

Public Document Pack



Tuesday, 20 April 2021

Tel: 01993 861522

e-mail democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk

COUNCIL

You are summoned to a meeting of the Council which will be held remotely, via Cisco Webex on **Wednesday, 28 April 2021 at 12.30 pm.**

Giles Hughes
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Council

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

Due to the current social distancing requirements and guidance relating to Coronavirus Regulations 2020 – Part 3 – Modification of meetings and public access requirements this meeting will be conducted remotely using Cisco Webex.

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Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Cabinet, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording.

West Oxfordshire District Council, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, OX28 1NB

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Photography is also permitted. By participating in this meeting, you are consenting to be filmed.

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

AGENDA

1. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2021 (to follow)
2. **Apologies for Absence**
To receive any apologies for absence.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive any declarations from Members of the Committee on any items to be considered at the meeting.
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. **Recommendations from the Executive (Pages 5 - 8)**
Purpose:
 To consider the recommendations made by Cabinet and the Council's Committees since its last meeting.
Recommendation:
 That the recommendations set out in Annex I to the report be adopted.
7. **Report of the Cabinet and the Council's Committees (Pages 9 - 20)**
 To receive the reports of the following meetings of the Cabinet and the Council's Committees. Unless otherwise stated, copies are attached:

(a) <u>Audit and General Purposes Committee</u>	<u>18 March 2021</u>	
(b) <u>Cabinet</u>	<u>24 March 2021</u>	
(c) <u>Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee</u>	<u>8 April 2021</u>	
(d) <u>Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee</u>	<u>14 April 2021</u>	To follow
(e) <u>Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee</u>	<u>15 April 2021</u>	To follow
(f) Cabinet	21 April 2021	To follow
8. **Future of Council Meetings (Pages 21 - 24)**
Purpose:
 To seek direction from Council on whether some or all meetings should continue to be held via video conferencing, should the law allow such after 7 May 2021.
Recommendation:
 That Council considers the report and determines how it wishes to proceed.

9. **Appointment of Independent Person (Pages 25 - 28)**

Purpose:

To seek authority to appoint an Independent Person for the purposes of assisting the Monitoring Officer on matters of Councillor Conduct.

Recommendation:

- (a) That Andrew Colling be appointed as an Independent Person for a period of 4 years
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Monitoring Officer to extend the appointment for further periods of one year at a time if he/she deems appropriate

10. **Notice of Motion - Re-use of IT Equipment**

The following Motion has been received in the names of Councillors Andy Graham and Duncan Enright:

“This Council notes that The Covid-19 lockdowns have shown how vital technology is to keeping people connected, in particular the vulnerable in society, many of whom have been confined to their homes and unable to see loved ones, and that according to Age UK 51% of digitally excluded people are over the age of 65, while refugees and the homeless also face worrying levels of digital exclusion.

This Council calls for:

- 1. The Council, public bodies in West Oxfordshire, and local businesses to reform their procurement policies by donating IT locally to those in need rather than scrapping it, using schemes such as the Laptops for Homeless and Vulnerable Initiative;*
- 2. A local re-use and recycling centre to enable SocialBox.Biz and its charity partners to collect and distribute old technology to those in need in West Oxfordshire; and*
- 3. Direct council suppliers to support the SocialBox.Biz initiative and, together with the Council, to proactively take part in sponsoring and promoting the SocialBox.Biz message to local businesses, through traditional media and social media channels.”*

11. **Emergency and Urgency Delegations (Pages 29 - 30)**

Purpose:

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

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

12. **Sealing of Documents (Pages 31 - 32)**

Purpose:

To note the documents sealed since the last report.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted

(END)

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the
West Oxfordshire District Council
held via video conferencing at 12:30 pm on **Wednesday 24 February 2021**

PRESENT

Councillors: Harry Eaglestone (Chairman), Jane Doughty (Vice-Chairman), Joy Aitman, Alaa Al-Yousuf, Luci Ashbourne, Andrew Beaney, Richard Bishop, Jill Bull, Nathalie Chapple, Andrew Coles, Owen Collins, Nigel Colston, Julian Cooper, Derek Cotterill, Suzi Coul, Maxine Crossland, Marilyn Davies, Duncan Enright, Hilary Fenton, Ted Fenton, Steve Good, Andy Graham, Jeff Haine, David Harvey, Gill Hill, David Jackson, Ed James, Richard Langridge, Liz Leffman, Nick Leverton, Dan Levy, Norman MacRae MBE, Martin McBride, Michele Mead, James Mills, Toby Morris, 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); Frank Wilson (Executive Director Finance); Vanessa Scott (Climate Change Manager); Rachel Crookes (Biodiversity and Countryside Land Management Officer); Keith Butler (Head of Democratic Services); Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer); and Adrienne Frazer (Strategic Support Officer).

66. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20 January 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

67. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jake Acock, Rosa Bolger, Laetisia Carter and Kieran Mullins.

68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Cooper declared an interest in Agenda Item 11, Sealing Report, because Deed Number 11868 affected a relative's property.

69. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

69.1 Covid Cases

The Leader advised that positive Covid cases were decreasing in West Oxfordshire with only two cases announced the previous day. She reiterated the need to maintain strict measures in order to keep everyone safe and try to ensure that residents could meet up with each other soon. It was noted that the last time Council had met 'in person' was the Budget meeting in 2020.

69.2 Climate Action Working Group & Winter Bulletin

Councillor Harvey highlighted that the Climate Action Working Group had met recently and work was continuing to move forwards at pace. In addition, the Climate Action Winter Bulletin had been published and residents could sign up to receive it via the website.

69.3 Safeguarding Training for Councillors

Councillor Davies addressed Members and reminded them that following a recent Safeguarding report it had been suggested that Councillors be able to access the same training in safeguarding issues as staff. This was now available on the Councillors Portal and she encouraged Members to undertake the e-lessons, which could then be logged as part of their training.

69.4 Christmas 2020 Flooding

Councillor MacRae made a statement regarding the flooding across West Oxfordshire at Christmas time and recognised the impact that this had on some 96 homes and 23 businesses, spread across a number of Parishes. He noted that issues relating to Thames Water and the Environment Agency had contributed to the significant flooding issues encountered. Councillor MacRae applauded Ubico for their swift response in delivering sandbags across the District and all those involved in filling and deploying an additional one thousand sandbags on Christmas Eve. He noted the work of the Council's Communications team who kept the social media channels up to date with the latest information and acknowledged that there had been difficulties getting a response from the Out of Hours Service, which was being examined. Members were advised that the Council would ensure that the County Council and the Environment Agency carried out thorough investigations into the flooding and report back. The Chairman of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee had invited officers from the County Council to attend its next meeting and Councillor MacRae would look forward to hearing their comments. Finally, he reiterated the Council's support and encouragement to Town and Parish Councils to produce emergency plans and noted the work undertaken by the Community Flood Wardens.

Councillor Coles queried how Councillor MacRae would be addressing the issues raised regarding the Out of Hours service and asked whether representatives from Thames Water and the Environment agency could be invited to attend the Environment Overview & Scrutiny meeting due to the essential partnership working involved.

In response, Councillor MacRae advised that the responsibility for the invitees lay with the Chairman of the Committee. Councillor Morris provided a response relating to the Out of Hours Service and stated that this was being looked at and reviewed. Members would be updated in due course.

70. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

There was no participation by members of the public.

71. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE

The Council considered the report of the Head of Democratic Services setting out recommendations made by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 17 February 2021.

Councillor Mead introduced the report and requested that the recommendations relating to the budget for 2021/22 be considered after agenda item no. 7 relating to the reports of the Cabinet and the Council's Committees. Therefore, Members noted that they were looking at the decision relating to the extension of the Environmental Services Contract with Ubico. This was seconded by Councillor Morris.

Councillor Leffman addressed the meeting and requested that the recommendation be amended and an additional recommendation be added as follows:

"That, prior to the expiry of the revised contract in 2024, WODC will enter discussions with other members of the shareholder group and with other authorities to improve

efficiency, bring forward low carbon refuse collection, and create savings through collaboration in ways that are not currently envisaged by the existing Ubico contract”

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Cooper, who reserved his right to speak.

In response to the amendment, Councillor MacRae felt that the amendment was meaningless due to the work already being covered by the Environmental Services Improvement Programme which would review the service provided by Ubico and deliver efficiency savings. With regard to low carbon refuse vehicles, this work would be undertaken by officers and Members would be provided with options in due course.

Councillor Levy felt that the amendment formalised the fact that the current contract contained a number of flaws which needed to be resolved.

The amendment was supported by Councillors Enright and Graham who felt it would underpin the work the Council wanted to do. However, Councillor Mills felt that the work was already being undertaken and he endorsed the comments made by Councillor MacRae.

Councillor Al-Yousuf reminded the meeting that the Environmental and Regulatory Service (ERS) Improvement Programme was due to be considered by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting on 15 April 2021.

In seconding the amendment, Councillor Cooper did not feel that the ERS improvement programme was part of the consideration and stated that there had been issues with the Ubico contract in the past. He felt this would be a wise addition to the resolution.

In summing up, Councillor Leffman highlighted that the amendment solidified the recommendation and put in writing what was expected of Ubico.

The Leader summarised the original motion and did not support the amendment.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was lost.

The original motion then put to the vote, and was carried.

RESOLVED: That the recommendation made by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 17 February 2021 in relation to the extension of the Environmental Services Contract with Ubico be approved (minute no. CT/106/2020/2021).

