

Tuesday, 20 July 2021

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## COUNCIL

You are summoned to a meeting of the Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Woodgreen, Witney on **Wednesday, 28 July 2021 at 2.00 pm.**



Giles Hughes  
Chief Executive

To: All Members of the Council

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. 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** (Pages 7 - 12)  
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2021.
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. **Petition: Witney North Local Plan Housing Allocation** (Pages 13 - 16)  
Purpose:  
To report on the presentation of a petition calling for the reconsideration of the Local Plan strategic housing site allocation at Witney North, and provide some comment to be taken into account  
Recommendation:  
That Council considers the petition calling for it to reconsider the North Witney Local Plan Housing Allocation, in the context of the information and comment contained in the report.
7. **Recommendations from the Executive and the Council's Committees or Sub-Committees** (Pages 17 - 20)  
Purpose:  
To receive and consider recommendations made by the Cabinet and the Council's Committees since its last meeting.  
Recommendation:  
That the recommendations set out in Annex I to the report be adopted.
8. **Report of the Cabinet and the Council's Committees** (Pages 21 - 70)  
To receive the reports of the following meetings of the Cabinet and the Council's Committees. Unless otherwise stated, copies are attached:
  - (a) [Cabinet](#) [26 May 2021](#)
  - (b) [Licensing Committee](#) [28 May 2021](#)
  - (c) [Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#) [2 June 2021](#)

(d)	<a href="#">Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee</a>	<a href="#">10 June 2021</a>	
(e)	<a href="#">Cabinet</a>	<a href="#">16 June 2021</a>	
(f)	<a href="#">Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee</a>	<a href="#">17 June 2021</a>	
(g)	<a href="#">Audit and General Purposes Committee</a>	<a href="#">24 June 2021</a>	
(h)	<a href="#">Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee</a>	<a href="#">8 July 2021</a>	
(i)	<a href="#">Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee</a>	<a href="#">14 July 2021</a>	
(j)	<a href="#">Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee</a>	<a href="#">15 July 2021</a>	To follow
(k)	Cabinet	21 July 2021	
(l)	Urgency Committee	23 July 2021	

#### 9. **Question on Notice**

The following has been submitted by Councillor Andrew Coles, to be asked of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Michele Mead:

*“The Leader of the Council will be aware that the plastic waste West Oxfordshire residents put in their blue-lid bins for recycling currently gets sent to Turkey for processing. The Leader will also, I'm sure, be aware of the recent report highlighting that in many cases plastics don't in fact end up being recycled due to poor infrastructure in places like Turkey and the sheer volume of plastic waste coming from countries like the UK. What reassurances can the Leader give the residents of West Oxfordshire that their plastics are indeed recycled and are not just left dumped somewhere or piled into huge mountains, burned or left to spill into rivers and the sea. And if she is unable to reassure us, can I ask what steps the council is planning to take to address this?”*

In accordance with the Council's procedures, the Leader may answer by: (i) a direct oral answer; or (ii) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, by reference to that publication; or (iii) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to all Members of the Council.

#### 10. **Climate Action Biannual Report (Pages 71 - 88)**

##### Purpose:

To present (i) a biannual report on the climate action taken by West Oxfordshire District Council in response to the climate and ecological emergency during the last six months: February-July 2021; (ii) the Council's Biodiversity Work Programme, 2021-2023; and (iii) a proposal to continue the Better Housing Better Health service with the National Energy Foundation (NEF) in 2021/2022.

##### Recommendations:

- (a) That the contents of the biannual report on climate action for West Oxfordshire, and of the WODC Biodiversity Work Programme, 2021-2023 included in [Annex I](#)

be noted; and

- (b) That the continuation of the Better Housing Better Health service with the National Energy Foundation (NEF) in 2021/2022 be approved.

11. **Appointment of Temporary Parish Councillors** (Pages 89 - 92)

Purpose:

To approve the appointment of temporary members of Bladon Parish Council and consider the future arrangements for temporary appointments to parish councils in the District.

Recommendations:

- (a) That approval is given for the making of an Order under section 91 of the Local Government Act 1972 appointing District Councillors Julian Cooper and Elizabeth Poskitt as temporary members of the Bladon Parish Council;
- (b) That the appointments shall be effective until the Bladon Parish Council is quorate (i.e. it has three members of the Council in place, excepting the temporary appointees);
- (c) That, in the event of either of the temporary appointees specified above subsequently being unable or not willing to fulfil the role of temporary parish councillor, the Monitoring Officer shall be authorised to appoint such other person(s) as deemed appropriate; and
- (d) That, should any other Parish Council in the District require the District Council to appoint one or more temporary councillors in order for it to be able to function, the Monitoring Officer shall be authorised to make such appointments if they need to be made more promptly than the date of the next meeting of either the Audit and General Purposes Committee or the Council.

12. **Updates to the Constitution and Establishment of a Constitution Working Group** (Pages 93 - 100)

Purpose:

To seek Council approval for the establishment of a Constitution Working Group to conduct a full review of the Constitution.

Recommendations:

- (a) That Parts 7 & 8 of the Constitution be deleted;
- (b) That a Constitution Working Group be established, in accordance with the terms of reference set out at Annex A; and
- (c) That the proposed work plan for the Constitution Working Group at Annex B be noted.

13. **Appointment of Monitoring Officer** (Pages 101 - 104)

Purpose:

To update members on arrangements to cover the Monitoring Officer role.

Recommendation:

That the Chief Executive be authorised to appoint an interim Monitoring Officer for the Council for a period of up to six months, following liaison with the Group Leaders.

14. **Notice of Motion - Climate and Ecological Emergency**

The following Motion has been received in the names of Councillors Liz Leffman and Mathew Parkinson, namely:-

*“On 20 September 2020, an Early Day Motion entitled the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill was tabled in the House of Commons. A second reading is to be held shortly. While the Government’s recent Ten Point Plan is an important step towards*

*tackling the UK's carbon emissions, this Bill recognises that our carbon footprint extends beyond the UK's borders. The Bill calls for:*

- the UK to make and enact a serious plan to combat climate change. This means dealing with our real fair share of emissions so that we don't go over critical global rises in temperature*
- our entire carbon footprint be taken into account (in the UK and overseas)*
- the protection and conservation of nature here and overseas along supply chains, recognising the damage we cause through the goods we consume*
- those in power not to depend on technology to save the day, which is used as an excuse to carry on polluting as usual*
- people to have a real say on the way forward in a citizens' assembly with bite*

*Many residents have made it clear through social media and by forming campaign groups that they want to see this Bill succeed, and Oxfordshire County Council has already given the Bill its support. This Council agrees with the principles of this Bill and supports residents in their efforts to see it come into law. We ask the Leader of this Council to write to our MP, asking him to support this Bill and its principles when it returns to the House of Commons”.*

**15. Notice of Motion - Planning Applications**

The following Motion has been received in the names of Councillors Duncan Enright and Ted Fenton, namely:-

*“This Council believes planning works best when developers and the local community work together to shape local areas and deliver necessary new homes; and therefore calls on the Government to protect the right of communities to shape individual planning applications”.*

**16. Emergency and Urgency Delegations (Pages 105 - 106)**

Purpose:

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

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

**17. Appointment of Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer (Pages 107 - 110)**

Purpose:

To determine the appointment to the statutory roles of Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer.

Recommendation:

That the Chief Executive, Giles Hughes, be appointed and designated as the Council's Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer, with immediate effect.

**18. Sealing of Documents (Pages 111 - 112)**

Purpose:

To note the documents sealed since the last report.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

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## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting of the Council

Held at the Windrush Leisure Centre, Witan Way, Witney  
at 2.00 pm on **Wednesday, 19 May 2021**

### PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Harry Eaglestone (Chairman), Councillor Jane Doughty (Vice-Chair), Councillor Joy Aitman, Councillor Alaa Al-Yousuf, Councillor Luci Ashbourne, Councillor Andrew Beaney, Councillor Jill Bull, Councillor Mike Cahill, Councillor Laetisia Carter, Councillor Nathalie Chapple, Councillor Andrew Coles, Councillor Owen Collins, Councillor Julian Cooper, Councillor Suzi Coul, Councillor Maxine Crossland, Councillor Marilyn Davies, Councillor Duncan Enright, Councillor Ted Fenton, Councillor Andy Graham, Councillor Jeff Haine, Councillor David Harvey, Councillor Gill Hill, Councillor David Jackson, Councillor Liz Leffman, Councillor Nick Leverton, Councillor Dan Levy, Councillor Norman MacRae MBE, Councillor Martin McBride, Councillor Michele Mead, Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt, Councillor Alex Postan, Councillor Carl Rylett, Councillor Harry St John, Councillor Derek Cotterill, Councillor Rupert Dent, Councillor Colin Dingwall, Councillor Mark Johnson, Councillor Lysette Nicholls, Councillor Mathew Parkinson, Councillor Andrew Prosser, Councillor Dean Temple, Councillor Alex Wilson and Councillor Ben Woodruff

Officers: Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer), Giles Hughes (Chief Executive) and Claire Hughes (Business Manager - Corporate Responsibility)

#### **CL.1 Election of Chairman**

The Chairman, Councillor Eaglestone welcomed everyone to the meeting and took the opportunity to thank everyone for their support during his time as in office. He wished the future Chairman and Vice Chairman the best of luck for their term.

Having asked for nominations, Councillor Mead proposed that Councillor Martin McBride be elected as West Oxfordshire District Council Chairman. This was seconded by Councillor Harvey.

There were no further nominations.

Therefore, it was

**Resolved** that Councillor Martin McBride be elected as Chairman.

#### **CL.2 Chairman to make declaration of Acceptance of Office**

The Chairman, Councillor McBride signed the declaration and took receipt of the chain of office. He thanked Councillor Eaglestone for seeing the Council through a particularly challenging twelve months.

#### **CL.3 Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

It was proposed, duly seconded and

**Resolved** that Councillor Alex Postan be elected as Vice-Chairman of the District Council.

#### **CL.4 Vice-Chairman to make declaration of Acceptance of Office**

The Vice-Chairman signed the declaration and took receipt of the chain of office. Councillor Postan thanked the retiring Vice-Chairman, Councillor Doughty for her work and support to the Chairman and wished her well in her new Cabinet role.

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**CL.5 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**CL.6 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jake Acock, Rosa Bolger, Steve Good, Andy Goodwin, Richard Langridge and Geoff Saul.

**CL.7 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

**CL.8 Receipt of Announcements**

Councillor McBride addressed the meeting and welcomed all newly elected and returning Councillors. He introduced the new Members and advised which Wards they represented.

Councillor Mc Bride also thanked all those Councillors who had either not stood for re-election or had not been re-elected. In particular, he expressed his gratitude to former Councillor, Toby Morris who had contributed a great deal as Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance.

Finally, Councillor McBride reiterated his thanks to the previous Chairman, Councillor Eaglestone for his leadership over the past year, which had been difficult for everyone.

Councillor Graham addressed the meeting and also expressed his thanks to Councillor Eaglestone and Councillor Doughty for their dedication to the civic roles during their term.

The Leader, Councillor Mead, welcomed all Members and advised of the following changes to the Group Leaderships:

Councillor Laetisia Carter – Leader of the Labour Group;

Councillor Owen Collins – Deputy Leader of the Labour Group; and

Councillor Nathalie Chapple – Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.

Congratulations were also expressed to Councillor Liz Leffman who had been elected as Leader of Oxfordshire County Council.

**CL.9 Participation of the Public**

There was no participation of the public.

**CL.10 Returning Officer's Report on Elections held 6 May 2021**

Members received the Returning Officers report detailing the results of the elections held on 6 May 2021.

The report advised of the total number of votes received for each candidate in the individual Wards, along with the electorate and turnout percentage.

Having considered the report, Council

**Resolved** that the report be noted.



**CL.11 Appointment of Deputy Leader and Cabinet Members**

The Leader, Councillor Mead, addressed the meeting and announced her appointment of the Deputy Leader, Councillor David Harvey. She went on to outline her Cabinet Members and the portfolio areas they would take responsibility for, as follows:

Councillor Suzi Coul – Finance

Councillor Norman MacRae – Environment

Councillor Merilyn Davies –Communities and Housing

Councillor Jeff Haine – Strategic Planning

Councillor David Harvey – Climate Change

Councillor Jane Doughty – Customer Delivery

**CL.12 Appointment of Committees 2021-2022**

Members received a report outlining the appointments to the Committees of the Council, in accordance with the Constitution and, where applicable, the rules relating to political balance.

Members noted that a revised membership of committees document had been circulated prior to the meeting and Councillor Mead proposed this, as laid out.

This was seconded by Councillor Harvey.

**Resolved that**

- (a) That the Committees indicated in paragraph 1.2 of the report be appointed, with the specified membership, for the period to the next annual meeting of the council;
- (b) That seats on those Committees be allocated to the political groups and the non-grouped members in accordance with the rules relating to political balance, and as indicated in the revised Table circulated prior to the meeting;
- (c) That Members be appointed to each of the Committees in accordance with the wishes of the political groups as shown in the Appendix to these minutes, and with resolution (d) below;

- (d) That, as a consequence of the political balance figures and the foregoing decisions, the non-grouped members be allocated seats as follows:

Audit and General Purposes Committee – Councillor Richard Langridge

Development Control Committee – Councillor Richard Langridge

Urgency Committee – Councillor Richard Langridge

Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Andrew Prosser

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Mike Cahill

Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Andrew Prosser

- (e) That in accordance with, and subject to the exceptions in, Rule 4 of the Council Procedure Rules, all Members of each political group not appointed to a committee or sub-committee be named as alternate members for the member or members of that group who have been appointed to that committee or sub-committee;

- (f) That the Licensing Committee be re-constituted for 2021-2022, with a membership of 11;
- (g) That seats on the Licensing Committee be allocated to the political groups in accordance with the principles of political balance, and having regard to the information in paragraphs 2.6 and 2.7 of the report, and be filled in accordance with their wishes; and
- (h) That, from the non-grouped members, Councillor Mike Cahill be appointed to serve on the Licensing Committee.

### **CL.13 Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Committees**

It was then proposed, duly seconded and

**Resolved** that the following Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen be elected for each of the Council's Committees for the municipal year 2021/2022:

Audit and General Purposes Committee	Councillor Alex Postan, Chairman
	Councillor Dan Levy, Vice-Chairman
Licensing Committee	Councillor Norman MacRae, Chairman
	Councillor Steve Good, Vice-Chairman
Miscellaneous Licensing Sub-Committee	Councillor Norman MacRae, Chairman
	Councillor Steve Good, Vice-Chairman
Standards Sub-Committee	Councillor Norman MacRae, Chairman
	Councillor Andrew Beaney, Vice-Chairman
Development Control Committee	Councillor Jeff Haine, Chairman
	Councillor Ted Fenton, Vice-Chairman
Lowlands Planning Sub-Committee	Councillor Ted Fenton, Chairman
	Councillor Joy Aitman, Vice-Chairman
Uplands Planning Sub-Committee	Councillor Jeff Haine, Chairman
	Councillor Julian Cooper, Vice-Chairman
Urgency Committee	Councillor Michele Mead, Chairman
	Councillor David Harvey, Vice-Chairman
Economic & Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Andrew Beaney, Chairman
	Councillor Andy Graham, Vice-Chairman
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Alaa Al-Yousuf, Chairman
	Councillor Andrew Coles, Vice-

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	Chairman
Finance & Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Derek Cotterill, Chairman
	Councillor Geoff Saul, Vice-Chairman

The Meeting closed at 2.38 pm

CHAIRMAN

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 <b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
<b>Name and date of Committee</b>	<b>Council – Wednesday 28 July 2021</b>
<b>Report Number</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 6</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Petition: Witney North Local Plan Housing Allocation</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>Witney North</b>
<b>Accountable member</b>	Councillor Jeff Haine, Cabinet Member for Planning Email: <a href="mailto:jeff.haine@westoxon.gov.uk">jeff.haine@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Accountable officer</b>	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Tel: 01993 861613 Email: <a href="mailto:giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk">giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Summary/Purpose</b>	To report on the presentation of a petition calling for the reconsideration of the Local Plan strategic housing site allocation at Witney North, and provide some comment to be taken into account.
<b>Annexes</b>	None
<b>Recommendation</b>	That Council considers the petition calling for it to reconsider the North Witney Local Plan Housing Allocation, in the context of the information and comment contained in this report.
<b>Corporate priorities</b>	
<b>Key Decision</b>	N/A
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Consultees/ Consultation</b>	None on this report, but the Local Plan was subject to the full statutory consultation processes and the independent examination process

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The Council's Petition Scheme provides for a debate at a Council meeting where the petition is supported by more than 1500 people.
- 1.2. Under the scheme, the "petition organiser" is entitled to five minutes at the meeting in which they may present and explain it, and a maximum of 15 minutes is allowed for discussion by the Council – subject to an extension of time at the discretion of the Chair "in exceptional circumstances".
- 1.3. It is for Council to decide how to respond to the petition – subject for example to any legalities, it may decide to take the action the petition requests, not to take the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate, or to commission further investigation into the matter, for example by a relevant committee.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1. A petition supported by approximately 1800 people was received electronically via Councillor Duncan Enright, in April. Some of those supporting it were not residents of the District, but it is clear that the number of such is not sufficient to reduce the overall number to 1500 or fewer, hence the reference to this meeting for a discussion in accordance with the Petition Scheme. The wording of the petition is *"Reconsider Witney North development of 1400 homes"*.
- 2.2. As referenced above, it is for Council to decide how to respond to the petition. Given the nature of what is requested and the statutory framework around the adoption of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan and the circumstances in which strategic housing site allocations may be reconsidered, [section 3](#) of this report contains relevant comment and information provided by the Planning Policy Manager.
- 2.3. It is appropriate also to mention that this is the first time that Council has debated a petition in this way in the period since the introduction of the Petition Scheme. It is no longer obligatory for the Council to have a Scheme but, if it does continue to do so, it needs to be reviewed and updated. A report recommending the establishment of a Constitution Working Group is included elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting, and consideration and review of the Petition Scheme is proposed to be incorporated into the work programme of that Working Group.

## **3. INFORMATION AND COMMENT FROM THE PLANNING POLICY MANAGER**

### **Introduction**

- 3.1. Land to the north of Witney is allocated in the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 for the provision of around 1,400 new homes. Policy WIT2 applies and stipulates a number of criteria to guide the future development of the site, including the need for comprehensive development to be led by an agreed masterplan.

