advised that alongside monitoring compliance, the post would provide valuable support for local businesses.

53.2 Council's response to Planning White Paper

Councillor Haine advised that the Council's comprehensive response to the government White Paper on Planning had been submitted along with a lengthy covering letter to the MHCLG, outlining the concerns raised by officers and Members, on 6 October 2020.

53.3 Home Energy Retrofit and Warm and Well assessments

Councillor Harvey made reference to the recent Council Press Release relating to keeping warm and helping to tackle climate change this winter.

The Council was working with its partner organisation, the National Energy Foundation, to ensure residents had access to information on home energy efficiency and heating improvements as well as grants. This was achieved through the Better Housing, Better Health service which aimed to reduce the number of people in fuel poverty. Alongside help and advice, the service also provided free energy visits known as Warm and Well Assessments. More information could be found on the Council's website or by contacting the Better Housing Better Health Service.

54. JOINT TOURISM SERVICE REVIEW

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Business Manager, Localities, which set out the scope of a review and option appraisal for the Shared Tourism Service.

To ensure the review was well grounded, the report highlighted that it would need to consider the wider local economy, the relationship with key external partners and organisations, the Council's Covid-19 Economic Recovery Plan and the Council's priority for A Vibrant District Economy. The main elements of the review were detailed at section 2 of the report.

The review work would examine options around future delivery models and opportunities for how the service could work in the future. It was also noted that had been fundamental changes in the way visitors, consumers and businesses communicate, access information and manage bookings. Annex A to the report provided headline details about the effects of Covid-19 and the on-going challenges and risks for the sector.

The report asked Members to note the content of the report and approve that the review be undertaken. The outcome of the review and options appraisal would be reported back to Cabinet following completion.

The Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor Morris, introduced the report and reminded the meeting that the Council had entered into a shared service for tourism five years previously. He explained that the review aimed to ensure the service would add value, make funding equitable and provide better guidance. He advised that if approved, a report would come to Cabinet in February or March 2021 and proposed the recommendations as laid out.

This was seconded by the Leader, Councillor Mills, who noted the consultees detailed in the Destination Management Organisation. He queried the inclusion of Marketing Cheltenham and was disappointed that there was no mention of the significant investments being made at Enstone and Eynsham as he had previously raised this with officers. He requested that he would like officers to take a closer look at Cotswold National Landscape, to ensure they were aligned with the Council's priorities and not just the wider partnership area. He reiterated that the review should not be narrow and stated that the strategic role of the service was particularly important. Finally, he disputed that the Council had not engaged with the LEP.

Councillor Cotterill highlighted that the Mayor of Burford had submitted a comment regarding the Visitor Information Centre in Burford, which was currently closed. He advised that there were a number of local entities who would like to use the premise as a fundraising 'pop-up' shop.

Councillor Morris assured Councillor Cotterill that he was aware of the request and a review of the Visitor Information Centres would form part of the wider review.

Having read the report and heard from the Members present, Cabinet agreed the recommendations subject to the comments made above.

DECISIONS:

- (a) That the report be noted subject to the comments raised; and
- (b) That the review be undertaken, and the outcome of the review and options appraisal be reported back to Cabinet following completion.

REASONS: To develop a strategy to underpin the Council's priority for a Vibrant District Economy, whilst considering the wider local economy, the relationship with key external partners and organisations, the Council's Covid-19 Economic Recovery Plan and the Council's priority for A Vibrant District Economy.

OPTIONS: None appropriate.

55. CARBON ACTION PLAN: THE PATHWAY TO ACHIEVING CARBON NEUTRAL BY 2030

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Climate Change Manager, which sought consideration of the proposed Carbon Action Plan and pathway to achieving the Council's target of being carbon neutral by 2030.

The report outlined how the Council would respond to the climate and ecological emergency as part of a Climate Action work programme for West Oxfordshire and detailed the action taken in response to the original recommendation put forward to Council for a residents' panel, as a mechanism for community engagement and co-ordinating climate action.

The Carbon Action Plan was attached as Annex I to the report and Members were asked to recommend that Council formally approve the document at its meeting on 28 October 2020. If approved, the plan would be published and would be used as a set of guiding principles and priorities for action as a consistent reference point for all projects.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Councillor Harvey, introduced the report and thanked everyone involved in the creation of the plan, including members of the public, members of the Climate Action Working Group, officers and other interested parties. He signposted Members to section 2 of the report which detailed the achievements so far, as well as future projects and their corresponding timelines. Councillor Harvey proposed the recommendations as laid out.

Councillor MacRae expressed his pride and pleasure at seconding the recommendations, which he reminded Members had evolved since the motion put to Council in June 2019. He described his astonishment at the level of progress so far and congratulated those involved.

Councillor Mills queried the penultimate bullet point on page 4 of the plan which he felt could be a little restrictive and felt there were other Oxfordshire wide partnerships that should be mentioned as opportunities for partnership working. Councillor Harvey advised that the Oxfordshire wide references could be added.

Councillor Leffman addressed Members and passed her congratulations to the team for such a comprehensive document. She raised a concern that there appeared to be no mention of the Council's desire to install Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs) in the Green and Action Travel section on page 23 of the plan and hoped this was not a reflection of the work not moving ahead.

In response, Councillor Harvey assured her that the Council was still keen to progress with the work, explained the reasons of the delay to date and agreed that the document should make reference to EVCPs.

Having read the report and having heard from the Members present, the Cabinet agreed the recommendations subject to the comments made above.

DECISIONS: That the contents of the report be noted subject to the comments raised, and that the Council be recommended formally to approve, for publication, the Carbon Action Plan as its pathway to achieving carbon neutral by 2030.

REASONS: To protect the environment whilst supporting the local economy; working with communities to meet the current and future needs and aspirations of residents; and to provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services.

OPTIONS: Cabinet could have chosen not to recommend the Carbon Action Plan however, that would be inconsistent with Council policies and the target of being carbon neutral by 2030.

56. DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which requested consideration of a draft supplementary planning document (SPD) on the topic of developer contributions towards new and enhanced infrastructure to support planned growth in West Oxfordshire.

The report outlined that there were a number of different forms of contributions which could be sought from developers in order to mitigate the impact of proposed development. This included planning obligations (such as Section 106 and Section 278 agreements) and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Changes made to the CIL regulations in 2019 meant that money secured through planning obligations and CIL could be spent on the same item of infrastructure and there was no longer a restriction placed on the number of planning obligations which could be 'pooled' together. West Oxfordshire was in the process of introducing CIL, with consultation having been undertaken over the summer, and it was hoped that it would be in place by spring 2021.

The overarching purpose of the SPD was to provide all parties with greater certainty and transparency about the likely requirements placed on developments in West Oxfordshire so that they could be factored in accordingly.

The draft Developer Contributions SPD was attached at Annex A to the report and was broken down into four parts, explained in section 2 of the report. Members were asked to approve publication of the draft document for a six week period of consultation.

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Councillor Haine, introduced the report and highlighted the table of CIL charges detailed at 2.6 of the report. He also made reference to a WODC guidance document for developers relating to refuse and recycling which he felt would be useful to include in the draft SPD. He proposed the recommendations as laid out.

This was seconded by Councillor Mead who thanked officers for the robust document.

A number of Members indicated that they would like to see additional information in the document and were encouraged to respond to the consultation accordingly.

Councillor Rylett queried how the Infrastructure Funding Statement would be provided to Members when it was released in December and was advised that officers would respond to him outside of the meeting as this was a separate document.

Councillor Rylett also stated that he had hoped the document would include more information as to how the Council would be communicating with Parish and Town Councils and advise how they could be assisted in receiving funding. In response, Councillor Haine felt that the document explained that quite well and assured Members that the Council would continue to liaise with Parish and Town Councils.

Councillor Mills requested that the language used in relation to allotments and other community growing spaces be more consistent and officers confirmed this would be amended.

Having considered the report and having heard from the Members present, the Cabinet agreed the recommendations subject to the comments made above.

DECISION: That the report be noted subject to the comments raised, and that the draft Developer Contributions SPD attached at Annex A to the report be published for a six week period of public consultation.

REASONS: The draft SPD would help to meet a number of priorities as set out in the Council Plan (2020 – 2024) including those relating to meeting identified housing needs, supporting economic growth, stronger local communities and improved health and well-being.

OPTIONS: Members could have chosen not to prepare a supplementary planning document on the topic of developer contributions, not to publish the draft for consultation, or to amend the consultation time frame.

57. COMMISSIONING FRAMEWORK WITH PUBLICA

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Chief Executive, which presented a high level commissioning framework, setting out the relationship, roles and responsibilities with Publica Group (Support) Limited and the performance framework to assure this.

Prior to, and following, the establishment of Publica, various reports had been presented to Members in relation to the structures around, and operational arrangements in respect of, commissioning. It was acknowledged that the situation would evolve over time, and the arrangements would be reviewed and refined in the light of experience.

In addition, the Council's Statutory Officers and Publica's Managing Director and Executive Director (Commissioning) had undertaken further work to produce a high-level Commissioning Framework document and further detail was provided in section 2 of the report.

The updated Commissioning Framework was set out at Annex A to the report and was presented for formal consideration, sign-off and implementation.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Deputy Leader, Councillor Morris, introduced the report and proposed the recommendations. This was seconded by Councillor Harvey.

Councillor Cooper raised a concern regarding a lack of communication from officers regarding the Woodstock Traffic Advisory Committee and no attendance at a recent meeting. Councillor Mills noted the comment and advised that he would address the concerns outside of the meeting as it did not relate directly to the report being considered.

Having read the report and having heard from the Members present, the Cabinet agreed the recommendations.

DECISION: That the Commissioning Framework document be approved and the associated performance management framework be noted.

REASONS: To enable the Council to deliver Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance: Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.

OPTIONS: The commissioning framework built on previous versions and iterations, as identified in the background papers. It would also be reviewed in the light of operational experience and as such, no alternative option was presented.

58. DRAFT COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN FOR WEST OXFORDSHIRE

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Chief Executive, which outlined a draft plan for the Council's approach to recovery from the impacts of Covid-19 in terms of both its leadership role working with West Oxfordshire's communities and the Council's own functioning.

The Council had received a report on Covid-19: West Oxfordshire Response and Recovery at its meeting on 24 June 2020, and had approved the recommendation that the Chief Executive be requested to prepare a Local Recovery Plan for West Oxfordshire for consideration at Cabinet and then Council in October 2020.

It had also been agreed that a Cabinet Advisory Group be established to advise Cabinet on the development of the Recovery Plan, and its insights had informed the development of the Draft Recovery Plan, attached at Annex A to the report.

The report recognised that it was possible that the Council would need to pivot back to organising a response and community support effort should challenges re-emerge as the course of the pandemic developed.

The main points covering collaborative working with partner organisations and the different phases that recovery was envisaged to go through were detailed in section 2 of the report, along with further detail as to how the Recovery Plan was developed.

Members were asked to approve the plan whilst noting the financial implications outlined in further detail at section 3 of the report.

The Leader, Councillor Mills introduced the report and thanked Members of the Cabinet Advisory Group for their valuable contribution.

The recommendations were seconded by Councillor Morris who highlighted the impact on individuals, the economy and the long term health affects being experienced. He also thanked Members for their input and hoped that the links to the voluntary sector would be retained.

Councillor Leffman thanked everyone involved for their input to the Recovery Plan but queried when the decision was taken to use funds from the 2019/2020 surplus. She also raised a concern that support to the Youth sector would not be included and outlined the difficulties that the younger generation had and were due to face, including increased levels of unemployment.

In response, Councillor Morris advised that the figure referred to had been agreed at Council on 29 July 2020. Councillor Mead assured Members that Cabinet had debated long and hard about which areas of work to support and, in relation to youth services, had felt that many

parish and town councils including Witney, Chipping Norton and Carterton were already providing this support.

Councillor Postan queried if the Council was correct to hire more staff to work on Climate Change projects when it was Economic Development that needed the support.

Having read the report and having heard from the Members present, the Cabinet agreed the recommendations.

DECISION: That Council be recommended to approve the draft Recovery Plan attached as Annex I to the report.

REASONS: To enable the Council to effectively respond to the impact of Covid-19 whilst continuing to deliver core services, deliver appropriate community support and move through planning and implementing recovery actions.

OPTIONS: The Council could choose not to prepare a Recovery Plan.

59. INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR THE RECOVERY OF WEST OXFORDSHIRE

The Cabinet received and considered the joint report of the Chief Finance Officer and the Group Finance Director, which set out an investment strategy framework within which the Council could invest in the infrastructure of West Oxfordshire that delivered on the Council priorities whilst also ensuring a return on investment that covered debt financing costs and sought to deliver a return that would help to close the financial gap set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

In April 2019 the Council had approved the new Council Plan which set out its priorities for the district for the period 2020-2024. Within the strategy, it recognised the financial challenges facing the Council and these were set out more clearly in the budget and financial strategy approved by Council in February 2020.

The recent health crisis had drawn these priorities into sharper focus, increasing further the need to deliver on these priorities and exacerbating the financial challenges facing the Council.

The report explained that the landscape around commercial investment by local authorities had started to shift, with a clear 'steer' from government and professional bodies that pure commercial investments driven by yield should be avoided.

The strategy put forward for consideration sought to balance the delivery of local priorities with principles of affordability and value for money. It set out a framework within which the Council could consider investment opportunities that delivered on the agreed corporate priorities and detailed the financial context that the Council found itself in, based upon the known position in February 2020.

The report highlighted the challenges that the Council was facing to its financial sustainability, brought about by a reduction in Government Funding, with further changes planned via the Fairer Funding Formula in the future. Further detail on the financial implications and the risks associated with adopting the strategy were provided in sections 3 and 5 of the report.

Members were asked to recommend that Council adopt the draft strategy, attached as annex A to the report, and authorise the Chief Executive to establish appropriate governance structures.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Deputy Leader, Councillor Morris, introduced the report and explained that this was an annual refresh which tried to ensure a balanced budget.

He proposed the recommendations as detailed in the report and this was seconded by Councillor Mead.

Councillor Mills noted that the strategy referred to him as Leader, and queried if this could be updated to make reference to the new Leader who would be appointed at the next Council meeting, following his resignation.

Having read the report and having heard from the Members present, the Cabinet agreed the recommendations.

DECISIONS:

- (a) That Council be recommended to adopt the draft strategy attached as Annex A to the report; and
- (b) That the Chief Executive be authorised to establish appropriate governance structures to support the strategy.

REASONS: To enable the Council to continue to deliver excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.

OPTIONS: The Council could have chosen not to support the strategy and seek to reduce the funding gap it faced through other means such as raising Council Tax or cutting service provision.

Councillor Mills closed the meeting and reminded Members that this was his last meeting as Leader. He thanked everyone for their support and input and was wished the best of luck by his fellow Members.

The meeting closed at 2.58 pm

Leader of the Council



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	Council – Wednesday 28 October 2020
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 10
Subject	Review of Political Balance
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor James Mills, Leader of the Council Email: james.mills@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Keith Butler, Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To review the allocation of seats on the Committees of the Council to the political groups and non-aligned members, as a consequence of changes in the membership of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups and the reduction in the number of non-aligned members from two to one.
Annexes	None
Recommendations	<p>(a) That the seats on the Committees of the Council be allocated to the political groups and the non-aligned member in accordance with the rules relating to political balance, and as indicated in the Table under paragraph 2.2, subject to the Council deciding (i) on which of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees the Conservative Group will have eight rather than nine seats; and (ii) on which of the two Overview and Scrutiny Committees where the Conservative Group has nine seats the Labour and Co-operative Party Group will have three seats and the Liberal Democrats two, and vice versa;</p> <p>(b) That as a consequence of the revised political balance figures, Councillor Richard Langridge be appointed to serve on the Development Control Committee; and</p> <p>(c) That it be noted that other changes in the membership of any Committees consequent to the above decisions shall be made in accordance with the wishes of the political groups, and notified to all members of the Council.</p>
Corporate priorities	N/A
Key Decision	N/A
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. In August 2020 Councillor Jake Acock ceased to be a member of the Liberal Democrat political group on the Council, and (i) notification was received that Councillor Acock was to be a member of the Conservative Group; and (ii) a request made for a consequential review of the allocation of the seats on Committees to the political groups and non-aligned members.
- 1.2. Subsequently, notification was received that Councillor Marilyn Davies was to be a member of the Conservative Group, having previously sat as an Independent.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. At the annual meeting of the Council in May 2019 the seats on the Council's Committees were allocated to the respective political groups and the non-aligned members in accordance with the statutory requirements, and as shown in the table below. It should be noted that this table takes account of adjustments which were required at that time, to ensure that the overall allocation to each political group was arithmetically correct:

Committee	Seats	Con	Lib Dem	Lab & Co-op	Ind	(Total)
(Total seats entitlement)	94	54	19	17	4	94
Audit & General Purposes	17	10	3	3	1	17
Development Control	24	14	5	4	1	24
Urgency	11	6	2	2	1	11
Econ & Soc O & S	14	8	3	3	0	14
Environment O & S	14	8	3	3	0	14
Fin & Man O & S	14	8	3	2	1	14
Resulting Total	94	54	19	17	4	94

- 2.2. Applying the revised figures of 30 Conservative Group members, nine Liberal Democrat Group members, nine Labour and Co-operative Party Group members and one Independent (non-aligned) member leads to the following arithmetical position, under which each of the three political groups is allocated one seat more than its overall entitlement:

Committee	Seats	Con	Lib Dem	Lab & Co-op	Ind	(Total)
(Total seats entitlement)	94	58	17	17	2	94
Audit & General Purposes	17	10	3	3	1	17
Development Control	24	15	4	4	1	25
Urgency	11	7	2	2	0	11
Econ & Soc O & S	14	9	3	3	0	15
Environment O & S	14	9	3	3	0	15
Fin & Man O & S	14	9	3	3	0	15
Resulting Total	94	59	18	18	2	97
Required Adjustment		-1	-1	-1		(-3)

- 2.3. The calculations shown in the table under paragraph 2.2 above reflect the fact that with two political groups each with nine members it is not possible to distinguish between them, and show that each of the three political groups needs to have one seat fewer or one of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees, i.e.
- The Conservative Group to have eight seats instead of nine on one of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees
 - The Labour and Co-operative and Liberal Democrat Groups each to have two seats rather than three on (a different) one of the remaining two Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- 2.4. It is for Council to decide the allocation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee seats to implement the requirements set out above.
- 2.5. The changes in allocations will lead to a number of adjustments in Committee Memberships, which will be implemented in accordance with the wishes of each of the political groups, as notified by their Leaders, and these will be notified to all members of the Council as soon as possible. The changes can be summarised as follows:
- **Development Control Committee:** The Conservative Group to have 15 seats instead of the current 14; the Liberal Democrat Group to have one seat fewer; and Councillor Richard Langridge to be appointed to serve on the Committee as the remaining independent/non-aligned Councillor. Where a Councillor is appointed to serve on this Committee he or she will automatically sit on either the Lowlands or Uplands Area Planning Sub-Committee, in accordance with the ward which they represent
 - **Urgency Committee:** The Conservative Group to have seven seats instead of the current six; no seat for an independent/non-aligned member (which doesn't require a decision as Councillor Marilyn Davies is automatically removed from the Committee)
 - **Overview and Scrutiny Committees:** As explained above – the Conservative Group to have an extra seat on two of the Committees; and the remaining political groups each to have three seats on two of the Committees and two on the other. Councillor Richard Langridge will no longer have a seat on the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a consequence of the adjustments in the balance of the Committee
- 2.6. Consultation is taking place with the political groups and it is hoped that their respective wishes will be reported to the Council at the meeting. It is also relevant to note that should the Leader of the Council elected earlier at this meeting make changes to the membership of Cabinet, there may be other consequential changes to Committee memberships.
- 2.7. It is important to note that whilst the political groups may express a preference as to where the precise adjustments are made, the decisions are for Council to make provided, of course, that its decisions reflect the statutory requirements referred to above.
- 2.8. Notwithstanding the fact that the rules of political balance do not apply to the Licensing Committee, the Council has previously decided that the best way to allocate the seats was in accordance with the principles of political balance. Currently, the Committee comprises seven Conservative councillors, with two from each of the political groups, and those allocations remain proportionate.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1. This report has no financial implications.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1. The report takes account of the statutory requirements as contained in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Committees and Political Groups Regulations 1990.

5. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

5.1. Subject to any advice as to the statutory position which may be required to be given at the meeting, council is able to vary the allocations of seats to the political groups and the Independent members.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1. None



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	Council – Wednesday 28 October 2020
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 11
Subject	Review of Video Conference Meetings
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr James Mills, Leader of the Council Email: james.mills@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Keith Butler Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To review the arrangements for virtual meetings, i.e. Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings held via video conferencing.
Annexes	Annex 1 – Virtual Meetings Procedure Rules (with proposed amendments) Annex 2 – Councillor Protocol for Virtual Meetings
Recommendations	(a) That the report be noted; (b) That the Virtual Meetings Procedure Rules approved by Council on 13 May 2020 be amended in accordance with Annex 1 ; (c) That no changes be made to the Councillor Protocol for Virtual Meetings in Annex 2 ; and (d) That the Council considers whether it wishes to specify a retention period for the recordings of meetings held via video conferencing.
Corporate priorities	N/A
Key Decision	N/A
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Coronavirus Act 2020, and Regulations made under that Act, make provisions as to the holding of meetings both in terms of when they are required and the ability, in the period to May 2021, for meetings to be held “remotely”, i.e. without the previous legislative requirement for members of a local authority to be present at the same place to conduct business.
- 1.2. At its meeting held on 13 May 2020, the Council approved Virtual Meetings Procedure Rules, and a Councillor Protocol for Virtual Meetings. The Procedure Rules included a requirement for them to be reviewed no later than this meeting.
- 1.3. This report also asks Council whether it wishes to specify the period during which a recording of a meeting shall remain available online, a point which was not addressed in May.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. The Virtual Meetings Procedure Rules approved on 13 May are included at [Annex 1](#) (page 4), with the proposed changes indicated via red and ~~struck-through~~ text. Aside from some small tidying up of wording, the main elements are:
 - (a) Making it clear that the possibility of holding physical meetings (as referenced in paragraph [1.4](#) of Annex 1) includes hybrid meetings, i.e. those where some attendees are physically present in a meeting room and others are attending electronically;
 - (b) enabling the public to join meetings via video conferencing in order to address the meeting, should they wish (see paragraphs [7.2](#) and [7.3](#));
 - (c) removing the provision prohibiting the giving of notice of a motion to be proposed at a meeting of the Council; and
 - (d) making provision for a further review no later than May 2021, which would of course be subject to the holding of virtual meetings continuing to be permissible at that time.
- 2.2. The recommended changes are hopefully self-explanatory, but it is appropriate to highlight the proposal that members of the public should be able directly to make a submission to a meeting should they wish to do so and subject to the requirements for notice etc. The key points with this are (i) the proposal that a meeting would proceed notwithstanding any technical or other reasons preventing the member of the public from making their statement, the “safety net” being that they will have been asked to supply the text of their submission, which would be read out by staff if necessary; and (ii) should unanticipated problems arise from taking this approach, the situation would subsequently be reviewed using the power in [paragraph 12.1](#) of Annex 1.
- 2.3. Should the Council approve this suggestion, it is intended that it will apply with effect from the meeting of the Lowlands Area Planning Sub-Committee on 9 November.
- 2.4. The Councillor Protocol for Virtual Meetings approved by the Council on 13 May has again been included, at [Annex 2](#). No changes are proposed.
- 2.5. The situation remains that the holding of meetings via video conferencing is permissible only for the period ending 5 May 2021. Should the government decide to extend the provisions beyond then, either because of the continuing implications of the pandemic and/or to enable local authorities to take decisions as to how they wish to hold meetings in the future, then the Council will need to give further consideration to that in due course.

3. RETENTION PERIOD

- 3.1. As mentioned in paragraph 1.3 above, the report considered by Council in May did not make reference to any retention period during which recordings of meetings would continue to be available online. Accordingly, the recordings of all meetings from 13 May 2020 currently remain available.
- 3.2. Should the Council wish to determine a period, the most obvious options are:
- A period in the range of one month to one year from the date of the meeting
 - Until such time as the minutes of the meeting in question have been either approved or published in draft form – the latter being a shorter (and sometimes very short) period
- 3.3. If the Council does take a decision which leads to some or all of the recordings since 13 May being removed, it is nonetheless the case that one recording of a Lowlands Area Planning Sub-Committee will be retained, until such time as an appeal against a refusal has been determined. This is because the applicant sought an assurance that it would remain in place.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. This report has no financial implications.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The recommendations in the report and the contents of the annexes are compliant with the statutory provisions in place further to the Coronavirus Act 2020 and The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panels Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

6. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

- 6.1. Subject to any advice as to the statutory position which may be required to be given at the meeting, council is able to vary the recommendations in this report as it sees fit.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1. None

Virtual Meetings Procedure Rules

These rules set out temporary arrangements for the effective management of virtual meetings. These arrangements override any equivalent provision in the Council's procedures and in the event of any conflict these temporary arrangements should take precedence. These rules have been made by the Council in order to implement The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panels Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (the 'Regulations') and will remain in force until 5 May 2021; or until such time as the those Regulations are repealed.

1. General

- 1.1 A virtual meeting is a meeting of the Council, Cabinet, Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council held by remote access and where virtual attendance by Members of the Council is by way of Cisco Webex or such other platform as provided. Councillors in virtual attendance will not be able to sign an attendance list, but a list will be kept and completed for each meeting by Democratic Services.
- 1.2 Attendance of the public at a virtual meeting which is open to the public will be via the streaming of the meeting on the Council's facebook page, or such other platform as may be provided, **with the exception that members of the public who have registered to speak at a meeting will be sent an invitation to join the virtual meeting,**
- 1.3 The Council, Cabinet and all Committees of the Council may hold all such virtual meetings that are deemed necessary and where such meetings are held these rules of procedure shall apply.
- 1.4 Should the regulations allowing virtual meetings remain in force throughout the period to May 2021, the Chief Executive will nonetheless be able to call physical meetings should social distancing and other considerations allow, subject to prior consultation with the Leader of the Council and, for Council meetings, the Chairman of Council. Subject to this, all meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committee for the period to May 2021 shall take place virtually. **The provision for physical meetings shall include hybrid meetings where permissible/technically feasible.**

2. Annual Meeting of the Council

- 2.1 The Annual Meeting of the Council will not be held on 20 May 2020 as previously scheduled, and the appointments to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council and appointments to other Committees and Sub-Committees will remain the same until the Annual meeting is held or until such time as the Council determines.

3. Notice of and Summons to the Meeting

- 3.1 The Chief Executive will give notice to the public of the time and place of any meeting by publication of the details on the website.
- 3.2 At least five clear working days before a meeting, the Chief Executive will send a summons signed by him or her to every member of the Council, Cabinet, Committee or Sub-Committee. The summons will give the date and time of each meeting and specify the business to be transacted and will be accompanied by the reports which are available. The summons and papers may be sent by post or by electronic means, as desired by any councillor.
- 3.3 The business for any virtual meeting will be as determined by the Chief Executive in consultation with the applicable Chairman.

4. Availability of Documents for the Public

- 4.1 Agendas and reports and associated papers which are available for the public will be published on the Council's website at least five clear working days before the meeting (www.westoxon.gov.uk/meetings)
- 4.2 When the Council offices at Woodgreen, Witney, are again open to the public, agendas and reports and associated papers will also be available for inspection at those offices.

5. Moving or cancelling virtual meetings

- 5.1 The Chief Executive may, following consultation with the Chairman of the relevant meeting move or cancel a virtual meeting without notice.

6. Access to Virtual Meetings

- 6.1 Members of the public and the press will be able to access virtual meetings via streaming on the Council's facebook page or such other platform provided.
- 6.2 Members of the public and the press will not be able to access those parts of any meeting where the meeting has resolved to exclude them by reason of the consideration of exempt or confidential information.

7. Petitions and Public Participation

- 7.1 A person wishing to present a petition or address a meeting may make their request as they do under the Council's existing rules, whether in relation to Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings, or under the separate scheme which relates to meetings of the Area Planning Sub-Committees.
- 7.2 Where a request has been made and accepted, the requester may **either choose to be sent an invitation to join the meeting via video conferencing to make his/her submission at the appropriate time; or may** supply his or her submission by the deadline for making the request, **for that submission to be read to the meeting by an officer in attendance. Submissions may be no more than three minutes/450 words for meetings of the Area Planning Sub-Committees; and no more than five minutes /750 words for other meetings to which the scheme applies.**
- 7.3 **A member of the public who wishes to make their own submission will be requested to supply the text of that submission, so that it may be read at the meeting in the event of technical or other reasons preventing them from joining the video conference. Should they decline to do so, and subsequently not join the meeting or manage to make their statement, the meeting will proceed to deal with the business.**
- 7.4 Necessarily, different arrangements will have to apply to any meeting of a Licensing Panel which may take place. Should such a meeting be held during the restricted period, the arrangements for interested parties to participate will be made at that time, and advised accordingly, under the authority granted by the Council on 13 May 2020.

~~**8. Motions**~~

- ~~8.1 Where Full Council meetings are held virtually the provision for members to submit a Motion will be disapplied.~~

9. Voting

- 9.1 At a meeting using virtual meeting technology any matter will be decided by a majority of those in attendance, physically or virtually by an electronic vote which shall record each member and how they have voted. Should this option not be available for

technical or other reasons, voting will be **by consent or** by roll-call, **as deemed appropriate by the Chairman.**

- 9.2 If, prior to a vote on any matter is taken, a request is made by any member and supported by three others, the minutes of the meeting shall record how each member present cast his or her vote. Such will be established by reference to the electronic vote on the matter, or via roll-call.
- 9.3 The Chairman or the host will ~~record the outcome of votes and~~ announce the **outcome of each** decision to the meeting.

10. Exclusion of the Public

- 10.1 Where a meeting resolves to exclude the public during the consideration of exempt or confidential information, the live streaming of the meeting will cease. Should the meeting be re-opened to the public for further business, the live streaming will recommence.
- 10.2 Where the public has been excluded, each Member in remote attendance must ensure that there are no other persons present who are not entitled to be (either hearing or seeing) consideration of such items, and/or recording the proceedings. Any Member in remote attendance who failed to disclose that there were in fact persons present who were not so entitled would be likely to be in breach of the Council's Code of Conduct.

11. Quorum and Technical Failings

- 11.1 The quorum for any **virtual** meeting shall not be affected by these rules.
- 11.2 In the event of any apparent failure of the technology being used for a virtual meeting, the Chairman shall determine whether the meeting is still quorate. Where a meeting remains quorate, the business of the meeting will continue. If it is not quorate the Chairman will adjourn the meeting for such period as deemed necessary to seek to resolve the technical issues.
- 11.3 Should any aspect of a councillor's remote attendance/participation fail, the Chairman may call a short adjournment to determine whether a connection can quickly be re-established. If the connection is not restored, the meeting should continue to deal with the business, providing the meeting remains quorate.
- 11.4 Where a meeting is open to the public, and the live streaming of the meeting fails, the meeting shall either be adjourned until such time as it is re-established, or closed and the remaining business transacted at a later date.

12. Review

- 12.1 These rules will be kept under regular review by the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, who shall be authorised to update them if such is deemed to be immediately necessary.
- 12.2 These rules will, in any event, be reviewed by the Council no later than **at its annual meeting in May 2021, should the holding of virtual meetings remain permissible at that time.** ~~the end of October 2020.~~

Councillor Protocol for Virtual Meetings

General points about councillors joining and participating in a virtual meeting

- Councillors are encouraged to join the meeting well in advance (i.e. at least fifteen minutes before the scheduled start time) in order to avoid disrupting the meeting and to try to ensure any technical issues can be resolved.
- Where using video-enabled equipment, councillors should leave their cameras on throughout the meeting as far as practicable.
- Councillors should try to go to a quiet location for the Meeting.
- **In all cases councillors will need to unmute their microphone before speaking and mute when they have finished speaking.**
- The Chairman will remind councillors to mute their microphones when not speaking. This is done in order to reduce feedback and background noise.
- Councillors are reminded that virtual meetings are generally public meetings and members of the public will be able to view them and Councillors should be mindful of this in their conduct and dress code.
- Non-verbal communication such as body language may be picked up and broadcast even when not speaking.
- Please be patient with one another and the Chairman of the meeting.

Protocol for councillors speaking at meetings

- Where a councillor is in attendance at a virtual meeting online, he/she will indicate his/her wish to speak via the host, by using the chat facility. The chat facility should not be used for any other purpose
- Notwithstanding this, in the case of Council and Cabinet meetings, councillors who wish to speak on a particular item are encouraged to indicate their wish to speak to Democratic Services in advance of the meeting. The Chairman will follow the relevant rules when determining who may speak, as well as the order and priority of speakers. The Chairman's ruling in this regard shall be final.
- **At the end of a discussion/debate, when all speakers have been heard, the Chairman will ask those present if anyone else wishes to speak.**
- Interruptions, such as 'point of order' should be kept to an absolute minimum and raised at the end of a speech not during.
- When referring to reports or making specific comments, councillors should refer to the report and page number so that all members and where applicable the public have a clear understanding of what is being discussed at all times.

Dealing with Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)

- Where a member has disclosed a DPI or other declaration in an agenda item that requires them to be absent from the meeting for that item, the host will remove the member from the meeting for the duration of the item
- If the member has joined the meeting by telephone rather than online he or she must end the call and await email confirmation that the item has been concluded before re-joining it. Failure to do so would be a breach of the council's code of conduct and in the case of a DPI a criminal offence.

Interpretation of standing orders

- Where the Chairman is required to interpret the Council's existing standing orders in light of the requirements of virtual participation, he or she shall take advice from the Monitoring Officer or, at a Cabinet, Committee or Sub-Committee meeting, the Democratic Services Officer prior to making a ruling. The Chairman's decision in all cases shall be final.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

West Oxfordshire District Council

Name and date of Committee	Council: Wednesday 28 October 2020
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 12
Subject	Covid-19: West Oxfordshire Recovery Plan
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr James Mills, Leader; Email: James.Mills@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Tel: 01993 861613; Email: Giles.Hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To outline a draft plan for the Council's approach to recovery from the impacts of Covid-19 in terms of both its leadership role working with West Oxfordshire's communities and the Council's own functioning.
Annex	Annex A : Draft Recovery Plan
Recommendation	That Council considers whatever recommendation is made by Cabinet at its meeting on 21 October 2020 in relation to the draft Recovery Plan attached as Annex A to this report.
Corporate priorities	All. The Draft Recovery Plan complements the Council's key corporate strategy document (The Council Plan 2020-2024).
Key Decision	N/A
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	Internal consultation with officers, Cabinet and with a wider group of Councillors through a Cabinet Advisory Group convened specifically to provide insight and inform the recovery effort. A wider Councillor session was also held to outline the formative approach towards a Recovery Plan.

I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Council received a report on Covid-19: West Oxfordshire Response and Recovery at its meeting on 24 June 2020. The Council meeting approved the recommendation that the Chief Executive be requested to prepare a Local Recovery Plan for West Oxfordshire for consideration at Cabinet and then Council in October 2020. This agenda paper is now brought forward in fulfilment of that recommendation.
- 1.2. The Council's meeting in June 2020 also approved the recommendation that a Cabinet Advisory Group be established to advise Cabinet on the development of the Recovery Plan, on the basis outlined in the supporting paper on the meeting agenda. Following the approval of this recommendation, a Cabinet Advisory Group has been convened and its insights have informed the development of the Draft Recovery Plan at [Annex A](#).
- 1.3. The report to Council in June 2020 outlined that Covid-19 has caused profound changes to every part of life in the UK. Many of these changes and impacts still prevail and the pandemic is and will continue to have a prolonged effect.
- 1.4. The June 2020 report outlined our response in terms of maintaining essential Council services; working with voluntary and community groups to help mobilise support for local people (in particular – shielded and vulnerable residents); and ensuring a flow of financial support through business grants paid to businesses in the District. It remains possible that the Council will need to pivot back to organising a response and community support effort should challenges re-emerge as the course of the pandemic develops.
- 1.5. As time advances, the challenges (and opportunities) presented due to Covid-19 will require a planned but dynamic and flexible response. The Council will need to balance maintaining core services, whilst delivering appropriate community support and moving through planning and implementing recovery actions.
- 1.6. This report and the draft Recovery Plan included in [Annex A](#) are to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 21 October 2020, and the recommendations arising from that meeting will be included in the associated draft minutes, which are expected to be published on Friday 23 October. It should in any event be noted that the shaded text on [page 11](#) differs from that which was included in the document circulated for the Cabinet meeting. This is not a material change – the text has been slightly reworked to make clear the data source, and that it relates to consumer-spending emissions only / Lloyds customers.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. Recovery from Covid-19 will take time and will be complex – reflecting the multi-faceted nature of the impacts created by the crisis. The purpose of the Draft Local Recovery Plan is to provide a suitable framework to help guide our recovery effort. The Draft Local Recovery Plan is brought forward now, at this early stage, so that the steer can inform the preparation of the budget for 2021/22 and guide our recovery activity.
- 2.2. A key part of our future work will be collaborative efforts with partner organisations and the Council will need to both influence others and adapt its own approach as part of joint initiatives to achieve useful outcomes. The Local Recovery Plan is not intended to be a static document that is fixed as a statement at a given date. Rather, it is set out as a framework that will be further developed with appropriate partner inputs, insights from supporting analysis and further consultation with Councillors on given work themes.
- 2.3. There will be different phases in the recovery activity. The phases recognise that initial activity will lead into longer term actions to ensure a proper recovery. The June 2020 Council report envisaged a preliminary re-start phase (0-6 months), succeeded by a recover phase (6-18 months) and a renew phase (18-36 months+).

- 2.4. The scope for advancing through the recovery stages will hinge to some degree on the extent to which a significant second wave of the pandemic occurs and the community/ economic impacts that this delivers. It is possible that we will be cast back into a community response and support mode and our scope to facilitate recovery actions may be circumscribed, particularly given the fact that staff capacity is finite.
- 2.5. A further reason for a phased approach to recovery is to enable West Oxfordshire's recovery plans to link with those of our partners. Our Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) and other Oxfordshire partners will be basing their own recovery plans on the phased approach outlined above and is important to link into this wider work.

Developing the Draft Recovery Plan

- 2.6. The Council adopted a statement of its corporate policy and priorities (the Council Plan 2020-2024) at the start of the year (Council meeting: 22 January 2020). The approach established in the Council Plan has set a context for the development of thinking relating to the Recovery Plan. The agreed policy in the Council Plan has been used as a backdrop against which areas of work have been further considered in terms of whether amended or supplementary actions are now required in the light of the pandemic.
- 2.7. Following the Council's meeting in June 2020, a Cabinet Advisory Group (CAG) was convened to help guide the development of a Draft Recovery Plan. The CAG has met several times and it has considered policy areas that relate back to Council priorities. The workshop sessions have focused on: climate change; economy; community; and Council/ Finances. The CAG workshops and Councillors' expression of policy concerns have informed the Draft Recovery Plan presented now.
- 2.8. In addition to the CAG sessions, a further Councillor meeting was convened on 24 September (open to all Councillors) to share the emerging recovery proposals with a broader group and to further enhance engagement around the forming work programme. The outcomes of this further session in terms of work priorities have then been reviewed in a final CAG session held on 8 October.
- 2.9. The purpose of the lead officers' joint working with the CAG has been to advise on the development of the recovery work strands and to help inform our approach. The recovery proposal is now brought forward for Cabinet's recommendation in terms of a Draft Recovery Plan. It is intended that the Recovery Plan provides a suitable framework to help guide a recovery effort that is consistent with the priorities established in the Council Plan.
- 2.10. The work to develop the Draft Recovery Plan has been informed through a cross section of lead officers from various functions and a focus has been given to identifying the resources required to advance work on relevant themes. Councillors and officers are keenly aware of the scope for collaboration with partners where this brings advantages (economies, learning and joint action etc.) but are also conscious of the need to focus effort and resource on achieving desired outcomes for West Oxfordshire's communities. The resources to be deployed to deliver the Recovery Plan are in the main additional staffing which is required to give the capacity that is necessary.
- 2.11. The programme of work outlined can be divided into two parts. Firstly, work that has been given a recommended priority ranking through Councillor engagement and that, once approved, can be commenced as funding can be made available. Secondly, areas of ambition where initiatives are on hold and further steps will be taken if external finance can be assembled or future opportunities arise and the effort can be extended at a later date.
- 2.12. The Plan extends work already underway in addressing Council Plan priorities and it complements related strategies. Examples of related strategy work are included elsewhere on this agenda (Investment Strategy; and Carbon Action Plan).