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

The reports of the meetings of the Cabinet and the Council's Committees held since 20 January 2021 were received.

72.1 Consultation on Draft Developer Contributions SPD Minute No. Ec&Soc/32/2020/2021

Councillor Cooper asked the Chairman of the Committee whether he was prepared to invite a representative from the Ministry of Defence to the meeting to explain why progression with the REEMA North Site in Carterton did not appear to move forwards.

In response, Councillor Beaney suggested that Councillor Cooper raise this as a request at the next meeting.

72.2 Corporate Risk Register - South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan – Legal Challenge Minute No. Audit & GP/32/2020/2021

Councillor Mills requested an update from the Chief Executive regarding the potential risks to the Council in relation to the challenge on South Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plan. The Chief Executive provided an update on the recent legal challenge and advised that the Secretary of State was also party to the proceedings. He advised that it

was not yet clear what the implications would be should the challenge be unsuccessful but noted that the risk was slightly smaller than previously because South Oxfordshire had now adopted its Local Plan.

Councillor Mills noted that any update should be given at the next Audit and General Purposed meeting, when consideration was given to the risk register.

72.3 Draft Ubico Budget and Business Plan
Minute No. ENV/30/2020/2021

Councillor Fenton referred to the signwriting on the sides of refuse vehicles and asked if work had begun and for an update on the present situation.

Councillor Al-Yousuf agreed that the vehicles were an ideal advertising tool to deliver the Council's "Reduce, Re-use, Recycle" message throughout the District. As Cabinet Member, Councillor MacRae advised that work had commenced on the vehicles and should be completed by 8 March 2021.

(The Chairman announced a short break at this stage and the meeting resumed at 1.32pm)

73. BUDGET 2021/22

The Council considered the recommendations made by Cabinet at its meeting held 17 February 2021 relating to the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy, General Fund Revenue Budgets, the Capital Programme for 2021/22 to 2030/31, Fees and charges for 2021/22, the Council's Pay Policy Statement, the Council's Capital Strategy 2021/22, the Council's Investment Strategy 2021/22, the Council's Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22, and Prudential Indicators.

The Leader, Councillor Mead introduced the report and noted the extraordinary events of the past 12 months and acknowledged the losses encountered by many residents and neighbours. She highlighted the £4m support grants that had been delivered by the Council and the wide ranging community responses. She expressed her thanks to Councillor Morris, the Chief Finance Officer and all staff involved in the Finance team for their hard work in producing the budget. Councillor Mead proposed the recommendations as laid out and a copy of her speech is appended to these minutes.

This was seconded by Councillor Morris who reserved his right to reply.

Councillor Graham recognised the effort made in exceptional circumstances with regards to the pandemic and thanked all those involved. Whilst he supported the budget, he noted that the Liberal Democrat Group would have liked to see more funding for Youth Services and younger people who had missed out during the pandemic. He noted that many people would struggle financially due to job losses, businesses closing and the furlough scheme. Councillor Graham felt this was the most transparent process he had experienced and he commended the Cabinet's approach to the budget.

Councillor Enright stated his support for the budget and applauded the positive and collaborative process undertaken by officers and the Cabinet. He highlighted the need for the District to 'Build Back Better', and to support businesses and economic development, in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors. He also noted the "uptick" in homelessness and those struggling to pay rent and hoped the Council could continue to support those in need.

Councillor Postan noted that the Council had not had to make any cuts to services unlike other authorities in financial crisis. He thanked officers and Cabinet Members.

Councillor Davies noted support for the approach which it was hoped was inclusive and transparent and was a key part of the Cabinet mentality. With regards to the comments

relating to Youth Services and as Chair of the Community Safety Partnership, she highlighted the enhanced provision to Youth Services, in particular mental health support. She advised that she would be happy to share future plans as they developed.

Councillors Cotterill and Coles noted the need to invest in ethical and green investments and divest the Council's finances away from fossil fuels. Councillor Al-Yousuf assured them that this issue was being addressed by the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Good recognised that this was the first West Oxfordshire budget proposed by a female leader and passed his congratulations to Councillor Mead.

In seconding the proposal, Councillor Morris thanked all Members for their support and reminded his colleagues that any residents struggling with their Council Tax bills should contact the Council Tax Support Team. He reiterated that the Council had continued to deliver the same services, provide support and invest in communities despite the current health crisis.

As required by statute, voting on the proposition was recorded, and the voting was as follows.

For the proposition: Councillors Aitman, Al-Yousuf, Beaney, Bishop, Bull, Chapple, Coles, Collins, Colston, Cotterill, Coul, Crossland, Davies, Doughty, Eaglestone, Enright, Hilary Fenton, Ted Fenton, Good, Graham, Haine, Harvey, Hill, Jackson, James, Langridge, Leffman, Leverton, Levy, MacRae, McBride, Mead, Mills, Morris, Owen, Poskitt, Postan, Rylett, Saul, St John and Woodruff.

Against/Abstentions: None.

There being 41 votes in favour and none against, the proposition was **carried**.

RESOLVED: That the following be approved:

- (a) the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy at Annex A to the report to Cabinet;
- (b) General Fund revenue budgets as summarised at Annex B to that report;
- (c) the Capital Programme for 2021/22 to 2030/31 as set out at Annex D to the report;
- (d) Fees and charges for 2021/22 as set out in Annex E to the report;
- (e) the Council's Pay Policy Statement as set out in Annex F to the report;
- (f) the Council's Capital Strategy 2021/22 as set out in Annex G to the report;
- (g) the Council's Investment Strategy 2021/22 as set out in Annex H to the report;
- (h) the Council's Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22 as set out in Annex I to the report; and
- (i) the Prudential Indicators as set out in Annex N to the report

74. COUNCIL TAX 2021/2022

Councillor Mead informed the Council that she wished to propose the recommendations as per the published and circulated report. This proposition was seconded by Councillor Morris.

As required by statute, voting on the proposition was recorded, and the voting was as follows.

For the proposition: Councillors Aitman, Al-Yousuf, Beaney, Bishop, Bull, Chapple, Coles, Collins, Colston, Cotterill, Coul, Crossland, Davies, Doughty, Eaglestone, Enright,

Hilary Fenton, Ted Fenton, Good, Graham, Haine, Harvey, Hill, Jackson, James, Leffman, Leverton, Levy, MacRae, McBride, Mead, Mills, Morris, Owen, Poskitt, Postan, Rylett, Saul, St John and Woodruff.

Against/Abstention: None.

There being 40 votes in favour and none against, the proposition was **carried** and the Council -

RESOLVED: That

- (1) for the purpose of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 Section 35(2), there are no special expenses for the District Council in 2021/22;
- (2) it be noted that at its meeting held on 13 January 2021 the Cabinet calculated the Council Tax Base for 2021/22:
 - a) for the whole Council area as 44,917.96 [item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the “Act”)]; and
 - b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish Precept relates as in the attached Schedule 1.
- (3) the Council Tax requirement for the Council’s own purposes for 2021/22 (excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) is £109.38
- (4) the following amounts be calculated for the year 2021/22 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - a) £48,081,322 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils and any additional special expenses.
 - b) £39,075,406 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act.
 - c) £9,005,916 being the amount by which the aggregate at 4(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 4(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
 - d) £200.50 being the amount at 4(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (2(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses);
 - e) £4,092,790 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act as per the attached Schedule 2.
 - f) £109.38 being the amount at 4(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 4(e) above by Item T(2(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish Precept or special item relates;
 - g) the amounts shown in Schedule 2 being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 4(f) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council’s area shown in Schedule 2 divided in each case by the amount at 2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with

Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate;

- h) the amounts shown in Schedule 3 being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 4(f) and 4(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;
- (5) it be noted that for the year 2021/22 the Oxfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated below:

Valuation band	Oxfordshire County Council £	Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley £
A	£1,048.74	£154.19
B	£1,223.53	£179.88
C	£1,398.32	£205.58
D	£1,573.11	£231.28
E	£1,922.69	£282.68
F	£2,272.27	£334.07
G	£2,621.85	£385.47
H	£3,146.22	£462.56

- (6) the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts shown in Schedule 4 as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2021/22 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.
- (7) the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2021/22 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (8) the following Council/Public Officers: Chief Finance Officer, Group Manager – Resident Services, Legal Services Manager, Legal Executive, Business Manager – Operational Support, Revenues Manager, Revenues Lead and Court Officer be authorised to:
- a) collect and recover any National Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax, and
 - b) prosecute or defend on the Council's behalf or to appear on its behalf in proceedings before a magistrate's court in respect of unpaid National Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax.

75. CLIMATE ACTION BI-ANNUAL REPORT

The Council received and considered a report from the Climate Change Manager and the Cabinet Member for Climate Change which presented a biannual report on the climate action taken in response to the climate and ecological emergency during the past six months; the West Oxfordshire Climate Change Strategy for approval and a Sustainability Standards checklist in Planning for approval.

Councillor Harvey introduced the report and welcomed Rachel Crookes to the team, along with Louise Croot who had returned from maternity leave. He thanked all of the team for their hard work.

With regards to the information relating to the Electric Vehicle Charging Points installation date, Councillor Harvey advised that this date had now been amended to the year 2021/22 to reflect the extension in funding from Government. He applauded the change in culture that this work had brought about across the Council, including officers and Members.

Councillor Postan reiterated the importance of tackling climate change and urged the Climate Action Working Group to look at options for moving away from the use of diesel power.