### **Background**

- 3.2. The principle of residential development to the north of Witney has been considered through a number of previous Local Plan examinations, most recently when the District Council published its draft Local Plan in March 2015 and proposed to allocate the North Witney Strategic Development Area (SDA) for 1,000 homes.
- 3.3. At public examination in November 2015, the appointed Inspector suspended proceedings to enable the Council to undertake further work to address his concerns which centred on the number of homes proposed.
- 3.4. Through proposed main modifications to the Local Plan published in November 2016, the Council increased the overall District housing requirement from 10,500 homes to 15,950 homes (including 2,750 homes in respect of Oxford City's housing

needs) and in doing so, proposed an increase in the number of homes allocated at the North Witney SDA from 1,000 to 1,400 homes.

- 3.5. The merits of the modifications including the North Witney SDA were considered through examination hearing sessions held in May and July 2017.
- 3.6. The Inspector's report was published in August 2018 and concluded in respect of the North Witney SDA that *'the significant contribution the allocation would make to meeting West Oxfordshire's housing requirements, on a site adjoining the district's main town and relatively close to its shopping centre, outweighs the harm likely to be caused by the development'*.
- 3.7. The North Witney SDA was subsequently included in the final West Oxfordshire Local Plan, which was formally adopted on 27 September 2018.

#### **Reconsidering the North Witney Allocation**

- 3.8. The submitted petition calls for the North Witney allocation to be reconsidered. Although no reason is stated, it is presumed that the petition has been submitted due to the environmental sensitivities of the site including in particular flood risk with flooding taking place in and around Hailey Road over the winter months.
- 3.9. These concerns reflect many of the views which were expressed to the Local Plan Inspector during the examination hearings in 2017. His report at paragraphs 125 – 132 addressed a number of these sensitivities including landscape impact, flood risk, foul water drainage, and transport and concluded that on balance, the site should be allocated for development.
- 3.10. It is important to note in this respect, that Local Plan Policy WIT2, which applies to the North Witney SDA, includes a large number of specific requirements to ensure that the impacts of development are carefully considered and mitigated. This includes requirements relating to transport and other supporting infrastructure, flood risk and drainage, conservation of heritage assets, phasing of development, landscaping, biodiversity, green infrastructure and the use of renewable energy, sustainable design and construction methods.
- 3.11. In terms of whether the allocation of the North Witney SDA can be 'reconsidered', it is relevant to have regard to paragraph 120 of the NPPF which states the following:
  - 120 Planning policies and decisions need to reflect changes in the demand for land. They should be informed by regular reviews of both the land allocated for development in plans, and of land availability. Where the local planning authority considers there to be no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the use allocated in a plan:
    - a) they should, as part of plan updates, reallocate the land for a more deliverable use that can help to address identified needs (or, if appropriate, deallocate a site which is undeveloped); and
    - b) in the interim, prior to updating the plan, applications for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area.
- 3.12. In respect of the North Witney SDA, the Local Plan was adopted a relatively short time ago (September 2018) and it is generally acknowledged that the 'lead-in' times for large, strategic sites are relatively long, particularly where multiple land ownerships are involved.

- 3.13. On this basis, it is not particularly unusual that new homes are not yet in place on the site. The Local Plan housing trajectory is purposefully 'stepped' to reflect the fact that the strategic allocations such as North Witney are expected to come forward in the second half of the plan period (i.e. from 2021 onwards).
- 3.14. It is also relevant to note that there is clear developer interest in bringing the North Witney SDA forward, with two as yet, undetermined planning applications submitted for the eastern and western parts of the site. These have been unable to be determined in the absence of an agreed masterplan but the District Council is working closely with the relevant land controlling interests in order to bring this forward.
- 3.15. On this basis, Officers do not consider that, at this point in time, it can be concluded that there is '*no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the use allocated in a plan*'.
- 3.16. As such, there is no valid reason to consider the 'deallocation' of the North Witney SDA in the context of paragraph 120 of the NPPF at this point in time. The proposed review of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan due to take place from November 2021 – September 2023 will provide an opportunity to further consider the matter.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. This report has no financial implications.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. None additional to the comment included above.

#### **6. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS**

- 6.1. Subject to any advice as to the statutory position which may be required to be given at the meeting, council is able to decide how to respond to the petition.

#### **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1. None



 <p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>	<p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p><b>Council: Wednesday 28 July 2021</b></p>
<p>Report Number</p>	<p><b>Agenda Item No. 7</b></p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p><b>Recommendations from the Executive and the Council's Committees or Sub-Committees</b></p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Councillor Michele Mead, Leader of the Council Email: <a href="mailto:michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk">michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Amy Bridgewater-Carnall, Senior Strategic Support Officer Email: <a href="mailto:amy.bridgewater-carnall@westoxon.gov.uk">amy.bridgewater-carnall@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To consider the recommendations made by Cabinet and the Council's Committees since its last meeting.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p><a href="#">Annex 1</a> – Schedule of recommendations</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the recommendations set out in <a href="#">Annex 1</a> to the report be adopted.</p>
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>None</p>

**1. BACKGROUND**

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

**2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1. The recommendations set out in [Annex I](#) both relate to matters to be considered at the Cabinet meeting on 21 July 2021, i.e. 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 Council 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)	Cabinet – 21 July 2021	Item 6 – Financial Outturn Report 2020/21 & additions to Capital Programme	(b) That the carry forward of Capital Budget of £3.657m as detailed in Annex B be approved; and (c) That the transfers to Earmarked Reserves as detailed in section 4 of the report be approved.
(b)	Cabinet – 21 July 2021	Item 7 – Approval of Proposed Standard Fees for Legal and estates	a) That the fees detailed at Annex A to the report be approved; and b) That that the fees should be set annually as part of the Council's Fees and Charges process.

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# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 8

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### CABINET

Record of decisions taken at the meeting of the **Cabinet** held  
on **Wednesday, 26 May 2021** at 2.00 pm

### PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Michele Mead (Leader), Councillor Suzi Coul, Councillor Merilyn Davies, Councillor Jane Doughty, Councillor Jeff Haine, Councillor Norman MacRae MBE and Councillor Michele Mead

Also in Attendance: Councillors Cooper, Dingwall, Eaglestone, Fenton and Graham.

Officers: Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer), Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer), Giles Hughes (Chief Executive) and Frank Wilson (Group Finance Director - Publica)

#### **1** Notice of Decisions

The decisions taken at the meeting on 21 April 2021 were noted.

#### **2** Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cabinet Member, Councillor David Harvey, and non-Cabinet Members Councillors Good and Levy.

#### **3** Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

#### **4** Participation of the Public

There was none.

#### **5** Receipt of Announcements

##### Welcome

Councillor Mead welcomed everyone back to the Council Chamber for the first time since lockdown restrictions eased and highlighted that this was her first meeting as Leader in the Chamber and the first Cabinet meeting for her newly appointed Cabinet Members.

##### Regulatory Excellence Awards 2021 - finalists

Councillor MacRae addressed the meeting and advised that The Oxfordshire Coronavirus Regulatory Partnership had submitted a nomination to the Local Government Awards and had been selected as a Regulatory Excellence Awards 2021 Coronavirus Category finalist.

He highlighted the work undertaken by three members of West Oxfordshire staff who had pulled together, worked across the county, broken down barriers and improved relationships. These staff members were Liz Walters – Hospitality and Events Officer, Andrew Bartlett – Covid Support Officer, Maria Harper – Covid Business Support and Ruth Levett – Service Leader. Councillor MacRae then shared some extracts from the nomination form which explained the achievements and the legacy left by the team. He finished by thanking all involved for the fantastic work and the achievement in being selected as finalists for the award.

**6** Appointments of Representatives to Outside Bodies

Councillor Mead introduced the report as Leader and proposed the appointments as per the revised Annex A. This was seconded by Councillor Haine.

**Resolved** that the appointments to Outside Bodies listed in the revised Annex A to the report, be approved.

**7** Ubico Business Case for Expansion and Extension of the Partnership to Gloucester City Council

Members received a report from the Business Manager – Contracts, which presented them with a proposal for Gloucester City Council to become an equal shareholder in Ubico Limited and presented the findings of a due diligence appraisal of the business case.

Councillor MacRae outlined the report and explained that West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) and Cotswold District Council (CDC), along with Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC), and four other partners in Gloucestershire were shareholders in Ubico Limited, a teckal company designed to deliver environmental services, offering better value for money than commercial contracts. Ubico had submitted a tender bid to Gloucester City Council (GCI) for its environmental services contract, which had been successful and would mean that GCI would join the partnership and become an equal shareholder in the company.

The appraisal of the business case had taken the form of an assessment of three key areas of risk –the Environmental Services Innovation Programme, the business support costs to Publica whilst integrating GCI into Ubico and the ongoing business support costs to Publica. These were detailed individually in the report under sections 3, 4 and 5.

Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC), and the other Ubico shareholders were performing their own reviews whilst Stroud District Council and Forest of Dean District Council had already agreed to GCI joining the partnership. In order to effectively review the business case, senior officers from Waste, Finance, HR, ICT, Legal, and South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) had been involved in the appraisal.

Following the review, it was concluded that Ubico had provided sufficient assurance to the Council to enable the Cabinet to recommend that the Leader approve the admission of GCI to Ubico as a shareholder. In addition, there would be a financial benefit to the Council through an estimated reduction of £33,000 per annum in corporate overhead costs.

An alternative option was that the Council could choose to oppose GCI joining the Ubico Partnership as an equal shareholder, however, the final decision would be made based on the majority.

Councillor MacRae, therefore, proposed the recommendations in the report as laid out and this was seconded by Councillor Davies.

In response to a query from Councillor Graham, Councillor MacRae confirmed that £33,000 was West Oxfordshire Council's share of the savings across the partnership. In addition, Councillor MacRae provided clarification on the potential for depot sharing with Gloucester and the opportunities this could provide with regards to a larger workshop for servicing the fleet of vehicles. There were also discussions to be had about the potential of covering each other's outlying, rural collection areas, when these were located within easy access of one another, offering up carbon reduction and fuel savings.

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Councillor Graham also asked what mechanism would be used to review and monitor the changes. Councillor MacRae advised that the Environmental Services Innovation Programme would be looking at the service improvement and there would be constant reiterations.

In response to a comment from Councillor Postan, Members were reminded that the performance of the Ubico contract was reviewed annually by Council.

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

**Resolved** that the proposal contained within this report is endorsed and the Leader (As the Ubico Shareholder Representative) formally supports Gloucester City Council joining Ubico Limited, as an equal shareholder.

## 8

### Local Development Scheme (LDS) Update

Members received a report from the Planning Policy Manager which requested approval of an update of the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS). This provided information on which planning policy documents the Council intended to prepare and when, to ensure transparency and enable effective community engagement. The LDS also provided information on Neighbourhood Planning.

The report highlighted that a Local Development Scheme (LDS) was required under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). The LDS must specify the development plan documents which form the development plan for the area. The LDS must be made publicly available including on the Council's website and kept up to date, being revised at least annually or more frequently where the need arose. The Council's most recent LDS was approved in November 2020, however, a number of issues had arisen which meant that it was necessary to agree a further update.

An updated version of the LDS was attached at Annex A to the report and covered the period May 2021 – May 2024 and a summary of the main changes was provided in the report.

Councillor Haine outlined the report and explained the need to review the Local Plan every five years, work for which was on schedule. He also provided an update on the latest situation regarding the examination hearings for the Salt Cross development and the ongoing discussions within government relating to their intention to abolish CIL and Section 106 and replace with a new, nationally set, value-based flat rate charge. Councillor Haine reiterated that unfortunately, there was still no clarity from government on this.

With regards to the Supplementary Planning Documents, Councillor Haine signposted Members to paragraph 2.13 of the report which advised that in light of the legal advice received, the updated LDS no longer referred to the preparation of SPD's for the four strategic areas. Councillor Haine then proposed the recommendations as laid out and this was seconded by Councillor Davies.

Councillor Graham raised a concern that the work undertaken so far on the SPD's would be put aside and noted that there would have been a cost incurred in producing them. In addition, he queried how prepared the Council was to act once the Government announced its changes with regard to CIL and Section 106. In response, Councillor Haine recognised that there had been a cost involved in preparing SPD's, particularly in relation to officer time and repeated that as yet, there was no clarity from Government on their plans moving forwards.

The Chief Executive, Mr Hughes, addressed the meeting and stated that he did not feel the work that had gone into preparing the SPD's would be wasted because of the legacy of

communication and idea harvesting that had been borne from the process. He echoed the frustrations felt at the lack of clarity from government and highlighted the work being carried out on the Oxfordshire Plan which the government were very supportive of.

Councillor Graham also wondered when consultation would be carried out, if the masterplans were to be created by the developers. In response, Councillor Haine advised that officers would be providing guidance to the developers and the plans would need to come to Council for approval. In addition, these were all strategic sites and would any proposals would undergo public consultation.

Having considered the report, and having heard from the Members present, Cabinet

**Resolved** that the updated Local Development Scheme attached at Annex A to the report is approved.

9

### Opening Woodstock Outdoor Pool

Members received a report from the Business Manager – Contracts which sought approval for a revised outdoor pool opening programme for the 2021 season, allowing the Woodstock Outdoor pool to open as an addition to the GLL planned Covid 19 recovery programme.

Following the announcement of the Government Roadmap (the Roadmap) GLL were asked to provide a schedule of the re-opening of facilities in accordance with the relaxation of lockdown restrictions. This resulted in GLL establishing the minimum viable offer (MVO) which was a forecast of the allowed activities and the order in which the services could be opened whilst minimising the risk that the business could become insolvent through lack of income.

As part of establishing the MVO, GLL identified that the Woodstock Outdoor Pool operated at a financial loss of £57,000 annually, however, the benefits could still be delivered in normal circumstances as the deficit was covered by GLL as part of the contracts overall financial arrangement.

The report detailed two options for consideration – the pool remain closed resulting in zero subsidy but the potential of costs associated with dilapidation; or open for the school summer holidays resulting in a £19,000 subsidy.

The legal implications relating to any amendment to the contract and the risks associated with the proposals were outlined at sections 4 and 5 of the report. A table at paragraph 5.4 demonstrated the benefits and weaknesses of the options.

An alternative option was that the Council could choose to explore different timeframes for the re-opening, although each would have a different effect on the modelling. The report, therefore, recommended a revised opening programme as detailed at Annex A and asked Members to decide if the amendment to the contract be for the remainder of 2021 or if it should be extended to cover future years.

Due to the recent change in portfolio remits, it was recognised that Councillor Doughty had only just taken ownership of this service area and therefore, Councillor Coul presented the report as the previous Cabinet Member for Health and Leisure.

Councillor Coul outlined the report and assured Members that this was a positive move in order for residents to enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits the facility provided. She highlighted the offers that would be publicised to encourage the public back to the pool and hoped that opening for the summer holidays would be a good compromise.

She therefore proposed recommendations a), b) and c) i and this was seconded by Councillor Doughty.



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Councillor Cooper addressed the meeting and stated his disappointment at hearing about this decision from a third party and not from Cabinet members. He advised that the pool had been in existence for over 50 years and had served Woodstock and surrounding areas including Cherwell. He queried if the model operated by Hinksey outdoor pool had been considered, which included staying open longer to provide a facility for cold water swimming.

In response, the Leader noted the request for Ward Members to be consulted in future but reminded the meeting that until this report had been considered, no decision had been made.

Councillor Davies was not convinced that the comparison of the Woodstock pool with the Hinksey facility was fair as they were very different facilities. However, it was agreed that a re-think of the future provision at Woodstock would be beneficial in order to encourage future usage.

Councillor Graham raised a concern that schools had not been consulted with as previously stated but had instead been advised that the pool would not be available to students. The new Cabinet Member for Customer Delivery, Councillor Doughty assured him she would look into this and had taken the comments relating to Ward Members on board.

Having considered the report and having heard from the Members present, Cabinet

**Resolved** that

- a) the proposed school summer holiday opening programme for Woodstock Outdoor Pool for the 2021 season, is approved;
- b) the forecast additional cost of this addition to the Recovery programme of the Leisure Contract, is acknowledged; and
- c) authority is delegated to the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Cabinet member, to allow an amendment to the minimum opening hours of the leisure contract via an exchange of letters for 2021.

The Meeting closed at 2.42pm

Leader of the Council

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## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### LICENSING COMMITTEE

Record of decisions taken at the meeting of the **Licensing Committee** held  
Council Chamber, Woodgreen, Witney on **Friday, 28 May 2021** at 2.00 pm

#### PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Norman MacRae MBE (Chairman), Councillor Steve Good (Vice-Chair), Councillor Mike Cahill, Councillor Julian Cooper, Councillor Harry Eaglestone, Councillor Ted Fenton, Councillor Lysette Nicholls and Councillor Geoff Saul

Officers: Michelle Bignell, Service Leader Licensing; Amy Bridgewater-Carnall, Senior Strategic Support Officer; Michelle Ouzman, Strategic Support Officer and Debra Courtenay- Crane, Licensing Officer

#### **1** Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2018 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **2** Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Owen Collins; Councillor Julian Cooper substituted for Councillor Andy Graham.

#### **3** Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

#### **4** Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman addressed the Committee and advised them that a long standing member of the Licensing Team, Debra Courtenay-Crane was leaving the authority. He thanked her for her hard work over previous years and recognised a number of achievements she had received in relation to gymnastics and her contribution to sport in the community. He acknowledged that many Councillors would have worked with Mrs Courtenay-Crane at some stage in relation to the licensing of taxi drivers or at one of the many events organised across the District. He wished Mrs Courtenay-Crane all the best in her future endeavours.

The Chairman then went on to advise Members that the Licensing Training due to take place today had to be postponed due to officer ill health. He assured the meeting that a date would be rearranged shortly.

#### **5** Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles (Policy) Review 2021

The Committee received a report from the Licensing Service Leader which detailed the statutory requirement to review the current Gambling Policy and provided Members with the draft document for consultation.

The report explained that the Council was the Licensing Authority for the purposes of the Gambling Act 2005 ("the Act"). The Act required the Council to prepare a Statement of

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Principles (Licensing Policy) which set out the general approach the Council would take when carrying out its regulatory role under the Act. The current Statement of Principles was due to expire in January 2022 and a new Statement of Principles needed to be in place by 31 January 2022.

As the legislation and statutory guidance had remained unchanged, there had been no major changes to the draft policy attached at Annex A to the report. The only change made was the removal of a reference to shared partnership working so that the draft document was solely for West Oxfordshire District Council.

The report proposed to carry out a full consultation for a period of twelve weeks and a list of consultees was detailed at section 2.5 of the report.

Comments would be reported back to the Licensing Committee later in 2021, with a view to a recommendation being made to the Council to adopt the Policy at its meeting on 27 October 2021.

The Chairman, Councillor MacRae, introduced the report and highlighted the minor change in wording of the Policy. He proposed that the recommendations be approved.

Having read the report and considered the draft Statement of Principles, the Committee

**Resolved** that a consultation exercise to seek the views of the trade and relevant stakeholders on the revised Policy, is approved.