- 2.13. It is important to recognise that the pandemic is an unfolding situation and the challenges presented are changing through time. In parallel with this, the Council's partners (including the statutory/ voluntary sector bodies and the Local Enterprise Partnership) are forming appropriate recovery work and the District Council will need to adapt and flex in various collaborative joint efforts. The Draft Recovery Plan on this agenda item sets a framework – it will need to be dynamic and develop so that it remains fit for purpose.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. The proposed action set out in the Draft Recovery Plan has been informed by the Council's budget situation. A focus has been devoted to prioritising the range of proposed work so that the cost of this (£643,000) can, subject to approval, be financed by £550,000 set aside for this purpose in earmarked reserves from the 2019/20 outturn with the remaining £93,000 taken from General Reserves. The detail of the proposed costs is shown in the table below.

Funding made available for Recovery Plan:	
Market Towns Officer (2 yrs)	£90k
Network of Wellbeing Hubs (project)	£50k
Economic Development Assistant (2 yrs)	£63k
Specialist Business Case Developer (2 yrs)	£90k
Climate Change Manager extension (2 yrs)	£99k
Carbon Action Plan Officer (2 yrs)	£73k
Biodiversity/Countryside Land Mgmt. Officer (2 yrs)	£81k
Development Mgmt. Sustainability Specialist (1 yr)	£52k
Active Lives Role (1 yr)	£45k
TOTAL	£643K
Initiatives to be pursued when external finance can be assembled, or future opportunities arise:	
Dedicated youth support analysis (2 yrs)	£39k
Organisational Development for local groups (1 yr)	£10k
Economic Development Projects fund (2 yrs)	£60k
Homelessness Prevention Role (2 yrs)	£64k
Community Builder pilots (2 yrs)	£34k
Grants Review Cross Departmental Role (2 yrs)	£74k

- 3.2. It is recognised that the breadth of the challenge facing the Council and the District's communities will necessitate leveraging resources from external finance and investment. A key element of the work programme set out here is designed to build the capacity of the

Council and its partners to access external finance and maximise the resources that can be brought into play for the benefit of the local area.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1. None at this stage.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1. The purpose of the Recovery Plan is to direct effort towards priority issues and this should help ensure that resources are focused on effective recovery action. Any significant actions will be subject to the Council's corporate risk management approach and will, therefore, be tested in terms of risk likelihood, potential impact and the identification of appropriate risk mitigation.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

6.1. The pursuit of a Recovery Plan as outlined should have a positive effect in terms of its equalities impact. The Recovery Plan is intended to help secure positive outcomes that help further the policy priorities set out in the Council Plan. The Council Plan itself was developed from a significant evidence base that informed the focus on policy themes and helped ensure an inclusive corporate plan. It will be appropriate to undertake relevant further assessment of equalities issues where new strategic action is formed.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

7.1. The programme of work designed to address the climate change agenda forms part of the Council Plan and the Draft Recovery Plan. This work seeks to protect and enhance the environment by taking local action on climate change and biodiversity.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

8.1. The Council could choose not to prepare a Recovery Plan.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1. None.

West Oxfordshire Covid-19 Recovery Plan (October 2020)

In June 2020 Council moved to prepare a Local Recovery Plan to complement the delivery of the Council Plan 2020-24 through the Covid-19 Recovery Themes of Economy, Community, Climate and Council, Service Delivery and Finance. These are closely aligned with the six Council Plan priorities to ensure that actions prioritised as part of the Covid recovery will also positively contribute to the achievement of the Council Plan (see [Table I](#)).

The 'live' status of the Recovery Plan reflects the agile approach required of the Council to be able to target its efforts and resources to achieve the Council Plan Vision to be 'fit for the future' through being proactive at addressing new challenges as the Council and District recovers from the impacts of the pandemic. It enables us to be flexible to take up opportunities to work with other partners as they arise and not be constrained by delivering a set of rigid prescriptive targets. Our recovery work will need to flex and adapt as the activity of our partner organisations (Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and others) forms and we shape what our role is in this collaborative effort. The task of recovering from the pandemic will be iterative and a 'dynamic' Covid-19 Recovery Plan will assist the Council to focus resources and effort to those opportunities as they arise over the years it will take to support a district wide recovery from the pandemic.

The Recovery Plan sets out how the Council will invest resources in achieving the aims identified for each Covid-19 Recovery Theme. The programme of work outlined across the themes can be divided into two parts. Firstly, work that has been given "recommended priority" ranking through Councillor engagement will be commenced at this early phase of the recovery as funding is in place. Secondly, "areas of ambition" where initiatives will be progressed when further finance can be assembled or alternative avenues for resourcing these initiatives are secured. See [Appendix I](#) – Covid-19 Recovery Delivery and Project Investment Schedule.

Table I – Covid-19 Recovery Theme	Related Council Plan Priorities
<i>Economy</i>	<i><u>A Vibrant District Economy</u></i> - Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy.
<i>Community</i>	<i><u>Healthy Towns and Villages</u></i> - Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better well being for everyone. <i><u>Strong Local Communities</u></i> - Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities. <i><u>Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population</u></i> - Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for the wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire.
<i>Climate</i>	<i><u>Climate Action</u></i> - Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity.
<i>Council, Service Delivery and Finance</i>	<i><u>Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance</u></i> - Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.

Covid-19 Recovery Theme - Economy

Related Council Plan Priority: *A Vibrant District Economy: 'Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy'*.

West Oxfordshire benefits from a diverse economy that is represented by many sectors ranging from high tech and advanced manufacturing to retail and the visitor economy. The COVID-19 lockdown has impacted different sectors to varying degrees and in different ways. The Council acknowledges that the economic recovery from the pandemic will require an equally varied and nuanced response to reflect this diversity. The Council also recognises the challenges ahead in terms of recovery to pre-Covid turnover; how the economy will fare once Government support for businesses and individuals ceases and the impact of the uncertainty surrounding the unknown outcome of the Government's Brexit negotiations with the EU on a trade deal. Equally, the Council is acutely aware of the impact this economic turmoil has had on rising unemployment rates and the impact that this has on individuals, their families and the communities they are part of.

In response to the challenges outlined above, the Council is an active partner of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership who is developing a County wide Economic Recovery Plan. Supplementary to this involvement, the Council identifies the following Economic Covid-19 Recovery Aims which will guide its proactive response to the specific economic recovery needs for the District.

Economy – Covid-19 Recovery Aims:

The following are proposed as high-level economic objectives for the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis:

- Recover to better than before.
- Re-imagine our town centres and high streets so they remain vibrant service centres for the local population and visitors alike.
- Ensure there is a robust support structure for all stages of business but particularly for those people setting up a business or going self-employed for the first time.
- Ensure training is available to re-skill those who have lost jobs and to help growing businesses recruit local people.
- Ensure that the district plays a full part in Oxfordshire's 'Innovation Ecosystem' as part of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy, and as part of the wider Oxford to Cambridge Arc.
- Be clear about the Council's role in different parts of the economic recovery process, whether this be to lead, partner with others or influence initiatives.
- Ensure that adequate resources are available so the Council can achieve what it sets out to do.
- Ensure that every decision and initiative takes into account and tries to minimise its environmental impact.

Economy – Covid-19 Recovery Delivery and Investment

The Council is committed to ensuring that West Oxfordshire's economy recovers from the pandemic and associated lockdowns. The Council aspires to an economy which is stronger than it was before the pandemic, ensuring relevant initiatives contribute to the delivery of the Council's climate ambitions and recognises that to do this investment is needed to bring this economic progress to fruition.

The Council commits to ongoing investment in the coordination, facilitation and delivery of action in the following key priority areas:

- To support the recovery and longer term vitality and viability of the market towns – including, for example, the development of individual plans for each town to protect and enhance their commercial hearts; support for the establishment of town recovery groups; securing external investment into the District; maximising the commercial benefit of the Council's own property and supporting town centre businesses.
- To ensure that business support is available to all stages and sectors of business, delivered either directly or in partnership with other organisations, both local and national, and including Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.
- To ensure that the right skills training opportunities are available locally to match local people to jobs and to support those organisations, including Job Centre Plus, Abingdon and Witney College and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership skills team that are delivering this.
- To support the recovery of the visitor economy – including, for example, working with the sector to repurpose it for the domestic market and driving the projects which will have a significant impact on the visitor economy including The Mullin Automotive Park and redevelopment of Eynsham Hall.
- To ensure that the Council plays its part in delivering the ambition of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy to be a 'top 3 global innovation ecosystem' by 2040. This will require the Council to actively build on its strengths and pursue local economic development opportunities including the Garden Village Science Park and a potential Carterton Technology Hub.

Covid-19 Recovery Theme - Communities

Related Council Plan Priorities:

Healthy Towns and Villages: 'Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone.'

Strong Local Communities: 'Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities'.

Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population: 'Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for the wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire.'

The Covid-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on our District at the individual, household and community level. The ongoing and unpredictable nature of this public health emergency and its impacts on the health and wellbeing of communities present challenges for recovery. The emergency has seen an inspiring grassroots level response which together with the Council's own Response Hub supported many individuals and households through this extremely difficult period. There are opportunities to build on these collaborative efforts with the Voluntary and Community Sector.

The health and wellbeing of our communities are impacted by a wide range of factors including housing, environment, employment and education and the work of the Council touches many of these determinants. This is reflected in the themes of this Recovery Plan and the following set of community recovery aims which will steer its efforts towards improved health and wellbeing locally as we recover from Covid-19.

Communities – Covid-19 Recovery Aims

- Build on increased opportunities to listen to, involve and engage residents in the Council's work.
- Prevent decline and reduce isolation by connecting people to places and each other.
- Establish strengths based approaches as a mode of operation across Council services.
- Work locally to find sustainable ways to retain and further develop new neighbourhood responses.
- Improve the way we invest our resources to make the biggest difference to areas and people in greatest need.
- Work hard to increase external investment into the district and increase capacity.
- Work to develop a more connected system so that people have better physical access to services and awareness of them.
- Co-produce and collaborate with the Voluntary and Community sector (VCS) locally more effectively to improve services and better manage resources.
- Improve local visibility and achieve greater contact with communities.
- Innovate and use existing resources and influence to shape places to best meet the needs of the community.

Communities – Covid-19 Recovery Delivery and Investment

The Council is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of the communities it serves and pledges to invest in taking an active role in this effort. An initial phase of investment will bring forward two strands of activity:

- Explore the scope for the development of a network of Wellbeing hubs across the District. It is hoped that this could result in a range of providers, including other Councils, working together to provide a mix of services including advice, housing and welfare support in a variety of formats and locations across the district.
- Focus on helping people, especially those who are alone or who have long term health conditions, to improve levels of physical activity and build up their confidence. Movement amongst these individuals has been particularly restricted by the pandemic and they are at particular risk of physical decline. The Council recognises that this physical decline may lead to complications associated with frailty and demands on the NHS and wishes to mitigate against this.

In addition to these two strands of activity, a further set of five initiatives have been identified which will be progressed should external finance, or alternative means to resource these, be found:

- **Youth support & district-wide needs analysis** – to develop a comprehensive understanding of the priorities that young people identify as important to them in order to ensure that services and infrastructure provision meets their needs. Covid-19 has had a significant impact on young people in terms of their education, employment options, development opportunities and social skills. Engaging with young people directly and working with other youth organisations will make a positive contribution at a critical time.
- **Homelessness Prevention** – to engage with and provide early assistance to those at risk of homelessness in a bid to avoid the damaging and costly consequences of homelessness. The Council recognises that the risk of homelessness on individuals, and therefore the Council in associated costs, will be significant over the short to medium term as Government support for employees ends, unemployment rates increase, debt levels increase and eviction suspensions end which may put an increased number of people at risk of homelessness.
- **Community Building** – To work directly with communities facing particular challenges and work with residents to develop solutions to those challenges and build confidence.
- **Organisational Development Support** - To provide dedicated support for community groups in West Oxfordshire to secure their long term sustainability and so that the Council and its communities can benefit from the groups activity.
- **Centralised Grants Function (including Grants Review)** – To better coordinate the Council's grants process in order to achieve improved efficiency, consistency and impact. The review should give consideration to lessons learnt through Covid-19 and test whether funding priorities are correct in light of this or if other needs have emerged that require grant support as a priority.

Covid-19 Recovery Theme - Climate

Related Council Plan Priority: *Climate Action: 'Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity.*

A Carbon Trust study using data from three million Lloyds customers noted a sharp decline in consumer spending between March and July as a consequence of lockdown. This resulted in a fall in carbon emissions equivalent to an estimated 4.3 million tonnes, 27% lower than in the same period in 2019. The Covid-19 pandemic also highlighted the value that local communities place on our natural environment, underlining the value of the Council's work following its declaration of a climate and ecological emergency in June 2019. This Recovery Plan sets out the following aims which seek to strengthen the Council's existing commitment to implementing its ambitions for climate by further reflecting the importance of a green recovery within them. These aims are not intended to replace the Council's current plans, but instead further those ambitions within the context of its plans for recovery from Covid-19 building upon the increased awareness and taking the opportunity to create a lower carbon future.

Climate – Covid-19 Recovery Aims:

- Aspire to achieving the highest environmental standards, embedding climate-conscious decisions, in everything we do.
- Reduce, replace and offset the Council's total CO₂e by delivering the Carbon Action Plan, working towards a target of carbon neutral by 2030.
- Facilitate partnership activities for widespread energy retrofit to reduce CO₂e as a District.
- Research and facilitate investment opportunities in green energy, supporting a Council and District transition across to low- and zero-emission energy.
- Deliver the highest sustainability standards in future development planning considerations.
- Contribute to the take up of green and active travel through partnerships across the District and County.
- Protect and enhance the value of existing open space and facilitate the creation of new natural landscapes that offer co-benefits for people and wildlife.
- Reduce waste at source and encourage recycling.
- Reduce water consumption through water efficiency and recycling measures across the Council's assets and portfolio.

The Council is committed to implementing its ambitions for climate through:

- A Carbon Action Plan for the Council, setting out the trajectory for how to become carbon neutral Council by 2030.
- A Climate Change Strategy setting out the Council's objectives and plans working across District in delivering climate action.
- A Biodiversity Plan defining the Council's next steps in facilitating a nature recovery.

Climate – Covid-19 Recovery Delivery and Investment

The Council is committed to ensuring that the strategies above will be translated into action to ensure that climate ambitions are met and that the value of our natural environment which has become so evident through the Covid-19 pandemic to our local communities is safeguarded and enhanced.

This commitment will be realised in the immediate term through:

- Investment in the coordination and delivery across service areas, departments and with external organisations and stakeholders of the Council's Carbon Action Plan, Climate Change Strategy and Biodiversity Plan.
- Implementation of the Sustainability Standards Checklist through which all planning applications will be required to demonstrate how exemplary standards of sustainability outlined within the checklist are being met in response to the following issues: Water use and flood risk; Biodiversity; Green and Active Travel; Aligning with Net-Zero Carbon; Sustainable Construction, Materials and Waste and Voluntary Standards for Sustainability.
- Investment in coordination and delivery of positive land management of Council owned sites for the benefit of people and wildlife in response to the ecological emergency. This will ensure that land management plans and ecological appraisal work currently underway delivers benefits that both conserve and enhance the ecological condition of the Council's own land, thus ensuring that our commitment to the ecological emergency is realised.

Covid-19 Recovery Theme - Council, Service Delivery and Finance

Related Council Plan Priority: *Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance*:

Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.

The Council views the significant period of change resulting from Covid-19 as an opportunity to reconsider how the Council is organised from a democratic/governance and service delivery perspective as well as to review the financial context within which the Council finds itself and how that will support or constrain the Council moving forward.

From a governance perspective the major issues facing the Council have been in respect of postponed elections and cancelled normal business meetings including Council and Scrutiny, use of technology to facilitate recovery and the impact of proposed government policies such as devolution and planning reforms.

From a service delivery perspective the issues facing the Council have been continuity of service delivery when face to face interaction and office bases were largely unavailable, reconfiguring the workforce to provide an immediate response to the lockdown emergency and responding to the increased demand from residents for alternative contact/access channels – telephone, website etc.

From a financial perspective the issues facing the Council have involved understanding the scale and length of the financial impact of the emergency on the Council, managing any projected shortfall in the short term and understanding any long term financial impacts of Covid-19.

In addition, careful consideration has been given to how the Council can invest to realise the aims identified under each of the Covid-19 Recovery Themes and ensure that the Council takes a catalytic role to help the District recover from the pandemic so that it is 'fit for the future' over the longer term.

Council, Service Delivery and Finance – Covid-19 Recovery Aims:

Through consideration of the Council's governance, service delivery challenges and financial context, a set of Covid-19 recovery aims for each of these issues have been identified:

Council Aims

- Scope for future webcasting of Meetings.
- Review of future use of the Council Chamber including consideration of more multi-functional use of the asset to support hybrid meetings.
- Increase cross-agency working to deliver benefits for the District.
- Review of Council constitution and committee structure (less immediate priority).

Service Delivery Aims

- Explore how the Council can embed the benefits of home / agile working benefits for staff.
- Improve the Council's understanding of the impact of Covid-19 on employee welfare.
- Audit and review Council office space requirements and plan for the future use of these assets.

- Improve communication and enforcement of Covid-19 safeguarding requirements with the resident and business community and visitors to the District.

Finance Aims

- Identify opportunities for increased income generation and, where there is scope, reduce expenditure in response to longer term budget shortfalls forecast in the medium term financial strategy.
- Identify, evaluate and pursue investments that will align with Council priorities, as set out the Council Plan and the Recovery Plan, that deliver future revenue streams to secure the Council's long term ability to serve the district.
- Identify and secure external grant funding to enable the Council to deliver additional services to the District without reliance on the availability of Council budget.

Council, Service Delivery and Finance – Covid-19 Recovery Delivery and Investment

The Council, in recognition of the importance of ensuring that as a democratically elected organisation it can best serve West Oxfordshire through the recovery and beyond, is committed to financing two work streams which will respond to the aims outlined above:

- Fund a programme of investment appraisals in order to identify, generate, evaluate and pursue investment opportunities (including further exploring the opportunity to promote and expand our 'charged for' services). This will enable us to provide long term income streams with the purpose of closing the Council's longer term budget gap and enabling the Council to pursue delivery of its ambitions.
- Pursue available external grants to deliver projects that benefit the District – these may be Covid-19 recovery related and/or those which will deliver on the Council Plan. By investing resources to prepare and submit business cases to external grant funds the Council will be able to deliver 'more for less' by securing revenue which would not be available from within existing constrained budgets.