Councillor Leffman supported the report and noted the need to encourage people to move away from carbon dependant heating.

Councillor Rylett was pleased with the progress made and made particular points about the Local Area Energy Plan and highlighted the role that the Council could play. He hoped that the Local Plan could be reviewed sooner rather than later to ensure that the highest standards were met when building new homes and continue to drive towards achieving Net Zero.

Councillor Coles acknowledged that this work had moved a long way but noted the time it had taken to push the issues forward. He commended everyone who had worked on this matter and reiterated the pressing need to act because nature was being depleted on a massive scale.

Councillor Mills thanked everyone involved in bringing the paper forward and listed a number of other organisations who had produced reports such as the England Economic Heartland and the Oxford Cambridgeshire ARC framework. He also noted the ethos to develop Carbon Positive housing.

Councillor Graham felt a bolder statement needed to be made with regards to building on flood plains and the inadequate approach from Thames Water to manage with the infrastructure. He also recognised the need to reduce the reliance on the motor car and encourage alternative transport methods.

Councillor Poskitt hoped that the Sustainability Checklist would afford officers some 'teeth' to negotiate with developers and reminded the meeting of the importance of bird boxes and encouraging local breeds of birds.

Councillor Ted Fenton reminded the meeting that Oxfordshire County Council had committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030, so this Council was not acting in isolation.

Councillor Harvey proposed the recommendations as laid out and assured Councillor Postan that he had noted his request for the Climate Action Working Group, along with the officers present who had noted Members' comments.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Al-Yousuf.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the biannual report on climate action for West Oxfordshire be noted;
- (b) That the Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire and Sustainability Standards Checklist for planning be approved; and
- (c) That the Council's priorities for the next six months be noted.

76. EMERGENCY AND URGENCY DELEGATIONS

The Council received the previously circulated report of the Head of Democratic Services, which specified decisions taken under the emergency and urgency delegation arrangements approved by Council on 13 May 2020.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

77. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

The Council received and noted the report of the Head of Paid Service which gave details of documents numbered 11860 to 11874F sealed since its last meeting.

The meeting closed at 2:48 pm

CHAIRMAN

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 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	Council: Wednesday 28 April 2021
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 6
Subject	Recommendations from the Executive and the Council's Committees or Sub-Committees
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Michele Mead, Leader of the Council Email: michele.mead@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 recommendations made by Cabinet and the Council's Committees since its last meeting.
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 second recommendation set out in [Annex I](#) is shown in italics as the Cabinet meeting is not due to be held until after the publication of these papers. If there is any amendment or further recommendations to be added, Councillors will be made aware of them prior to the meeting.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. Any financial implications of the proposed decisions are as set out in the associated reports to Cabinet and/or Committees.

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)	Miscellaneous Licensing Sub-Committee 18 March 2021	Training for Members of the Sub-Committee (Minute no. 5(b))	Council agrees that any Members newly appointed to the Miscellaneous Licensing Sub-Committee will be required to attend suitable training as agreed by the Service Leader (Licensing and Business Support), in consultation with the Chairman of the Sub-Committee, prior to participating in any decisions, with this requirement to apply similarly in respect of any temporary appointments for a particular meeting of the Sub-Committee.
(b)	<i>Cabinet – 21 April 2021</i>	<i>Addendum to Item 13 - Investment Property – Acquisition (minute number tbc) – Terms of Reference for West Capital Programme Investment Board</i>	<i>e) That Cabinet and Council note the Terms of Reference of the West Capital Programme Investment Board, following their meeting held on Monday 19 April 2021.</i>

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Agenda Item 7

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Record of decisions taken at the meeting of the **Cabinet** held
via video conferencing on **Wednesday 24 March, 2021** at 2.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillors: Michele Mead (Leader); Toby Morris (Deputy Leader); Suzi Coul, Merilyn Davies, Jeff Haine, David Harvey and Norman MacRae MBE.

Also in Attendance: Councillors Richard Bishop, Jill Bull, Mike Cahill, Andrew Coles; Julian Cooper, Derek Cotterill, Duncan Enright, Harry Eaglestone, Hilary Fenton, Ted Fenton, Andy Graham, Gill Hill, Dan Levy, Martin McBride, Elizabeth Poskitt, Alex Postan, Carl Rylett and Geoff Saul

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive); Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer); Jan Britton (Managing Director), Christine Gore (Executive Director, Commissioning), Melanie Dodd (Biodiversity Officer); Chris Hargraves (Planning Policy Manager); Philippa Lowe (Business Manager Localities); Heather McCulloch (Community Wellbeing Manager); Caroline Clissold (Housing Manager); Vanessa Scott (Climate Change Manager); Democratic Services

109. NOTICE OF DECISIONS

RESOLVED: That the record of the decisions taken at the meeting held on 17 February 2021, copies of which had been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

110. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

111. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

112. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

112.1 John White

Mr. White read out a statement relating to Agenda Item 8, the Joint Tourism Service and Visitor Economy.

112.2 Sharone Parnes

Mr. Parnes had submitted a statement, which was read out to Cabinet by Democratic Services, and related to the Local Nature Reserve(s) in Woodstock.

113. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

113.1 The Leader announced that two long serving officers were retiring; Christine Gore and Martin Holland. She thanked them both for everything they had done for the Council and wished them well in their retirement.

113.2 Councillor Harvey announced that a Sustainable Planning Specialist had been appointed.

114. LOCAL NATURE RESERVE: WOODSTOCK WATER MEADOWS

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Biodiversity Officer, which Councillor Haine introduced. He thanked Mr. Parnes for his submission. Councillor Haine reiterated that there were only two local nature reserves in West Oxfordshire, the Council does not have the authority to designate an area a local nature reserve. Woodstock Town Council would need to apply to Natural England to designate areas within their ownership and management.

DECISION: That Woodstock Town Council apply to Natural England to declare Local Nature Reserves on land within their ownership and management within their administrative boundaries only, including Woodstock Water Meadows.

115. EAST CHIPPING NORTON SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The Cabinet received the report of the Planning Policy Manager. Councillor Haine explained that the Council had received correspondence from the lawyers of CALA Homes and was seeking legal advice, therefore this item was being deferred until further notice.

116. JOINT TOURISM SERVICE

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Business Manager Localities. Councillor Morris introduced this item, explaining that this was part of the recovery for the local economy from the Pandemic. There had been a joint steering group with the partner councils to pool resources and ideas, and it was hoped that local residents could see the impact of the project, in the local community, to recover from Covid-19.

DECISIONS:

- (a) That a joint Advisory Board be established with partners to provide stronger governance over the activities of the Cotswold Destination Management Organisation;
- (b) That the officers supporting the Advisory Board be requested to:
 - (i) Refresh the Destination Management plan;
 - (ii) Develop a range of key performance indicators to monitor impact;
 - (iii) Build on the Action Plan to prepare a programme of work to support the Green Economy, Recovery and Sustainable Tourism;
 - (iv) Prepare a Communication Strategy; and
 - (v) Review the DMO business member levels and funding structure;
- (c) That the dedicated face-to-face Visitor Information Services do not re-open and that appropriate budget is directed to businesses to support their transition to digital services; and
- (d) That an annual report be presented to the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet on the state of the Visitor Economy and update on delivery against Corporate Priorities.

117. FINANCIAL AND SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT: 2020/2021 QUARTER THREE

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Chief Executive. Councillor Morris explained that the report outlined a budget which was set before Covid-19 and a re-forecast was necessary following the Pandemic. Government grants had covered any shortfall within

the budget position, and he thanked everyone who had worked to keep Council services delivered through the Pandemic.

DECISION: That the 2020-21 Quarter Three financial and service performance be noted.

118. COMMUNITY REVENUE GRANTS

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Community Wellbeing Manager, which sought approval of recommended Community Revenue Grant awards for 2021/22, and for the distribution of remaining funds for 2020/21.

Councillor Coul explained that it had been a difficult year for the voluntary sector, a lot of projects had been unable to be completed, and it was considered that the organisations who were not able to start or complete their projects should still receive the grant allocation.

DECISIONS:

- (a) That the recommended Community Revenue Grant awards for 2021/22 be approved, as detailed in Annex 1 to the report; and
- (b) That the remaining £5,081 in the 2020/21 Community Revenue Grants budget, be distributed, as required, to the originally awarded bodies.

119. PLANNED EXPENDITURE OF THE HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION GRANT 2021/2022

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Group Manager, Resident Services, which sought consideration of the planned expenditure of the Homelessness Prevention Grant for 2021/22 and the Emergency Accommodation Allocation for April to June 2021.

Councillor Davies explained that this was a comprehensive package which was a housing led approach, making sure that when people were made homeless they would be allocated a home as soon as possible, and wherever possible, within the district.

DECISIONS:

- (a) That the expenditure detailed within paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5 of the report be approved;
- (b) That, subject to a successful bid for RS14 funding, the allocation of spending as set out in paragraph 2.15 of the report be approved; and
- (c) That the Housing Manager be authorised, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness, to approve any amendments to these allocations, subject to compliance with ring-fenced grant conditions.

120. OXFORDSHIRE ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Climate Change Manager, which set out the benefits of the Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (OEVIS) and sought a decision to adopt the Strategy, the draft of which was included as an Annex to the report.

Councillor Harvey explained that an Oxfordshire wide project was being undertaken, and the strategy raised the number of electric vehicle charging points from 5% of all the car parking spaces to 7.5%, which depended on Government funding to move forward with this change, the charging points would be under local authority management by 2025. This had been delayed for about a year due to Covid-19.