The Meeting closed at 2.15 pm

Licensing Committee Chairman

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## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Record of Decisions of the meeting of the  
**Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee**  
Held in the Council Chamber at 2.00 pm on **Wednesday, 2 June 2021**

### PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Derek Cotterill (Chairman), Councillor Geoff Saul (Vice-Chair), Councillor Joy Aitman, Councillor Alaa Al-Yousuf, Councillor Julian Cooper, Councillor Rupert Dent, Councillor Harry Eaglestone, Councillor Andy Graham, Councillor Gill Hill, Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt, Councillor Alex Postan, Councillor Andrew Prosser and Councillor Harry St John

Officers: Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer)

#### **1 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to adding Councillor Enright to those that were present.

#### **2 Apologies for Absence**

The following temporary appointments were notified:

Councillor Poskitt substituted for Councillor Levy.

Councillor Aitman substituted for Councillor Bolger.

Councillor Graham substitute for Councillor Parkinson.

#### **3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

#### **4 Participation of the Public**

There were no requests received.

#### **5 Start Time of Meetings**

The Chairman provided an overview of previous start times of the meeting. The Chairman then proposed that Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee would meet at 2pm for the year 2021/22. Councillor Eaglestone seconded the proposal.

**RESOLVED:** That the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee meets at 2pm for the year 2021/22.

#### **6 Establishment of Council's Investment Policy Task and Finish Group**

Following a request from Councillor Al-Yousuf at the April meeting, it was agreed that a Task and Finish Group would be established to look at defining the Council's Investment Policy and review Arlingclose's service contract and investment mandate.

The Senior Strategic Support officer explained to the Committee how Task and Finish Groups were established, their purpose and reporting responsibilities.

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The Chief Finance Officer began by offering an overview of the Council's current Financial position and explained the investment and treasury funds.

Members noted that the Council currently received external, independent advice from Arlingclose. The role, cost and work of Arlingclose on the Council's Externally Managed Pooled Funds was discussed. It was noted that many circumstances had changed since the contract with Arlingclose began. The Council's current investment and borrowing positions as well as approaches to debt and risk were considered.

The Chief Finance Officer acknowledged that it was a good time for a review and agreed to provide a short (one page) briefing paper for the first meeting of the Investment Policy Task and Finish Group. She informed the Committee that the Council currently had circa £12m invested and when £2m of that matures the Council could choose to keep £10m invested in order to maintain its status under MiFID 2.

Following a query from Councillor Al-Yousuf, Mrs Griffiths advised that the Council's needs, treasury function and the challenges to be faced were covered in the budget papers. It was agreed that advice was needed on the bottom line that the Council wanted its' Treasury Investments to reach.

The Chairman proposed that the scrutiny vice-chair, Councillor Saul be nominated as the Chairman of the Task and Finish Group. Further proposals of membership were Councillors Levy, Al-Yousuf, Dent and Postan.

**RESOLVED that:**

1) the Investment Policy Task and Finish Group's initial meeting will decide the Group's remit and scope, to be brought to the next Financial and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on the 14 July 2021 for approval;

2) the Investment Policy Task and Finish Group could be held virtually with the agenda being published five working days in advance; and

3) the following Members are nominated to the Investment Policy Task and Finish Group; Councillor Saul (Chairman), Councillor Levy, Councillor Al-Yousuf, Councillor Dent and Councillor Postan.

**7**

**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 the 18 May 2021.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

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8

### **Committee Work Programme**

The Committee considered the previously circulated report from Democratic Services, which invited it to consider its Work Programme for 2021/2022.

No comments were raised other than to add the approval of the Investment Policy Task and Finish Group's scoping document for consideration at the next meeting. The Senior Strategic Support Officer outlined the first step in establishing this Group as the remit and scope of the Group being agreed by Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Poskitt asked about the progress of the electric vehicle charging points scheme. The Chief Finance Officer advised that in order to dovetail with, and supplement, Oxfordshire County Council's (OCC) charging point programme, the Council had delayed its work on this project until OCC's work was more advanced. She advised that Councillor MacRae was up to date with the latest situation.

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

(a) the progress made in establishing the Investment Policy Task and Finish Group including its scope and remit be added to the work programme.

9

### **Members Questions**

Councillor Cooper asked about how the Council responds to central Government consultation documents. Councillor Al-Yousuf advised that officers respond to these requests and would consult Members when necessary.

The Meeting closed at 2.52 pm

CHAIRMAN

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## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Record of Decisions of the meeting of the  
**Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee**  
Held at 2.00 pm on **Thursday, 10 June 2021**

### PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Alaa Al-Yousuf (Chairman), Councillor Andrew Coles (Vice-Chair), Councillor Mike Cahill, Councillor Owen Collins, Councillor Rupert Dent, Councillor Harry Eaglestone, Councillor Ted Fenton, Councillor Andy Goodwin, Councillor Liz Leffman, Councillor Martin McBride, Councillor Alex Postan, Councillor Carl Rylett and Councillor Harry St John

Officers: Laurence King (Shared Principal Engineer) and Bill Oddy (Group Manager - Commercial Development)

#### **1 Minutes of Previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **2 Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Woodruff.

#### **3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

#### **4 Participation of the Public**

The following members of the public addressed the Committee in relation to Agenda Item 5 – OCC Local Lead Flood Authority Update.

William Wareing – resident of Woodford Mill, Witney and on behalf of The Witney Flood Mitigation Group

Tony Stark – resident of Woodford Mill, Witney and a founder member of The Witney Flood Mitigation Group

Kay Jerred – resident of Riverside Gardens, Witney and representing 50 elderly and vulnerable residents.

Copies of their submissions are attached as an appendix to these minutes.

In response to a question from Councillor Coles, Mr Wareing advised that the representatives of the Environment Agency had made it clear that there were no plans for flood risk or mitigation measures for Witney.

Following a question from Councillor Postan, Mr Wareing confirmed who the group had reached out to and how they had tried to include people in decision making positions.

In response to a question from Councillor Fenton, Mr Stark advised of the different occasions that flooding had occurred.

Councillor Coles thanked Ms Jerrad for attending and expressed his sympathy for the situation she and other residents had found themselves in. Ms Jerrad confirmed that there did not appear to be a register of the most vulnerable properties and / or residents. Officers confirmed that this could be included in Community Emergency Plans and shared with the Fire Service.

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Councillor Graham also expressed his gratitude to the speakers for attending the meeting and impressed by their speeches, although the content had been upsetting to hear.

5

### **OCC Local Lead Flood Authority - Update**

Mr Bill Cotton, Corporate Director for Environment and Place at Oxfordshire County Council addressed the meeting in relation to the council's role as Local Lead Flood Authority.

He provided an overview of the responsibilities which he acknowledged were complicated; outlined the management roles and responsibilities for Oxfordshire and the Local Lead Flood Authority; advised how the OCC worked in partnership on the Local Management Strategy and were a statutory consultee on planning applications.

Members were provided with an explanation of the agreement held with District Councils to manage water courses and work with riparian owners to remind them of their responsibilities.

Mr Cotton advised that it was the County Council's responsibility to record and investigate flood incidents (25 investigations in West Oxfordshire) and work with the fire brigade, local groups and councillors when an incident occurred. He admitted that the process had been tested at Christmas but reminded the meeting that due to Climate Change and flood risk, these incidents would always occur. Mr Cotton also referred to the Information and Support Toolkit and encouraged Members to let him know if these needed improvement.

Questions and comments from Councillors included:

Councillor Postan – the difficulties experienced if a river was cleared upstream, resulting in ground water, surge and run off. He also referred to de-silting, tree planting, changes in agricultural methods and traffic measures.

Councillor Leffman queried what could be done to improve the relationship between the District and County Councils regarding planning applications; how to enforce clearing of watercourses by landowners; the responsibility for ditches and grips on Highway land; and drainage clearance operating on a four year cycle but in reality was closer to 8 to 9 years.

Councillor St John asked for clarification on the Section 19 report and why it had not yet been completed; the flood alert not being activated early enough; and the responsibility of the Environment Agency in this situation.

The Council's Flooding Officer, Laurence King advised members that the S19 report was a County Council responsibility to produce. In response, Mr Cotton advised that he would enquire as to the status of the S19 report and get back to officers.

Councillor Coles raised the issue that a months rain had fallen in one afternoon and proposed the areas likely to be affected would have been known 24 to 36 hours earlier; he noted that sandbags were not ready on that occasion and preparations not made; he argued that despite the Climate Emergency, basic maintenance was not being carried out. He concluded by asking Mr Cotton how closely the County Council had worked with the relevant groups and authorities.

In response, Mr Cotton agreed to visit the 'pinch points' in person and meet the residents affected.

Members also raised a number of other areas for discussion, including building formal relationships with residents, the Local Resilience Forum and Parish Councils; and planning and building on known flood plains and appearing to disregard local knowledge with little recognition of community awareness.

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In response, officers clarified the criteria for when a planning application was submitted to the County Council for comment. The Group Manager – Commercial Development asked if the 20+ flooding investigations in West Oxfordshire could be shared and reiterated the need to encourage town and parish councils to create their own community plans. He suggested that the Committee could ask to see the Section 19 report once it was available and it was agreed that this would be added to the Work Programme.

In summing up, Mr Cotton advised that the five key actions he would take away with him were:

To be clear about the County's responsibilities;

To help strengthen partnership working;

To help community groups to build resilience;

He agreed to meet with local residents and visit areas of flooding concern; and

To chase up the status of the S19 report and forward it to the Committee for information.

The Committee agreed that a representative from the Environment Agency should be invited to a future meeting and look into the existing powers that the Council had for encouraging clearance of water courses and ditches.

In response to a query from Councillor Rylett, Mr Cotton advised that he would find out about the report from Wild Oxfordshire and the Environment Agency regarding Natural Flood Management and would share it with Members.

The Chairman thanked Mr Cotton for attending and answering questions from the Committee.

## 6

### **Call-In of Cabinet Decision; Allocation of Parking Funds**

The Committee considered the report relating to the Call In of the Cabinet decision on the Allocation of Parking Funds, considered at 21 April 2021 meeting.

The decision had been called in by Councillors Cooper, Leffman Graham and Poskitt.

Councillor Cooper addressed the meeting and felt there had been a lack of definition around the decision, queried how the amounts had been arrived at and asked if Publica had the resources to take on the report. He asked how the expenditure would be monitored and asked if the Council would be adopting the suggestions put forward by Parish and/or Town Councils.

In response, Councillor MacRae advised that when the District Council initially agreed to undertake some work on on-street parking issues, due to a lack of capacity at OCC, it was envisaged the work would take just a few months for each of the major settlements. However, the project within Woodstock had taken a very considerable amount of time, principally, because of the need to engage with so many groups and the high number of contacts from within the Community.

In addition, the Covid pandemic saw a significant number of members of staff redeployed from their 'normal' duties to work on the Council's Covid response.

As with the study conducted in Corn Street/Church Green Witney, the results of the Woodstock parking study were reported to OCC for them to consider and take forward any changes they considered appropriate, including support for a one-way system around 'the triangle' and a restriction on large vehicles accessing the town centre. He reminded

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Councillor Cooper that the district authority was not the Highway authority and could not therefore make decisions on changes to on-street parking regulations. The district council did not have the capacity to provide continued support to the project, as focus needed to be directed to other parking service management and improvement matters. The County Council would therefore need to take this matter forward.

In response to the comment ‘...*due to the lack of information on the change in capacity within PUBLICA to undertake this task.*’ Councillor MacRae advised that the report was published in his name and he took full responsibility for its content. He was content to publish it and did not think it was appropriate to cast blame on members of staff in this matter.

Moving to the second point raised, ‘Undefined terms’ Councillor MacRae explained that the funding was provided for the following purposes:

- Review/study/collection of data on parking needs and issues, so that the information could be used to request changes to parking provision or restrictions, from the appropriate authority, where needed.
- Contribution towards the cost of any changes agreed by the appropriate authority (i.e., towards line marking, subject to OCC Highways agreement)

As suggested by Cllr Enright at the Cabinet meeting, and agreed by Councillor MacRae, Councils receiving this funding would be asked to report back to WODC a breakdown of what had been spent and what had been achieved as a result. Councillor MacRae also proposed that a requirement be included that the funds were to be used as directed within a two-year timespan with outcomes to be focused on improving parking, increasing parking provision or improving parking safety.

Following the statement from Councillor MacRae, Councillor Leffman advised she was still uncertain as to what the town or parish councils would be able to do with the money and queried if this was the best use of Council resources.

It was agreed that the criteria for spending the money needed to be clearly communicated with the parish and town councils and any letter would also advise that they had two years in which to spend the funds on ‘parking related’ activities.

It was therefore proposed and duly seconded that the Call In would not be supported and officers would add a ‘sunset’ clause of two years to the communication to councils.

**Resolved** that the Call in is not supported.

7

## **Committee Work Programme 2021/22**

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

Members noted that the following additions would be included on the work programme for future meetings:

Representative to be invited from the Environment Agency; and

Riparian Ownership – Land Management Strategy update.

**Resolved** that the work programme be agreed subject to the additions above.

10/June2021

8

### **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 18 May 2021.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

9

### **Members' Questions**

Councillor Leffman asked the following question relating to parking enforcement in Charlbury:

“This relates to an agreement that was made some years ago with residents on Church Lane and Dyers Hill about parking their cars. It is a complicated story, but essentially, parking is restricted for one hour per day in order to discourage people from parking for free and then walking to the station. However it was recognised that this made it difficult for residents to park and so it was agreed that if residents gave their car registrations to WODC they would not be ticketed. we have had a couple of cases of residents getting tickets over the years but in general this has been respected. Earlier this week some residents received an email telling them that from next Monday this agreement would be suspended. There was no consultation, councillors were not informed of the decision, and apparently not all residents were informed either. I wrote to Maria Wheatley who sent me an email yesterday saying she would come back to me later in the day about this but so far I have not heard anything.

My main concern is that once again, decisions that make a big difference to residents are being taken without any notice, without consultation and without councillors being asked for their views.”

In response, the Group Manager responsible for Commercial Development stated there were two locations in the District where a similar traffic regulation order was in place – Charlbury and Long Hanborough railway stations. These were put in place to deal with on street parking issues approximately ten to 15 years ago and, similar to other areas of West Oxfordshire, would benefit from being reviewed by Oxfordshire County Council.

Mr Oddy stated that he was not aware of why residents had received notice about a local parking agreement but he would liaise with the Parking Services Manager and ask her to respond to Councillor Leffman.

Councillor Collins asked the following question regarding Bring Sites:

“I have seen an email sent to Witney Town Council regarding the Bring Sites. I do not feel that this was written in the spirit of what the Committee suggested and rather than refer to consultation, appeared to provide costs for taking over the running of the site implying the decision was a foregone conclusion. I would like to express the disappointment felt by Witney Town Council.”

In response, Mr Oddy apologised on behalf of the author of the email. He had hoped the communication would help officers to understand the impact that removing the sites had and costs had been included to try to help the council's reach a decision.

The Meeting closed at 4.32 pm

CHAIRMAN

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## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### CABINET

Record of decisions taken at the meeting of the **Cabinet** held  
on **Wednesday, 16 June 2021** at 2.00 pm

### PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Michele Mead (Leader), Councillor David Harvey (Deputy Leader), Councillor Suzi Coul, Councillor Merilyn Davies, Councillor Jane Doughty, Councillor Jeff Haine, Councillor David Harvey, Councillor Norman MacRae MBE and Councillor Michele Mead

Also in Attendance: Councillor Julian Cooper, Councillor Harry Eaglestone, Councillor Andy Graham and Councillor Mark Johnson.

Officers: Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer), Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer), Giles Hughes (Chief Executive) and Frank Wilson (Group Finance Director - Publica), Suzanne Barton (Senior Estates Officer), Andrew Smith (Communication Officer) and Michelle Ouzman (Strategic Support Officer).

#### **10** Notice of Decisions

The decisions taken at the meeting on 26 May 2021 were approved.

#### **11** Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Carl Rylett.

#### **12** Declarations of Interest

Declarations of Interest were received as follows:

##### Item 8 – Commercial Tenancy Arrears Review

Councillor Harvey declared an interest as a business tenant of West Oxfordshire District Council.

#### **13** Participation of the Public

There was no participation of the public.

#### **14** Receipt of Announcements

##### Regulatory Excellence Awards 2021

Following his announcement at the last Cabinet meeting, Councillor MacRae addressed Members and was delighted to announce that The Oxfordshire Coronavirus Regulatory Partnership had won the Local Government Awards, Regulatory Excellence Awards 2021 Coronavirus Category. He passed his congratulations to all staff involved.

##### Additional Restriction Grants

Councillor Coul advised that the above grants had been supplied to local businesses in the most recent round of awards.

Covid-19 Local Update

Councillor Mead reminded Members that although hospitalisations and deaths from Covid-19 were low, the virus was still spreading throughout the District. She reminded the meeting of the need for the Council and elected members to continue to support local residents and encourage individuals to have the vaccine. Ultimately, the Leader's message was to urge caution and continue to support the vulnerable residents.

**15** Service Performance Report 2020-21 Quarter Four

Members received a report which provided details of the Council's operational performance at the end of 2020-21 Quarter four (Q4), and enabled Councillors to assess operational performance and gain assurance on progress towards achieving the Council's priorities.

A new Council Plan 2020-2024 was approved by Council in January 2020. Due to the impact of Covid-19 on the economy, community, climate change, service delivery and finances, a Local Recovery Plan was approved by Council in October 2020 to complement the delivery of the Council Plan 2020-24. A new performance management framework had been developed with a much broader framework than previous frameworks. It set out six key strands of information on which assurance needed to be provided and these were listed at 2.3 of the report.

The report also included benchmarking data on a trial basis and further information was detailed at 2.5 of the report.

Members noted the Council Priorities section of the report and the West Oxfordshire Council Plan Annual Statement which was attached at Annex A to the report. The Council's Service Performance was covered in a full report attached at Annex B to the report, and provided an overview of the customer facing and support services that had been impacted by Covid-19.

There were no alternative options provided as the report was for noting.

The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and stated that the impact of the pandemic was unsurprising. She highlighted that the performance indicators were being reviewed to include key KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) which aligned with the Council's Plan. Councillor Coul proposed that the report be noted. This was seconded by Councillor Davies.

In response to a question from Councillor Cooper, the Cabinet Member highlighted that the wording on page 11 had been used cautiously, as it had been known that the proposed 21 June date could be amended if necessary.

Councillor Cooper also requested an update on Electric Vehicle Charging Points and Councillor Harvey advised that the contractual details were still being discussed and WODC's project was dependant on the County Council's Park & Charge project moving ahead.