Appendix I – Covid-19 Recovery Delivery and Project Investment Schedule

The Council committed funds from its 19/20 surplus to meeting the aims of this Recovery Plan. As noted, Councillor engagement has given a recommended priority ranking and identified nine funded fixed term roles which will bring the required activity to fruition:

Role/Project

Market Towns Officer (2 yrs)

Network of Wellbeing Hubs (project)

Economic Development Assistant (2 yrs)

Specialist Business Case Developer (2 yrs)

Climate Change Manager extension (2 yrs)

Carbon Action Plan Officer (2 yrs)

Biodiversity/Countryside Land Mgmt. Officer (2 yrs)

Development Mgmt. Sustainability Specialist (1 yr)

Active Lives Role (1 yr)

A further six initiatives are endorsed and will be pursued when further finance can be assembled or future opportunities arise to recognise these areas of ambition:

Role/Project

Dedicated youth support analysis (2 yrs)

Organisational Development for local groups (1 yr)

Economic Development Projects fund (2 yrs)

Homelessness Prevention Role (2 yrs)

Community Builder pilots (2 yrs)

Grants Review Cross Departmental Role (2 yrs)



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	Council: Wednesday 28 October 2020
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 13
Subject	Carbon Action Plan: The Pathway to Achieving Carbon Neutral by 2030.
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor David Harvey, Cabinet Member for Climate Change Email: david.harvey@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Ness Scott, Climate Change Manager Tel: 07525 802994; Email: vanessa.scott@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	<p>This paper presents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Carbon Action Plan and pathway to achieving the Council's target of carbon neutral by 2030, for approval.• The first document, of two key deliverables identified, within the report agreed by the Council on 22 January 2020 as the framework for how the Council will respond to the climate and ecological emergency as part of a Climate Action work programme for West Oxfordshire.• Action taken in response to original recommendation put forward to Council for a residents panel in West Oxfordshire as a mechanism for community engagement and co-ordinating climate action.
Annex	Annex 1 : Carbon Action Plan: The Pathway to Achieving Carbon Neutral by 2030.
Recommendation	Council is invited to consider whatever recommendation is made by Cabinet at its meeting on 21 October 2020.
Corporate priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To protect the environment whilst supporting the local economy2. Working with communities to meet the current and future needs and aspirations of residents.3. To provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services.
Key Decision	N/A

Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	The Carbon Action Plan has been developed by the Climate Change Manager working in close consultation with key officers, stakeholder partners and colleagues within West Oxfordshire District Council to ensure steps to reduce, mitigate and offset impact on climate change is embedded across service areas and functions. This document has also been the focus of consultation with the Council's cross-party Climate Action Working Group.

I. BACKGROUND

I.1 This paper presents:

- The Carbon Action Plan and pathway to achieving the Council's target of carbon neutral by 2030, for approval.
- The first document, of two key deliverables identified, within the report agreed by the Council on 22 January 2020 as the framework for how the Council will respond to the climate and ecological emergency as part of a Climate Action work programme for West Oxfordshire.
- Action taken in response to original recommendation put forward to Council for a residents panel in West Oxfordshire as a mechanism for community engagement and co-ordinating climate action.

I.2 This report and the Action Plan included in [Annex I](#) are to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 21 October 2020, and the recommendations arising from that meeting will be included in the associated draft minutes, which are expected to be published and circulated on Friday 23 October.

2. MAIN POINTS

2.1 On 22 January 2020, the Council agreed a report that set out a framework and timescales for developing a Carbon Action Plan as the mechanism for delivering West Oxfordshire District Council's commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

2.2 It was also agreed at this meeting that the Council's previous carbon accounting methodology was to be peer-reviewed by an independent consultant. This work was successfully completed by Aether Ltd in the late stages of 2019/2020. Advice and recommendations were provided by Aether Ltd to inform the scope of Council emissions included within the subsequent carbon account and Carbon Action Plan.

2.3 The Council's carbon account was completed for 2019/2020 and aligns with the recommendations of Aether's peer review. This is now referred to within the Carbon Action Plan as the Council's baseline position in terms of Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) and has, in turn, informed the development of the Council's priorities for action.

2.4 Original plans to hold an Officer workshop to develop the Carbon Action Plan were cancelled shortly following Lockdown. Instead, internal officer consultation took the form of one-to-one discussions which went on to inform a draft document.

2.5 Timescales for delivering a Carbon Action Plan were also re-scheduled to take into account the impact of Covid-19. A target to deliver a Carbon Action Plan at Council in July 2020 was subsequently rescheduled to October 2020.

- 2.6 The adjusted timeframes have allowed for a longer period of consultation both internally and with Members. The cross-party Climate Action Working Group was presented with the draft Plan at a meeting on 11 August 2020.
- 2.7 This Carbon Action Plan represents the completion of the first phase of strategy development setting out how the Council aims to deliver its commitment to the climate and ecological emergency. The second phase of strategy development is the Climate Change Strategy. It is this subsequent document that will develop strategic objectives for how the Council will address climate change working with partners and communities across the District. Both strategy documents are also referred to within the Council's Recovery Plan as key outputs helping steer the Council's priorities for climate action.
- 2.8 Referred to within the Biannual Report on Climate Action in West Oxfordshire (Council, 29 July 2020) is the Climate Action Survey during May and June, 2020. This led to priorities and comments from 446 people who took part in West Oxfordshire. This Survey has also provided the Council a large database of people who have registered their interest in Council events and news on Climate Action. This Climate Action Network will be used to communicate and engage with residents, businesses and local communities on Council projects and partnerships that are linked to Climate Action.
- 2.9 The Council's shift to more virtual means of communication in 2020 is valid at present and is expected to remain valid in the medium to longer term. The breadth of the recent survey has demonstrated the effectiveness of these digital mechanisms. The Council can now maximise communications with a Climate Action Network and continue to grow this over time. Anyone wishing to register with the Climate Action Network, is invited to email: Climate.Action@westoxon.gov.uk.
- 2.10 The Council's recent survey and newly-formed Climate Action Network both successfully demonstrate an alternative strategy for engaging with residents, ensuring maximum reach. Furthermore, this method of engagement is designed to maintain business continuity within a now very constrained environment for community consultation.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. The Council's 2020/21 budget included a provision of £200,000 and a commitment to review the possibility of adding further funds in the subsequent two financial years.
- 3.2. The resource and finance required, both revenue and capital, will be considered for each individual work package and project developed. A decision would need to be taken on each as to whether research and viability followed by delivery can be implemented through either existing internal resource or is more appropriately sought through external and specialist experts, or a combination of the two. Individual Council decisions, on the allocation of funding, will need to be taken for the implementation of targets contained within this Plan. That will be understood in more detail at the scoping stage of each project.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. There are no perceived legal implications associated with the proposals within this report.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. The Carbon Action Plan sets a trajectory and pathway for how the Council can meet its target of carbon neutral by 2030. The Plan does not set a cost to delivering the target and acknowledges that individual work packages will need to be developed to fully assess all options available to the Council based on carbon and financial considerations.

- 5.2. Savings are anticipated as a direct consequence of Climate Action taken by the Council and through measures to reduce demand on natural resources.
- 5.3. The Plan is very clear that it provides a pathway; a set of Guiding Principles; and Priorities for Action as a consistent reference point for all projects. Budgets and funding will ultimately be required to implement these actions and, for this reason, it is referred to as a potential long-term risk. Whilst the availability of funding - whether from the Council, external funding sources or through green investment strategies – does not influence the Council's ability to publish the Carbon Action Plan, medium-long-term funding sources is a potential risk factor to the Council in terms of its ability to achieve the targets within it.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 6.1 The impacts of adopting and implementing a Carbon Action Plan for the Council will have equal impact on all services, customers and staff and there is a shared benefit to the objectives of this report and associated benefits from taking positive action to address the climate change impact of the Council.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The proposals within this report will have a direct, positive impact on the Council's operations with regard to energy and resource efficiency, water efficiency, waste reduction and recycling and associated carbon reduction.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 8.1. One alternative option is to take no action at all.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1. The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:
 - Meeting minutes and motion agreed by the Council on 26 June 2019.
 - Meeting minutes and motions agreed by the Council on 22 January 2020.
 - Meeting minutes and report agreed by the Council on 29 July 2020.
- 9.2. These documents will be available for inspection at the Council Offices at Woodgreen during normal office hours for a period of up to 4 years from the date of the meeting. Please contact the author of the report.

[Annex 1](#): Carbon Action Plan: The Pathway to Achieving Carbon Neutral by 2030.

CARBON ACTION PLAN

The Pathway to Achieving Carbon Neutral by 2030

Presented to Full Council: 28th October 2020



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

CLIMATE ACTION

for West Oxfordshire

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1.0 Introduction

1.1. Why develop a Carbon Action Plan?

West Oxfordshire District Council (the Council) declared a climate and ecological emergency making its pledge to become a carbon-neutral Council by 2030. The decision was taken at a meeting of Full Council on 26 June 2019.

1.2. What will the Plan set out?

The Carbon Action Plan now sets out the Council's pathway for how it will achieve its target of carbon neutral. It will:

- Present a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions account as a baseline and measure of the Council's current impact on climate change so that it can measure the success of actions taken to reduce and remove emissions;
- Define a set of Guiding Principles for planning all future research and projects implemented by the Council towards its target of carbon neutral;
- Identify a Pathway and Priorities for Action as the trajectory for achieving carbon neutral;
- Set out a process for the monitoring and review of action in progress and new action planned so that the Plan remains live and responsive to external influences, technological changes and innovation within the low-carbon and renewable energy sector;
- Lead by example, establishing as a Council an assessment methodology and set of Guiding Principles that partners working across the District may apply to their own projects planned in response to the climate emergency.

The Carbon Action Plan is not intended as an overly technical document. It is written for reference by multiple stakeholders within the Council and across functions. Detailed technical and specialist projects will fall from this Plan as standalone pieces of work which will be developed and implemented, where necessary, in support of the Council's plans for carbon neutral.

1.3. How will the Council prioritise action?

The Council sets out its Priorities for Action under three headings:

- Council offices, property and sites
- Leisure centres and facilities
- Council vehicle fleet, machinery and transport

Guiding Principles have been developed within this Plan as a common and consistent reference point for all individual projects specifically designed to contribute towards a carbon neutral target – these are described in detail in Section 3.0.

The timing of projects will be prioritised to align with a Pathway that has been developed as a trajectory for the Council achieving its carbon-neutral target, referred to in Figure 4, Section 4.0. This Pathway highlights where there is greatest opportunity to influence change and reduce climate impact. As aforementioned, a number of projects will flow from this Plan at key stages of the Pathway. Each of these should be developed with reference to the Plan's Guiding Principles. This will be done to ensure that emissions and climate change impact is central to decision-making by the Council, and is particularly important when those decisions relate to the Council's highest-emitting locations and services. This Pathway aims to assist in the planning and prioritisation of those projects.

Projects will be designed as work packages. It is recognised that a work package will, to a greater or lesser degree depending on the project, require an element of research and development - which may also be referred to as a viability assessment stage. This is to facilitate well-informed decision making.

Delivering carbon neutral is an iterative process so projects will need to evolve as the landscape for clean energy and technology evolves. This Plan is structured to allow a flexible approach to project planning as part of the trajectory to carbon neutral. This also allows for the lessons learned and experiences taken from one project to feed into and benefit the next.

Clean energy technologies are referred to as an important element of the UK's plans for an economic and green recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic. This is one very recent example of how emphasis and investment towards clean energy technology has changed within a fairly short timeframe and has the potential to influence the landscape in the future. With additional Government stimulus and investment, we can expect to see technology evolving and green energy technology becoming more accessible. And as demand increases for new and innovative solutions, new technologies can be expected to come forward.

The Council may be able to participate in piloting some of the more innovative approaches and will create and/or take those opportunities when they arise.

Developing projects at different stages of a Pathway to carbon neutral allows the Council to maximise the benefits of these technological advancements as they occur.

The detailed scope of individual work packages will need to be developed in stages. How they are prioritised will also be guided by other factors, for example:

- Where there are opportunities for partnership at County level and with District Councils, a collaborative approach will be taken.
- Where UK Government funding comes forward as a stimulus for a priority within this Plan, action will be taken.

1.4. How will the Council monitor the Plan?

The Carbon Action Plan will be monitored and reported on as part of the Council's current commitment to reporting its annual Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. This is in line with Government guidance. Monitoring and reporting is also carried out with the objective of meeting the Council's commitment to deliver action in response to its declaration of a climate and ecological emergency.

The impact of actions taken as part of this Plan will be monitored through a time-series analysis to enable year on year comparisons being made and monitoring of changes in Council's climate change impact over time.

The Annual Monitoring Report will also be used to report on progress being made towards this Plan's objectives and Council's target of carbon neutral. This will complement processes being put in place to monitor the Council Plan and Covid-19 Recovery Plan. Steps will be taken to streamline reporting wherever possible as there will be cross over between each of the Plans.

1.5. What resources will be required?

The resource and finance required, both revenue and capital, will be considered for each individual work package and project developed. A decision would need to be taken on each as to whether research and viability followed by delivery can be implemented through either existing internal resource or is more appropriately sought through external and specialist experts, or a combination of the two. Individual Council decisions, on the allocation of funding, will need to be taken for the implementation of targets contained within this Plan. That will be understood in more detail at the scoping stage of each project.

2.0 Council emissions

2.1. What does the Council measure?

There are no fixed guidelines on what the Council should include in its account of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. This is why the Council commissioned an expert, peer review of its existing methodology¹ to ensure that the highest standards of GHG accounting and reporting are adopted.

The GHG emissions, now included in the Council's account, are categorised by Scope and summarised here in Table I.

Table I: GHG Emissions Scope.

SCOPE	Type	Description
One	Gas	Gas used for heat and power to offices, property and sites owned and operated by the Council.
	Liquid fuel	Diesel, petrol and oil used to power all vehicles and machinery owned by the Council.
Two	Electricity	Electricity used to power offices, property and sites owned and operated by the Council.
Three	Business travel	Travel undertaken by staff and Councillors for business purposes including bus, car, taxi, rail, London Underground and plane.
	Water	Water consumed in offices, property and sites owned and operated by the Council.

Guidance from the *Greenhouse Gas Protocol for a Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard*² has been used to ensure the Council has developed a fair and accurate account of its GHG emissions by including datasets that are:

- 1) Relevant
- 2) Complete
- 3) Consistent
- 4) Transparent
- 5) Accurate

¹ Aether's WODC Baseline Review – Recommendations and Guidance

² See <https://ghgprotocol.org/corporate-standard> for further information and the Protocol in full

2.2. How does the Council measure emissions?

The Council accounts for its GHG emissions as CO₂e. This term stands for carbon dioxide equivalents and is a measure of how much global warming is given by a particular GHG as a function of the amount or concentration of carbon dioxide gas. CO₂e is the common unit used within this Plan to express the contribution of the Council's GHG emissions on global warming and subsequent impact on climate change.

Data from a number of different sources, from across the Council, are used. These source data are quantified using different units of measure. For example, some data obtained are expressed as litres of liquid fuel, either petrol or diesel; some as kWh of gas or electricity; some as distance travelled by car; some as fares incurred on journeys taken by train, bus or plane. In each case, these data are converted into a single measure of CO₂e. To express the Council's total GHG emissions in terms of CO₂e, conversion factors defined and published by the Government³ have been used. These conversion factors are reviewed by Government each year to maintain up-to-date and accurate reporting.

2.3. What is the emission baseline?

The Council has completed its GHG emissions account for year ending 2019/2020 which is referred to within this Plan as the Council's baseline.

During 2019/2020, emissions totalled **3,022,199 kg CO₂e**.

If the Council's most recent annual emissions are converted to a purely electricity equivalent, 3,022 t.CO₂e is equal to 12,963,022 kWh of electricity. According to Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) figures, the average household consumes 3,860 kWh of electricity a year⁴. The Council's CO₂e is therefore equivalent to the electricity consumed by 3,358 homes using BEIS figures. Census data for 2018/2019 records 49,000 households in West Oxfordshire so Council total emissions can be compared to approximately 7% of total households within the District.

For a detailed summary of the 2019/2020 GHG account, refer to Annex I.

2.4. What does the data tell us?

The data tells us that the Council is currently dependent on non-renewable, fossil fuels and consumption of gas, diesel, petrol, oil and electricity from the National Grid are dominant energy sources. The data also highlights where Council emissions are concentrated according to Scope and Location.

³ Government conversion factors for company reporting of greenhouse gas emissions, last updated 9th June 2020: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-conversion-factors-for-company-reporting>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/energy-consumption-in-the-uk>

2.4.1. By scope

Table 2: Total Emissions by Scope.

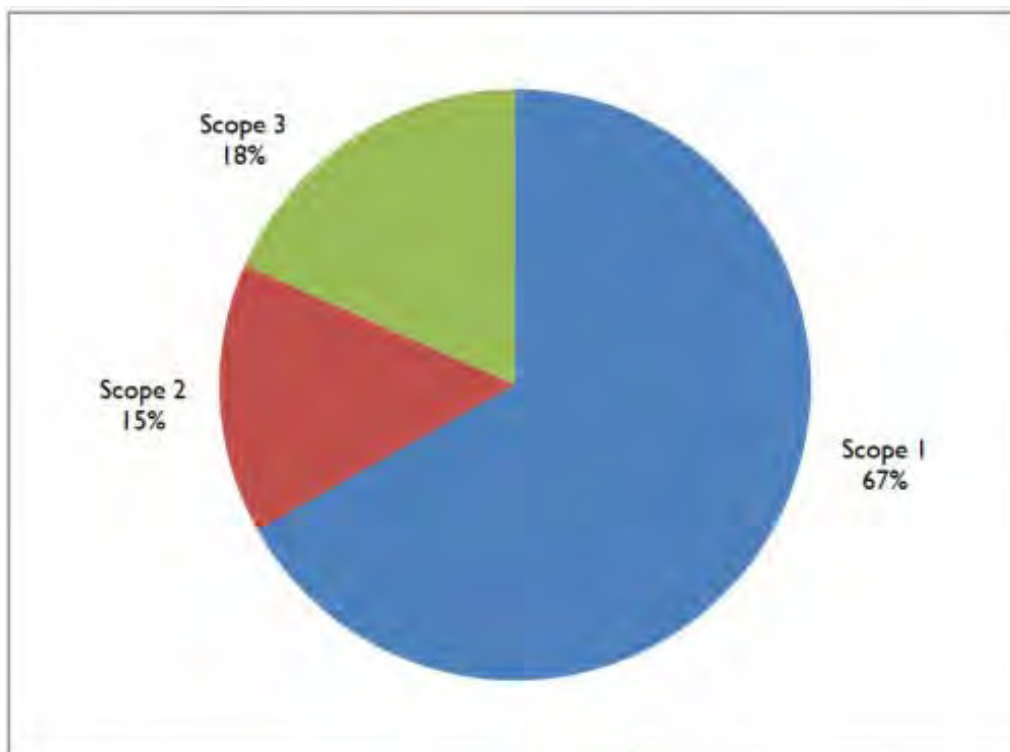
01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020	Kg CO ₂ e
Scope 1	2,020,220
Scope 2	447,126
Scope 3	554,853
TOTAL	3,022,199

Scope 1 emissions are the largest source for the Council. Emissions associated with gas and liquid fuel account for 67%, two thirds of Council emissions.

Scope 2 emissions associated with the purchase of electricity from the National Grid account for a further 15% of Council emissions.

Scope 3 emissions associated with the transport of gas, electricity and liquid fuel (referred to as T&D, Transport & Distribution and WTT, Well to Tank), water consumption and transport miles for staff and Councillors account for the final 18% of Council emissions.

Figure 1: Total Emissions by Scope.



2.4.2. By location

Table 3: Total Emissions by Location.