DECISION: That the Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy set out in Annex I to the report be adopted.

121. OXFORDSHIRE COUNTYWIDE DOMESTIC ABUSE SUPPORT SERVICE: EXTENSION OF CONTRACT

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Community Wellbeing Manager, which was for two years, in collaboration with Oxfordshire County Council and a financial commitment of £95,000. This was an essential service, although Councillors wanted to ensure that abuse of older people was highlighted as an issue.

DECISIONS:

- (a) That the report be noted; and
- (b) That approval be given for contributions to the Countywide Domestic Abuse contract to continue for a further two years, as outlined in the report.

122. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That, in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person), the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business.

123. UNIT 13, TALISMAN BUSINESS CENTRE, BICESTER

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Senior Estates Officer. The property had been void for 2 years.

DECISION: That approval be given for the granting of a lease for Unit 13 at the Talisman Business Centre, Bicester, on the terms specified in the report.

124. REQUEST FOR FUNDING: SALT CROSS GARDEN VILLAGE DESIGN WORKS

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Chief Executive, which was supported by Members. The Garden Village would bring improvements, such as employment and affordable housing to the area.

DECISIONS:

- (a) That, in the absence of any other external funding sources, the forward funding of design works for the access roundabout and underpass to the Garden Village with A40 improvement works be supported in principle, subject to repayment of the funds by developers via the Section 106 Agreement for the Garden Village;
- (b) That the Chief Executive be authorised, following consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources and the Chief Finance Officer; to approve the final terms of the funding agreement; and
- (c) That up to £440,000 of funds from the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant reserve be allocated to provide this forward funding on the understanding that the Council's share will be substantially lower, and ultimately repaid.

The meeting closed at 3.33pm

Leader of the Council

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Economic and Social Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
held via video conferencing at 6.30pm on **Thursday 8 April 2021**

PRESENT

Councillors: Andrew Beaney (Chairman), Laetisia Carter (Vice-Chairman), Joy Aitman, Luci Ashbourne, Jill Bull, Julian Cooper, Jane Doughty, Harry Eaglestone, Andy Graham, Nick Leverton and Carl Rylett.

Also in attendance: Councillor Duncan Enright, Suzi Coul

Officers in Attendance: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive); Mandy Fathers (Business Manager, Operational Services); Chris Hargraves (Planning Policy Manager); Claire Bromley (Policy Planner), Democratic Services

38. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 January 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

39. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

Apologies from Cllr Neil Owen and Jake Acock.

40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

41. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

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

42. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The work programme was discussed. The following points were made.

- Domestic Violence presentation to be given to Committee on 27 May 2021
- Discussion on the GLL Contract to be held at Committee on 27 May 2021
- RAF Brize Norton – an update was given by the Chief Executive. Members requested that a representative of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, who was responsible for the Ministry of Defence Estates, be invited to address Committee to provide an update.
- Oxford-Cambridge expressway was no longer required and could be removed from the work programme.
- Health Care provision was ongoing to be kept on the work programme.
- Enforcement Powers in the Housing and Planning Act – Committee requested an update.

43. VULNERABLE PERSONS RESETTLEMENT SCHEME – VERBAL UPDATE

The Committee received a presentation from the Business Manager (Operational Services). It was explained that families were being supported through indefinite leave to remain applications and supported with additional English lessons, housing and finances. Children had settled well into their education. Support was also being given through booklets in order for families to become self-sufficient. The booklets were produced through an Oxfordshire wide project and best practice was shared in partnership with other authorities.

Thanks were given to the Committee for taking concerns raised previously and to the officers for doing remarkable work for the support given to these families.

The Cap Funding Scheme within the Strategy was for individuals and was provided up to £500 per individual, for help with education, getting into work and in one case financial support for medical issues.

Committee thanked officers for their work in supporting these families.

44. AFFORDABLE HOUSING REVISED DRAFT SPD CONSULTATION

The Committee considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager who gave a brief introduction to the supplementary planning document which was in need of updating. The draft document was currently the subject of consultation, which would close on 16 April 2021.

Comments and queries from Members related to issues such as:

The policy on working with travelling communities and whether this should be included in the document; making sure that local people with housing need were being provided with housing locally. Officers explained that the Council had a commitment to accommodate local people within their own boundaries and also an agreement, which was Oxfordshire wide, to take unmet need from Oxford City.

Concern was expressed over the size of houses being built, as larger houses such as four and five bedroomed houses were not mentioned in the document and neighbourhood plans were an important factor in what was required. Officers explained that developers were currently applying for smaller houses.

It was considered that the Council should be encouraging people to register for self-build or custom building housing and requested that Officer advertise that there was a register for people to use.

It was also considered important that information was being captured on independent providers who were providing housing and supported day time care, on a small scale for people who would otherwise be on the housing list.

The approach to energy and sustainable housing was ambitious, how could the local plan provide this type of housing.

Keyworkers were mentioned in the housing for essential workers, one category, of which was teachers. The Chair requested that keyworkers should include support staff.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and a consultation response be formulated.

45. LOCAL PLAN ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2019/20

The Committee received and considered the report of the Planning Policy Manager, which was introduced by the Policy Planner. It was explained that the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) was structured around the six council priorities.

The key points of the report were: the gradual decline in CO2 across the district; increased number of charging points; increase in renewable energy; gradual decline of residual household waste; potential lower than usual use of the leisure centres due to Lockdown; there had been progress on the park and ride; there was an increasing trend in the number of people employed in West Oxfordshire, although some loss of employment space to change of use to residential had taken place; approximately £3m was collected in S106 planning obligations, of that £1.2m was for affordable housing; an increased number of planning applications were for smaller houses, 23% were on redeveloped land; 80% were determined within the timescales. Cabinet had considered the report and comments had been incorporated into the current report.

Comments and queries from Members related to issues such as:

The review of the Local Plan needed to be open and transparent and the public be made aware of the review and timetable of public engagement. Officers explained that there were various stages of consultation, which would start at the end of 2021. Bio-diversity and zero carbon issues would feature highly within the review.

Guidance on the mix of housing needed to be given, including the size of the houses, as concern was expressed that if developers were building a lower proportion of 3 and 4 bed houses, they would shrink the plot size of the smaller houses.

Building on the flood plain in relation to climate change would be an important factor within the review.

Meeting the housing need for a changing population, including travellers' sites and the size of the pitches or plots. Officers would look into the change in the number of pitches and report back to Members.

The timescale for the S106 planning obligations and how they had been met or delayed was queried. Officers explained that improvements were being made to the monitoring of the planning obligations currently.

Members reiterated that the process of debate through Cabinet and onto Full Council should be a better managed process with a more transparent and open debate.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

46. SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020-21 QUARTER THREE

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive, which provided details of service performance during Q3.

Covid-19 had an impact on performance, as there was a need to support vulnerable residents and work on delivering the business grants, which would not normally be part of the workload, together with other issues such as working hard with people who were rough sleeping and households in emergency accommodation, ensuring that everyone had accommodation during the lockdowns.

Issues with staff turnover, particularly in Planning, was explained, with recruitment taking place currently.

Two planning complaints which had been partially upheld although most complaints were Covid-19 related.

Comments and queries from Members related to issues such as:

‘Money allocated for food distribution and the projected need to support foodbanks. Whether there was a project as a whole district, as there was a collective need to supply people with good food, keeping a check on good food supplies, taking account of funding from Town and Parish Councils and building on community experience. Councillors expressed support for this project, although concern was also expressed on how the supply of food should be distributed, as foodbanks responded to a specific need. This would be discussed with Officers.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

47. 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 23 March 2021.

It was noted that:

Supplementary Planning Documents would be included on the agenda when necessary.

Car Parking in Woodstock was queried and when Cabinet would be considering this matter and the allocation of funds.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the Cabinet Work Programme be noted.

48. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

There were no questions from Members.

49. CONCLUSION

As this was the last meeting of the Civic year, Councillor Graham thanked the Chairman, Councillor Beaney, for conducting the meetings in a fair, honest and open way. This was supported by the Committee.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm

Chairman

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the
Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee
held via video conferencing at 12:30 pm on **Wednesday 14 April 2021**

PRESENT

Councillors: Derek Cotterill (Chairman); Alex Postan (Vice-Chairman); Alaa Al-Yousuf, Louise Chapman, Julian Cooper, Maxine Crossland, Harry Eaglestone, Steve Good, Liz Leffman, Dan Levy, Geoff Saul and Harry St John.

Also in Attendance: Councillors Norman MacRae, Michelle Mead and Toby Morris.

Officers: Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Chief Executive); Frank Wilson (Group Finance Director - Publica); Jasmine McWilliams (Asset Manager); Andrea Clenton (Principal Planner - Major Developments and Appeals); Andrew Sherbourne (Accounting Technician); Georgina Wilkinson (Shared Compliance Officer); Adrienne Frazer (Strategic Support Officer) and Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer).

42. MINUTES

Having considered the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2021, the Committee

RESOLVED: That the minutes be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

Councillor Enright substituted for Councillor Bolger.

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

45. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

There were no requests received.

46. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2020-2021

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

No comments were raised other than the desire to add more items to the programme for future scrutiny. Councillor Al-Yousuf indicated that he would be requesting an additional item under Agenda Item 12 on the agenda, Report from Arlingclose on the Council's Externally Managed Pooled Funds (see Minute 52).