Councillor Cooper asked about the latest situation regarding a backlog of planning applications being processed. Councillor Coul advised that Cabinet had taken note of the concerns raised and additional resources were being brought in to reduce the waiting time.

Councillor Haine confirmed that additional staff had been employed and the backlog of applications was being worked through.

Having read the report, Cabinet

**Resolved** that the 2020-21 Q4 service performance be noted.



**16** Community Facility Grants - 1st Round 2021/2022

Members received a report from the Business Manager – Contracts, which asked them to consider applications for grant aid from the first two rounds of funding for the Community Facilities Grant Scheme.

Two applications had been received from Great Rollright Parish Council for £10,000 and Stonesfield Cricket Club for £1562.50 and the full breakdown and description of funding was outlined in Annex A to the report.

Great Rollright Parish Council had requested funding to assist with the replacement of playground equipment and bases, following a recent ROSPA inspection. The project's aim was to deliver a modern, well equipped playground that met the requirements of the children in the village and the total cost of the scheme was £50,000.

Stonesfield Cricket Club had requested funding to provide a new electronic scoreboard because the current board was no longer useable and had been deemed a health and safety risk. In addition, the report noted that the replacement scoreboard was required in order to fulfil fixtures at both adult and junior levels, as it was a compulsory requirement for participation in league cricket. The total cost of the scheme was £6,250.

Members noted that the total grant allocation in this report was £11,562.50 and would increase the total investment made to date to £56,250, into local schemes.

An alternative option was that Cabinet could choose to offer differing levels of grant aid although this could result in the projects not being viable due to insufficient funding.

The Cabinet Member for Customer Delivery, Councillor Doughty introduced the report and was pleased to be recommending the proposals for two positive and worthwhile community projects. Both of which would help to improve the health and wellbeing of local residents.

This was seconded by Councillor MacRae who reiterated the need to support local, good causes.

Having read the report, Cabinet

**Resolved** to award the grants in accordance with the recommendations set out in Annex A to the report.

**17** Commercial Tenancy Arrears Review

Members received a report which asked Cabinet to consider the commercial tenancy arrears position in light of the statutory limitation on recovery action against tenants.

In response to the Covid-19 crisis, in March 2020, the Council issued Business Support Terms to its commercial tenants. The Terms, attached at Annex A to the report, allowed all commercial tenants (except those able to continue to trade, headlessees and Government organisations) a three month rent deferral. In August 2020 the Council decided to extend the rent deferral for a further three months for only those tenants still unable to trade. The decision included the offer to tenants to enter into a monthly payment plan for the deferred rent, with the aim being to bring their rent accounts up to date by the end of March 2022, or the end of lease, whichever occurred first.

The CIPFA Asset Management Team had monitored English and Welsh authority responses to the Covid-19 pandemic in respect of their commercial tenants and the team's advice was listed at 1.3 of the report.

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Annex B to the report detailed the Criteria for Further Commercial Tenant Support and was intended to provide a policy for both the November 2020 trading restrictions and the further trading restrictions implemented by the Government at the end of December 2020, as a result of the response to Covid-19. The Financial Implications section of the report explained the average performance of the Council's property portfolio and outlined the processes for rent deferrals, 'Lease Re-gear' and rent free periods.

An alternative options was that the Council could choose not to provide further support however, the risk was that this could increase the potential for reduced future income if the rent payments could not be met.

Councillor Coul introduced the report and explained that this report was proposing a policy to clarify how the Council would process any requests received. This was seconded by Councillor Mead.

Councillor Graham commented on the level of support already provided to local businesses and thanked the staff involved. He asked for clarification as to how and when the policy would be reviewed and queried if officers would be reporting back.

The Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Chief Executive, Mrs Griffiths, advised that these figures would be included in any variances detailed in the Budget report. She added that each case would be reviewed on a commercial basis.

Councillor Coul did not feel it was appropriate to put a time limit on the process because the business sector could continue to be impacted by Covid for sometime to come. She assured Councillor Graham that the policy would be reviewed if officers felt it was not working adequately in the future.

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

**Resolved that**

- a) the arrears position on the commercial portfolio is noted; and
- b) authority is delegated to the Cabinet Member for Finance to utilise the tools set out in section 3 of the report, on a case by case basis, to protect the commercial interests of the Council.

The Meeting closed at 2.15 pm

Leader of the Council

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Record of Decisions of the meeting of the  
**Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee**  
Held Council Chamber at 6.30 pm on **Thursday, 17 June 2021**

### PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Andrew Beaney (Chairman), Councillor Andy Graham (Vice-Chair), Councillor Jill Bull, Councillor Owen Collins, Councillor Maxine Crossland, Councillor Mark Johnson, Councillor Nick Leverton, Councillor Lysette Nicholls, Councillor Mathew Parkinson, Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt, Councillor Andrew Prosser and Councillor Alex Wilson.

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive) and Heather McCulloch (Shared Healthy Communities Manager), Adrienne Frazer and Michelle Ouzman (Strategic Support Officers).

### **I Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8 April 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, with the following amendments and updates:

Minute Number 43 – Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme: Councillor Collins provided an update from Councillor Ashbourne confirming that there were six families, in receipt of grant funding, that had been helped by the scheme.

Minute Number 44 – Affordable Housing Consultation: The Chairman noted that questions had been asked about travelling communities and park home sites being included in the supplementary planning document.

Minute Number 46 – Service Performance Report Quarter Three: With regards to Planning complaints, it was noted that the Planning Department was under pressure. The Chairman proposed to speak to the Chairman of Development Control Committee with regard to this issue.

The Chief Executive noted that he had requested an update on Planning from the Group Manager – Resident Services which would be considered in the July meeting.

Item 60 – Members Questions: Councillor Cooper noted that he had asked a question about Woodstock outdoor swimming pools re-opening times.

### **2 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Jake Acock.

### **3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

### **4 Participation of the Public**

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

### **5 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman advised that the papers for the consultation on Oxfordshire's Local Plan, Regulation 18 (Part 2), would be published on 2 July 2021 by the Oxfordshire Growth Board. The consultation would be discussed at the 8 July 2021 committee and Members were asked to note that the papers for this item would be late.

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### **Start Time of Meetings**

The Chairman provided a brief overview of previous start times of the meeting. Councillor Leverton proposed that Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee meet at 6.30 pm for the year 2021/22. The Chairman seconded the proposal.

**RESOLVED:** That the committee's start time be noted.

7

### **Presentation from Domestic Abuse Strategic Lead, OCC**

The Committee received and considered the presentation of the Shared Healthy Communities Manager, which provided Members with the opportunity to ask questions about the Domestic Abuse service in the District and the County.

During discussions, Members asked for clarification on the statistical data, the terminology being used and the joined up nature of services around Oxfordshire.

West Oxfordshire District Council's contribution of £10,000 for a further two years of funding for the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Service was noted.

Members also asked about the assistance provided for people with learning disabilities, especially in rural communities, and about provision and support for male survivors of domestic abuse and fathers of young children who were experiencing difficulties. The Shared Healthy Communities Manager informed the meeting that the Place of Safety resource was available to this client group.

Officers outlined the options and services that aimed to change behaviour and Councillor Graham offered to raise this at County Council level, particularly in relation to the work carried out in the education service.

Members also discussed the services available to the BAME community. The Shared Healthy Communities Manager informed the Committee about a project based in Oxford City which focussed on the BAME community.

The Chairman thanked the Shared Healthy Communities Manager for her comprehensive presentation.

8

### **Committee Work Programme**

The Committee received and considered the report which gave members the opportunity to comment on the recent review of the Work Programme for 2021/2022.

Following discussions, it was noted that:

Supplementary Planning Documents would be considered by Development Control Committee in future;

The consideration of the Council's work around Domestic Abuse could be moved to the 'other reports' section of the work programme;

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The report on the upgrade to West Oxfordshire's public space CCTV provision had been moved to the September Cabinet meeting. An equitable distribution of CCTV across the district was seen as desirable and the value of high quality provision to the police was noted. It was felt that the CCTV management being run from Oxford City would not provide the best service to the District;

Following a query raised by Councillor Graham, a report was requested for the July meeting on the Council's preparation for the arrival of refugees from Afghanistan. It was anticipated that some of the refugees would arrive at RAF Brize Norton and Members felt that further information was required about the District Council's role in assisting their resettlement;

Concerns were also raised about a need to increase the provision of NHS Dental services in West Oxfordshire, particularly in Carterton. Officers agreed to investigate the matter.

**RESOLVED:** That the amendments to, and contents of, the Committee Work Programme be noted.

9

### **Notice Of Motion - Re-use of IT Equipment**

The committee considered the motion referred by Council on 28 April 2021, for the Council and other public bodies in West Oxfordshire to re-use IT equipment that would previously have been disposed of.

The content of the motion, was as follows:

*"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. "*

Committee Members expressed broad support for the motion and Councillor Bull noted that the issue could be as much about connectivity as access to appropriate IT hardware.

Councillor Graham noted that is the motion was also concerned with reducing waste and therefore linked in to the climate change agenda. Members proposed a variety of potential recipients for the project, should it go ahead, such as: U3A, local schools and charities working with developing countries.

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**RESOLVED:** That a detailed proposal be produced by officers to be presented to Council for consideration.

**10 Preparation for presentation from GLL**

The Committee considered the issues it would like to discuss with GLL at the July meeting.

Councillor Graham requested that an overview of the business model adaptations and business recovery models following the pandemic be provided. In addition, he hoped to see information on business planning for the next two to three years.

Councillor Leverton requested clarification on where the responsibility lay for the poor quality of football pitches in Carterton.

Finally, the Chairman asked that any additional questions be forwarded to himself or Democratic Services by Friday 25 June 2021.

**11 Cabinet Work Programme**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Democratic Services, which gave Members the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 18 May 2021.

It was noted that:

Item 1 - approval of upgrade to West Oxfordshire's public space CCTV provision and monitoring arrangements was part of the committee's work programme.

Items 6 and 8 - options for the future use of the Witney Town Centre Shop and options for the future of 33A High Street, Burford (Visitor Information Centre) - the Chairman offered to discuss with the Chairman of Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee which would be the most appropriate scrutiny committee to consider these two items.

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

**12 Members Questions**

There were no questions from Members.

The Meeting closed at 7.32 pm

CHAIRMAN

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## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Record of Decisions of the meeting of the  
**Audit and General Purposes Committee**  
Held at 6.00 pm on **Thursday, 24 June 2021**

### PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Alex Postan (Chairman), Councillor Dan Levy (Vice-Chair), Councillor Joy Aitman, Councillor Luci Ashbourne, Councillor Andrew Beaney, Councillor Julian Cooper, Councillor Rupert Dent, Councillor Colin Dingwall, Councillor Duncan Enright, Councillor Gill Hill, Councillor Martin McBride, Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt, Councillor Harry St John, Councillor Dean Temple and Councillor Alex Wilson

Officers: Emma Cathcart (Counter Fraud Unit Manager) and Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer) and Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer).

#### **1 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **2 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jake Acock and Richard Langridge.

Councillor Dean Temple substituted for Councillor Harry Eaglestone.

#### **3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

#### **4 Participation of the Public**

There was no participation of the public.

#### **5 Chairman's Welcome**

Councillor Postan welcomed all Members to this first meeting of the municipal year and asked everyone present to introduce themselves, including officers.

#### **6 Internal Audit Opinion 2020/21**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer, which presented a summary of the work undertaken by Internal Audit during 2020/21 and gave an overall opinion on levels of assurance resulting from this work.

The Assistant Director, South West Audit Partnership introduced the report and highlighted the two annexes – Internal Audit Annual Opinion 2020/21 and Summary of Work Completed Since March 2021. The Annual Opinion contained a Key Points section on page 42 which provided an 'At a Glance' overview.

A number of questions were raised relating to the work on the Section 106 contributions and the Chief Finance Officer explained that the project was completed as far as the historical data was concerned. She advised that officers were now working on the 'business as usual aspect'. Due to staff absence, other officers had stepped in and picked up the work and she thanked all

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those involved. Following a question from Councillor St John, Mrs Griffiths reiterated that the system was not going to be accessible by the public or parish councils but requests would be submitted and officers would respond accordingly.

Other queries raised by Members included:

Time limits on the agreements and how this would be checked;

The ability to charge developers for staff time, which was possible moving forwards but not retrospectively.

Having considered the report and debated the content, Members

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**7**

### **Counter Fraud Unit Report and Proceeds of Crime and Anti-Money Laundering Policy**

Members received a report from the Counter Fraud Unit Manager which provided a summary of the activities undertaken by the team and the annual update in relation to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (IPA) and the Council's existing authorisation arrangements.

The report also provided the Committee with an updated Proceeds of Crime and Anti-Money Laundering Policy, which set out the Council's legislative obligations, for approval and adoption.

When asked if the revenue streams generated by the Counter Fraud Unit could be summarised, Ms Cathcart explained that this was hard to quantify as there were streams of loss avoidance, recovery and income to be considered. In addition the team undertook preventative activities such as training across the partnership, which consists of six Councils. She advised that criminal enforcement activity was not as prevalent within West Oxfordshire but this was improving and investigations were being referred from every pocket of the Council.

It was noted that there had been an opportunity for fraudulent activity in relation to the Business Grants and Ms Cathcart explained that the Counter Fraud Unit had actively taken part in the assessment and verification processes to reduce risks. The team were looking to pursue any potential prosecutions relating to fraudulent applications and were overseeing the post payment audit work with SWAP.

Additional questions relating to the Business Grants included whether the Council got to retain any of the money as it was administering the grants on behalf of the government and whether the debt could be sold on. It was outlined that the Council had received new burdens funding to aid the administrative processes and that BEIS had indicated that they would take responsibility for debts where the Council could show that it had exhausted recovery routes,

The issue of penalties for fly-tipping was discussed and whether it was an appropriate deterrent. Ms Cathcart outlined that fixed penalty notices were utilised where the offence warranted this as an alternative to prosecution not as a replacement. Serious incidents would still be considered for prosecution.



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Councillor Poskitt queried how much of the fraud was human error compared to deliberate acts. Ms Cathcart explained that fraud is a criminal offence and could not be reported as such until an individual has been prosecuted. Where there is error, it would be recorded as such.

Having considered the report and having debated the content, the Committee

**RESOLVED** that

1. the report and work plan attached at Annex A, are noted;
2. the Proceeds of Crime and Anti-Money Laundering Policy at Annex B is approved and adopted; and
3. the Deputy Chief Executive (Chief Finance Officer) is authorised to approve future minor amendments to the Policy in consultation with Finance, Legal Services and the Counter Fraud Unit.

**8**

**External Auditor 2020/21 Audit Plan**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer, to which was attached an Annex containing the External Audit Plan for 2020/21, which included the key matters, risks and scope of the audit.

Peter Barber (Engagement Lead, Grant Thornton) introduced the report and highlighted the Materiality, Significant Risks and key sections of the report. He noted that West Oxfordshire had a larger portfolio of investment properties and assured Members that the Valuers' opinion was challenged where necessary. He advised that the Pension Liability was an area that was scrutinised and reiterated the Value for Money section of the report. The main audit risk that keeps being brought up is the hole in the MTFS, and the plans for addressing it

Mr Barber went on to explain the proposed uplift in fees, as outlined on page 30 of the report) and advised that his team were due to start work on Monday, meeting with key officers across the Council. Mr Barber answered a number of questions from Members relating to the uplift in fees and reminded the meeting that there were likely to be bigger challenges in later years, with a need to save money. These savings would impact on how the Council chose to spend its money.

In response to a question from Councillor Postan, the Chief Finance Officer explained the rates reset and the loss of New Homes Bonus together comes to £4m. Councillor Postan asked if it would be possible to see the questions posed that highlighted a possible change in risk in relation to the Pension Liability and interest rates. Mrs Griffiths advised that this exercise was undertaken every year.

Following further questions about the risk of investing in property compared to retaining money in the bank, Mrs Griffiths explained that most of the Council's property investment was focused in the commercial sector which resulted in a better yield than the Treasury Investment fund.

The Chairman thanked the External Auditors for their work, input and explanations, and the Committee

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

**9**

**KPMG LLP Reports - Housing Benefit Subsidy Certification**

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Members received a report from the Group Manager: Resident Services and the Business Manager for Operational Support and Enabling which noted the outcome of the Housing Benefit Subsidy Grant Certification audit for 2019/20.

The report explained that in financial years prior to 2018/19, the annual housing benefit subsidy audit had formed part of the procurement process for external audit services. This procurement was carried out on behalf of local authorities by the Audit Commission.

Since the demise of the Audit Commission, the Council had used PSAA Ltd (a company established and owned by the Local Government Association) to procure its external audit services.

Due to changing legislation, the procurement for external audit services from 2018/19 onwards could not include the audit of the Housing Benefit Subsidy claim. Therefore, with effect from the 2018/19 financial year, the Council was required to procure this specialist service directly and had procured the services of KPMG LLP to carry out the Housing Benefit subsidy claim audit for the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years.

Having considered the report, the Committee

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

10

### **Corporate Risk Register Updates**

Members received a report from the Chief Executive which updated the Committee on the changes to the Council's corporate risk register at the end of Quarter Three of 2020/21.

The Risk Register had been updated by the risk owners during Quarter 1 and reviewed by the Council's Management Team on 26 May 2021. A copy of the register was attached at Annex A to the report.

The report advised that the intention was to review both the format of the register and risks. The risk register is being reviewed and overhauled, new risk escalation process needs to be created and approved. The new format and risk scoring would follow the methodology set out under a new Risk Management Policy. An update on the progress is set for the next Audit and General Purposes Committee scheduled for 23 September.

The Risk, Insurance and Procurement Officer was in attendance to answer questions from Members.

Councillor St John queried the information on page 93 of the report relating to Publica staff. He asked if there was a departmental budget for a set number of people, if statistics were available on numbers and the cost of agency staff.

Mr Butler advised that salaries and employment was kept to a budget and monitored by the Publica Board and HR. The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the recruitment process was under review as it had been acknowledged that some key posts were difficult to recruit to.

Councillor Postan suggested that the risk should be marked as 'red' bearing in mind the problems with staffing numbers in the Planning Department.

Members also raised queries and debated issues relating to development at Brize Norton and Housing Land Supply numbers.

Councillor Levy raised the concern that many of Publica's employees had to be sought from further afield due to the high cost of living and housing in West Oxfordshire.

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

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

## **Member Questions**

The Chairman addressed the meeting and read out the remit of the Audit and General Purposes Committee.

Councillor Postan went on to highlight the issue of staffing levels within Publica and advised that he did not feel some areas were getting the correct level of service, for residents and staff. He asked the Committee to consider active and positive suggestions for ways to solve the problem and reduce the risk.