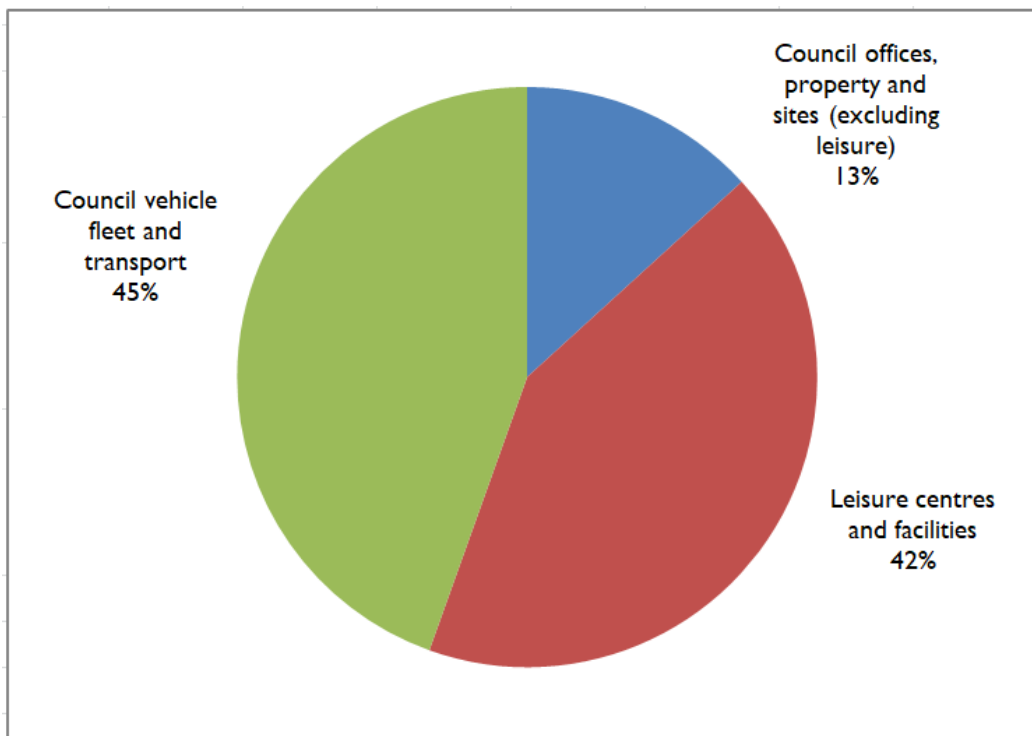
01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020	Kg CO ₂ e
Council offices, property and sites (excluding leisure)	400,418
Leisure centres and facilities	1,276,260
Council vehicle fleet, machinery and transport	1,345,521
TOTAL	3,022,199

Council offices, property and sites represent 13% of total emissions across Scopes 1, 2 and 3.

Leisure centres and facilities account for 42% of Council emissions, across Scopes 1, 2 and 3.

Council vehicle fleet, machinery and transport including Council-owned waste trucks currently operated by UBICO as part of a contract to deliver the Council's waste, street cleansing and grounds maintenance contract, accounts for another 45% of Council emissions.

Figure 2: Total Emissions by Location.



3.0 Guiding principles

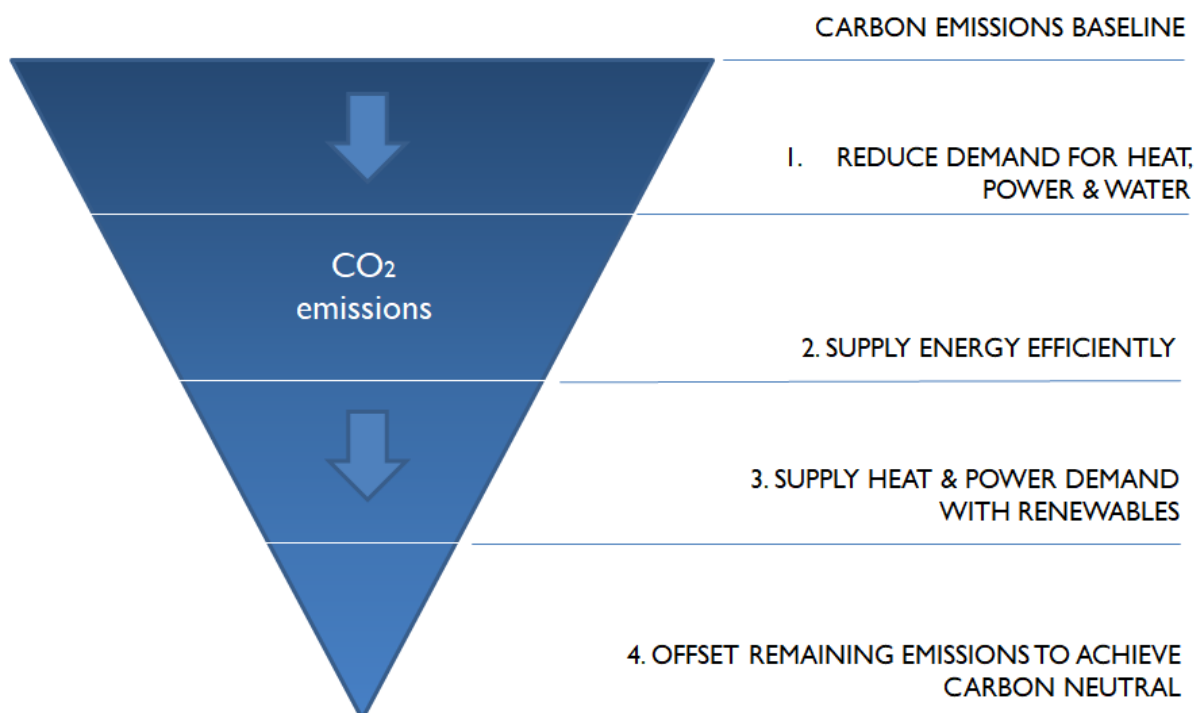
The Council has developed Guiding Principles within this Plan as a common reference for all projects planned as part of its trajectory for reaching carbon neutral.

Table 4: Guiding Principles.

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION
GP1	Target energy-efficiency and resource-efficiency measures as a first step to reducing heat, energy, fuel and water demand
GP2	Transition away from fossil fuels including gas and liquid fuel, and move to electricity-based and other low-carbon energy technologies
GP3	Direct supply electricity using renewables either on-site or from another local energy source
GP4	All remaining CO2e that can not be reduced or removed in their entirety, to be offset using an agreed offsetting mechanism

These principles align with the energy-hierarchy approach, illustrated in Figure 3, and will be applied as a consistent point of reference in the planning of work packages, projects and activities being taken forward to deliver this Plan.

Figure 3: The Energy Hierarchy.



3.1. GP1: Reduce demand for heat, power and water

The first step taken in the hierarchy focuses on the management of resources and measures planned to reduce the demand for that resource. Within the context of this Plan, the resource refers to the Council's demand for energy and water.

Reducing the Council's demand for these resources can be done by, for example:

- Creating well-insulated buildings so that less heat is required to achieve a comfortable temperature;
- Employing technologies that manage a building's energy demand so that optimum performance can be achieved;
- Installing water-efficiency measures to reduce flow rates, recycle water and manage consumption levels;
- Reducing demand for office space through agile and remote working policies;
- Reducing transport miles for business by meeting through alternative, virtual means;
- Reducing the fuel consumption of vehicle fleet through driver-awareness training.

These measures, amongst others, can be taken to reduce the Council's requirement for heat, power and water. A reduction in the demand for resources will result in, not only a reduction in climate change impact, but also a reduction in cost. In prioritising steps towards resource efficiencies, financial savings can therefore also be made.

3.2. GP2: Supply energy efficiently

Energy for heat and power can be supplied through non-renewable fossil fuels such as gas, liquid fuel (diesel, petrol, oil) or alternatively, can be supplied through low- and zero-carbon (LZC) energy technologies that harness the power of wind, solar, air, soil or water. These technologies produce electricity. In the future, hydrogen is also expected to play an increasingly important role in total energy mix.

A transition away from fossil fuels to principally electricity-based systems is therefore an essential step towards carbon neutral.

All systems, whether they are designed to heat buildings, swimming pools or power the Council vehicle fleet, should also be carefully and efficiently designed to maximise energy performance. For example, heating systems modelled and designed to meet the predicted levels of demand operate efficiently and can have a large impact in terms of further reducing energy demand. The better the performance and efficiency of a system, the lower the subsequent demand for energy.

Moving to highly-efficient, electricity-based systems is essential in the Council's transition away from fossil fuels to cleaner and more sustainable solutions for the future.

In making that shift towards principally electricity-based systems and other low-carbon energy technologies, there will be an increase in the Council's demand for electricity. The current annual demand for gas, within Scope 1, is 980,616 kg CO₂e. A key performance indicator for this Plan focuses on gas consumption reducing over time, offset by a forecast increase in demand for electricity.

Guidance on how the total, resulting electricity demand should then be supplied is discussed in more detail under Guiding Principle 3.

3.3. GP3: Supply heat and power using clean energy

Measures to reduce demand and design efficient and predominantly electricity-based systems are important first steps in the Council's Pathway to achieving carbon neutral. The Council's next step will be to assess options to supply the heat and power it requires through clean, zero-carbon energy.

Opportunities for clean energy should first be assessed on-site within the envelope of the Council building. This is because it can provide an immediate and direct supply of electricity and further reduce total electricity demand from another source. This is already the case at Carterton Leisure Centre and Elmfield where roof-mounted Solar PV provides a direct source of electricity. Any unused electricity is returned to the grid. Battery storage will need to be an important component of future installations considered by the Council in order to ensure the benefits of generating clean energy are retained on site.

Where the Council generates and exports renewable electricity to the grid, it might be expected that a credit is provided back to the organisation. However, the decarbonisation effect of supplying renewable electricity to the grid is accounted for within the national average grid factor. Once on the grid, renewable electricity is not distinguishable from non-renewable electricity. The resulting grid electricity is therefore a mix of all primary energy sources (renewable and non-renewable) and a single emission factor that accounts for this mix is used for grid electricity. This average grid factor decreases as more renewable sources connect in to the grid, resulting in the long-term reduction in Scope 2 emissions for all grid electricity users.

In the medium to longer-term, opportunities to direct-source clean, zero-carbon energy will be investigated by the Council to maximise its reach for carbon neutral in operation. Corporate Power Purchase Agreements (cPPAs) are fast evolving and will be investigated for their contribution towards the Council's future strategy for clean energy supply. In brief, a cPPA is a contract for the direct purchase of renewable energy from a renewable energy generator. Sleeved or 'Physical' cPPAs facilitate the supply of renewable energy from generator to multiple sites for the buyer, e.g. Council, via an energy supplier so that whilst total energy comes from the national grid, it can be quantified via renewable credits from the generator making it demonstrably, zero carbon.

This would be a contrary strategy to the Council's current procurement of energy. The Council purchases its energy from an energy supplier and, although its electricity tariff is green, the GHG emissions associated with it are accounted for using the average grid factor. GLL, current sports leisure contractor for the Council, also source their energy from an energy supplier which is, in turn, is subject to the same average grid factor.

The Council's aim for carbon accounting of renewable electricity will therefore need to ensure:

- i. Renewable energy generation produced through the Council’s investment, used directly by the Council with the carbon benefit of generation clearly traced by applying a zero-emission factor to the renewable electricity generated. Emission savings will therefore occur as electricity used is zero carbon and assumed to directly displace the requirement for grid electricity, meaning Scope 2 emissions are reduced.
- ii. No double-counting of the benefit of renewable generation. Double counting occurs when renewable electricity is either exported directly to another organisation or exported to the grid.

Clean, renewable energy will not only be considered as a potential future supply to the Council’s multiple buildings, but also as a wider investment opportunity.

3. 4. GP4: Offset remaining emissions to achieve carbon neutral

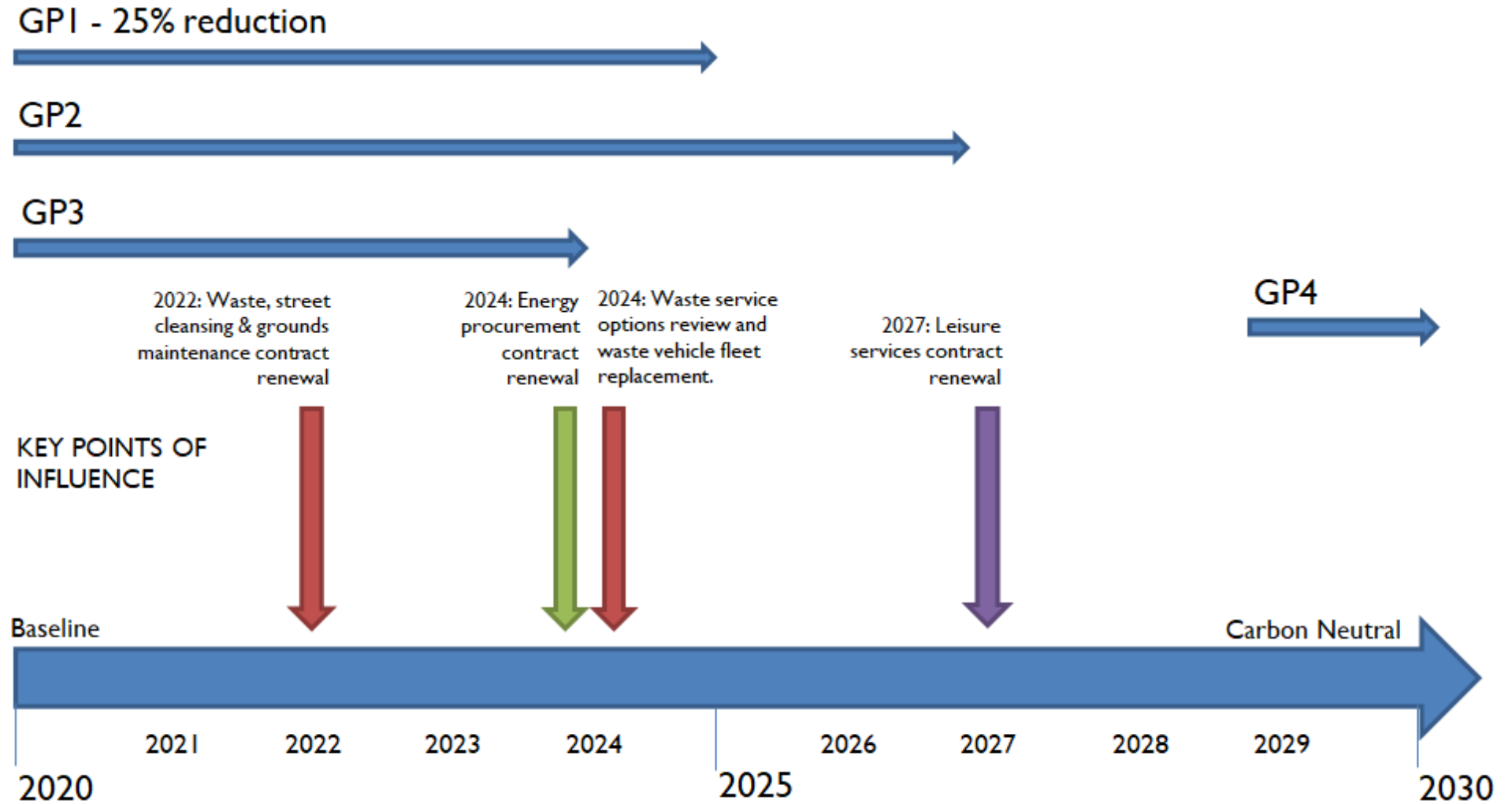
The emissions that cannot be removed entirely within the 2030 Pathway will be offset through a mechanism endorsed within this Plan, but only once all other steps have been taken and Guiding Principles fully explored and/or implemented.

Carbon offsetting will enable the Council to reach its carbon neutral target in full by paying for a carbon credit, i.e. to pay for an equivalent amount of emissions to be reduced or removed elsewhere. The Council will focus on carbon offsetting that derives local benefit as a priority over investing in carbon offset schemes further afield.

Table 5: Recognised Carbon Offsetting Schemes.

Name	Where are the offsets made	Notes
Council energy-efficiency retrofit fund	West Oxfordshire	Equivalent CO2e savings derived from investment into a deep retrofit programme for existing housing stock within the District.
Woodland carbon code	West Oxfordshire and UK	Developed through support of UK Government, the Environmental Reporting Guidance allows these domestic units to be used like international offsets, so organisations can use these in their emission reporting. Supporting local projects for tree and woodland management will be a priority for the Council.
Peatland carbon code	UK	Generates carbon offsets from emissions removed from the atmosphere through peat restoration in the UK. Developed through support of UK Government, the Environmental Reporting Guidance allows these domestic units to be used like international offsets, meaning that companies can use them as an alternative to international offsets in their emission reporting.
World Land Trust carbon offsetting scheme	International	World Land Trust’s Carbon Balanced project enables individuals and organizations to offset their residual greenhouse gas emissions through the protection and restoration of carbon-rich wildlife habitats in the tropics.

4.0 Pathway to carbon neutral



5.0 Priorities for action

The Council sets out its Priorities for Action under three headings:

- Council offices, property and sites
- Leisure centres and facilities
- Council vehicle fleet, machinery and transport

To achieve carbon neutral, the Council will aim to:

- ◆ Deliver action to reduce, remove or offset the CO₂e impact of current Council activities and services.
- ◆ Plan new activities and services coming on stream with consideration to their climate change impact so that any associated emissions can be successfully mitigated and/or offset.

5.1. Council offices, property and sites

Guiding Principle	HEAT & POWER	Easy		Hard	
		Impact		Impact	
		High	Low	High	Low
GP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define the Council's office footprint as staff need. Keep under review. Embed principles of an agile working strategy for Council staff. Reduce staff business miles between offices in a permanent move to meetings via remote access unless a critical business need requires face-to-face. Raise awareness to how staff can reduce energy demand both in the office and when working from home. Reduce energy demand in Council offices through energy-efficiency retrofit. Develop a work package to first complete energy modelling, energy audits, M&E design, to assess and model the most suitable energy-efficiency measures and building management systems for consideration. Review details on energy performance alongside other property management issues identified, such as those highlighted in building condition surveys. Consider internal air quality and sources of natural, cross ventilation vs mechanical options to prevent overheating and maintain levels of thermal comfort within office spaces. Consider whole-life cost and embodied carbon when assessing options. 	√ √ √	√	√ √ √	
GP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply energy to Council offices efficiently, using predominantly electricity-based, low-carbon energy systems. Within an energy modelling work package, assess the suitability and effectiveness of different systems. Consider these alongside other property management issues. Consider whole-life cost and embodied carbon of different systems when assessing options. 			√ √	
GP3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within an energy modelling work package, assess the suitability of clean, zero-emission, energy technologies on-site. Consider whole-life cost and embodied carbon when assessing options. Remaining heat and power demand to be met via supply of renewable energy. 			√ √ √	
GP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any residual emissions that can not be entirely removed, offset by 2030 through a mechanism endorsed within this Plan. 				

Guiding Principle	WATER	Easy		Hard	
		Impact		Impact	
		High	Low	High	Low
GP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce water demand in Council offices by assessing both water-efficiency and greywater recycling retrofit measures as part of an energy modelling work package. Where greywater recycling can be demonstrated as effective and financially viable, review wider application in Council-owned public conveniences. 		√		√
GP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install water-efficiency and greywater-recycling systems in Council offices and public conveniences where appropriate. 			√	
GP3					
GP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any residual emissions that can not be entirely removed, offset by 2030 through a mechanism endorsed within this Plan. 				

Guiding Principle	WASTE	Easy		Hard	
		Impact		Impact	
		High	Low	High	Low
GP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a method for measuring and recording the Council's total volume of waste each year so that the associated emissions can be accounted for in future reporting. Ensure clear and accessible recycling bins are provided in Council offices to encourage staff to recycle at work. Reduce paper consumption, transition to a paperless Council and provide all publications through, principally, electronic means. Develop an Environmental Policy for the Council to signpost the Carbon Action Plan promoting the steps being taken by the Council towards a paperless transition. If paper is required for printing, this should be done using sustainable, FSC-accredited sources to minimise the Council's environmental impact. 	√			
GP2					
GP3					
GP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any residual emissions that can not be entirely removed, offset by 2030 through a mechanism endorsed within this Plan. 				