RESOLVED: That the work programme be noted with the following addition:

(a) the establishment of a Task and Finish Group be added to the work programme to look at defining the Council's Investment Policy.

47. 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 23 March 2021.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

48. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

There were no Members' Questions.

49. PUBLICA BUSINESS PLAN

The Committee considered the report from the Chief Executive which gave Members the opportunity to comment on the Publica Business Plan 2020-22 before its presentation to Cabinet on 21 April 2021.

The Group Finance Director addressed the Committee and outlined the report, highlighting that this was a mid-point update within the two year business plan. He reminded Members that a lot of the original work planned for the first year, had been impacted by Coronavirus. He also noted that some of the images used in the plan had since been updated to reflect the new Leader of the Council and a revised version would be submitted to Cabinet in April.

Councillor St John asked if the issue of empty dwellings could be addressed in the plan as he was mindful that whilst it was important to build new houses, it was also important to work on reducing the number of existing, empty properties in the District.

Mr Wilson advised that an Empty Homes Co-ordinator had recently been recruited and would continue the ongoing work of the Homelessness Team in this area of work. He advised that an update could be provided at a future meeting if the Committee requested it.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and no further comment be expressed to Cabinet.

50. SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020-21 QUARTER THREE

The Committee considered the report from the Chief Executive which provided detail of the Council's Service Performance during Quarter 3.

The report outlined the Performance Management Framework which had been developed along with the Commissioning Framework, approved by Cabinet in October 2020. Section 3 of the report highlighted the performance impacted by Covid-19 and explained the support that had been rolled out to residents across the district as well as an overview of the various business grants that had been administered.

Councillor Levy queried the level of work carried out by the enforcement team at the Forest of Dean and Cotswold District Councils with regard to fly-tipping, who appeared to be operating at a higher level than West Oxfordshire.

In response, the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Councillor MacRae advised that the department were in the process of appointing additional resources to tackle this issue. He advised that he had been in discussion with the Group Manager for Waste and two agency staff were being introduced to the team.

Councillor St John applauded the team at West Oxfordshire for responding swiftly to an abandoned caravan in his ward recently and stated that the process for reporting issues was working well.

RESOLVED: That the Service Performance for 2020-21 of Quarter Three be noted.

51. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That, in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person) the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining item of business.

52. REPORT FROM ARLINGCLOSE ON THE COUNCIL'S EXTERNALLY MANAGED POOLED FUNDS

The Committee considered the report from the Chief Finance Officer and the Council's external financial advisors, Arlingclose. The report set out the performance of the externally managed pooled funds, covering the 12 months up to 28 February 2021.

Phiroza Katrak (Client Director) attended as a representative of Arlingclose, outlined the highlights of the report and answered questions from Members.

Councillor Al-Yousuf proposed that a Task and Finish Group be established to look at defining the Council's Investment Policy and requested that a special meeting be held following the elections to review Arlingclose's service contract and investment mandate.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

53. INVESTMENT PROPERTY REVIEW

The Committee received a verbal update from the Asset Manager in relation to the current situation regarding property lettings across the District and how the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted on them.

The Asset Manager provided information on the businesses hardest hit by the pandemic and following a question from Councillor Leffman advised that officers were guided on which businesses to rent to by the Councils Commercial Rents Policy. It was noted that some premises had been purchased with business tenants in occupation.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

54. CALL-IN OF CABINET DECISION – GARDEN VILLAGE DESIGN WORKS

The Committee considered a report from the Chief Executive following the Call-In request relating to the Cabinet decision of 24 March 2021 (minute number 124) relating to the funding of design works for the access roundabout and underpass to the Garden Village Science Park to integrate with Oxfordshire County Council Housing Improvement Fund (HIF) A40 improvement works.

Councillor Levy outlined the reasons for the Call-in and the areas of work that he felt required further clarification.

Officers responded to each of the queries raised in the Call-In request and provided background information on the desire to retain employment opportunities in the area and how S106 money is used and managed in a development of this size.

In response to a query from Councillor Cooper, officers explained the responsibility of each individual party and authority with regards to funding.

The Cabinet Member, Councillor Haine answered a number of questions from the Committee and reminded them that it would be down to the Planning Committee to determine any application on its merits.

The Chief Finance Officer provided assurances regarding the Council's funding arrangements and advised that she was comfortable with the decision as approved by Cabinet.

Following a robust debate, the Committee concluded that the decision had been scrutinised appropriately. The Chairman therefore proposed that the Call-In was not supported and this was seconded by Councillor Good. Members noted the importance of moving ahead with the work required.

RESOLVED: That the Call-In was not supported and the decision could proceed.

The meeting closed at 2.22pm

CHAIRMAN

Public Document Pack

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 15TH APRIL 2021

HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present:

Councillor Alaa Al-Yousuf, Chairman

Councillors Richard Bishop, Jill Bull, Andrew Coles, Harry Eaglestone, Duncan Enright, Ted Fenton, Liz Leffman, Martin McBride (Vice-Chair), Elizabeth Poskitt and Alex Postan

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Norman MacRae, Cabinet Member for Environment

Officers:

Scott Williams, (Business Manager – Contracts); Kenton Vigus (Waste Contracts Specialist); Adrienne Frazer (Strategic Support Officer) and Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer).

Apologies:

Councillor Owen Collins

35 Minutes of Previous meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 3 February 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

36 Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Owen Collins.

37 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

38 Participation of the Public

There were no requests received.

39 Committee Work Programme 2020/2021

The Committee was provided with an update on its work programme for 2020/21.

The Chairman advised that an invitation had been extended to Oxfordshire County Council as Local Lead Flood Authority, following a request made at the last meeting. However, due to staff changes OCC had advised they would be unable to attend until the June 2021 meeting. Officers confirmed this would be added to the work programme for June.

Councillor Coles queried if further information could be given on the nature of the staffing changes and was advised that there had been a change of officers with a new person in post.

It was also proposed that the final line of the appendix be amended to remove reference to the Cabinet Advisory Group for Environment. Councillor Al-Yousuf advised that the Climate Action Working Group had met earlier that day and had a successful and information meeting.

RESOLVED: That the following item be added to the work programme for future meetings:

a) Update from OCC as Local Lead Flood Authority be added to June 2021;

40 Cabinet Work Programme

The Committee considered the report from Democratic Services which gave Members the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 23 March 2021.

Councillor Bull queried if the report relating to the Upgrade to West Oxfordshire's Public Open Space CCTV would be submitted in May as detailed. In response, the Cabinet Member for Environment advised that he was unable to advise any further as this area of work did not fall within his remit.

In response to a query from Councillor Enright, Councillor MacRae advised that an update on the Christmas Floods was due to be provided by the Leader in May.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

41 Environmental Services Innovation Programme - Presentation

Members received a verbal presentation on the Environmental Services Innovation Programme from the Business Manager – Contracts which outlined the work planned for the future of the service.

Councillor Leffman asked for clarity on the replacement vehicles timeline and was advised that the service at West Oxfordshire was different to that being delivered at Cotswold District Council who were due to review their contract after two years. Mr Williams explained that it was still possible to deliver savings and efficiencies working with our partner Councils because there were commonalities in the service. It was noted though that one of the challenges was that the service covered two different waste disposal authorities – Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire.

Councillor Poskitt highlighted that there appeared to be slightly different waste being collected, via differing methods. Mr Williams advised that in general, the waste was similar but it was the way that it was collected for example the separation of some dry recycling contents. However, the food waste was collected in the same manner so efficiencies could be found there.

Councillor Coles asked if there was the potential to introduce more digital reporting, with prompts or promotions for customers. Officers explained that one of the projects being worked on was a self-serve facility for Councillors to access but it was highlighted that not all residents were comfortable with a move to digital.

Councillor McBride raised the issue of moving to electric or hybrid vehicles as the intel coming back appeared to be positive. He was assured that all options were being considered as well as hydrogen, rail, air and sea for the movement of heavy fleet.

Having received the report and heard from the officers present, the Committee noted the presentation.

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

42 Environmental Services In-Cab Technology System

Members received a presentation from the Business Manager - Contracts, outlining the business case on the costs, benefits and risks of procuring an Environmental Services In-Cab Technology system. The presentation and supporting report offered the Committee the opportunity to comment to Cabinet on the seeking of approval to proceed in procuring the system using the capital budget of up to £140,000, which was set aside in the 2021-22 capital programme.

Mr Williams explained how the equipment worked within the vehicles and the benefits this afforded the crew including up to date route information, health and safety data and access requirements for their route. He also explained that the device was able to store information about any incidents relating to damage to bins or other vehicles and could alleviate issues around potential insurance claims.

Members noted that Ubico were using the technology at Cotswold District Council and had already recorded a fall in the number of missed bins during the two weeks of use. Officers felt the technology would also provide a fuel saving and help with carbon reduction. Page 23 of the report detailed more of the customer benefits.

Mr Williams answered queries from Members including the robustness of the devices and the ability to use the app on a smartphone if the tablet failed.

Councillor Poskitt noted that some crews did not place bins back where they found them, causing residents to search for their own. Officers assured her that crews would be held to account if the service was not delivered appropriately.

Having read the report and having heard from the officer present, the Committee supported the recommendations and asked the Cabinet Member to pass their comments to Cabinet for information.

RESOLVED that the recommendations in the report be supported.