Councillor Postan noted that the Publica Board were in the process of appointing an auditor and suggested that a representative be invited to the next Audit and General Purposes meeting. He felt that Councillors had taken the risk of starting Publica and had a duty to consider the value of that decision in monetary terms. He also felt that if more authorities joined Publica, West Oxfordshire's position could be diluted.

Councillor Dingwall felt that the Council had invested a huge amount of time and support and it would be unfair another member to join.

In response to a question of clarification from the Deputy Chief Executive, Councillor Postan advised that the evidence for scrutinising this issue was based on turnover and there was an evidential lack of service following the issues encountered in the planning department.

Councillor Postan asked if the review that Publica were undertaking into recruitment could be shared with Members and Mrs Griffiths advised that this would be possible, whilst reiterating that Publica were aware of the difficulties surrounding recruitment and were trying to address them.

The Meeting closed at 7.40 pm

CHAIRMAN

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## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Record of Decisions of the meeting of the  
**Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee**  
Held at 6.30 pm on **Thursday, 8 July 2021**

### PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Andrew Beaney (Chairman), Councillor Andy Graham (Vice-Chair), Councillor Jake Acock, Councillor Jill Bull, Councillor Laetisia Carter, Councillor Owen Collins, Councillor Jeff Haine, Councillor Mark Johnson, Councillor Nick Leverton, Councillor Lysette Nicholls, Councillor Mathew Parkinson, Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt, Councillor Andrew Prosser, Councillor Dean Temple and Councillor Alex Wilson

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive) and Phil Shaw (Business Manager - Development Management)

#### **13 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **14 Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Temple substituted for Councillor Crossland.

#### **15 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

#### **16 Participation of the Public**

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

#### **17 Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

#### **18 Presentation from GLL Better**

Following a request from the Committee at a previous meeting, a presentation was given by GLL Better (Greenwich Leisure Ltd), the Council's Leisure Services provider. Mr John Busby and Mr John Amatt from GLL gave a slide presentation to the members and it was agreed that a copy would be circulated to Members after the meeting

The presentation was received well by all members and the Chair thanked GLL for their contributions during the height of the Covid crisis.

Councillor Carter stated that GLL had been a lifeline to people in Chipping Norton, and that they should be proud of their staff.

A general discussion was held on the GLL presentation where the following topics were raised, noted and discussed:

- Carterton football pitches and grounds – Plans were in place for improvements, a local nominated grounds communicator was also in place.
- Swimming pools were due to open from 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2021

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- Discussion of inclusivity for access to the swimming pools, which included water temperature management to enable this service, as swimming pool heating systems aged
- Retention of 'trickle feed entry' as public liked this approach and it enabled centres to manage the flow of people
- More Pilates and yoga sessions were desired
- Future plans were being looked at in case of further lockdowns
- Workforce reviews, currently full staffing levels
- Energy action plan and investment in upkeep of centres
- Income from clubs were now being closely managed

Having received the presentation and having debated the issue, the Chairman thanked the representatives from GLL for attending and answering queries from the Committee.

The Committee

**Resolved** that the presentation be noted.

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### **Enforcement Update**

Members received a verbal update from the Business Manager – Development Management, on the current workload and initiatives within the Planning and Enforcement teams.

A summary of the update was as follows:

- A 46% increase in planning applications this year, had resulted in a pressured workforce
- There were less staff to manage applications – a current review was in place on staff retention and recruitment, and proposal on re-introduction of grading structure, retention of junior staff, to enable them to grow into senior positions, was a future aim
- 30% of workload currently being focussed on as a priority
- 70% of workload to be managed by new workflow initiatives
- Length of time to manage cases had increased due to Covid restrictions
- Implementation of shared investigators resulting in less site visits
- Implemented a building management investigator to monitor construction sites in the field, this had reduced the numbers of complaints received
- Lead times at courts were very lengthy, officers were working with applicants to negotiate and try to avoid court routes

The update was greatly appreciated by all members and Mr Shaw was thanked for attending.

Members wanted the staff to be aware that they were very aware of the current increased workload they were faced with, especially with the limited current resources available. Members wished to be supportive of the initiatives in place to address the situation and

**Resolved** that the update is noted.

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### **Oxfordshire Plan Consultation Document**

Members received a report from the Chief Executive which asked Members to consider the approval of the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document. This set out a range of planning policy options and a series of spatial strategy options for Oxfordshire.

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When complete, the Plan would provide a high level spatial planning framework up to 2050 and would be statutory planning document, supplementing Local Plans. Members were asked to express a view on the recommendations due to be considered at Cabinet on 21 July 2021. The Chief Executive, Giles Hughes introduced the report.

Mr Hughes advised that, as the lead senior officer for Oxfordshire, he would work on delivery of the Plan with colleagues across the Oxfordshire Councils. Councillor Haine also sat on the Oxfordshire Plan Advisory Group, alongside fellow Cabinet Members from the other Oxfordshire Councils. He explained that this was an ambitious project for a long term view, and was a notable national piece of work, which had government funding. The Plan was a draft consultation document, looking at options and no key decisions had been made as yet. Requirement at this stage was to obtain approval to consult on the plan and its options. There would be a ten week consultation process, due to start at the end of July, with on-line webinars being delivered. Libraries would also provide accessibility for the public to view the document.

The Chairman suggested that he would go through the document page by page with Councillors indicating when they had feedback or comments, or if a section required further discussion

During consideration of the document, the following key items were noted and discussed:

- Final consultation document needed editorial context reviewed to ensure clarity, especially maps and pictorial content
- Last review in 1977 resulted in boundary and county changes, affecting political local seats and national seats
- Clarification was required on the tight timeframes already agreed by programme team
- Councils had different targets for Climate emergency and there was a need to work across Councils to work more closely together to develop a future plan
- Offsetting framework mentioned, clarity of the framework would be useful
- Light pollution, requirement to protect areas of Dark Skies
- Biodiversity net gain, definition required
- Appropriate terminology for Traveller and Gypsy communities
- Document should not be generic on inclusivity when looking at disability housing needs
- Document needed to reflect housing needs for younger people as well as older people
- Seemed to have been written towards older people, did not reflect preschool, apprenticeships or post 16 education
- Live work units, plan is strategic

Having considered the report and discussed the content, it was agreed that the Chief Executive would take into account their comments when the final publication style, editorial corrections and minor amendments were made.

Therefore, the Committee

**Resolved** that their comments be forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration.

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## **21 Council Priorities and Service Performance Report - Quarter 4**

The committee considered a report from the Chief Executive which provided details of the Council's service performance during Quarter 4.

A description of the Performance Management Framework and Performance Reporting was provided at section 2 of the report and advised of the six key strands of information now being focused on. The report also explained the Commissioning Framework and set out the relationship between Publica and the Council, along with their respective responsibilities.

The Chief Executive had received the report and had noted the progress made, whilst being mindful of the impact of the ongoing pandemic. Section 2.7 of the report highlighted the key issues experienced by the Council and its officers in that time.

Members considered the content of the report and discussed the various challenges encountered. It was noted that Planning applications had increased by 46% this year and this was reflected in the report.

Having considered the report, and having heard from the officers present, the Committee **Resolved** that the report is noted.

## **22 Committee Work Programme**

The Committee received and considered the report which gave members the opportunity to comment on the recent of the Work Programme for 2021/2022.

Following discussions, it was noted that:

An invitation was due to be extended to the Police to attend the next Committee meeting and give a verbal update. Members were encouraged to submit questions to the Chairman and Democratic Services by mid-August.

An invitation was due to be extended to Cottsway Housing Association to attend Committee meeting and give a verbal update. Members were keen to invite WODC Housing Associations to attend future Committee meetings, starting with Cottsway, followed by others at later dates throughout the year.

NHS Dental Service provision - Following the last briefing note from Oxfordshire CCG, officers had requested a further update on how the Council would address the NHS Dental practice shortfall.

The report on the preparation for the arrival of refugees from Afghanistan - Following last month's briefing note, Officers were informed that a further detailed briefing note was due to be issued in September.

**Resolved** that the updates be noted.

## **23 Cabinet Work Programme**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of the Democratic Services, which gave Members the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 18 May 2021.



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During discussions it was noted that:

Upgrade to WO public space CCTV provision & monitoring arrangements - Members agreed to hold a pre-meeting one week before 16 September 2021 meeting, if required, to review the report and receive an update because this item was due to be considered by Cabinet on 15 September 2021.

24

### **Members Questions**

Councillor Leverton wanted it noted that the Oxfordshire Plan was a long document to review. It was suggested that if there was a long report to review in the future, it could warrant a separate meeting. All members were in agreement.

The Meeting closed at 9.40 pm

CHAIRMAN

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## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Record of Decisions of the meeting of the  
**Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee**  
Held in the Council Chamber at 2.00 pm on **Wednesday, 14 July 2021**

### PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Derek Cotterill (Chairman), Councillor Geoff Saul (Vice-Chair), Councillor Joy Aitman, Councillor Julian Cooper, Councillor Harry Eaglestone, Councillor Gill Hill, Councillor Dan Levy, Councillor Mathew Parkinson, Councillor Alex Postan, Councillor Andrew Prosser, Councillor Harry St John and Councillor Dean Temple

Officers: Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer), Jasmine McWilliams (Estates Manager), Debra Goodall (Business Manager - Finance), Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer), Adrienne Frazer (Strategic Support Officer)

#### **10 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **11 Apologies for Absence**

The following temporary appointments were notified:

Councillor Temple substituted for Councillor Al-Yousuf.

Councillor Aitman substituted for Councillor Bolger.

#### **12 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

#### **13 Participation of the Public**

There were no requests received.

#### **14 2020/21 Treasury Outturn**

The Chief Finance Officer informed the meeting that the investments were making good returns; the funds were returning to their pre-pandemic levels in the stock market and noted that it was expected that levels of investment would fall to just over £10M in 2021/22.

Clarification was sought on the following queries and responded to by officers:

Externally managed funds' fluctuating values;

The spread of externally managed funds;

The amount of the fund management fees;

A request for a table showing funds, gross yield, withdrawals and management fees to be included in future reports;

The interest rate on the 50 year loan to Cottsway Housing Association.

The Chief Finance Officer advised that the funds value had fallen during the pandemic but were now recovering. She agreed to provide the requested table in future reports. The Chief Finance Officer and Councillor Saul explained that the loan to Cottsway Housing Association was made to support the Council's priority to provide affordable housing rather than to offer a high financial yield.

Having considered the report and following debate, the Committee

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

**15 Council Priorities and Service Performance Report 2020-21 - Quarter Four**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Chief Executive, which provided details of the Council's progress towards achieving its aims and priorities set out in the Council Plan 2020-2024, and service performance during Quarter Four. It also included information on: work towards a new performance management framework; a narrative of progress towards each of the Council priorities and the impact on customer facing and support services by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Comments and queries from Councillors included:

**Council Plan Annual Statement**

The following additions to the Statement were requested:

Page 34 – the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty needs to be referred to.

Page 35 – “What’s on the Horizon” section – needs to include a carbon neutral target to match the Oxford Plan.

Page 39 – The Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy – needs a timescale adding for completion in West Oxfordshire.

Councillor St John asked about when the report on the Council's land from the Biodiversity Officer would be complete. The Estates Manager advised that the Biodiversity & Countryside Land Management Officer, who has been working closely with the Estates Team, Tree Officers and Drainage Engineer, has nearly completed the baseline plans and will move forward to drafting the enhanced plans with options and recommendations. This report is due in the Autumn.

The work on the Land Management Plans has been reported to Climate Action Working Group and Informal Cabinet and a report will be going to Full Council in July with details of progress of plans.

The Chief Finance Officer updated the meeting on the Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy. She explained that the WODC scheme is dependent on progress with the Oxfordshire park and charge scheme. The WODC scheme, which has limited funds of £400K, is intended to be used to supplement the Oxfordshire scheme and is therefore dependent on the decisions and outcomes of Oxfordshire's progress.

**PERFORMANCE REPORT: January 2021 - March 2021**

The Committee considered the previously circulated report.

The following comments were raised:

Councillor St John commented on the significant increase in the number of long term empty properties. Councillor Cotterill noted that a recruitment has taken place to focus on this work.

The Chief Finance Officer, following a request from Councillor Postan for performance indicator summary information, advised the Committee that she and her team are reviewing

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the report's content and the purpose of each performance indicator with an aim to provide a shorter report with information focussed on the most important areas of interest.

Having considered the report and following debate, the Committee

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

**16 Investment Policy Task & Finish Group - Update**

Councillor Saul informed the meeting that the Task and Finish Group had yet to meet. It was therefore agreed that the item be deferred to the next meeting and a further selection of meeting dates would be circulated to the Members of the group in due course.

**17 Committee Work Programme**

The Committee considered the previously circulated report from Democratic Services, which invited it to consider it's the Work Programme for 2021/2022.

No comments were raised.

**RESOLVED:** That the work programme be noted.

**18 Cabinet Work Programme**

The Committee considered the previously circulated report from Democratic Services, which invited it to consider it's the Cabinet Work Programme for 2021/2022.

No comments were raised.

**RESOLVED:** That the work programme be noted.

**19 Investment Property Outturn 20/21**

The Committee received a report from the Estates Manager, Ms Jasmine McWilliams, updating Members on the property portfolio which the Council held, and which helped to support the revenue budget via investment income.

The Estates Manager began by offering an overview of the report. She noted that the internal team were reviewing the properties owned by the Council, post-pandemic.

Councillor Prosser asked about the bad debt levels incurred by the pandemic rent deferrals. The Estates Manager explained that following an update report presented in March and December 2020, the Council had agreed deferrals, especially in retail rents, also that recently Cabinet agreed options for future deferral requests. She also noted that existing tenants all had a repayment plan which would resolve the majority of the debt by March 2022.

Councillor Postan requested that the property portfolio be risk assessed. The Estates Manager confirmed that that work was underway.

Councillor St John requested that the table in future reports included the category of use of the property and amount of rental income deferred. He also requested a summary table of all assets, the current value of each asset providing a total value of assets held by the Council. The Chief Finance Officer agreed to provide this in future reports.

The Chairman noted that the pandemic had altered investments values significantly.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

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### **Members Questions**

Councillor St John, in the light of the impact of the pandemic on property valuations, suggested commissioning an independent valuation report on the Council's property portfolio.

The Estates Manager informed the meeting that Carter Jonas had provided such a report in 2020 and the Estates team was currently reviewing and risk assessing the property portfolio. The Estates Manager agreed to circulate the Carter Jonas report.

The Chief Finance Officer advised the meeting that the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) rules do not allow local authorities to make any purchase purely for its yield. Breaching this PWLB rule would lose the Council access to all PWLB funds.

The Meeting closed at 3.09 pm

CHAIRMAN

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## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Record of Decisions of the meeting of the  
Cabinet

Held at 2.00 pm on **Wednesday, 21 July 2021**

### PRESENT

Councillors: Councillor Michele Mead (Leader), Councillor David Harvey (Deputy Leader), Councillor Suzi Coul, Councillor Merilyn Davies, Councillor Jane Doughty, Councillor Jeff Haine and Councillor Norman MacRae MBE.

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive), Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer), Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer) and Jasmine McWilliams (Asset Manager).

#### **18 Notice of Decisions**

The notice of decisions taken at the meeting held on 16 June 2021 were noted.

#### **19 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence received.

#### **20 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

#### **21 Participation of the Public**

There was no participation of the public.

#### **22 Receipt of Announcements**

Councillor Mead addressed the meeting and requested a moments reflection following the sad news of the death of young, 13 year old resident earlier in the week. The young girl had passed away following an incident at Duck Lake and had been a student at Woodgreen School. A moments silence was held by all present.

##### Oxfordshire Growth Board – Change of Name

Councillor Mead advised that, following recent discussions, it had been agreed to change the name of the Oxfordshire Growth Board to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. It was felt this better reflected the purpose of the group and more accurately suited their remit. She advised that both names may continue to be used during the transition period.

##### Retirement of Monitoring Officer, Mr Keith Butler

Councillor Mead reminded Members that, although not present at the meeting, this was the last Cabinet meeting with Mr Butler at the helm as Monitoring Officer. She expressed her gratitude to him for all his help and support when she took over the role of Leader and agreed that he would be dearly missed. She wished him, along with the Cabinet Members, all the best for the next chapter in his life.

Councillor Mead also advised that the Cabinet meeting due to be held in August would be cancelled due to a lack of business.

##### Re-opening of Woodstock Swimming Pool

Councillor Doughty was delighted to announce that Woodstock Swimming Pool was due to reopen imminently. She advised that there would be a special 'pre-opening' of the pool on Thursday 22 July with slots being made available for children and after school attendance. The official opening day was Friday 23 July 2021 and Councillor Doughty reiterated that the pool

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was one of the jewels in West Oxfordshire's crown and all the team were excited to be re-opening their doors.

#### Launch of Net Zero Carbon Toolkit

Councillor Harvey announced the launch of the Net Zero Carbon Toolkit which had been produced to assist developers and home owners with understanding how they could reduce their carbon emissions. He noted that this was not just for new build properties but included information on retro-fitting existing buildings and was an excellent guide for all aspects of the subject including costings. Councillor Harvey advised that the 90 page document would be circulated to all Members in due course and he encouraged them to disseminate the information widely.

### **23 Financial Performance Report 2020/21 Year End**

Members received a report from the Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Chief Executive which provided details of the Council's financial performance at the end of 2020/21, the key movements to reserves and the capital budget for 21/22, including any unspent funds rolled over from 20/21.

The circumstances of the 2020/21 financial year applied an unprecedented pressure on Council finances in terms of the ability to generate and collect income. The report outlined the early action taken by officers and the biggest impacts on the budget.

The Revenue Outturn was attached as Annex A and the Capital Programme was attached at Annex B.

The report asked for approval to carry forward £3.657m of Capital Budget as detailed in Annex B as well as to approve the transfers to Earmarked Reserves as detailed in section 4 of the report.

There were no alternative options detailed in the report.

Councillor Coul introduced the report and reminded Members of the careful and considered approach the Council had taken with its finances in recent times. This had resulted in the authority being in a better position than many other Council's. However, she noted how challenging the past year had been, with additional costs and loss of income. She reminded Members that there was not an easy journey ahead and urged caution as the District tried to recover from the impact of Covid-19. She proposed the recommendations as laid out.

These were seconded by the Leader.

Having considered the report and having heard from the Members present, Cabinet

**Resolved** that the report be noted; and

**Recommended** that Council

- (a) approve the carry forward of Capital Budget of £3.657m as detailed in Annex B to the report; and
- (b) approve the transfers to Earmarked Reserves as detailed in section 4 of the report.

### **24 Approval of Proposed Standard Fees for Legal and Estates**

Members received a report from the Interim Head of Legal Services which sought approval to set the Legal and Estates fees for property transactions.