Guiding Principle	GREEN & ACTIVE TRAVEL	Easy		Hard	
		Impact		Impact	
		High	Low	High	Low
GP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess need for sheltered, secure, accessible and well-lit cycle storage and shower facilities in Council offices to encourage staff and Councillors to cycle to work. Assess the viability of installing electric vehicle charging points (EVCP) at Council offices for staff and Councillors to support a transition away from fossil fuels to alternatively-powered vehicles. Install EVCP in line with Oxfordshire EV strategy and standards. Promote cycle voucher scheme available to staff to encourage cycling to work. Promote employee leased car scheme available to staff to encourage wider take up of EV (both cars and bicycles) offering significant tax benefits. 	√			√
GP2					
GP3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For staff and Councillor EV to be considered fully zero-emission, electric vehicle charging points installed at Council offices should be supplied using a source of clean energy. 				
GP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These priorities for action do not relate to audited emissions within the Council's carbon account and therefore do not need to be the focus of carbon offset. 				

5.2. Leisure centres and facilities

Guiding Principle	HEAT & POWER	Easy		Hard	
		Impact		Impact	
		High	Low	High	Low
GP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Demand Reduction Plan through work in partnership with GLL, identifying new ways to reduce energy demand in operation, link with Performance Indicators for energy within the annual contract review process. Focus on high-energy consuming activities e.g. gym equipment. Reduce energy demand in leisure centres through energy-efficiency retrofit. Develop a work package to first complete energy modelling, energy audits, M&E design, to assess and model the most suitable energy-efficiency measures and building management systems for consideration. Review energy performance alongside other building management issues identified, such as those highlighted in building condition surveys. Consider internal air quality and sources of natural, cross ventilation vs mechanical options for cooling to reduce energy demand and prevent overheating. Consider whole-life cost and embodied carbon when assessing options. Consider energy performance indicators as part of an annual review of the current leisure services contract, as a way of managing energy demand. 	√			√
GP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply energy to leisure centres efficiently, transitioning across to principally electricity-based, low-carbon energy systems within the timeframes of a Council trajectory to carbon neutral. M&E strategies developed on a site-by-site basis to coincide with end-of-life heating and cooling systems. Consider whole-life cost and embodied carbon of different systems when assessing options. 			√	√
GP3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within an energy modelling work package, assess the suitability of additional clean, zero-emission, energy technologies on-site. Consider whole-life cost and embodied carbon when assessing options. All new leisure facilities should be designed to the highest possible standards, aspiring to net-zero carbon in operation, in order to mitigate for future impact on climate change. Remaining heat and power demand to be met via a direct supply of renewable energy. 			√	√
GP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any residual emissions that can not be entirely removed, offset by 2030 through a mechanism endorsed within this Plan. 				

Guiding Principle	WATER	Easy		Hard	
		Impact		Impact	
		High	Low	High	Low
GP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Demand Reduction Plan through work in partnership with GLL, identifying new ways to reduce water demand in operation, link with Performance Indicators for water within the annual contract review process. Focus on high water-consuming activities e.g. swimming pool maintenance regimes. • Reduce water demand in leisure centres and facilities by assessing suitability of water-saving fixtures and fittings (e.g. showers), greywater recycling systems (e.g. in toilets) and water filtration systems (e.g. for swimming pool maintenance). • Consider rainwater harvesting tanks for maintaining existing grass football pitches and consider the benefits of hybrid football pitches (part grass/part artificial) as a less water-intensive option for the future. • Consider water monitoring performance indicators as part of an annual review of the current leisure services contract as a way of managing water demand. 	√			
GP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install water-efficiency measures, greywater recycling systems, water filtration systems and management practices in order to make more efficient use of water. 			√	
GP3					
GP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any residual emissions that can not be entirely removed, offset by 2030 through a mechanism endorsed within this Plan. 				

Guiding Principle	WASTE	Easy		Hard	
		Impact		Impact	
		High	Low	High	Low
GP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ existing measuring and recording of GLL's total volume of waste each year so that the associated emissions can be accounted for in future reporting. • Develop a Demand Reduction Plan through work in partnership with GLL, identifying new ways to reduce waste in operation, link with Performance Indicators for waste within the annual contract review process. Ensure clear and accessible recycling bins are provided in all Leisure Centres and at all facilities to encourage visitors to recycle. • Invite GLL, Leisure Services Contractor, to work with the Council to reduce waste by signing up to a Council Environmental Policy and principally paperless approach in its operations. If paper is required for printing, this should be done using sustainable, FSC-accredited sources to minimise the Council's environmental impact. 	√			
GP2					
GP3					
GP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any residual emissions that can not be entirely removed, offset by 2030 through a mechanism endorsed within this Plan. 				

Guiding Principle	GREEN & ACTIVE TRAVEL	Easy		Hard	
		Impact		Impact	
		High	Low	High	Low
GP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Demand Reduction Plan through work in partnership with GLL, identifying new ways to promote active travel, link with annual contract review process. • Assess need for sheltered, secure, accessible and well-lit cycle storage encouraging staff and visitors to cycle to leisure centres and facilities. • Develop a consistent strategy and set of standards for installing electric vehicle charging points (EVCP) at existing and new leisure facilities to support a transition away from fossil fuels to alternatively-powered vehicles. • Install EVCP in line with Oxfordshire EV strategy and standards. 	√			
		√		√	
GP2					
GP3					
GP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These priorities for action do not relate to audited emissions within the Council's carbon account and therefore do not need to be the focus of carbon offset. 				

5.3. Council vehicle fleet, machinery and transport

Guiding Principle	WASTE, STREET CLEANSING & GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT	Easy		Hard	
		Impact		Impact	
		High	Low	High	Low
GPI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate the Council's ambitions and targets within this Carbon Action Plan in the waste contract renewal in 2022. Reduce GHG emissions and climate change impact associated with the Council's waste service, street cleansing and grounds maintenance contract by completed a detailed resource-efficiency review. Develop a work package to complete an assessment of these services which depend heavily on vehicle fleet and machinery in their delivery. Complete the work package ahead of a 2024 waste service options review to ensure results and recommendations inform Council decision making. An assessment would need to first focus on identifying need via an Options Appraisal for all waste streams covering <u>required</u> waste services (domestic refuse, recycling and potentially, soon-to-be food waste) and <u>additional</u> waste services (garden, commercial, bulky). Review total cost in the running of each service, total income generated, associated impact on climate change, alongside other factors relating to, for example, health and wellbeing of waste operatives. Evaluate whole-life cost of carbon, and end-to-end impact, of waste services with consideration to both collection and processing of waste. Employ national models of assessment where these are available. Recommendations put forward on resource-efficiency measures. Review building, depot and bulking station need in West Oxfordshire for the 2024 waste service options review so that space requirement and infrastructure is planned as part of a longer-term strategy to i) reduce transport fuel demand and ii) facilitate a transition to vehicle fleet powered by alternative sources of low-carbon energy. Informed by Options Appraisal and interlinked with Green Vehicle Fleet Transition Plan. Any new depot/s should be designed to the highest possible standards, aspiring to net-zero carbon in operation, in order to mitigate for future impact on climate change. Acknowledge the demand-reduction benefits of ecologically-sensitive land management practices such as relaxed mowing regimes and the positive impacts of these in terms of reducing fuel demand of machinery used in grounds maintenance. Interlink with Land Management Plans. 	√			
				√	
				√	
				√	
			√		

Guiding Principle	WASTE, STREET CLEANSING & GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT	Easy		Hard	
		Impact		Impact	
		High	Low	High	Low
GP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with UBICO to produce and present a Green Vehicle Fleet Transition Plan for the electrification of vehicle fleet over the course of a carbon-neutral trajectory. A transition plan would need to include details of the current lifetime of vehicles within the Council's fleet and also reflect need as determined by decisions taken following an Options Appraisal. Note: whilst electrification may play a leading role for vehicle fleet up to 3 tonnes, there is potential for alternative low-carbon fuel such as hydrogen becoming a more viable option in the future for heavier, waste collection vehicles. Electrification of machinery, for example battery-operated lawnmowers and chainsaws made a stipulation of future waste, street cleansing and grounds maintenance contract delivery. 		√		
GP3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For electric vehicle fleet associated with a waste, street cleansing and grounds maintenance contract to be considered fully zero-emission, electric vehicle charging points should be supplied using a source of clean energy. Increased demand for power will need to be met via supply of renewable energy. 			√	
GP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any residual emissions that can not be entirely removed, offset by 2030 through a mechanism endorsed within this Plan. 				

Guiding Principle	STAFF & COUNCILLOR BUSINESS TRAVEL	Easy		Hard	
		Impact		Impact	
		High	Low	High	Low
GP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a method for measuring and recording Councillors' business miles travelled in order to increase the accuracy of reporting of CO2e in future years. Use data to review the positive impacts of holding virtual Council meetings. Reduce staff business miles between offices in a permanent move to meetings via remote access unless a critical business need requires face-to-face. Assess the viability of installing electric vehicle charging points (EVCP) at Council offices for staff and Councillors to support a transition away from fossil fuels to alternatively-powered vehicles. Install EVCP in line with Oxfordshire EV strategy and standards. Promote employee leased car scheme available to staff to encourage wider take up of Electric Vehicles offering significant tax benefits. Promote with staff and Councillors the benefits of using public transport for business purposes. 	√			
GP2					
GP3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For electric vehicles associated with staff and Councillor business travel to be considered fully zero-emission, EVCP should be supplied using a source of clean energy. Increased demand for power will need to be met via supply of renewable energy. 			√	
GP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any residual emissions that can not be entirely removed, offset by 2030 through a mechanism endorsed within this Plan. 				

Guiding Principle	COUNCIL VEHICLE FLEET FOR STAFF	Easy		Hard	
		Impact		Impact	
		High	Low	High	Low
GP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the viability of installing electric vehicle charging points (EVCP) at Council offices for staff and Councillors to support a transition away from fossil fuels to alternatively-powered vehicles. Install EVCP in line with Oxfordshire EV strategy and standards. Review existing demand for vehicle fleet – ‘pool cars’ – and plan for their replacement with EV vehicles once EVCP are installed at Council offices. 			√	
GP2					
GP3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EVCP should be supplied using a source of clean energy. Increased demand for power will need to be met via supply of renewable energy. 			√	
GP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any residual emissions that can not be entirely removed, offset by 2030 through a mechanism endorsed within this Plan. 				

Annex 1: Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Accounts 2019/2020.

2019/2020 Total Emissions by Scope.

Annual 2019/20			
Scope	Source	CO ₂ e (kg)	CO ₂ (kg)
One	Gas	980,616	978,749
	Liquid fuel	1,039,604	1,025,359
	Total Scope 1	2,020,220	2,004,108
Two	Electricity	447,126	443,099
	Total Scope 2	447,126	443,099
Three	WTT Gas	127,517	
	WTT Liquid fuel	248,346	
	Business travel	45,787	45,472
	WTT Business travel	11,785	
	Electricity T&D	38,453	38,108
	WTT Electricity	61,697	
	WTT Electricity T&D	5,312	
	Water consumption	15,957	
	Total Scope 3	554,853	83,579
	Total emissions	3,022,199	2,530,786

2019/2020 Total Emissions by Location.

Year	2019/20
Row Labels	Sum of CO ₂ emissions (kg CO ₂ e)
Depots	29,305
Leisure centres	1,276,260
Office buildings	234,315
Other buildings	123,246
Public conveniences	13,551
Council fleet & machinery liquid fuel	1,277,051
Sub-contractor liquid fuel	10,898
Staff business travel	51,633
Councillor business travel	5,939
Grand Total	3,022,199

2019/2020 Total Emissions by Category.

Year	2019/20
Source category	(All)
Row Labels	Sum of CO2 emissions (kg CO2 e)
Liquid Fuel	1,277,051
Diesel	940,313
Diesel - WTT	225,344
Gas Oil	87,428
Gas Oil - WTT	20,053
Petrol	3,073
Petrol - WTT	841
Leisure centres	1,276,260
Carterton Leisure Centre	550,162
Windrush Leisure Centre	464,341
Chipping Norton Leisure Centre	261,757
Office buildings	234,315
Woodgreen	122,236
Elmfield	96,914
Witney TCS	15,165
Other buildings	123,246
Woodstock Pool	51,365
Witney ATP	26,736
Monahan Pavilion	23,262
Bartholomew Pool	12,489
Temporary car park	3,759
The Guildhall	2,926
Marriots Close	1,516
Carterton ATP	779
Car Parks	284
Swain/Newman Court Industrial Estate	54
CCTV Camera 42	41
Welch Way, Witney	23
Greystones Industrial Estate	15
The Weavers, Farm Hill, Witney	1

WODC staff business travel	51,633
Publica vehicle mileage - Divided for WODC	37,507
Publica vehicle mileage - Divided for WODC - WTT	9,749
Publica (WODC Only) Rail Travel	1,124
WODC ONLY staff - Petrol	1,088
Publica (WODC Only) Bus travel	543
WODC ONLY staff - Diesel	497
WODC ONLY staff - Petrol - WTT	298
Publica (WODC Only) UK air travel	249
Publica (WODC Only) Rail Travel - WTT	220
Publica (WODC Only) Bus travel - WTT	130
WODC ONLY staff - Diesel - WTT	120
Publica (WODC Only) London underground	38
Publica (WODC Only) Taxi travel	31
Publica (WODC Only) UK air travel - WTT	27
Publica (WODC Only) Taxi travel - WTT	7
Publica (WODC Only) London underground - WTT	5
Depots	29,305
Depot (Ubico) - Station Lane (2) (Meter #: 2000008977235)	20,447
Depot (Ubico) - Station Lane (Meter #: 2000008977226)	8,739
Depot (Ubico) - Station Lane	119
Public conveniences	13,551
P. Con: Langdale Gate	1,677
P. Con: Spendlove Centre	1,579
P. Con: Burford High Street	1,541
P. Con: Browns Lane	1,361
Public conveniences (All)	1,300
P. Con: Hensington Road	1,181
P. Con: New Street Car Park	1,165
P. Con: The Leys	1,134
P. Con: Town Hall, Chipping Norton	998
P. Con: Guildenford	727
P. Con: Bampton (Market Square)	397
P. Con: Black Bourton Road	260
P. Con: Back Lane, Eynsham	231
Sub-contractor Fuel	10,898
Diesel	8,751
Petrol - WTT	2,097
Petrol	39
Diesel - WTT	11
WODC councillors business travel	5,939
WODC councillor vehicle mileage	4,746
WODC councillor vehicle mileage - WTT	1,193
Grand Total	3,022,199



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	Council: Wednesday 28 October 2020
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 14
Subject	Motion: Live Streaming of Council and Committee Meetings
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Toby Morris, Cabinet Member for Resources, Email: toby.morris@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Keith Butler Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider the motion originally proposed and seconded at Council on 23 October 2019, in the context of the comments and recommendation of the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Annex	Annex 1 : Report considered by the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held 7 October 2020 Annex 2 : Draft minute from that meeting
Recommendation	That the Council considers and determines the motion in the light of the recommendation of the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Corporate priorities	Not applicable.
Key Decision	N/A
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. At the meeting of the Council held on 23 October 2019, the following Motion was proposed by Councillor Jake Acock and seconded by Councillor Andy Graham, namely:-
“One of the ethos of this council is to be inclusive; not exclusive. We want to welcome people in and get more and more active with local government. This council recognises we are living in an age of technology that can be used to keep in touch, improve communications and change peoples lives for the better. Therefore, in order to improve our communications, we charge that every council and committee meeting is filmed and recorded, then placed on the West Oxfordshire District Council website for West Oxfordshire residents to view and listen to our meetings. Across the country from Manchester, Wandsworth and Bath, council meetings are recorded. Therefore, this council charges that we will now record and stream live all of our council meetings and committee meetings”
- 1.2. The motion having been duly proposed and seconded stood referred without discussion to the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment and advice.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. [Annex 1](#) to this report is the report considered by the Committee on 7 October 2020, and also makes reference to previous consideration by the Committee and by Council on 27 November 2019 and 22 January 2020 respectively.
- 2.2. Also included, at [Annex 2](#), is the draft minute from the meeting of the Committee held on 7 October.
- 2.3. After a full and detailed discussion, the Committee’s recommendation to Council is: *“That the motion be deferred for twelve months because there were other financial priorities to consider at the present time”*.
- 2.4. Council is invited to consider the recommendation made by the Committee, and is of course free to decide the matter as it sees fit.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. As set out in [Annex 1](#).

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. None

5. RISK ASSESSMENT


- 5.1. Not applicable

6. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

- 6.1. Alternatives which were looked at in preparing the report for the Committee are set out in [Annex 1](#).
- 6.2. The Council may choose whether or not to pursue any of those options, or whether to identify an alternative approach.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1. None

 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>West Oxfordshire District Council</p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p>Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday 7 October 2020</p>
<p>Report Number</p>	<p>Agenda Item No. 9</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>Live Streaming of Council and Committee Meetings</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Cllr Toby Morris, Cabinet Member for Resources Email: toby.morris@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Phil Martin, Group Manager, Business Support Services Tel: 07764352360; Email: phil.martin@publicagroup.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To further consider the Motion regarding webcasting of meetings referred to the Committee by the Council and to submit comments or recommendations accordingly.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That consideration be given to the Motion as set out below, and comments or a recommendation be made to Council.</p>
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>To meet the current and future needs and aspirations of residents and to provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services.</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>N/A</p>

I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. At the meeting of the Council held on 23 October 2019, the following Motion was proposed by Councillor Jake Acock and seconded by Councillor Andy Graham, namely:-
“One of the ethos of this council is to be inclusive; not exclusive. We want to welcome people in and get more and more active with local government. This council recognises we are living in an age of technology that can be used to keep in touch, improve communications and change peoples lives for the better. Therefore, in order to improve our communications, we charge that every council and committee meeting is filmed and recorded, then placed on the West Oxfordshire District Council website for West Oxfordshire residents to view and listen to our meetings. Across the country from Manchester, Wandsworth and Bath, council meetings are recorded. Therefore, this council charges that we will now record and stream live all of our council meetings and committee meetings”
- 1.2. In accordance with paragraph 11(e) of the Council Procedure Rules, it was resolved that the motion should stand referred without discussion to this Committee – minute no. 50 of the meeting held 27 November 2019 refers.
- 1.3. Subsequently, Council further considered the matter at its meeting on 22 January 2020 (minute no. 56) and resolved:
 - (a) That further study was required on the various methods of recording available, location options and cost of installation;
 - (b) That the meetings rooms to be included in the evidence gathering should be Committee Rooms 1 & 2 and the Council Chamber, and that feedback should be sought from other Councils which had installed systems, or were due to do so; and
 - (c) That the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to consider the costings and other information prior to further consideration by the Council.
- 1.4. This further report has been delayed as a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic, including the cancellation of some meetings earlier in the year, and the situation has of course developed and been influenced by the holding of meetings via video conferencing, which became temporarily permissible under legislation made by the Government in April.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. The Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee has previously considered a report on the Webcasting of Council meetings, in March 2016. A copy of that report and the associated minute extract were attached to [the report to this Committee on 27 November 2019](#). At that time the Committee resolved *“That the content of the report be noted and the Cabinet be advised that the Committee was of the opinion that no further action should be taken on the matter at this juncture.”*
- 2.2. In the four and a half years that have passed since this matter was last considered, the webcasting/live streaming of meetings has become more commonplace. Across the Publica partnership, Forest of Dean District Council introduced webcasting of its Council and Planning Committee meetings in May 2018; Cheltenham Borough Council introduced webcasting from its Council Chamber only, in October 2019; and Cotswold District Council has recently approved the award of a contract for the purchase and implementation of a hybrid web casting solution.
- 2.3. On 4 April 2020 as a result of the pandemic the ‘Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings)

(England and Wales) Regulations 2020' were passed by Government. This temporarily removed the legal requirement for local authorities to hold public meetings in person thus giving Councils the powers to hold public meetings virtually by using video or telephone conferencing technology. The Regulations and consequent power are in place until 7 May 2021, however this is currently under review so may be extended or made permanent.