43 Members' Questions

Councillor Leffman asked for an update on the Bring Sites from the Cabinet Member present. She noted that Parish Councils had not yet been contacted by officers to discuss the future of the sites in their areas. In response, the Business Manager - Contracts, advised that due to the gradual reopening of businesses and recycling sites since lockdown, the Council had decided to pause further action and pick the issue up in May. He explained that the closure or removal of any site would be a gradual process.

Councillor Leffman queried if something could be done to encourage drivers from dropping litter from the vehicles onto the roadside. Officers advised that Ubico had a rota in place to carry out roadside cleansing and asked Councillors to email them with any areas affected by littering.

Councillor Coles raised the issue of non-essential tree maintenance still be carried out, despite officers advising that the work would be complete by March. His concern related to the disruption this caused to nesting birds. He asked if the Tree Maintenance Policy could be looked at as the last review was carried out in April 2019.

In response, the Chairman reminded the meeting that the Council had recently appointed a new Biodiversity and Land Management Officer who would be likely to look at issues such as this. The Cabinet Member for Environment advised that the engineers did check the trees prior to carrying out any work.

Councillor Postan asked if positive action could be taken to tackle the dumping of waste, dry wipes and wet wipes into the sewerage system, causing ongoing problems with the water courses and rivers. He referenced a recent Panorama programme which had highlighted this problem.

Councillor MacRae reminded Members of the work the Council had already undertaken including writing to the Secretary of State for the Environment, the relevant private members bill but reiterated that the Council had no statutory powers over the water authorities. He again asked Members to continue to let himself and officers know of issues being encountered.

Councillor Postan hoped that officers could look at further action that could be taken with regards to Planning and Land Management control.

As this was the last meeting of the municipal year, Councillor Enright thanked the Chairman for steering the Committee over the past year and all officers for their work. This was supported by Councillor Eaglestone and wished everyone standing for re-election good luck in May.

Duration of the meeting: 2.00 - 3.17 pm

Chairman on
Thursday, 15 April 2021

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Record of decisions taken at the meeting of the **Cabinet** held
via video conferencing on **Wednesday 21 April, 2021** at 2.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillors: Michele Mead (Leader); Toby Morris (Deputy Leader); Suzi Coul, Merilyn Davies, Jeff Haine, David Harvey and Norman MacRae MBE.

Also in Attendance: Councillors Alaa Al-Yousuf, Jill Bull, Owen Collins; Julian Cooper, Derek Cotterill, Harry Eaglestone, Duncan Enright; Hilary Fenton, Andy Graham, Steve Good, Dan Levy, Elizabeth Poskitt, Alex Postan, Carl Rylett and Harry St John.

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive); Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer); Frank Wilson (Executive Director, Finance); Maria Wheatley (Parking Services Manager); Jasmine McWilliams (Asset Manager); Scott Williams (Business Manager Commissioning Strategy); Bill Oddy (Group Manager – Commercial Development); Amy Bridgewater-Carnall – Senior Strategic Support Officer)

125. NOTICE OF DECISIONS

RESOLVED: That the record of the decisions taken at the meeting held on 24 March 2021, copies of which had been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

126. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bolger, Bishop, Hill and Ted Fenton.

127. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

128. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

Mrs Jo Lamb addressed the meeting in relation to Agenda Item 6 – Allocation of Parking Funds.

Mr Nigel Pearce addressed the meeting in relation to Agenda Item 10 – Oxfordshire Growth Board Environment Advisory Group.

Copies of both submissions are appended to these minutes.

129. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

129.1 Thank You to All

Councillor Mead took the opportunity to thank everyone present for their support over the past few months, as she noted that dependent on the result of the forthcoming election, there could be a change in leadership. In particular, she thanked her Cabinet colleagues for welcoming and advising her into the role of Leader. Councillor Mead also wished all those members not standing for re-election the best in their future endeavours and passed her good luck and wishes to all candidates in the election in May.

130. ALLOCATION OF PARKING FUNDS

The Cabinet considered a report from the Parking Manager which sought approval of proposals for the allocation of the parking fund to specific projects highlighted in the Council's Parking Strategy.

The report explained that the Council was responsible for parking in the off-street car parks that it owned or managed and the County Council was responsible for on-street parking throughout the district. The Council carried out enforcement on-street on behalf of the County Council under an agency agreement.

A Parking Strategy was adopted in 2016 and identified two key issues; a growing demand for additional parking capacity and a need for changes to parking regulations on-street in a few key locations. It was noted that the County Council had limited resources available to undertake on-street reviews so Cabinet had previously agreed to allocate funding of £35,000 to support the delivery of reviews in the District.

However, to date the balance on the fund remained at £35,000 with no deductions, however, commitments had been made as outlined in section 2.2 and 2.3 of the report. The report therefore proposed that the remaining funds be allocated to those parties detailed in 2.6 of the report on the understanding that the money would be used for parking related issues.

Councillor MacRae introduced the report and explained that the District Council was not the responsible for parking but acknowledged the difficulties and problems that many towns and villages faced in this area. It was hoped that this unallocated funding could be used to start to address some of the problems faced.

This was seconded by Councillor Harvey who reiterated that he hoped the Town and Parish Councils could make good use of the funds.

In response to a query from Councillor Cooper with regards to responsibility of functions, Councillor MacRae repeated that the County Council was the responsible body and despite the work undertaken by the District Council, had not responded to the results submitted to them.

Councillor Graham queried how the original amount of £35,000 had been arrived at and asked for the rationale behind the allocation of funds at 2.6 of the report. The Cabinet Member advised that the decision to set aside this funding was taken in 2016 and the minutes from those meetings were available should Councillor Graham wish to refer to them.

Councillor Enright supported the report and acknowledged the work already undertaken in Witney Town Centre. He queried how spending of the money would be monitored and managed to ensure it was spent solely on parking issues. Councillor MacRae advised that he did not wish to burden officers with more paperwork but noted that a letter or email from the town or parish council setting out what they had used the money for, would suffice.

Councillor Poskitt reiterated the comments made by the public speaker, Mrs Lamb, and did not feel that £7,000 would go very far in tackling the problems in Woodstock. Councillor MacRae acknowledged the seriousness of the issues in Woodstock and advised that discussions were ongoing with all affected parties to try to move forward with additional parking at Hensington Road.

Having considered the report and responded to the comments raised, the Cabinet agreed the recommendations in the report

DECISION: That

- a) the commitment to Oxfordshire County Council of the offer of up to £10,000 in relation to Church Green and/or Corn Street Witney be re-stated; and
- b) the remaining proposed allocations from the fund explained in the report and set out at the table in section 2.6 of the report, be approved.

REASONS: To continue to commit to building Strong Local Communities: Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities.

OPTIONS: Cabinet could decide not to allocate any of the funds or make different allocations to those recommended.

131. PUBLICA BUSINESS PLAN 2020-22

The Cabinet considered a report from the Chief Executive which asked Members to consider the Publica Business Plan 2020-22, first approved in June 2020, to note progress and recommend that the Leader approve the Plan.

As part of the establishment of Publica a number of items were identified as reserved matters for Council approval and these were approved in October 2016 as part of the governance principles underpinning the establishment of Publica.

The reserved matters decisions fell to the shareholder representatives to determine and for each partner Council this was the Leader of the Council. To assist the Leader in reaching her decision the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet reviewed the Draft Business Plan in 2020 and were invited to suggest appropriate amendments before it was adopted.

In 2020 all of the Shareholder Councils adopted the two year business plan (2020-22) and this was attached as Annex A to the report. The report outlined the areas covered by the Business Plan and explained the action plans which supported the priorities and strategic actions. It was noted that progress had been affected as a result of the response to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Leader introduced the report and acknowledged the impact that Covid-19 had on some of the progress originally planned, with staff being redeployed to actively respond to the needs of the communities in the District. However, she felt the document provided a good update and a clear direction of travel and proposed the recommendation as laid out.

This was seconded by Councillor Morris who noted the opportunity that this interim update provided with regard to looking at priorities for the future.

Councillor Postan asked that Cabinet note that there was still a feeling of separation between Members and officers and hoped this could be addressed.

Having considered the report, Cabinet approved the recommendations as laid out.

DECISION: Cabinet recommended that the Leader (as Shareholder) approve the Publica Business Plan 2020-22 as laid out.

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

OPTIONS: The Cabinet could make comments in relation to the Plan, and proposed amendments would need to be agreed by the other partner councils.

132. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES IN-CAB TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM

The Cabinet considered a report from the Business Manager Commissioning Strategy which presented a business case on the costs, benefits and risks of procuring an Environmental Services In-Cab Technology system and sought approval to proceed in procuring the system using the capital budget of up to £140,000, set aside in the 2021-22 capital programme.

The report advised that 'In-Cab Technology' was a widely used system available on the market and allowed live data to be viewed and updated by teams involved in delivering environmental services. Cotswold District Council (CDC) had recently procured and implemented an Environmental Services Management System with In-Cab Technology from Yotta.

The CDC system was integrated with Salesforce this year and was now in the process of enabling the benefits to be realised as outlined in the business case. This meant there was now the opportunity for West Oxfordshire District Council to purchase the system which it was hoped would offer a number of financial, service related and carbon reduction benefits to the Council and Residents.

The report outlined the varying benefits of installing this system for the customer, for the company delivering the service, Ubico, and for the Council including fewer missed collections, faster enquiry response times and specific location data such as nearby schools and blind corners.