The report advised that historically Legal and Estates fees had been charged by the Council where a transaction was at the request of the tenant or other parties but there had been no



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standard fees set formally by the Council, with each case set individually. Private sector landlords and other Councils typically charged standard fees for property transactions where appropriate.

The main points relating to the Legal and Estates fees were summarised at sections 2.1 and 2.2 of the report and it was proposed that the fees be set annually within the Fees and Charges report.

An alternative option was that Members could choose to amend or not approve the proposed standard fees.

Councillor Coul outlined the report, which was considered to be a sensible, housekeeping exercise and proposed the recommendations as laid out. This was seconded by Councillor MacRae who noted the importance of being open and transparent with these decisions.

Having considered the report and having heard from the Members present, Cabinet

**Resolved** that the fees detailed at Annex A be approved; and

**Recommended** that the fees be set annually as part of the Council's Fees and Charges report to Cabinet.

25

## **Oxfordshire Plan Consultation Document**

Members received a report from the Chief Executive which asked them to consider the approval of the Oxfordshire Plan consultation document, which set out a range of planning policy options and a series of spatial strategy options for Oxfordshire.

The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (OP2050) is being produced by the five local planning authorities in Oxfordshire, working in close partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP throughout.

When complete the Oxfordshire Plan would provide a high-level spatial planning framework for Oxfordshire up to 2050 and would be a statutory planning document supplementing Local Plans. The Plan aimed to be transformational and occupied new policy areas, such as climate change, environmental betterment, health impacts and zero carbon transport. It had now reached the Regulation 18 part 2 stage.

The report and consultation document were considered by the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8 July 2021. The Committee did not raise any objections but noted some points of detail. These points were noted by the Chief Executive and would be taken into account in the context of recommendation b).

The report noted that the proposed Consultation document at Annex B differed from that published for the meeting of the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee but only in relation to the information on page 120 of the document.

An alternative option was that Cabinet could choose not to approve the consultation document.

Councillor Haine outlined the report and reported the content of an email received from the CPRE to all Members. The CPRE whilst supportive in principle had raised concerns that the document was not fit for purpose. Councillor Haine provided an overview of the document and the reasons he felt it should be approved for consultation. He proposed the recommendations as laid out and this was seconded by Councillor Davies.

In response to a query from Councillor Graham, the Chief Executive assured Members that the comments and suggestions from the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be taken into account, as per the paragraph at section 3 of the report.

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Councillor Enright advised that the County Council had approved the document for consultation at their recent Cabinet meeting and highlighted the importance of joint working. The Leader assured Councillor Enright that the District's response would be delivered by the Chief Executive along with the CEO's of all Council's.

Councillor Postan advised that, alongside his colleague Councillor Levy, the document had been considered by the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel. The Panel had given a clear understanding that the document needed to reflect that the country was in a Climate Emergency and therefore the attitude towards all plans being developed, needed to reflect that view. He also advised of technological developments that had the potential to be interesting and positive, which he intended to brief Members on in due course.

Councillor Cooper raised a query as to what cases had been looked at and consideration given to a buffer zone at Blenheim. He cited the recent situation in Liverpool who had lost their World Heritage Site status. In response, the Chief Executive advised that this document did not look at the detail of locations and this would be considered in more detail, further through the process.

The Leader concurred that once the document reached the Regulation 19 level, it included far more detail. Councillor Postan noted that there was such thing as a Buffer Zone in legal terms.

Having considered the report, and having heard from the Scrutiny Committees and the Members present, Cabinet

**Resolved** that

- a) the Regulation 18 (Part 2) consultation document be approved for public consultation as attached; and
- b) the Chief Executive be authorised to make any necessary editorial corrections and minor amendments to the documents, and agree the final publication style, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, subject to agreement with their counterparts in the other four partner Local Planning Authorities.

**26**

### **Options for the future use of 33A High Street, Burford**

Members received a report from the Asset Manager and Valuer and Estates Surveyor which asked them to consider the options for the future of 33A High Street, Burford.

The report advised that the Council owned the freehold of 33A High Street, Burford, shown edged red on the plan attaches as Annex A to the report. The property comprised a ground floor retail unit with ancillary storage space and

a single WC. The subject property was located within the same building as the public conveniences which had independent access from the High Street, along the side of the building. The report focused on the future use of the retail shop only which was used by the Council as a Visitor Information Centre up until March 2021.

This service was closed after a decision by Cabinet on 24 March 2021.

As the building became vacant, an options appraisal, shown in the confidential Annex A to the report, was prepared by the Valuer & Estates Surveyor. In addition, the Council had received interest in the property on a commercial letting basis and a

freehold sale basis, also detailed in the options appraisal at Annex A.

The options for the future of the property were to retain and re-let on a commercial basis or sell on the open market. Full details of the options were outlined at 2.2 and 2.3 of the report.

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An alternative option was that the Council could decide to retain the property but continue a community use. However, it was noted that there would be no financial benefit to this option.

Councillor Coul outlined the report and reminded Members of the previous report relating to Council finances and the need to be prudent. She therefore proposed that Option I in the report be supported which would provide the Council with a healthy financial yield and the option of retain the building for future use.

This was seconded by Councillor Doughty.

**Resolved** that

- a) Option I be pursued as specified in the report, in line with the principles of the Investment Strategy; and
- b) the Group Manager for Commissioning be authorised to approve the final detailed heads of terms for a lease of the site, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Chief Finance Officer.

The Meeting closed at 2.32 pm

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

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## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### Record of Decisions of the meeting of the **Urgency Committee**

Held Council Chamber, Woodgreen, Witney at 2.00 pm on **Friday, 23 July 2021**

#### PRESENT

Councillors: , , Councillor Joy Aitman, Councillor Julian Cooper, Councillor Marilyn Davies, Councillor Jane Doughty, Councillor Duncan Enright, Councillor Andy Graham, Councillor Jeff Haine, Councillor Richard Langridge, Councillor Norman MacRae MBE and Councillor Alex Postan

Officers: Elizabeth Griffiths (Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer)

#### **1 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2020 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **2 Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**

In the absence because of other prior commitments of both the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee, it was –

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Norman MacRae MBE be elected to Chair this meeting of the Committee.

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Jeff Haine, Councillor David Harvey, Councillor Michele Mead, Councillor Nathalie Chapple, and Councillor Suzi Coul.

Councillor Julian Cooper for Councillor Nathalie Chapple

Councillor Nick Leverton for Councillor Suzi Coul

Councillor Jane Doughty for Councillor David Harvey

Councillor Alex Postan for Councillor Michele Mead

#### **3 Exclusion of Public and Press**

##### **RESOLVED:**

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

#### **Financial Support for GLL**

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

The report set out the background to the current situation and the steps which had previously been agreed for the 2020/21 financial year. It proposed the continuation of the waiver of management fees due to the Council from GLL, explained the negotiated and proposed terms for such, and advised that the current projections were that by the start of the 2022/23 financial year GLL would have repaid the current debt to the Council and management fees would become payable again.


Having considered the report and having clarified points with the officers, and in the belief that the proposals were in the best interests of the Council, the Committee unanimously:

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the waiver of the management fees due from the Leisure Centre operator, GLL for the financial year 2021/22 be approved, on the basis outlined in the report; and
- (b) That the waiver of the 2021/22 contribution by GLL to the role of the Healthy Communities Officer be approved.

The Meeting closed at 2.30 pm

CHAIRMAN

 <b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
<b>Name and date of Committee</b>	<b>Council: Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021</b>
<b>Report Number</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 10</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Climate Action Biannual Report</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Accountable member</b>	<b>Councillor David Harvey, Cabinet Member for Climate Change</b> <b>Email: david.harvey@westoxon.gov.uk</b>
<b>Accountable officer</b>	<b>Ness Scott, Climate Change Manager</b> <b>Tel: 07525 802994; Email: vanessa.scott@publicagroup.uk</b>
<b>Summary/Purpose</b>	<p>This paper presents to Full Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A biannual report on the climate action taken by West Oxfordshire District Council in response to the climate and ecological emergency during the last six months: February-July 2021.</li> <li>• The WODC Biodiversity Work Programme, 2021-2023.</li> <li>• A proposal to continue the Better Housing Better Health service with the National Energy Foundation (NEF) in 2021/2022.</li> </ul>
<b>Annex</b>	<a href="#"><u>Annex I</u></a> : WODC Biodiversity Work Programme, 2021-2023.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>(a) That the contents of the biannual report on climate action for West Oxfordshire, and of the WODC Biodiversity Work Programme, 2021-2023 included in <a href="#"><u>Annex I</u></a> be noted; and</p> <p>(b) That the continuation of the Better Housing Better Health service with the National Energy Foundation (NEF) in 2021/2022 be approved.</p>
<b>Corporate priorities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To protect the environment whilst supporting the local economy</li> <li>2. Working with communities to meet the current and future needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>3. To provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services</li> </ol>
<b>Key Decision</b>	<b>N/A</b>

Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	The WODC Biodiversity Work Programme, 2021-2023, has been developed by the Climate Change Manager working closely with the District Council's Chief Executive, its Biodiversity and Countryside Land Management Officer, Sustainable Planning Specialist and Biodiversity Officer. The cross-party Climate Action Working Group has also seen the Biodiversity Work Programme ahead of this being presented to Full Council and have been closely consulted.

## I. BACKGROUND

I.1. This paper presents to Full Council:

- A biannual report on the climate action taken by West Oxfordshire District Council in response to the climate and ecological emergency during the last six months: February-July 2021.
- The WODC Biodiversity Work Programme, 2021-2023, in [Annex I](#) (starting at page 16).
- A proposal to continue the Better Housing Better Health service with the National Energy Foundation (NEF) in 2021/2022.



## 2. BIENNIAL REPORT ON COUNCIL MOTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH CLIMATE ACTION.

Table 1: Biannual reporting on Council motions associated with climate action.

Notice of Motion	Biannual Reporting Tracker
2.1. Date of Full Council: 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2020 <b><i>NOTICE OF MOTION – CLIMATE ACTION BIODIVERSITY PLAN</i></b>	<p>The Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire, 2021-2025 (published in Feb 2021) incorporates, as a leading theme, <i>“Protecting and restoring natural ecosystems.”</i></p> <p>The Strategy defines a vision and strategic objectives for this theme and is the first step taken in response to a call in January 2020 for a Biodiversity Plan.</p> <p>With the Climate Change Strategy objectives clearly defined, the Council has gone on to develop its short- to medium-term actions for biodiversity in the form of a 24-month biodiversity work programme. The biodiversity work programme is referred to in greater depth in section 3.0 under theme one: protecting and restoring natural ecosystems, and in Annex 1.</p>

### 3. CLIMATE ACTION REPORT

3.1 Progress and activities for climate action are reported under two headings:

- i) Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire, 2021-2025 (published Feb, 2021)
- ii) Carbon Action Plan (published Oct, 2020)

3.2 These two documents provide the Council's framework for prioritising and taking forward a programme of work in response to the climate and ecological emergency.

3.3 Actions taken forward for the Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Action Plan are also captured, at a high level, in the Council's Local Recovery Plan (October 2020). This Plan gives further resource and subsequent impetus to the climate work programme.

Table 2: A report of the last six months.

Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire, 2021-2025.	
3.3. CCS Theme one: <b>Protecting and restoring natural ecosystems</b>	<p><b>Appointment of Biodiversity &amp; Countryside Land Management Officer.</b> In February 2021, Rachel Crookes joined WODC as Biodiversity &amp; Countryside Land Management Officer. Rachel is responsible for developing enhanced Land Management Plans for the Council's parks and open green spaces.</p> <p><b>The Land Management Plans (LMPs)</b> A baseline LMP position for all council-managed open green spaces is now close to completion. This is the starting point from where recommendations for biodiversity enhancement will be made. Site visits have been carried out to review existing value and status which has been done in close discussion with the Council's Forestry and Landscape Officer (Nick Dalby); Tree Officer (Joe Saxton); Wychwood Project's CEO (Neil Clennell); and volunteer groups (Witney Woodland Volunteers and North Leigh Friends). An LMP Steering Group has also been formed, with officers from across climate, waste contracts, property &amp; estates teams to facilitate cross working.</p> <p>Next steps are to work from this baseline position to develop a vision, biodiversity enhancement principles and GIS maps to illustrate proposals for how the Council's open spaces can be designed as both accessible and natural, providing long-term benefits for people and wildlife. Current proposals are</p>

	<p>to present enhancement plans to Full Council in October 2021 ahead of launching an online consultation with a public survey in the autumn/winter '21.</p> <p>Resourcing models and potential funding streams are being explored and developed so that there is a proposed, longer-term strategy for delivering enhanced land management plans on Council open spaces.</p> <p><b>A Biodiversity Work Programme, 2021-2023</b>, provides an overview to the Council's collective efforts on biodiversity projects. Please refer to Annex I. This work programme will be retained as a working document and tool for managing resource allocation set alongside the wider objectives contained within the Climate Change Strategy and Local Recovery Plan.</p>
3.4. CCS Theme two: <b>Energy</b>	<p><b>"Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire"</b></p> <p><a href="#">Link to summary report</a>  <a href="#">Link to full report</a></p> <p>A new report has been produced and was launched by OxLEP on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021. A consortium of local stakeholders, including Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and all six local authorities asked the ECI to investigate how the county can eradicate carbon emissions from its economy. Produced in collaboration with Bioregional and colleagues from the Transport Studies Unit and Engineering Department, the Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire report begins by reviewing recent progress on climate goals. It highlights successes in decarbonising electricity and reducing energy demand over the last decade - a period which has seen rapid economic and population growth in the county. It also showcases the considerable sustainability expertise that exists in Oxfordshire, underpinned by a thriving world-class innovation ecosystem.</p> <p>This report addresses the question of how Oxfordshire can sustain the momentum of the last decade to achieve net-zero emissions. There remains a significant way to go to decarbonise transport, reduce reliance on fossil fuels for heating, and protect and enhance carbon stored in the natural environment. Maintaining the same rate of emissions reduction in Oxfordshire will require relatively greater investment locally, in building retrofit, cleaner heating systems and electric vehicles; and cultural and behavioural changes such as active travel, dietary changes and reduced energy demand. The report</p>

analysis shows that there are different routes to net-zero, and in presenting scenarios for the next three decades, the report outlines three distinct pathways to eradicating emissions from the economy.

#### **Net Zero Carbon Toolkit**

A Net Zero Carbon Toolkit has been produced by West Oxfordshire, Cotswold and Forest of Dean Councils for new-build and retrofit housing.

In 2019, Cotswold District Council secured funds through the [Local Government Association \(LGA\) Housing Advisers Programme](#), a programme designed to support councils seeking to innovate in meeting the housing needs of their communities. Please see the original press release [here](#).

Publica councils have worked closely and collaboratively on this piece of work to ensure the Toolkit represents a partnership resource. Its original delivery timeframes were delayed amid the Pandemic last year. However, in December 2020, Publica established a cross-council project team to co-ordinate its production and have been working closely with our consultants to produce the Toolkit since. The Toolkit has been written by a team of leading specialists in this field and includes Levitt Bernstein, Elementa, the Passivhaus Trust and Etude. It offers up-to-the minute technical guidance for small/medium house builders, architects and consultants and is the 'how to guide' for delivery of our net-zero carbon policy in Salt Cross. It is also WODC's request for developers to 'align with net-zero carbon' in the new Sustainability Standards Checklist. This is a field that lacks technical guidance and specifications generally, so it fills a much-needed gap in information and provides consistency in how we define net-zero in building terms.

The Toolkit was launched on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July. The webinar event was recorded so that this can be shared more widely with stakeholders and other Councils after its launch as part of plans for its ongoing promotion.

#### **Better Housing Better Health service**

The Council is now seeking approvals at Full Council to continue its commitment to the Better Housing Better Health service run by the National Energy Foundation (NEF) for 2021/2022. The service costs £7,000 per year for WODC as a partner in the Oxfordshire-wide Affordable Warmth Network.