- 2.4. Following the change in legislation the Council has used a video conferencing solution to virtually hold and broadcast Council meetings, which has been well received by residents, with just under 900 views on average per meeting (this should be treated purely indicative as all views even if they were only for a few minutes are included in this figure). Because the current powers are time bound there are no guarantees that the current arrangements for live streaming will be able to continue and, in any event, the current system is not suitable for the webcasting of physical meetings taking place at the Council offices, meaning that an alternative solution is required.
- 2.5. In order to future proof any decision regarding webcasting solutions, it is considered that any system would need to have the capability for Councillors to take part either from the offices or from an alternative location such as their home, thereby providing the flexibility to operate during the current pandemic and when movement / access is less restricted. The following options are based around a hybrid approach that meets this requirement.

3. OPTION 1 – PROVIDING RECORDING AND WEBCASTING CAPABILITIES FOR THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND COMMITTEE ROOMS 1 & 2

- 3.1. The implementation of a webcasting solution that provides functionality for meetings to be held in either the Council Chamber or Committee Rooms independently.
- 3.2. The solution can be configured for either a dual delegate unit, which enables two members to log into one delegate unit, with each unit having its own push to talk button and voting capability or a single unit. The difference in costs will be outlined in the finance section of the report.
- 3.3. The solution will utilise four cameras located in the Council Chamber to digitally capture the meeting and three large flat TVs would be installed so that all participants can see what is happening throughout the meeting.
- 3.4. Committee Room 1 would have a similar specification to the Council Chamber using multiple cameras to record the meeting and additional TV screens so that when needed the dividers can be opened up to give access to Committee Room 2, which would be equipped with two cameras and speakers so attendees can fully take part in the meeting.
- 3.5. As with the webex video conferencing system currently being used for all meetings, Councillors would also be able to join the meeting at another location, from their personal device, via a web browser. Whilst possible, this would happen only if Government Regulations allow it beyond 7 May 2021, but would remain possible for informal meetings, such as Councillor briefings or workshops.

4. OPTION 2 - PROVISION OF RECORDING AND WEBCASTING CAPABILITY FOR THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

- 4.1. The implementation of a webcasting solution that provides functionality for meetings to be held in the Council Chamber. The solution can be configured for either a single or dual delegate unit. The difference in costs will be outlined in the finance section of the report.

5. OPTION 3 - RECONFIGURATION OF COUNCIL CHAMBER OR COMMITTEE ROOM 1, WHICH WILL INCORPORATE RECORDING AND WEBCASTING CAPABILITIES

- 5.1. The layout of the Council Chamber is inflexible and so limits how it can be used currently and as a result of this it has generally been used only for full Council and Cabinet meetings, with other meetings being held in the Committee Rooms, mainly Committee Room One.
- 5.2. A possible solution to this is to explore the feasibility of either reconfiguring the Council Chamber so that it could then host all meetings or alternatively making the necessary changes to Committee Room One and hosting all meetings in there, thus freeing up the Council Chamber to be re-purposed.
- 5.3. Whilst costs have been provided for the technical solution in the finance implications section, these do not include the costs of new furniture, lighting and other items required in either the Committee Room or Council Chamber. If the Committee wishes to pursue this option than a full set of costs will be produced.
- 5.4. In addition to providing a steer on their preferred options, the Committee may also wish to provide some clarity as to which meetings might be webcast/live streamed, as there will be different implications associated with different options.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The indicative one off capital costs for the options outlined in the main body of the report are:

Option	Costs
Option 1 with Dual delegate units	£192,132
Option 1 with Single delegate units -	£270,347
Option 2 with Dual delegate units –	£98,109
Option 2 with Single delegate units –	£156,253
Option 3 (re-configuration of Committee Room 1)	£92,189 (does not include furniture or other associated costs)

- 6.2. The revenue costs for system maintenance and hosting are £32,195, based on a three-year contract paid upfront and then £12,763 annually afterwards.
- 6.3. Currently there isn't any funding available in either the Council's capital programme or revenue budgets so this needs to be taken into consideration as part of the recommendation to Council. Should the Council wish to proceed, it will need to be subject to the budgetary process and to it being in a position to make a decision in the knowledge of what consequential impacts there may be.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are potential data protection issues associated with webcasting and live streaming of meetings. Should Council decide to progress with such a project it would be essential to learn from the experience of others and ensure robust safeguards were in place to protect against the misuse of such recordings. This will include the installation of notices in the council chamber and/or other rooms where webcasting/live streaming takes place, updating the constitution to include a protocol for webcasting, and an updated privacy notice.

- 7.2. Although it is recommended that if the Council chooses to progress this matter it should choose a hybrid-option, it remains the case that from May 2021 it may not be possible for councillors to attend a meeting otherwise than by being physically present.
- 7.3. In order to comply with both public procurement regulations and the Council's own Contract Procedure Rules, a framework would be used as this mitigate risks, whilst also reduces the costs and time involved.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1. The main risk associated with webcasting/live-streaming of meetings is highlighted in section 7 above, i.e. the misuse of such recordings. Putting in place robust safeguards would mitigate against such a risk.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 9.1. The Council could choose not to implement a recording / webcasting solution and return to how meetings were held once the current ability to hold meetings remotely changes or comes to an end. It is also possible that the Government may advise that hybrid meetings take place either temporarily – to protect anyone particularly at risk from Covid – or permanently to make democracy more accessible.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1. None.

**Extract from the draft minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Management
Overview and Scrutiny Committee held 7 October 2020**

MOTION; LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Group Manager, Business Support Services, which asked that consideration be given to the motion as set out below, and comments or a recommendation be made to Council.

At the Council meeting on 23 October 2019, the following was proposed by Councillor Jake Acock and seconded by Councillor Andy Graham:

“One of the ethos of this council is to be inclusive; not exclusive. We want to welcome people in and get more and more active with local government. This council recognises we are living in an age of technology that can be used to keep in touch, improve communications and change peoples lives for the better. Therefore, in order to improve our communications, we charge that every council and committee meeting is filmed and recorded, then placed on the West Oxfordshire District Council website for West Oxfordshire residents to view and listen to our meetings. Across the country from Manchester, Wandsworth and Bath, council meetings are recorded. Therefore, this council charges that we will now record and stream live all of our council meetings and committee meetings”

It was resolved at the meeting that the motion would stand referred without discussion to the Finance & Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and a copy of the minutes was attached as an appendix to the report.

Council further considered the matter at its meeting on 22 January 2020 and resolved:

- (a) That further study was required on the various methods of recording available, location options and cost of installation;
- (b) That the meetings rooms to be included in the evidence gathering should be Committee Rooms 1 & 2 and the Council Chamber, and that feedback should be sought from other Councils which had installed systems, or were due to do so; and
- (c) That the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to consider the costings and other information prior to further consideration by the Council.

The report noted that this work had been delayed as a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic, including the cancellation of some meetings earlier in the year.

The report outlined a number of options for Councillors to consider which varied in the location that the equipment could be installed in, the type and functionality of the units and whether there were individual or dual units provided.

The indicative, one off costs for each option were broken down and explained in section 6 of the report and varied in value from £92,189 to £270,347. However, there were also maintenance and hosting costs to be taken into account. The report also highlighted that there was not any funding available in existing budgets and any decision would therefore be subject to the budgetary process.

The Group Manager, Business Support Services, Phil Martin, introduced the report and reminded Members of the current legislation relating to virtual meetings that was only in place until May 2021. He also advised that across the Publica partnership, Forest of Dean District Council had introduced webcasting of its Council and Planning Committee meetings in May 2018; Cheltenham Borough Council introduced webcasting from its Council Chamber only, in October 2019; and Cotswold District Council had recently approved the award of a contract for the purchase and implementation of a hybrid web casting solution.

There were differing opinions across the Committee with some feeling that the costs described were too high to consider at the moment, whereas others supported the investment as it was important to ensure the public could continue to participate in decision making.

It was noted that Council meetings were operating in a different environment compared to when the motion was originally considered and the Webex solution was satisfactory for the time being.

In response to a query from Councillor Leffman, Mr Martin explained that any contract would need to be subject to an open tender process and each authority was operating on differing timelines.

Councillor Langridge proposed that the motion should be deferred for a twelve month period because there were other financial priorities to consider at the present time. This was seconded by Councillor McBride.

Councillor Al-Yousuf suggested that the Committee amend the proposal to include reference to Option 3 which would help give officers a steer as to the style and location of equipment preferred. It was broadly supported that Committee Room 1 was a more suitable location for the equipment as the costs were lower and there could be potential for hiring out the space in the future.

As the proposer of the existing motion, Councillor Langridge did not feel that the officer time involved in supporting Option 3 could be justified and did not want to amend his recommendation.

The Committee therefore

RECOMMENDED: That the motion be deferred for twelve months because there were other financial priorities to consider at the present time.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	Council: Wednesday 28 October 2020
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 15
Subject	Motion: Electronic Communications
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Toby Morris, Cabinet Member for Resources, Email: toby.morris@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Keith Butler Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider the motion originally proposed and seconded at Council on 22 January 2020, in the context of the comments and recommendation of the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Annex	Annex 1 : Report considered by the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held 7 October 2020 Annex 2 : Draft minute from that meeting
Recommendation	That the Council considers and determines the motion in the light of the recommendation of the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Corporate priorities	Not applicable.
Key Decision	N/A
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. At the meeting of the Council held on 22 January 2020, the following Motion was proposed by Councillor Jake Acock and seconded by Councillor Andy Graham, namely:-

“West Oxfordshire District Council places great importance upon communications with councillors, whether that be sending out agendas for meetings or through regular email updates.

West Oxfordshire District Council also places great importance upon environmental credentials and cost-effective projects.

Therefore, this council resolves that we will no longer send paper copies of communications including agendas for all meetings and will issue every councillor with an iPad for council business.

This will allow the council to:

- a) have stronger greener credentials and help to tackle the climate crisis.*
- b) be more cost and staff efficient.*
- c) be more GDPR friendly.*

This council resolves that this will be added to the 2020 budget and that all councillors will be issued with an iPad by May 2020”.

- 1.2. The motion having been duly proposed and seconded stood referred without discussion to the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment and advice.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. [Annex 1](#) to this report is the report considered by the Committee on 7 October 2020.
- 2.2. Also included, at [Annex 2](#), is the draft minute from that meeting.
- 2.3. After a full and detailed discussion, the Committee’s recommendation to Council is: *“That the motion is not pursued at the present time”.*
- 2.4. Council is invited to consider the recommendation made by the Committee, and is of course free to decide the matter as it sees fit.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. As set out in [Annex 1](#).

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. None

5. RISK ASSESSMENT


- 5.1. Not applicable

6. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

- 6.1. None applicable.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1. None

 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>West Oxfordshire District Council</p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p>Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday 7 October 2020</p>
<p>Report Number</p>	<p>Agenda Item No.</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>Electronic Communications</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Cllr Toby Morris, Cabinet Member for Resources Email: toby.morris@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Phil Martin, Group Manager, Business Support Services Tel: 07764352360; Email: phil.martin@publicagroup.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To consider the motion regarding electronic communications referred to the Committee by the Council and to submit comments or recommendations accordingly.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That consideration be given to the motion as set out below, and comments or a recommendation be made to Council.</p>
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>To meet the current and future needs and aspirations of residents and to provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services.</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>N/A</p>

I. BACKGROUND

1.1. At the meeting of the Council held on 22 January 2020, the following Motion was proposed by Councillor Jake Acock and seconded by Councillor Andy Graham, namely:-

“West Oxfordshire District Council places great importance upon communications with councillors, whether that be sending out agendas for meetings or through regular email updates.

West Oxfordshire District Council also places great importance upon environmental credentials and cost-effective projects.

Therefore, this council resolves that we will no longer send paper copies of communications including agendas for all meetings and will issue every councillor with an iPad for council business.

This will allow the council to:

- a) have stronger greener credentials and help to tackle the climate crisis.*
- b) be more cost and staff efficient.*
- c) be more GDPR friendly.*

This council resolves that this will be added to the 2020 budget and that all councillors will be issued with an iPad by May 2020”.

1.2. In accordance with paragraph 11(e) of the Council Procedure Rules, it was resolved that the motion should stand referred without discussion to this Committee – minute no. 60 of the meeting held 22 January 2019 refers.

1.3. This report has been delayed as a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic, including the cancellation of some meetings earlier in the year, but is now intended to give the opportunity for the Committee to consider the motion and submit comments and/or a recommendation to Council.

2. MAIN POINTS

2.1. The potential financial implications of providing an iPad for all Councillors are included in section 3 below.

2.2. It will of course be for the Council to decide whether or how to proceed in this matter, but it is hoped that the following comments will be of interest:

- In the current circumstances where Councillors are attending meetings via video conferencing, it may not be suitable for them to also need a screen/device for viewing the documents for the meeting in question
- It is already the case that meetings papers are made available in a “document pack” that contains appropriate links and bookmarks to facilitate electronic navigation of the documents. These are in pdf format and can be read on any device; and may be distributed additional to or instead of paper copies, as desired
- That said, if an iPad or similar was used, it is likely that that could be in conjunction with software which would enable the documents to be annotated by the user. It is likely that the CMIS system currently used for administering and publishing meeting documents and councillor information etc will be replaced in 2021, in which case the roll out of devices, if approved, might best be scheduled to coincide with the change
- It is undoubtedly the case that an iPad or similar would be more secure insofar as the councillor would be the only user of the device. It is also relevant that (i) only a very small proportion of documents are not for the public; (ii) they are or would only be supplied to the secure @westoxon email address for each councillor; and (iii) any device supplied by the council would be configured such that it could not be used for

other purposes and locked down via Mobile Device Management (MDM) software to ensure it was secure.

- It is certainly the case that the electronic circulation of documents is quicker and more efficient than copying and posting, as well as being more environmentally friendly but, as stated above, this does not necessarily require the provision of a device.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1. The capital costs for the options outlined in the main body of the report are:

Device Options	Costs	Total
iPad – 10.2 Inch Screen, 32Gb Storage	£329	£16,121
iPad Air – 10.9 Inch Screen, 64 Gb Storage	£579	£28,371
iPad Pro – 11 Inch Screen, 128Gb Storage	£769	£37,681

- 3.2. In addition to the device costs, Councillors may require a keyboard, which also acts as a screen cover and cost between £159 and £179 depending on the model.
- 3.3. As the device will operate on the Council's ICT network it will need to be lockdown to ensure it complies with the Council PSN requirements. The revenue costs associated with the implementation of a Mobile Device Management (MDM) solution is approx. £100 per device so totally £4,900 per annum.
- 3.4. Based on the experience of supporting Cheltenham Borough Council who had issued iPads to their Councillors and have now chosen to replace them with laptops there is an increase in ICT support time that should be factored into any consideration along with the need to also budget for replacements and accessories such as covers.
- 3.5. The expected live cycle of a device such as an iPad that is constantly updated is on average 3 years, therefore an allocation would need to be made in the capital programme to fund an ongoing replacement programme
- 3.6. If all Councillors agreed to have Ipads and adopt a paperless approach in terms of the previous of meeting agendas and minutes the annual revenue saving would equate to approx. £5,000 to £7,000.
- 3.7. Whilst the issuing of an iPad to all Councillors would result in savings in time, and in printing and postage costs, it would require a full sign up otherwise a mixed approach could create work, which would then erode the potential to offset the costs.
- 3.8. Currently there isn't any funding set aside in either the Council's capital programme or revenue budgets so this needs to be taken into consideration as part of the recommendation to Council.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1. None identified

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. A potential risk associated with issuing Councillors with iPads is the loss of data if the device is misplaced / stolen, this is mitigated by locking down each devices so ensuing they will not have sensitive data stored on them.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1. The Council could choose not to provide Councillors with an iPad and continue paying an allowance for Councillors to purchase a device that suits their own personal needs.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Extract from the draft minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee held 7 October 2020

MOTION; ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Group Manager, Business Support Services, which asked that consideration be given to the motion as set out below, and comments or a recommendation be made to Council.

At the Council meeting on 22 January 2020, the following was proposed by Councillor Jake Acock and seconded by Councillor Andy Graham:

“West Oxfordshire District Council places great importance upon communications with councillors, whether that be sending out agendas for meetings or through regular email updates.

West Oxfordshire District Council also places great importance upon environmental credentials and cost-effective projects.

Therefore, this council resolves that we will no longer send paper copies of communications including agendas for all meetings and will issue every councillor with an iPad for council business.

This will allow the council to:

- a) have stronger greener credentials and help to tackle the climate crisis.*
- b) be more cost and staff efficient.*
- c) be more GDPR friendly.*

This council resolves that this will be added to the 2020 budget and that all councillors will be issued with an iPad by May 2020”.

It was resolved at the meeting that the motion would stand referred without discussion to the Finance & Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A copy of the minutes from the Council meeting was attached as an appendix to the report.

The report noted that this work had been delayed as a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic, including the cancellation of some meetings earlier in the year.

Officers had investigated the option of providing l pads to all Councillors and the cost implications associated with this were detailed in section 3 of the report. Additional costs were also detailed which needed consideration including the provision of keyboards, screen covers, implementation costs and ICT support time.

Members noted that there was not any funding available for this project and should the Council choose to proceed, it would need to be subject to the budgetary process.

Some Members felt that the move to electronic documents was a positive one and many had experience of this way of working through their town councils. However, some Members also felt that it may not be a sensible use of public money at this time.

Councillor Langridge proposed that Council be advised that the Committee did not feel the motion should be pursued at this time. This was seconded by Councillor St John.

RECOMMENDED: That the motion is not pursued at the present time.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	Council: Wednesday 28 October 2020
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 16
Subject	Motion: Firework Displays
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Alaa Al-Yousuf, Chairman Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Email: alaa.alyousuf@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Keith Butler Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider the motion proposed and seconded at Council on 26 February 2020, in the context of the comments and recommendation of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Annexes	Annex 1 : Minute from the Council meeting held 26 February 2020 Annex 2 : Draft minute from the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held 1 October 2020
Recommendation	That the Council considers and determines the motion in the light of the recommendation from the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Corporate priorities	Not applicable.
Key Decision	N/A
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. At the meeting of the Council on 26 February 2020, the following motion was proposed and seconded by Councillors Toby Morris and Suzi Coul respectively:

“This Council resolves:

- (a) To ask for all public firework displays within the local authority boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people*
- (b) To actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks*
- (c) To write to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the **environmental impact and** maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays*
- (d) To encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock **climate-friendly and** ‘quieter’ fireworks for public display”.*

- 1.2. The text in **red** reflects additional text incorporated into the motion by the proposer and seconder during the discussion at Council, the minute of which is attached at [Annex 1](#).

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. The Council agreed to refer the motion to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
- 2.2. The Committee subsequently considered the matter at its meeting held 1 October and the draft minute from that meeting is included in [Annex 2](#).
- 2.3. After a full and detailed discussion, the Committee’s recommendation to Council is that the motion be approved, subject to the Council also working with Town and Parish Councils on the matter, as referenced in the draft minute.
- 2.4. The Council is invited to consider the recommendation made by the Committee, and is of course free to decide the matter as it sees fit.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. None

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. Not applicable

6. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

- 6.1. Not applicable.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1. None

**Extract from the minutes of the Council meeting
held 26 February 2020**

NOTICE OF MOTION – FIREWORK DISPLAYS

The following motion had been received in the names of Councillors Toby Morris and Suzi Coul, namely:-

“This Council resolves:

- (a) To ask for all public firework displays within the local authority boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people*
- (b) To actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks*
- (c) To write to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays*
- (d) To encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock ‘quieter’ fireworks for public display”.*

Councillor Morris proposed the motion and explained that the matter had been brought to his attention by local residents who had been made aware of a similar proposal by the RSPCA. He added that as a dog owner himself, he was sympathetic to the intentions of the motion and whilst he did not wish to advocate being a ‘kill-joy’ considered it was one the Council should support. Councillor Morris explained that most public displays would already be advertised in advance, but the requirement to implement a maximum noise limit was due to the majority of private displays not being advertised to local residents and he hoped for these reasons, Council would support the motion.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Coul.