Councillor MacRae introduced the report and thanked the Chairman of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny for a robust discussion and support for the proposal at their recent meeting. He reiterated the advantage of lowering missed collections and the efficiency benefits the system would bring. He proposed the recommendations as laid out.

This was seconded by Councillor Harvey who noted that other neighbouring authorities were using this technology to great effect.

Having considered the report and having heard from the Members present, Cabinet approved the recommendations as laid out.

DECISION: That

- a) the business case be supported and approval granted for the allocation of up to £140,000 set aside in the capital programme for 2021-22, to be used to procure and implement the Environmental Services In-Cab Technology system from Yotta (including software licences and maintenance costs in year 1); and
- b) a proportion of the revenue savings in the Ubico contract costs of at least £50,000 p.a. will go to fund the software licences and maintenance costs of £34,103 per annum in years two to four inclusive of the contract.

REASONS: The proposal contained within this report supports the Council priority: Climate Action - Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity.

OPTIONS: Cabinet could choose not to procure the system and continue with the current method of service delivery.

133. AGREEING THE STRATEGIC VISION FOR OXFORDSHIRE

The Cabinet considered a report from the Chief Executive which introduced a final version of the Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire, attached as an appendix to the report. The report also

updated Members on the results of the consultation process and briefly summarised the main changes to the Vision, with the detail provided in the appendices. Finally, the report presented a final version of the Vision for consideration and agreement.

Cabinet had previously received a report in December 2020 detailing the Board's ambition to develop the Vision. It was hoped that the Vision would have a wider remit and would serve as an overarching Vision 'umbrella', under which both the Board and partners could develop future plans and strategies for their communities that articulated and planned for the future of Oxfordshire.

The report provided detail on the Consultation process carried out, timescales and next steps for the Vision.

The Leader introduced the report and felt that the input of the Board was invaluable. She proposed the recommendations as laid out.

This was seconded by Councillor Coul.

Councillor Graham queried if the wording used on pages 52 and 53 could be made stronger by replacing 'should' with 'will'. In response, Mr Hughes suggested that it may be better not to change the wording but to reiterate the importance and ambition of the vision.

Councillor Poskitt noted that younger people had been consulted on the document and yet there was no reference to apprenticeships or technical training. She also highlighted the importance in social equity.

Having considered the report and having heard from officers, Cabinet agreed the recommendations as laid out.

DECISION:

- a) That the Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire be approved; and
- b) Officers be requested to consider how to embed the Vision's ambitions for Oxfordshire in future plans and strategies of the Council.

REASONS: The Growth Board brings together all of the Principal Councils in Oxfordshire, together with other key partners, to work cooperatively on strategic issues. As such it is relevant to all of the key priorities identified in the Council Plan.

OPTIONS: Cabinet could chose not to approve the Strategic Vision.

134. OXFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY GROUP

The Cabinet considered a report from the Chief Executive which set out a recent proposal, which was agreed by the Growth Board on 22 March 2021, to establish an Environment Advisory Group, together with a set of Terms of Reference. Wider information was also provided concerning the establishment of a Local Nature Partnership for Oxfordshire, and the Oxford to Cambridge Arc Environment Principles.

The Leader introduced the report and was pleased that the Advisory Group was being established. She proposed the recommendations as laid out.

This was seconded by Councillor Harvey who felt the establishment of the groups displayed an awareness of the importance of Biodiversity and Land Management and was another step in the right direction.

The Chief Executive, Mr Hughes addressed Members and explained the three aspects of the report, which it was hoped would be complimentary to one another and build on the climate action work already taking place across Oxfordshire.

Councillor Postan queried the lack of reference to the Task and Finish Group set up by the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel to look at infrastructure funded by private investment. He commended the report from the T&F group to Cabinet and asked if their point could be considered moving forwards.

Following the public submission from Mr Pearce, Councillor Graham asked if his points could be considered before this matter was noted at Council. Councillor Mead clarified that this was a Cabinet decision, not Council however, she would refer Mr Pearce's comments to the Growth Board. In response, Mr Hughes highlighted that it was important to recognise the role of the group was a consultative and advisory one and they were not a decision making body. However, he had noted the comments made and would raise them with Growth Board colleagues.

Having considered the report and having heard from officers present, Cabinet approved the recommendations as laid out.

DECISION:

- a) That the establishment of a Growth Board Environment Advisory group be supported;
- b) That the Oxford to Cambridge Arc Environment Principles be endorsed, as set out at Appendix 3, recognising that this statement of ambition applies to a diverse range of urban and rural communities, and that further evidentiary work will be required at a local level to understand their longer-term implications; and
- c) That the development of an Arc Environment Strategy, which will provide for how the principles can be delivered, be supported.

REASONS: The Growth Board brings together all of the Principal Councils in Oxfordshire, together with other key partners, to work cooperatively on strategic issues. As such it is relevant to all of the key priorities identified in the Council Plan.

OPTIONS: Cabinet could chose not to support the establishment of a Growth Board Environment Advisory group, and not to endorse the Oxford to Cambridge Arc Environment Principles.

135. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That, in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person), the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business.

136. CALL-IN OF CABINET DECISION - SALT CROSS GARDEN VILLAGE DESIGN WORKS

This item was withdrawn from the agenda by the Leader because, having debated the matter, the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided not to support the Call-In.

(See Minute Number 42 of the Finance & Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee minutes from Wednesday 14 April 2021)

137. INVESTMENT PROPERTY - ACQUISITION

The Cabinet considered a report from the Asset Manager requesting approval to acquire three long leases of investment property on a sale and leaseback basis.

The report outlined the details of the acquisition including the location of the site, supported by Annex A and information relating to the leases in question as shown in Annex B to the report.

Main points of the report were broken down and provided detail on the investment summary, the offer being proposed, due diligence processes and the involvement of the newly established Capital Programme Investment Board.

Following publication of the report, officers advised that a meeting of the Capital Programme Investment Board had taken place and a verbal update was provided at the meeting. Cabinet were also asked to consider an additional recommendation e), noting the Board's Terms of Reference as agreed at their meeting on 19 April 2021. Details of the additional recommendation were circulated in an addendum to the report, to all Members, prior to the meeting.

Councillor Morris introduced the report and proposed the recommendations as set out in the report and the addendum. This was seconded by Councillor Mead.

Members requested clarification from the Cabinet Member on details of the due diligence process that had taken place along with the timescales needed to take advantage of the opportunity.

Councillor Graham highlighted the need for the decision making to be transparent and was reminded that the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the overall Council portfolio annually and the Council's assets were a matter of public record.

Having considered the report and having heard from the officers present, Cabinet approved the recommendations as proposed.

DECISIONS: that Cabinet

- a) agrees to acquire the leasehold for the reasons set out in the report;
- b) that funds of the sum detailed in 1.4 of the report be released for due diligence and, if appropriate, subsequent purchase;
- c) authority be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Head of Legal and the Cabinet Member for Finance to agree the final terms for the acquisition in line with the Heads of Terms;
- d) the foregoing decisions be implemented immediately, for the reasons explained in the report, and in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules and with the consent of the Chair of the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- e) the Terms of Reference of the West Capital Programme Investment Board, following their meeting held on Monday 19 April 2021, be noted.


REASONS: The decision supports the Council priority, Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance: Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.

OPTIONS: Cabinet could decide to withdraw its bid for the property and not proceed with the acquisition.

The meeting closed at 3.06 pm

Leader of the Council

DRAFT

 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	Council: Wednesday 28 April 2021
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 8
Subject	Future of Council Meetings
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Michele Mead, Leader of the Council Email: michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Claire Hughes – Business Manager (Corporate Responsibility) Tel: 01594 812515; Email: claire.hughes@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	A report seeking direction from Council on whether some or all meetings should continue to be held via video conferencing, should the law allow such after 7 May 2021.
Annexes	None
Recommendation	That Council considers the report and determines how it wishes to proceed.
Corporate priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Working with communities to meet the current and future needs and aspirations of residents 2. To provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	N/A

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Luke Hall MP the Minister of State for Regional Growth and Local Government has written to all Council Leaders in England to say that the Government will not be extending the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (the Regulations) which make provision for virtual meetings because that would require primary legislation
- 1.2. In light of this announcement, the Regulations cannot apply to meetings after 7 May 2021 and as such there will be a requirement to return to physical meetings after that date.
- 1.3. However, the Association of Democratic Services Officers and Lawyers in Local Government, along with Hertfordshire County Council, have issued a claim in the High Court to ask for a declaration of lawfulness to allow for the continuation of local authority remote meetings beyond 7 May 2021. The basis of the claim is that the legislation already allows for remote meetings. That application has been accepted by the Court and expedited and will be heard on 21 April 2021.
- 1.4. The position is therefore that whilst we may be able to continue with virtual meetings this is unknown and as such we are taking steps to ensure that plans are in place to hold meetings face to face if required.
- 1.5. Whilst the continuation of virtual meetings would be beneficial, at least whilst social distancing measures are in place, it is a matter for Council to determine whether or not (if the declaration is granted) they would want this practice to continue. The purpose of this report is therefore to set out some options for consideration. However, if the declaration is not granted then this report will be surplus to requirements as the Council will, by law, be required to return to face to face meetings. Obviously, Council will be advised of the outcome.

2. CONTINUATION OF VIRTUAL MEETINGS

- 2.1 The use of technology to hold virtual meetings has been largely successful, and whilst there have been some technical difficulties, in the main meetings have been effective , facilitated public engagement and most importantly enabled decision making to continue. In addition there have been the associated benefits of time and cost savings particularly in relation to travel.
- 2.2 If on 21 April, the High Court grants a declaration, then the Council will find itself in a position where it has the option to continue with virtual meetings and Council are asked to consider whether this is an option they would like to pursue.