	<p>The Better Housing Better Health service aims to deliver the following outcomes for residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement to resident's thermal comfort, particularly those in fuel poverty and / or poor health.</li> <li>• Increase in household income through both a reduction in the cost of energy bills and new income being identified.</li> <li>• Reduction in health problems associated with living in a cold and/or damp home and an increase in general wellbeing as a result.</li> <li>• Raised awareness of fuel poverty/energy efficiency throughout the county and in particular with the health and social care sector.</li> <li>• Improvement in health and safety in the home, particularly with regards to fire hazards.</li> </ul> <p>In 2020/2021, The NEF delivered for West Oxfordshire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 101 in-depth warm and wellbeing assessments. Assessments usually take 20 minutes with the majority leading to interventions and extensive case work which is often needed to ensure a successful outcome for the resident. Due to the pandemic, average house call times increased as people have had more areas where they need support.</li> <li>• 107 ECO Flex grant applications and installations (including 77 loft insulations, 36 cavity wall insulations as energy-efficiency measures)</li> <li>• carbon emission savings: in 2020/21, NEF estimates a saving of 58,220kg/CO<sub>2</sub> through their BHBH service and energy-efficiency measures.</li> </ul> <p><b>Green Homes Grant, Local Authority Delivery, LAD1b</b>, Oxfordshire County Council-led grant scheme. This year, Oxfordshire County Council has been successful in securing £1.5 million in government green homes grant funding for energy-efficiency measures reaching at least 150 homes across the county. All Oxon councils are working together with the delivery partner NEF to help less well-off households retrofit their homes with energy saving equipment – cutting families' fuel bills while at the same time helping to reduce the county's carbon footprint. WODC are working proactively with the NEF to ensure the green homes grant is advertised and subsequently taken up by residents in West Oxfordshire.</p>
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<p><b>3.5. CCS Theme three: Low-carbon transport and active travel</b></p>	<p><b>Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (OEVIS)</b>  On 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021, Cabinet approved the OEVIS. Developed in collaboration with Oxfordshire County Council and local authority partners, the OEVIS lays out the framework to realise a countywide vision for the charging of electric vehicles (EVs). With an end to sales of diesel and petrol cars set for 2030, it is expected that 25,000 battery electric vehicles will be on Oxfordshire's roads within the next five years. To meet this emerging demand, the OEVIS sets an aspiration for 7.5% of all local authority managed public car park spaces to be adapted to fast or rapid electric vehicle charging points (EVCPs). This represents an ambitious goal for the Council's EVCP plans, making EV car charging available to residents across the district.</p> <p><b>Council-led Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs)</b>  EB Charging are now appointed by WODC, working on behalf of Publica councils, to carry out a feasibility assessment of Council-owned car parks for the installation of EVCP. Following a kick-off meeting with EB Charging in June 2021, EB Charging are now in a position to begin their site surveys and make recommendations. All recommendations will need to be considered alongside existing proposals for EVCP as part of Park &amp; Charge Oxfordshire, so that one dovetails and complements the other.</p> <p><b>Park &amp; Charge Oxfordshire.</b>  The pilot installation is at Cattle Market car park in central Bicester. Charging points went live here on Thursday 27 May 2021 and EV drivers have been very positive about the new EVCPs.</p> <p>In May 2021, SSE Utilities withdrew from the project and will not be providing the infrastructure delivery or investment into the project that was previously intended. Fortunately, Park and Charge Oxfordshire continues to be an extremely important project for the County and for the funders at the Office for Zero Emissions Vehicles (OZEV). All remaining project partners and participating District Councils remain fully committed to deliver the agreed programme without the involvement of SSE.</p> <p>With SSE's departure from the project, the project's infrastructure cost is currently unfunded. OCC therefore immediately set about seeking additional funding from OZEV via the On-Street Residential Charging Scheme (ORCS), administered by the Energy Saving Trust (EST), to cover 75% of the costs of the infrastructure side of the project. News on the success of that funding application will</p>
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	<p>be known later this summer. The remaining infrastructure costs will be met by additional funding from lead project partners Zeta Specialist Lighting – a Bicester-based SME - who are also designing and building the bespoke EV chargers for the project right here in Oxfordshire as well as running the Charge Point Operation concession contract under the trading name 'EZ-Charge'.</p> <p>As a result, the project consortium delivering the project will now be entirely Oxfordshire-based and comprise Zeta Specialist Lighting (Bicester), Urban Integrated UK (Oxford), Oxfordshire County Council and the University of Oxford.</p> <p>Innovate UK – and the two remaining commercial partners Zeta and Urban Integrated - will continue to fund all other elements of Park and Charge Oxfordshire in order for the EV charging hubs to be delivered at no cost to the host Local Authorities involved.</p> <p>In the meantime, the Park and Charge Oxfordshire team are continuing with their successful communications campaign with Green.TV, and are looking forward to delivering up to three on-the-ground public engagement events across Oxfordshire this August: one of these events will be held in Witney.</p> <p>These will be all-day events held on weekend days in towns and villages where the scheme is coming later in the year, and will be a way to get people excited about what is to come and give them a great opportunity to test drive an EV and learn all about the scheme well in advance of their local Park and Charge hub opening in the winter. Further details will be shared online <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
<p>3.6. CCS Theme four: <b>Standards in new development</b></p>	<p><b>Appointment of Sustainable Planning Specialist</b> In April 2021, Hannah Kenyon joined WODC as the new Sustainable Planning Specialist responsible for implementing the Sustainability Standards Checklist. Hannah is working as part of the climate team, alongside the Council's development management team.</p> <p>The new <b>Sustainability Standards Checklist</b> was soft launched online at the end of May 2021. The Checklist and supporting information is available online <a href="#">here</a>.</p>

	<p>Registered major applications are currently being reviewed with consideration to the checklist headings, whilst a new expectation for a Sustainability Statement is now referenced in a pre-application letter and advice being issued by the Council to applicants.</p> <p>A series of technical webinars have also been scheduled to enhance our knowledge and practical application of sustainability considerations in planning. The first webinar introduced the Checklist and was well received by officers.</p> <p>The Council's planning validation checklist is currently being updated: this is work in progress, being done for all Publica councils simultaneously. When the Sustainability Standards Checklist becomes a part of the updated validation checklist process, this will mark its formal launch.</p> <p><b>Net Zero Carbon Toolkit</b> A Net Zero Carbon Toolkit, referred to in 3.4, provides technical guidance for both retrofit housing and new-build housing projects and will provide a resource for small and medium-sized housebuilders and applicants looking to align their housing development proposals with a standard of net-zero carbon. The Toolkit was launched and presented in partnership by West Oxfordshire, Cotswold and Forest of Dean District Councils on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July. The webinar event was recorded so that this can be shared more widely with stakeholders and other Councils after its launch as part of plans for its ongoing promotion.</p> <p><b>Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan</b> Independent examination of the AAP by an Inspector began on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and ran for two weeks. Policies covering net-zero carbon, biodiversity net gain and green infrastructure were dealt with on the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021 under Matter 7 of the hearing. Planning and climate teams, alongside consultant specialists in the field of net-zero carbon and biodiversity net gain, were present at the hearing responding to issues and questions raised by the Inspector. The Inspector's conclusions on the AAP following the examination will be provided in due course.</p>
3.7. CCS Theme five: <b>Engage, support &amp; educate</b>	<p>Winter and spring (2021) editions of the <b>Climate Action Bulletin</b> were produced and issued to all 320 members of the Council's Climate Action Network. Back editions are available online <a href="#">here</a>.</p>



A **Climate Action Day** for the Parish and Town Council Forum was held in April 2021. This event was organised courtesy of WODC, and hosted by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) – an energy-focused charity. Parish and town councils received expert guidance from CSE on how to develop climate actions at a local level. Ideas were shared during workshops that stimulated debate around ideas including energy monitoring, community surveys, litter picks and community walks. Delegates left the day with a variety of tools and resources to start developing climate-action plans for their own parish and town councils. WODC has now also added a new "Climate Action Near You" section to its Climate Action Bulletins and will be inviting parish and town councils to share their news on how they are getting on with their climate plans.

The Council's 2020 **Climate Art Competition Winners** - Millie Freer, Lexie Bosher and Nicole Harris – have now received and planted their prize trees. With lockdown measures having begun to ease in April of this year, Millie chose to plant her tree in the orchard of Deer Park Wood. Lexie and Nicole planted their tree in the grounds of Wood Green School. Their original winning entries can be viewed [online here](#). The press release can be viewed [here](#).

**Climate action webpages** are being continually updated to reflect progress being made on climate projects: <https://westoxon.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/>

On the 14<sup>th</sup> June, WODC took part in the **“SwitchUpYourLunch”** Oxfordshire campaign run by Good Food Oxford to raise awareness with staff to the importance of food choices in relation to climate impact. It was a successful event with many staff contributing their favourite vegetarian recipes on Publica's portal.

On 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021, WODC's Climate Change Manager joined guest speakers at an **Oxfordshire Zero Carbon Homes Initiative** event hosted by Friends of the Earth. Ness Scott presented on the origins and definition of the net-zero carbon policy within the Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP), representing an example of best practice.

Carbon Action Plan: The Pathway to Achieving Carbon Neutral by 2030	
3.8. Recruitment	<p>Actions within the Carbon Action Plan will be supported by a newly-appointed Climate Change Officer who joins the climate team on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021. On arrival, the Climate Change Officer's immediate priority will be to undertake the Council's carbon account for 2020/2021 and support the development and implementation of decarbonisation proposals across the Council's estate and services.</p>
3.9. Priority for action: Council offices, property and sites	<p><b>Energy and sustainability modelling for Woodgreen and Elmfield offices.</b></p> <p>In February 2021, an energy and sustainability consultant was appointed by the Council to produce a report summarising the recommendations of site visits and desktop building energy modelling and viability assessment providing the Council best-practice options for sustainable and low-carbon office retrofit.</p> <p>The Council's consultant was appointed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop models that assess the building energy performance of Council offices for WODC.</li> <li>• Complete a viability assessment for low / zero-carbon (LZC) energy technologies. For a clean transition and ultimate step towards carbon neutrality, all Council-owned buildings must move away from fossil-fuels to electricity-based systems by installing LZC energy in-situ or a combination of solutions where appropriate.</li> <li>• Model and conclude with two scenarios, including detailed energy-efficiency specifications and LZC technologies for office retrofit providing options for: 1) essential energy retrofit alongside, 2) exemplary energy retrofit.</li> <li>• Assess water-efficiency measures, waste reduction and recycling, the provision of safe, accessible and secure cycling storage using BREEAM 2018 standards for assessment as part of an overall review of Council office space.</li> </ul> <p>Two reports were completed in April 2021. The key findings from these reports were presented to the Climate Action Working Group in an April meeting. Retrofit and decarbonisation measures are being considered alongside a wider piece by the Council looking at future office space that reflects staff need, post Covid. They also provide important supporting information on decarbonisation proposals where these are eligible for external government funding.</p>

	<p>Publica Staff Benefits continue to support and incentivise staff, who are eligible for the scheme, in leasing an electric vehicle through the provider Tusker. This offers not only government tax and NI savings but encourages those eligible to consider making that switch to a cleaner vehicle.</p>
3.10. Priority for action: Leisure centres and facilities	<p><b>Decarbonisation reports and Solar PV viability in leisure buildings.</b></p> <p>In June 2021, an energy assessment and decarbonisation report, accompanied by a Solar PV viability report, were completed for three council-owned leisure buildings. The three buildings were selected as having greatest, immediate potential for space heating and hot water system decarbonisation and have therefore been assessed as a priority.</p> <p>Decarbonisation reports for Carterton Leisure Centre, Carterton Pavilion, Witney ATP and Pavilion are now complete and provide both short-term and medium- and long-term recommendations for energy-efficiency measures, space heating and hot water system replacement and Solar PV.</p> <p>These recommendations will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• help to inform decisions on low-cost, energy demand-reduction measures from a building management perspective;</li> <li>• help to plan for the longer-term decarbonisation of the whole building;</li> <li>• provide important supporting information on decarbonisation proposals where these are eligible for external government funding.</li> </ul>
3.11. Priority for action: Council vehicle fleet, machinery and transport	<p><b>Transitioning to electric vehicles</b></p> <p>The Council's waste vehicle fleet now includes its <a href="#">first battery electric vehicle (BEV)</a> – a new Renault Zoe R135 Iconic. Ubico, West Oxfordshire's waste and recycling delivery partner, will use the Council-owned vehicle day-to-day. The Zoe's 52kWh battery has enough capacity for staff to undertake their work without the need to recharge during the day. Furthermore, the Council has on order its first battery electric road sweeper, a new addition to the waste vehicle fleet expected on the streets this year.</p> <p><b>New In-Cab Technology for waste vehicle fleet</b></p> <p>The Council has also invested in a new <a href="#">"in-cab" technology system</a>. The specialist software system will be retro-fitted to the Council's entire fleet of refuse, recycling, food and garden waste vehicles and will help reduce the number of collections being missed as well reducing the fuel used and cutting vehicle carbon emissions. Greater efficiencies in service delivery will bring projected annual savings of £50,000 per year from the Council's contract with its waste service delivery partner, Ubico.</p>

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. The Council's 2020/21 budget originally included a provision of £200,000 and a commitment to review the possibility of adding further funds to climate projects in the subsequent two financial years. Approximately £50,000 of the total £200,000 set aside to implement climate projects has, to date, been spent with the balance rolling forward to fund future projects.
- 4.2. As with all capital projects, the budget available for climate projects is constrained: there is therefore a need to identify and secure external, grant funding sources to enable delivery. Without this external grant funding, some of the objectives listed above may not be achieved.
- 4.3. The Council's Local Recovery Fund (October 2020) now funds four, fixed-term positions within the Council's newly-created climate team, providing resource and capacity within the Council to support delivery of the Local Recovery Plan, Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Action Plan. This funds the team as follows:
  - Climate Change Manager: fixed-term until Nov '23.
  - Biodiversity & Countryside Land Management Officer: fixed-term until Feb '23.
  - Climate Change Officer: fixed-term until July '23.
  - Sustainable Planning Specialist: fixed-term until April '22.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

#### **6. RISK ASSESSMENT**

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

#### **7. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 7.1. The design of all projects as a response to the climate and ecological emergency have an equal impact across Council functions, for all customers and staff.

#### **8. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. The proposals within this report will have a direct, positive impact on the Council's operations with regard to energy and resource efficiency, water efficiency, waste reduction and recycling and associated carbon reduction. In addition, multiple cross-benefits towards climate change mitigation and adaptation are planned district-wide through work across functions and with partner organisations.

#### **9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

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

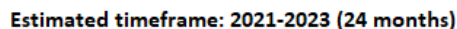
#### **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1. The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:
  - Meeting minutes and motion agreed at Full Council on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019.
  - Meeting minutes and motions agreed at Full Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2020.

- Climate action biannual report at Full Council on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020.
- Carbon Action Plan and report at Full Council on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2020.
- Local Recovery Plan and report at Full Council on 28<sup>th</sup> Council 2020.
- Climate action biannual report at Full Council on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

10.2. These documents will be available for inspection at the Council Offices at Woodgreen during normal office hours for a period of up to 4 years from the date of the meeting. Please contact the author of the report.

## Biodiversity Work Programme

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2.0 Working with councils, regional and local partners to identify and deliver strategic opportunities for the restoration of natural ecosystems, improving habitat connectivity, wildlife corridors, and nature-based solutions in land-use management. For example, further developing a pilot initiative currently under way with Oxfordshire County Council and the Wychwood Project to assess a Natural Capital approach as a method for understanding the multiple benefits of nature, informing strategic opportunities for restoring natural ecosystems

a	Natural Capital Assessment of key WODC sites, looking at current assets and areas for improvements as part of LMP baseline.									WIP
b	Integration of recommendations from the Natural Capital Assessment into the enhanced LMPs.									WIP
c	Work with partner organisations such as Wychwood Project, County Council, LWVP to identify sites within their land stewardship that would benefit from collaboration, e.g. 'The Windrush in Witney Project'.									To start

3.0 Partnering with councils in the development of Oxfordshire strategy and policy for biodiversity, nature conservation, climate-change adaptation and mitigation. This will be carried out by continuing to play an active role in the development of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

a	District Council as working group members and consultees for climate change, biodiversity and natural capital assets in the development of the OP2050									WIP
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4.0 Leading a county-wide collaboration on a Local Nature Partnership (LNP) for Oxfordshire.

a	Build on workshops carried out in 2020/21 and establish a Board representing a wide stakeholder involvement for the LNP									WIP
	Contribute towards the LNP in taking forward the Board's priorities for Oxfordshire									To start


5.0 Delivering targets for natural landscape, biodiversity net-gain and nature-based solutions as part of new development in West Oxfordshire by retaining, as a minimum, existing dedicated resource in planning policy and development management teams. Embed good-practice principles as an expectation within the West Oxfordshire Sustainability Standards Checklist and Local Plan review.

a	Appointment of new post on a 12-month fixed term contract: Sustainable Planning Specialist.									Complete
b	Launch and implement Sustainability Standards Checklist in planning as a means of co-ordinating biodiversity and natural capital considerations as integral to a scheme's overall sustainability.									WIP
c	Demonstrate importance of the Checklist, presenting a business case for the Sustainable Planning Specialist function as integral to the DM structures and team longer-term, integrating biodiversity as a key consideration in a development scheme's overall sustainability.									WIP
d	Retain existing levels of biodiversity officer, specialist support on planning applications and policy development. This requires that, as a minimum, current biodiversity officer staffing levels are continued. Temporary F-T assistant biodiversity officer position in WODC soon coming to an end (Oct-21).									WIP
e	Support the adoption of natural capital and biodiversity net gain policies developed as part of the Salt Cross Area Action Plan.									WIP
f	Support development management in determining planning applications, including the delivery of strategic sites and biodiversity net gain requirements.									
g	Support the Local Plan review process, natural capital, biodiversity and green infrastructure policy development.									To start







 <b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
<b>Name and date of Committee</b>	<b>Council – Wednesday 28 July 2021</b>
<b>Report Number</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 11</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Appointment of Temporary Parish Councillors</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Accountable member</b>	Councillor Michele Mead, Leader of the Council Email: <a href="mailto:michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk">michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Accountable officer</b>	Keith Butler, Monitoring Officer Tel: 01993 861521 Email: <a href="mailto:keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk">keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Summary/Purpose</b>	To approve the appointment of temporary members of Bladon Parish Council and consider the future arrangements for temporary appointments to parish councils in the District.
<b>Annexes</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) That approval is given for the making of an Order under section 91 of the Local Government Act 1972 appointing District Councillors Julian Cooper and Elizabeth Poskitt as temporary members of the Bladon Parish Council;</li> <li>(b) That the appointments shall be effective until the Bladon Parish Council is quorate (i.e. it has three members of the Council in place, excepting the temporary appointees);</li> <li>(c) That, in the event of either of the temporary appointees specified above subsequently being unable or not willing to fulfil the role of temporary parish councillor, the Monitoring Officer shall be authorised to appoint such other person(s) as deemed appropriate; and</li> <li>(d) That, should any other Parish Council in the District require the District Council to appoint one or more temporary councillors in order for it to be able to function, the Monitoring Officer shall be authorised to make such appointments if they need to be made more promptly than the date of the next meeting of either the Audit and General Purposes Committee or the Council.</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate priorities</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Key Decision</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Exempt</b>	<b>No</b>

Consultees/ Consultation	None
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## I. BACKGROUND

- I.1. A parish council must be quorate in order to operate and make decisions. The statutorily prescribed quorum for a parish council is one third of its membership, subject to a minimum of three.
- I.2. Section 91 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council the power to make an Order appointing temporary members to a parish council where that council cannot function because of the number of vacancies. This power is one which cannot, under the applicable Regulations, be taken by the Executive, and is exercisable by the Audit and General Purposes Committee or by Council. The schedule of meetings is such that this report is being brought to Council rather than awaiting the next meeting of the committee.

## 2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. Bladon Parish Council has a membership of six, meaning that its quorum is three. Currently, there are four vacancies on the council. Where a “casual vacancy” occurs on a parish council, other than in the six months prior to the end of the term of office, that council has to give notice of the vacancy, and there is then a period of 14 working days within which any ten electors for the parish may request that an election is held. If an election is not triggered, the parish council is obligated to fill the vacancy by co-option “*as soon as is practicable*”. For the first of the vacancies which occurred, the period for an election request has passed, but the parish council will not be able to approve a co-option until someone puts himself or herself forward for the role, and the council is quorate.
- 2.2. For the remaining three vacancies, the period to request an election has not yet expired and it remains to be seen whether any or all of the vacancies will be filled by election rather than co-option. The latest date for an election to fill any of those vacancies will be 30 September 2021.
- 2.3. The legislation states that, in these circumstances, this council “*may by Order appoint persons to fill all or any of the vacancies until other councillors .... take up office*”. Therefore, this council may appoint up to four temporary members. It is suggested, however, that making two appointments would be appropriate, as that would ensure that even if one of the four councillors who would then be in place was unable to attend a meeting, there would still be a quorum.
- 2.4. The legislation is silent on the question of whether any appointees have to be qualified (and not disqualified) to be a member of the parish council concerned. It is my view that the absence of a provision enabling someone who is not qualified to fill a temporary appointment means that they should be so qualified. This means that the appointee(s) must be a British, Irish, commonwealth or EU citizen aged 18 or over and (i) a registered elector for the parish; or (ii) have occupied land in the parish for twelve months, as owner or tenant; or (iii) have their principal or only place of work in the parish; or (iv) have lived in the parish or within three miles of the parish for twelve months. In addition, none of the disqualifications from being a councillor may be applicable to the person(s).
- 2.5. It is considered that it would be appropriate for the two members of this Council who represent the Woodstock and Bladon Ward (Councillors Julian Cooper and Elizabeth Poskitt) to be appointed to the temporary positions. Should either or both be unable or not willing to take on the role, the approval of recommendation (c)

above would enable the Monitoring Officer to make alternative appointments. The appointments would cease to have effect as soon as the parish council is otherwise quorate. It is anticipated that the Parish Council will meet during August, and will be able at that meeting to co-opt one councillor, meaning that it will be quorate, and that the temporary appointments proposed in this report will cease at that time.