Councillor Postan expressed the view that whilst fireworks were a part of British history, they were, in his view, an uncontrolled and unlicensed nuisance which caused risks to livestock and pets. He added that he considered the activity was one that should be licensed and he therefore supported a review of the Council’s licensing system, should the motion be supported, to ensure firework displays were included as part of that system.

Councillor Bolger commented that whilst she supported the intentions of the motion, she wished to propose an amendment to recommendations (c) and (d) of the motion so as to read; “(c) To write to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the environmental impact and maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays”; and “(d) To encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock climate-friendly and ‘quieter’ fireworks for public display”.

Councillors Morris and Coul confirmed that they were happy to accept the amendment as proposed by Councillor Bolger.

Councillor Leffman informed the Council that whilst she agreed with the views of Councillor Postan, she considered that the main issue was with private displays and was unsure how lowering the decibel level would address this issue. Councillor Leffman therefore proposed that the motion be referred to the Council’s Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Morris and Coul confirmed that they were content for the motion, as amended, to be referred to that Committee, and it was -.

RESOLVED: That the revised motion, having been duly proposed and seconded, be referred to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment and advice.

**Extract from the draft minutes of the
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held 1 October 2020**

MOTION: FIREWORK DISPLAYS

The Committee considered the motion proposed by Councillor Toby Morris and seconded by Councillor Suzi Coul, as amended following comments from Councillor Bolger, at the meeting of the Council held 26 February 2020:

“This Council resolves:

- (a) To ask for all public firework displays within the local authority boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people*
- (b) To actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks*
- (c) To write to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the environmental impact and maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays*
- (d) To encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock climate-friendly and ‘quieter’ fireworks for public display*

The Committee was asked to consider the matter and agree on any comments or recommendations to be submitted to Council.

The seconder of the original motion, Councillor Coul, addressed Members and reiterated the difficulties that animal owners experienced when unexpected fireworks were set off. It was noted that discussion on the motion had been delayed due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequential postponement of scrutiny meetings.

The Committee accepted that many organised, public displays were adequately advertised and noted that the District Council did not have a statutory duty to regulate firework displays.

It was felt that the Council could do more to work proactively with event organisers, town and parish councils, and to educate residents to encourage them to consider their neighbours when arranging celebrations. The Committee was also supportive of the proposal to write to businesses and encourage them to stock fireworks with lower decibel levels.

Councillor Leffman proposed that the motion be amended to include specific reference to the Council contacting Parish and Town Councils with a view to them publishing communications in their parish newsletters and advising them of Members’ desire to protect people and animals.

The Committee agreed that this should be included and the proposition was put to the vote and was carried.

RECOMMENDED: That the Council works with Parish and Town Councils and

- (a) asks for all public firework displays within the local authority boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people;
- (b) actively promotes a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks;
- (c) writes to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the environmental impact and maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays; and
- (d) encourages local suppliers of fireworks to stock climate-friendly and ‘quieter’ fireworks for public display.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	Council: Wednesday 28 October 2020
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 17
Subject	Motion: Environmental Awards for Businesses
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Alaa Al-Yousuf, Chairman Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Email: alaa.alyousuf@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Keith Butler Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider the motion proposed and seconded at Council on 26 February 2020, in the context of the comments and recommendation of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Annex	Annex 1 : Draft minute from the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held 1 October 2020
Recommendation	That the Council considers and determines the motion in the light of the recommendation from the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Corporate priorities	Not applicable.
Key Decision	N/A
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. At the meeting of the Council on 26 February 2020, the following motion was proposed and seconded by Councillors Duncan Enright and Rosa Bolger respectively:

“In light of the climate emergency, the council will encourage businesses and organisations in the district to adopt more sustainable modes of operation. The council therefore resolves to investigate methods to encourage this by audit and award schemes to recognise good practice. These will include exploring best practice by local authorities, the inclusion of environmental measures in procurement decisions, considering awards similar to environmental health audits for food outlets, and discussion with West Oxfordshire Business Awards (WOBA) about sustainability awards.”

- 1.2. The motion having been duly proposed and seconded stood referred without discussion to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment and advice.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. The Committee subsequently considered the matter at its meeting held 1 October and the draft minute and recommendation from that meeting is included in [Annex 1](#).

- 2.2. After a full and detailed discussion, the Committee’s recommendation to Council is: *“That the Council encourages businesses and organisations in the district to adopt more sustainable modes of operation. The Council should ask the Climate Action Working Group to investigate methods to encourage this by audit and award schemes to recognise good practice, including exploring best practice by local authorities, the inclusion of environmental measures in procurement decisions, considering awards similar to environmental health audits for food outlets, and discussion with West Oxfordshire Business Awards (WOBA) about sustainability awards”*.

- 2.3. The Council is invited to consider the recommendation made by the Committee, and is of course free to decide the matter as it sees fit.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. None

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. Not applicable

6. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

- 6.1. Not applicable.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1. None

**Extract from the draft minutes of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny
Committee held 1 October 2020**

MOTION: ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS FOR BUSINESSES

The Committee considered the motion proposed by Councillor Duncan Enright and seconded by Councillor Rosa Bolger at the meeting of the Council held 26 February 2020:

“In light of the climate emergency, the council will encourage businesses and organisations in the district to adopt more sustainable modes of operation. The council therefore resolves to investigate methods to encourage this by audit and award schemes to recognise good practice. These will include exploring best practice by local authorities, the inclusion of environmental measures in procurement decisions, considering awards similar to environmental health audits for food outlets, and discussion with West Oxfordshire Business Awards (WOBA) about sustainability awards.”

The Committee was asked to consider the matter and agree on any comments or recommendations to be submitted to Council.

The Committee was supportive of the motion and noted that some local businesses already promoted their environmental commitment. There was discussion about how the awarding process would be resourced and whether it could be included in existing work streams of the Climate Action Working Group or the Covid-19 Recovery Plan.

It was noted that WOBA already provided awards to local businesses and it was suggested that the Council approach WOBA and ask them to consider including a sustainability award in their programme.

Councillor Enright felt that the motion was a good starting point, worth pursuing and the details could be worked out later.

The Climate Change Manager, Ness Scott, advised that the scheme could be as large or as small as required and quoted some examples of other Local Authorities which ran similar incentives.

Having considered the comments made, the Committee agreed that the motion should be supported and suggested that the awards be included within the work of the Climate Action Working Group.

RECOMMENDED: That the Council encourages businesses and organisations in the district to adopt more sustainable modes of operation. The Council should ask the Climate Action Working Group to investigate methods to encourage this by audit and award schemes to recognise good practice, including exploring best practice by local authorities, the inclusion of environmental measures in procurement decisions, considering awards similar to environmental health audits for food outlets, and discussion with West Oxfordshire Business Awards (WOBA) about sustainability awards.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	Council – Wednesday 28 October 2020
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 18
Subject	Emergency and Urgency Delegations Decisions
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr James Mills, Leader of the Council Email: james.mills@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Keith Butler Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To note decisions taken under the emergency and urgency delegation arrangements approved by Council on 13 May 2020.
Annexes	None
Recommendation	That the report be noted.
Corporate priorities	N/A
Key Decision	N/A
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. At its meeting on 13 May 2020, the Council approved Emergency and Urgency delegations to the Chief Executive to enable decisions to be taken which were either an emergency, or where there was urgency such that the matter could not reasonably await the next meeting of whichever body would otherwise take that decision.
- 1.2. The report on the matter included the statement that: *“Any decision under the above provisions shall be recorded and published, and reported to Council, Cabinet or the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee, such report to include the reasons that the powers needed to be used”*.
- 1.3. This report specifies four decisions taken under those powers.

2. PAVEMENT LICENSING POLICY

- 2.1. The Business and Planning Act 2020 received Royal Assent on 22 July. The Act included urgent provisions designed to make it easier for premises in England serving food and drink such as bars, restaurants and pubs to seat and serve customers outdoors through temporary changes to planning procedures and alcohol licensing. The Pavement Licensing provisions came into effect immediately, on the receipt of Royal Assent. The administration of Pavement Licensing under the Act is a responsibility of the District Council, and necessitated the approval of a policy for administering the necessary processes.
- 2.2. The Policy needed to be approved in a very short timescale, meaning that the Urgency powers were used and the decision to approve the Policy made following consultation with the Chair of the Miscellaneous Licensing Sub-Committee.
- 2.3. A report and the Policy were subsequently reported to the Sub-Committee, and may be viewed on the [Council's website](#).

3. EMERGENCY FOOD AND ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES GRANT ASSISTANCE SCHEME

- 3.1. The Government provided funding which, in two tier areas, was directed to counties, with a requirement to consider whether other authorities were better placed to deliver the funds. Within fairly broad criteria, the expectation was that the funding was used to support individuals suffering hardship as a result of COVID-19.
- 3.2. The requirement was for the funding of approximately £50,000 provided to West Oxfordshire to be spent within three months, meaning that a Policy needed to be agreed as a matter of urgency, which the Chief Executive did, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Health and Leisure. The approved Policy is in Annex A to a report which is [available on the website](#).

4. DELEGATION OF ENFORCEMENT POWERS UNDER COVID-19 LEGISLATION

- 4.1. The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restriction) (England) (No.3) Regulations 2020 gave Oxfordshire County Council; powers relating to the control and prevention of coronavirus, and the County Council wished to delegate those powers such that they could be undertaken by this Council.
- 4.2. The powers needed to be capable of being used as soon as was practicably possible, meaning that the emergency delegation power was used by the Chief Executive for the purpose.
- 4.3. The decisions were:

- To accept the delegation of powers to enable West Oxfordshire District Council to carry out enforcement actions detailed by The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restriction) (England) (No.3) Regulations 2020.
 - To authorise the Business Manager for Environmental and Regulatory Services, acting in consultation with the Chief Executive, to enter into all necessary and appropriate contracts and agreements to implement the delivery of the enforcement work on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC).
 - To delegate authority to the Business Manager Regulatory Services to perform the enforcement duties of OCC set out in any such agreements referred to above.
- 4.4. Prior to July 2020 the powers available to local authorities to enable them to fully implement the measures potentially needed to prevent, protect against, delay or otherwise control the incidence or spread of coronavirus in their area were not sufficient. The Regulations referenced above were intended to address/remedy this, and are effective until 17 January 2021. The acceptance of the powers from the County Council did not transfer the County Council's enforcement obligations under the Regulations but, in so far as this Council utilises those powers, it will be acting on behalf of the county and the latter will include that activity in the reports it is required to make to Government.
- 4.5. The Powers under the Regulations include the following main provisions:
- Closure of, or limiting access to, individual premises. Under this Regulation a local authority may impose prohibitions, requirements or restrictions in relation to entry and exit from or location of people within, specified premises. The authority cannot give this direction to any business or premises that forms part of essential infrastructure (as defined in the Regulations), vehicles used for public transport or the carriage or haulage of goods
 - Impose prohibitions, requirements or restrictions in relation to the holding of a specified event or events of a specified description. The direction can be given to; the owner or occupier of the premises for an event; the organiser of such an event; any person involved in holding such an event. A direction may impose requirements about informing persons who may be planning to attend an event of any prohibitions, requirements or restrictions imposed in relation to the holding of it.
 - Closure of public outdoor places or prohibit or restrict access to public outdoor places at specified times. Where the public outdoor place forms part of Crown land, the local authority cannot give a direction in relation to that place without the agreement of the appropriate authority.
- 4.6. The local authority must also review the need for any direction at least once every 7 days, to assess whether the conditions for issuing a direction (relating to a threat to public health and a direction being a necessary and proportionate means of preventing, protecting against, controlling or providing a public health response to the incidence or spread of coronavirus in the local authority's area), are still met. If these conditions are not met, the direction must be revoked.
- 4.7. If the threat still remains but the measures in the direction are found to be no longer necessary or proportionate, the local authority must either revoke without replacement, or revoke and replace the direction with one containing measures that are necessary and proportionate.
- 4.8. The Regulations also contain provisions about the process for and publication and notification of Directions and revocations; and as to enforcement, including that a person who contravenes certain provisions, or directions, commits an offence, punishable by a fine. A local authority designated officer or a constable (including a police community support

officer) may take such action as is necessary to enforce a direction made under the Regulations.

- 4.9. A local authority designated officer will be able to issue a prohibition notice requiring a person not to continue to contravene a direction under the regulation; and in relation to contraventions of a direction relating to an event, or relating to public outdoor places, a constable (including a police community support officer) may direct a person to leave the event or place, or may remove a person from the event or place, and in relation to an event, may direct the event to stop. Businesses or individuals that are in breach of such a direction can be subject to prohibition notices and fines.

5. TEST AND TRACE SELF ISOLATION DISCRETIONARY SUPPORT PAYMENTS POLICY

- 5.1. Arising from the statutory requirement for persons testing positive for coronavirus, or identified as a close contact by Test and Trace to self-isolate, the government introduced a scheme to help people who would struggle financially as a consequence, with eligible persons to receive a payment of £500. The scheme includes mandatory qualification criteria, and will run until 31 January 2021.
- 5.2. The eligibility for this scheme has been restricted to those individuals who
- Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has test positive;
 - Are employed or self-employed;
 - Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result; and
 - Are currently receiving Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit.
- 5.3. Due to the restrictions within the 'main' Test and Trace Payment scheme the Government has allocated an additional pot of money to support those individuals who are not currently in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits listed above to create a 'Discretionary Scheme'.
- 5.4. The Council can introduce additional criteria to determine eligibility for discretionary payments in their own District as long as these operate in addition to, rather than instead of the criteria detailed above. It is therefore being recommended to add a further two categories as follows:
- Are not a Student (as they are not available for work); and
 - Do not have savings/capital in excess of £6,000 (as these residents are not in the greatest need).
- 5.5. Payments of £500 will be awarded to each successful application and will be paid within 72 hours following receipt of all supporting documentation.
- 5.6. Both of these schemes will be administered by the Councils' Revenues and Benefits Service and the Discretionary Scheme Policy follows (as closely as possible) the Council's approved Discretionary Housing Payment policy; in terms of the qualifying criteria and decision making arrangements.
- 5.7. The Government has provided funding to support Local Authorities in implementing the Test and Trace Support Payment (Discretionary) scheme. This includes both administrative costs (set-up costs and running costs) and the costs of the payments to be made under the scheme. For West Oxfordshire District Council the discretionary support payment allocation is (£18,470.57. The allocation to cover administration and set-up costs is

£24,538.40. Awards are only permitted at £500. There is no discretion to award more or less.

- 5.8. There is no additional top-up funding for this scheme. If the council awards over its funding allocation, the council will be liable for any overspend. As the administration and set-up of this scheme will be implemented and processed within internal resources already available to the Council, the Council may decide to utilise some of the set-up costs funding of £24,538.40 to top-up this scheme if necessary to support more residents if there is a requirement to do so.
- 5.9. Because of the need for the scheme to be implemented as soon as possible in order to ensure assistance could be provided, the urgency delegation power was used by the Chief Executive for the purpose of making decisions to (i) approve the adoption of the policy; (ii) authorise the Group Manager for Resident Services to administer the scheme; (iii) approve the top-up scheme described in 5.8 above; and (iv) approve the additional criteria referred to in 5.4 above.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. This report has no financial implications.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. This report has no financial implications.

8. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

- 8.1. Not applicable.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1. None

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Schedule of documents sealed out of meeting by the Chairman and the Head of Democratic Services, since the last meeting of the Council.

<u>Registration Number</u>	<u>Description of documents</u>	<u>Parties in addition to the Council</u>
<u>MISCELLANEOUS</u>		
I1819	Lease – Unit K Newman Court, Downs Road, Witney, plus plans	Alan Claridge (1)
I1820	Licence to Assign – Unit C, Swan Court, Witney	Smart Photography Ltd (2) Mr Daniel Dixon (T/A Dixon Automotives (3)
I1821	Deed of Release – 33 School Road, Finstock, plus plan	Cottsway Housing Association Ltd (2)
I1821A	Duplicate	
I1822	Lease- Unit D, Newman Court, Witney – plus plans	Simon Lauriston Sharpe (2)
I1823	Deed of Variation to S106 Agreement – land South East of Pinsley Farm, Main Road, Long Hanborough	Bloor Homes Ltd (2)
I1823A	Duplicate	
I1824	Footpath Diversion Order – land on Stanton Harcourt Road, Eynsham - plus plan	An Application of Horizon Property Capital Development (2)
I1824A	Duplicate	
I1824B	Triplicate	
I1824C	Quadruplicate	
I1825	Lease – Unit G Newman Court, Downs Road, Witney – Plus plan	W R Harvey & Co (Antiques) Ltd (1)
I1826	Deed of Easement – Road Drainage at Stocks Lane, Carterton – plus plans	George Wimpey South West Ltd (2)
I1826A	Duplicate	
I1826B	Triplicate	
I1827	Legal Charge – Plat 122 Hanborough Park, Main Road, Long Hanborough (Land South East of Pinsley Farm, Long Hanborough)	Dominic Jessica, James Mosquera and Pulker Paz (1)
I1828	Form DSI – Cancellation of entries relating to a registered charge – Flat 1, Blenheim Heights, 102B Woodstock Road, Witney	
I1829	Licence to Underlet – Unit J, Plots 1 and 2 Phase 4 Carterton Industrial Estate aka Three Michael’s Yard	Michael John Bennett and Pamela Bennett (2) Pavestone Ltd (3)
I1829A	Duplicate	
I1829B	Triplicate	
I1830	Lease – Unit B Swain Court, Witney - plus plans	Daniel Dixon (T/A Dixon Automotives) (2)
I1831	Rent Deposit Deed – Unit B Swain Court, Witney	Daniel Dixon (T/A Dixon Automotives) (2)

I1831A	Duplicate	
I1832	Rent Arrears Agreement – Unit B Swain Court, Witney	Daniel Dixon (T/A Dixon Automotives) (2)
I1832A	Duplicate	
I1833	Supplemental Agreement Under S106 – 1-8 Barrow Court, Yarnton Road, OX29 4DY	Sovereign Housing Association Ltd (2)
I1833A	Duplicate	
I1834	Supplemental Agreement Under S106 – 1-8 and 10-16 (Even) Towns End, Giernalls Road, OX29 9TX	Sovereign Housing Association Ltd (2)
I1834A	Duplicate	
I1835	Section 106 Agreement (Delegation of functions to help reduce risk of Coronavirus Infections)	OCC(1)
I1835A	Duplicate	
I1836	JCT Minor Building Works Contract (supply and installation of an inclusive play area and Junior and youth activity area at Madley Park Playing Fields, Witney) – Madley Park Playing Fields Witney	Sutcliffe Play (South West) Ltd (2)
I1836A	Duplicate	
I1837	S106 Deed of Variation – Land at Churchill House, Chipping Norton, Known as 1-10 Churchill Court, Hailey Road, Chipping Norton, OX7 5EA	Westlea Housing Association Ltd (2)
I1837A	Duplicate	
I1838	Deed of Variation – Land at New Road, Bampton now known as 11, 15, Flat 17 to 23 (Odds), 25 to 43 (Odds) Pembroke Place, Bampton OX18 2EY and 30, 42, to 64 (Evens) Pembroke Place, Bampton OX18 2EZ	Greensquare Group Ltd (2) Prudential Trustee Company Ltd (3)
I1838A	Duplicate	
I1838B	Triplicate	
I1839	Side Agreement Supplement to the Design Build Operate and Maintain Contract dated 2/10/2018 in relation to the impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Leisure Services	Greenwich Leisure Ltd (2)
I1839A	Duplicate	
I1840	Section 106 Agreement – Land at Shilton Road, Burford plus plan	Beechcroft Developments Ltd (1) Close Brothers Ltd (3)
I1840A	Duplicate	
I1840B	Triplicate	
I1841	S106 Deed of Variation – Land at Stenter Lane, Witney	Oxfordshire County Council (2) Sovereign Housing Association Ltd (3)
I1841A	Duplicate	
I1841B	Triplicate	
I1842	Minor Works Building Contract 2016	Sport and Play Ltd (2)
I1842A	Triplicate	