3. FACE TO FACE MEETINGS

- 3.1 If the declaration is not granted on 21 April then the Council will have no option other than to revert to face to face meetings. However, even if it is granted the Council could still opt to return to face to face meetings if that was its wish.
- 3.2 The continuation of social distancing measures does create some difficulties with facilitating face to face meetings but these can be overcome in a variety of ways. For smaller meetings the Council Chamber could be utilised but would require appropriate measures to be put into place, e.g. screens between seats and the use of PPE. However, for larger meetings such as the AGM the meeting would need to be held at an alternative premises. Discussions are currently ongoing with the leisure

centre to see whether they can accommodate this and with a separate company regarding the provision of sound and videoing equipment.

4. MIX OF VIRTUAL AND FACE TO FACE

- 4.1 If the declaration is granted and the continuation of virtual meetings permissible, Council may also wish to consider the option of continuing with some of its meetings virtually, whilst returning others to face to face. For example Council could decide that Full Council is held face to face and that all other meetings remain virtual.
- 4.2 The officer's view is that meetings where public interest is usually higher are better suited to a virtual environment as the use of technology enables greater accessibility and provides more option for people to take an active role e.g. in planning or licensing committees. Other committees which may be appropriate to continue in a virtual capacity could include scrutiny committees. For Full Council meetings, the level of public attendance is not generally high, but social distancing requirements present challenges in trying to accommodate up to 49 councillors plus staff and the public.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. Unknown at this stage

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. As detailed in this report

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1. There are no immediate risks considered to be arising from the contents of this report.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1. The use of virtual meetings has enabled more people to engage in and understand local politics. However, there is some evidence that some groups may find a virtual environment more challenging.

9. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. The continuation of virtual meetings will see the continued reduction in carbon emission associated with travel.


10. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 10.1. Not applicable.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1. There are no background papers relevant to this report.

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 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	Council: Wednesday 28 April 2021
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 9
Subject	Appointment of Independent Person
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Michele Mead, Leader of the Council Email: michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Claire Hughes – Business Manager (Corporate Responsibility) Tel: 01594 812515; Email: claire.hughes@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	This paper seeks authority from Full Council to appoint Andrew Colling as an Independent Person for the purposes of assisting the Monitoring Officer on matters of councillor conduct.
Annexes	None
Recommendations	(a) That Andrew Colling be appointed as an Independent Person for a period of 4 years (b) That delegated authority to given to the Monitoring Officer to extend the appointment for further periods of one year at a time if he/she deems appropriate
Corporate priorities	1. Working with communities to meet the current and future needs and aspirations of residents 2. To provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	N/A

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Localism Act 2011 (Section 28) requires a relevant authority to have in place arrangements under which allegations made under the Code of Conduct can be investigated, and under which decisions on allegations of breaches of the Code can be made.
- 1.2. The arrangements must include provision for the appointment of at least one independent person whose views must be sought, and taken into account before any decision is made on an allegation that it has been investigated. The views of the Independent Person may also be sought at other stages of the process and most authorities refer complaints to the Independent Person at an early stage in the process and particularly when the Monitoring Officer is carrying out an initial assessment of the complaint.
- 1.3. There are certain requirements set out in the Act in summary, these are that an Independent Person may not be a current or past (within 5 years):
 - member, co-opted member or officer of the authority,
 - member, co-opted member or officer of a parish council of which the authority is the principal authority, or
 - relative, or close friend, of a person referred to above

2. APPOINTMENTS PROCESS

- 2.1 Following a period of advertisement officers have reviewed CV's and have met with Andrew Colling
- 2.2 Officers feel that Mr Colling demonstrated the appropriate level of integrity and professionalism and therefore recommend to Council that he is appointed with effect from 1 May for a period of 4 years.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. There is no remuneration of Independent Persons, however, they are entitled to claim travel expenses and an allowance of £75 for up to four hours work and £150 for more than four hours work.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. The appointment will satisfy the Council's legal obligations under the Localism Act 2011

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. There are no immediate risks considered to be arising from the contents of this report.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 6.1. All appointments have been made in accordance with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are no climate change implications as a result of this report.


8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

8.1. N/A

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1. There are no background papers relevant to this report.

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 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	Council – Wednesday 28 April 2021
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 11
Subject	Emergency/Urgency Delegations Decisions
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Michele Mead, Leader of the Council Email: michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Elizabeth Griffiths – Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer Tel: 01993 861188 Email: elizabeth.griffiths@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To note decisions taken under the emergency and urgency delegation arrangements approved by Council on 13 May 2020.
Appendices	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”*.

2. FUNDING AGREEMENT: CONTAIN OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT FUND

- 2.1. The County Council offered each of its District Councils the opportunity to share in the funding it had been given to help contain the spread of Covid. This funding was free and allows West Oxfordshire District Council to provide additional support over and above its budget. The Council however, does have to comply with the original terms of the funding in terms of use and this must be reported on a regular basis to County. This compliance was the content of the funding agreement. Decision taken 29/3/21.

3. REASONS FOR USE OF URGENCY POWERS

- 3.1. The agreement needed to be signed by the 31 of March 2021 to allow the funding to be drawn down. It had already been reviewed by Legal and our Insurance officers and there was a clear and compliant plan for spending the funds that had been agreed between Officers and County. The use of urgency powers was necessitated by the timeframe and the risk was considered to be small since all reasonable checks and reviews had already happened internally.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. This report has no financial implications.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. This report has no financial implications.

6. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

- 6.1. Not applicable.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1. None

Agenda Item No. 12

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>
11875	S106 Deed of Variation – Land at Dashwood House, Middle Barton (1-5 Dashwood Terrace at 1 Frances Road, Middle Barton)	Westlea Housing Association (2)
11875A	Duplicate	
11876	S106 Deed of Variation – Land at Quarry Close, Enstone (1-5 Quarry Place, Tew Road, Enstone)	Westlea Housing Association (2)
11876A	Duplicate	
11877	S106 Deed of Variation – Land off the Slade, Charlbury (Odd No's 95-109, Odd No's Flats 111 to 117, and even No's Flats 128 to 142 Ticknell Piece Road, Charlbury)	Greensquare Group Ltd (2)
11877A	Duplicate	
11878	S106 Second Deed of Variation – Land at Fernleigh, Buttercross Lane, Witney (Flats 1-80 inclusive)	Greensquare Group Ltd (2) Prudential Trustees Company Ltd (3)
11878A	Duplicate	
11878B	Triplicate	
11879	Lease – Counterpart – Site 3A Galleys Island, Braintree, Essex plus plan	TH UK & Ireland Ltd (2)
11880	Rent Review Memorandum – Unit B Newman Court, Downs Road, Witney	Lewis Barnard and Fraser Barnard (2)
11880A	Duplicate	
11881	DS1 HM Land Registry Cancellation of Entries Relating to a Registered Charge – 5 Cornish Road, Chipping Norton	
11882	Contract – The Old Courthouse, 28 Bridge Street, Witney	Oxford (2007) Ltd (1)
11883	Transfer – The Old Courthouse, 28 Bridge Street, Witney	Oxford (2007) Ltd (1)
11883A	Duplicate	
11884	Agreement Energy Modelling of WODC Office Buildings at Woodgreen and Elmfield	Heaton Design and Engineering Ltd (2)
11884A	Duplicate	
11885	Section 106 Agreement – former Police Station, Banbury Road, Chipping Norton plus plan	Nimbus Property Developments Ltd (2)
11885A	Duplicate	United Trust Bank Ltd (3)
11885B	Triplicate	
11886	Shared Equity Legal Charge – Plot 121 Hanborough Park, Long Hanborough (to be known as 6 Bedford Mews, Long Hanborough)	Chloe Vivien Constance and Kai Paton (1)
11887	Deed of Variation to Clawback Agreements (relates to the Clawback Agreement to the Transfer dated 26 March 2001 between WODC	Cottsway Housing Association Ltd (2)

	and West Oxfordshire Housing Ltd (now Cottsway Housing Association Ltd) for the Transfer of the Council's Housing Stock)	
I1888	Consolidated Car Park Order – District Car Parks	
I1888A	Duplicate	
I1889	Underlease – Unit E, Newman Court, Downs Road, Witney - plus plans	ASC Ltd (2)
I1890	Com Funding Agreement	Oxfordshire County Council (1)
I1890A	Duplicate	
I1891	Transfer- Public Open Space with Associated Parking & Toilets on land adjoining Elmhurst Way, Carterton – plus plan	BDW Trading L5td (1)
I1891A	Duplicate	
I1892	Deed of Variation – 11 Harmans Court, Jubilee Lane, Milton-Under-Wychwood – plus plan	Christine Ann Dickinson (2) Grange Management (Southern) Ltd (3)
I1892A	Duplicate	
I1892B	Triplicate	
I1893	Funding Agreement – (43 Plots) Shared Ownership Affordable Housing at Colwell Green, Downs Road, Witney; Windrush Place, Witney and Dovecote Park, Minster Lovell	H H No 2 Ltd (2) Heylo Housing Secured Bond PLC (3)
I1893A	Duplicate	
I1893B	Triplicate	
I1894	Lease – Garage 6 Brook Hill, Woodstock plus plans	James Langley (2)