- 2.6. The final recommendation, at (d) above, is self-explanatory, although the Council could if it wished choose fully to delegate the function.
- 2.7. Once an Order making the appointments has been made, two copies will be sent to the Secretary of State, as required by the statute.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICAITONS**

- 3.1. This report has no financial implications, apart from the use of some staff time.

### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. The report takes account of the statutory power contained in the Local Government Act 1972.


### **5. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS**

- 5.1. The Council is not obligated to make temporary appointments but, if it does not do so, the Bladon Parish Council may not be able to function until after its next scheduled elections, in May 2022.
- 5.2. The Council is free to appoint persons other than those recommended, subject to the appointees being qualified for, and not disqualified from, being a member of Bladon Parish Council.

### **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1. None

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 <p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>	<p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p><b>Council: Wednesday 28 July 2021</b></p>
<p>Report Number</p>	<p><b>Agenda item No. 12</b></p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p><b>Updates to the Constitution and Establishment of a Constitution Working Group</b></p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Councillor Michele Mead, Leader of the Council Email: <a href="mailto:michele.mead@westoxon.gov">michele.mead@westoxon.gov</a>.</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Email: <a href="mailto:giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk">giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk</a>  Claire Hughes, Business Manager – Corporate Responsibility Email: <a href="mailto:claire.hughes@publicagroup.uk">claire.hughes@publicagroup.uk</a></p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To seek Council approval for the establishment of a Constitution Working Group to conduct a full review of the Constitution.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex A: Draft Terms of Reference for Constitution Working Group Annex B: Draft Work Plan for Constitution Working Group</p>
<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>a) That Parts 7 &amp; 8 of the Constitution be deleted; b) That a Constitution Working Group be established, in accordance with the terms of reference set out at Annex A; and c) That the proposed work plan for the Constitution Working Group at Annex B be noted.</p>
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance: Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>Monitoring Officer Deputy Chief Executive/S151 Officer Interim Head of Legal Services Senior Management Business Managers</p>

## **I. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. The Council has a duty to publish an up to date Constitution and it should be reviewed annually by the Monitoring Officer with any necessary changes being considered by Council.
- 1.2. The Constitution must contain:
  - (a) the Council's standing orders/procedure rules;
  - (b) the members' code of conduct;
  - (c) such information as the Secretary of State may direct;
  - (d) such other information (if any) as the authority considers appropriate.
- 1.3. Whilst some changes have been made to the Constitution a comprehensive review has not been conducted for some time and therefore it is recommended that Council agrees to establish a Constitution Working Group to conduct a full review of the Constitution over the coming months.

## **2. OFFICER SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

- 2.1. The existing Officer Delegation Rules as published in the Constitution are out of date, although the necessary delegations have been approved by Council and are in place.
- 2.2. A comprehensive review has been commenced, and will be considered by Senior Managers and the proposed Working Group before being presented to a future Council meeting.

## **3. PARTS 7 AND 8 (MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP OF EXECUTIVE)**

- 3.1. Part 7 of the Constitution sets out the Management Structure of the Council but would require updating to reflect the current arrangements, including the relationship with Publica. Whilst included in the original model constitutions produced by the government at the time the Cabinet system was introduced, there is no current requirement for such information to be contained within the Constitution, and it is recommended that this Part is deleted accordingly.
- 3.2. Part 8 of the Constitution sets out the membership of the Executive. This information is actively published and updated on the Council's website and it is not necessary to include it as part of the Constitution. It is therefore recommended that this Part is also deleted.

## **4. CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP**

- 4.1. As referenced in the introduction to this report it has been sometime since a full review of the Constitution has been completed. In accordance with best practice it is therefore recommended that the Council establishes a Constitution Working Group which can work with the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and the Business Manager for Corporate Responsibility to conduct a wholesale review and make recommendations to Council for approval.
- 4.2. Proposed terms of reference for the Group are included at Annex A.
- 4.3. Given the scale of the task, the work would need to be completed over a period of time as agreed with the Group. However, a draft high level timeline is included at Annex B for Council's information. This will be reviewed and updated as necessary, during the life of the Working Group.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. None specific or arising from this report.

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. Save that any changes to the Constitution need to be approved by Council, there are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **7. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1. There are no specific risks associated with this report. However, failure to have a robust and up to date Constitution, could place the Council at risk of legal challenge.

## **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 8.1. Council could choose not to constitute the proposed Working Group.

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1. Council's Constitution.

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## CONSTITUTION REVIEW WORKING GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 1. Purpose

The Constitution Working Group has been established, to review the Constitution and ensure that it is fit for purpose. It will undertake this role by:

- a) Reviewing areas in the Constitution to ensure that they are fit for purpose
- b) Making recommendations on proposed changes to the Constitution;
- c) Receiving requests to review certain areas of the Constitution;
- d) Considering changes proposed by Members, Officers and Committees;
- e) Recommending proposed changes to Full Council for approval.

In addition the Group will be responsible for reviewing the arrangements in respect of the provision of webcasting.

### 2. Membership

The Constitution Review Working Group shall comprise seven members, appointed on the basis of political balance in accordance with the wishes of the political groups, i.e. four x Conservatives; two x Liberal Democrats, and 1 x Labour/Labour and Co-operative. Others members will be invited to the meetings as required.

### 3. Chair

The Chair of the Constitution Review Working Group will be appointed at its first meeting.

### 4. Voting

Any vote will be subject to a simple majority. In simple majority voting the Chair will have a casting vote.

### 5. Quorum

The quorum of a meeting of the Constitution Review Working Group will be three.

### 6. Frequency of Meetings

The Constitution Review Working Group will meet as and when required. All meetings will be held in private and dates and times of meetings will be agreed by the Working Group. Meetings will generally take place remotely via Webex or Google Meet.

### 7. Minutes of Constitution Review Working Group Meetings

The Working Group shall agree the minutes at the next suitable meeting.

These terms of reference were approved by Council on 28 July 2021

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## Constitution Working Group Work Plan

No.	Topic	Description	Target Date	Lead Officer	Update
1	Review of Parts 7 and 8 of the Constitution	Proposed deletion of Management Structure and Membership of the Executive	July 2021	Claire Hughes	To be considered by Council on 28 July 2021
2	Review of Parts 3 and 4 of the Constitution	Review of Responsibility for Functions and the Officer Scheme of Delegation	October 2021	Claire Hughes	To be considered by Council on 27 October 2021
3	Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel and Review of Members Allowances	Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel and a Review of all members allowances	October 2021 with report on proposed allowances in Feb 2021	Claire Hughes	Panel to be appointed at Full Council in October 2021
4	Review of Parts 1 and 2 of the Constitution	A review of the Summary (Part 1) and Articles (Part 2) of the Constitution	November 2021		
5	Petition Scheme	Review of necessity for and content of the Council's Petition Scheme	October 2021		

Constitution Working Group

No.	Topic	Description	Target Date	Lead Officer	Update
6	Review of Part 5 of the Constitution	Review of Member Code of Conduct, Member/Officer protocol and Employee Code of Conduct	November 2021		
7	Review of the use of Webcasting	A review of the options on the use of hybrid technology	December 2021 in case of any budget implications for the 2022 budget		
8	Review of Scrutiny Arrangements	A report on the different governance options for the Council, specifically Cabinet and Leader model and Committee model and Area Committees	January 2022	Claire Hughes	
9	Additions to the Constitution	Check to establish whether anything is missing that should be in the constitution e.g. financial procedure rules, contract procedure rules	February 2022		

(END)

 <b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
<b>Name and date of Committee</b>	<b>Council: Wednesday 28 July 2021</b>
<b>Report Number</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 13</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Appointment of Monitoring Officer</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Accountable member</b>	Councillor Michele Mead, Leader of Council Email: Michele.Mead@westoxon.gov.uk
<b>Accountable officer</b>	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Email: Giles.Hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
<b>Summary/Purpose</b>	To update members on arrangements to cover the Monitoring Officer role. Council needs to agree new arrangements to cover the statutory responsibilities as set out in Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
<b>Annexes</b>	None
<b>Recommendation</b>	That the Chief Executive be authorised to appoint an interim Monitoring Officer for the Council for a period of up to six months, following liaison with the Group Leaders.
<b>Corporate priorities</b>	Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance: Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.
<b>Key Decision</b>	N/A
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Consultees/ Consultation</b>	N/A

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Under section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the Council is required to appoint one of its officers to act as Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring officer is responsible to report to the council :
- Any contravention of law or any code of conduct or practice made or approved by or under legislation
  - Any maladministration or injustice
  - Any matter which is likely to give rise to any contravention or maladministration
- 1.2 Additional responsibilities were delegated to the Monitoring officer under the Local Government Act 2000 and the Localism Act 2011 with regard to the operation of the Constitution and the promotion of ethical governance within the district and parish councils.
- 1.3 The current Monitoring Officer, Mr Keith Butler has recently tendered his resignation, and the Council now needs to appoint a new Monitoring Officer who can be in place when Mr Butler leaves.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1. The role of the Monitoring Officer requires detailed knowledge of local government law and procedure.
- 2.2. A permanent replacement would be unlikely to be able to take up the role for some time having regard to the recruitment process and the serving of any notice period, and therefore it is necessary to secure some interim cover.
- 2.3 An interim appointment will also allow a wider consideration of the options for the Monitoring Officer role long term, including options for these responsibilities to be handled with the legal service.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 There is a budget for the current Monitoring Officer role, which is a full time position, but this also covers wider responsibilities such as Elections. It is anticipated that the interim Monitoring Officer role will be on a part time basis, as it will focus on the Monitoring Officer responsibilities.

## **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 As set out the Council is required to appoint one of its officers to act as Monitoring Officer

## **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 The recruitment exercise and employment checks (including references) for the interim role will need to be robust and appropriate.

## **6. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 6.1. The Council's employment practices are consistent with equalities legislation.

**7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**


- 7.1. Members could decide not to delegate authority for the appointment, but this would necessitate an additional Council meeting to make the interim appointment, as an appointment is required by the end of the summer at the latest.

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1. None.

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 <b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
<b>Name and date of Committee</b>	<b>Council – Wednesday 28 July 2021</b>
<b>Report Number</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 16</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Emergency/Urgency Delegations Decisions</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Accountable member</b>	Councillor Michele Mead, Leader of the Council Email: <a href="mailto:michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk">michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Accountable officer</b>	Elizabeth Griffiths – Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer Tel: 01993 861188 Email: <a href="mailto:elizabeth.griffiths@westoxon.gov.uk">elizabeth.griffiths@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Summary/Purpose</b>	To note decisions taken under the emergency and urgency delegation arrangements approved by Council on 13 May 2020.
<b>Appendices</b>	None
<b>Recommendation</b>	That the report be noted.
<b>Corporate priorities</b>	N/A
<b>Key Decision</b>	N/A
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Consultees/ Consultation</b>	None

## **1. 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. ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS GRANTS (DISCRETIONARY)**

- 2.1. On 3 October 2020, the Government announced the introduction of additional support for local authorities under the National and Local Covid Alert Level 3 Restrictions. The purpose of this support was to enable Local Authorities to support its local economy and businesses that had been adversely impacted by the recent national restrictions and would be impacted by any future restrictions.
- 2.2. The Council approved its local Additional Restrictions Grant scheme in November 2020 and approved its discretionary scheme in April 2021.
- 2.3. In its change of policy in April 2021 the Council amended its eligibility criteria to include mobile self-employed persons in receipt of the self-employed income support scheme (SEISS), such as hairdressers and taxi drivers who have identifiable fixed costs whether related to property, vehicle or business.
- 2.4. The SEISS and JRS was created to support people with their loss of income through pay and therefore to support them with their cost of living. Subsequently, on further reflection of the Council's initial Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) Policy approved in November 2020 and its more recent ARG Policy, approved in April 2021 it was concluded that it had a negative impact on those businesses where the person(s) had also been in receipt of either the SEISS or JRS as the council had not supported these businesses with any business related costs.
- 2.5. It was therefore proposed that amendments were made to both policies to include within the eligibility criteria that those persons in receipt of either the SEISS or JRS and have identifiable business related costs are able to claim the ARG. It was also proposed that the changes were made retrospectively and any grant applications declined due to the applicant being in receipt of either the SEISS or JRS with identifiable business costs are awarded a grant payment. The policies were amended accordingly.

## **3. REASONS FOR USE OF URGENCY POWERS**

- 3.1. The use of urgency powers was necessitated by the timeframe and the need to use monies provided by no later than 30 June 2021.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. This report has no financial implications. The costs associated with the schemes were funded by government.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**


- 5.1. This report has no financial implications.

## **6. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS**

- 6.1. Not applicable.

## **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1. None

 <p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>	<p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p><b>Council: Wednesday 28 July 2021</b></p>
<p>Report Number</p>	<p><b>Agenda Item No. 17</b></p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p><b>Appointment of Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer</b></p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Councillor Michele Mead, Leader of Council Email: Michele.Mead@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Keith Butler, Monitoring Officer Email: keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To determine the appointment to the statutory roles of Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the Chief Executive, Giles Hughes, be appointed and designated as the Council's Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer, with immediate effect.</p>
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance: Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>N/A</p>

## **I. BACKGROUND**

- I.1. Under section 8 of the Representation of the People Act 1983, the Council is required to appoint one of its officers to act as Electoral Registration Officer and also to appoint one of its officers as Returning Officer for the District Council.
- I.2. The roles of Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for the District council, as extended by various Acts of Parliament or Statutory Orders, cover such duties as:
  - Returning Officer for West Oxfordshire District Council elections
  - Returning Officer for parish and town councils in the District for their elections and for the conduct of parish polls;
  - Acting Returning Officer for Parliamentary Elections where designated by the appropriate Government Minister (currently for the Witney Constituency);
  - Deputy Returning Officer for County Council elections in relation to divisions within West Oxfordshire and Local Returning Officer for Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner elections; and
  - Local Counting Officer in relation to national and regional referendums
- I.3. The current Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer is the author of this report, and has recently tendered his resignation from employment with the Council. The Council now needs to appoint a successor. These are statutory positions which the Council must fill.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1. The day to day work in support of Electoral Registrations and in running elections is carried out by the Electoral Services Team. With the author's retirement the intention is to recruit a separate experienced Elections Manager to lead the day to day work. The identification of a Chief Executive as the Electoral Registration Officer and the Returning Officer, working with a separate Elections Manager, is the most common approach in local government.
- 2.2. It is both a statutory and constitutional requirement for the Council to appoint an Electoral Registration Officer and a Returning Officer. Section 8 of the Representation of People Act 1983 requires a District Council to appoint an officer of the council to be the Electoral Registration Officer within its district.
- 2.3. The main duties of the Electoral Registration Officer include the creation and maintenance of the registers of Electors. The statutory involvement of the post includes the provision of registers and absent voter lists for each Polling Station, as well as to candidates at the election and to the Returning Officer.
- 2.4. Section 35 of the Representation of People Act 1983 requires a District Council to appoint an officer to be the Returning Officer for the election of Councillors of the County, District and Parishes within its district, and for the other duties listed in paragraph 1.2 above.
- 2.5. The Returning Officer will be personally responsible for the conduct of the poll, including the provision of polling stations, the issue and receipt of postal ballot papers, the verification and counting of the votes in their area, organising and delivering the count and declaration of results, receipt of all candidates' election expenses returns, presentation of final account and claiming appropriate funding from central government as prescribed and the retention of election documents.

- 2.6. As the roles are closely linked, for consistency, it is usual for the Electoral Registration Officer and the Returning Officer roles to be held by the same person.
- 2.7. The Electoral Registration Officer and the Returning Officer are usually a senior officer of the District Council. The role of the Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer is an individual appointment and the person appointed to the role has personal responsibility that is independent and separate from their main duties as an employee of the Council.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. The Representation of the People Act 1983 makes provision for a scale of expenses to be fixed for the purpose of determining the Returning Officer's expenditure. Elections are categorised as either "local" (i.e. parish, district, county or unitary) or "Parliamentary" (i.e. Westminster). Parliamentary elections have their own fees and charges, set by the Cabinet Office and appropriate expenditure on these elections is reclaimed from central government. In local elections the Returning Officer is paid a fee based on the number of wards where seats are being contested. Arising from previous decisions by the Council, payment for the Returning Officer for local elections is in accordance with a scale of fees and charges produced by the County Council. There is no change to the existing budget and charging arrangements in place as a result of this report.

### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. As set out in the report under the Representation of the People Act 1983 the Council is required to appoint an Electoral Registration Officer and a Returning Officer for the District Council. Any failure to do so could lead to the Council being challenged for failing to meet its statutory duties

### **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. The responsibilities are personal and carry significant risk to the individual. Indemnity insurance is provided in all cases to mitigate the risk of a legal challenge

### **6. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 6.1. The Council's employment practices are consistent with equalities legislation.

### **7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 7.1. Members could decide not to appoint, but this would necessitate an additional Council meeting to make the appointment for another candidate.

### **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1. None.

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## 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>
11895	Licence to Assign – Plot 3 Phase IV Carterton Industrial Estate, Black Bourton Road, Carterton (plus plan)	John William Forster and Diane Christine Forster (2) Empire Gates Ltd (3)
11895A	Duplicate	
11895B	Triplicate	
11896	Contract for Provision of Garden Waste Licence Stickers	Cotswold District Council (1) Forest of Dean District Council (2) Breeze Ltd (4)
11897	Deed of Variation to A Lease – Plot 3 Phase IV Carterton Industrial Estate, Black Bourton Road, Carterton	John William Forster and Diane Christine Forster (2)
11897A	Duplicate	
11898	Licence to Assign – Plot 3 Carterton Industrial Estate, Black Bourton Road, Carterton	FR Fletcher & Sons Ltd (2) Oakey Automotive Services Ltd (3)
11898A	Duplicate	
11898B	Triplicate	
11899	Rent Review Memorandum – First Floor Offices at 3 Welch Way, Witney	Aesop Arts & Society Ltd (2)
11899A	Duplicate	
11900	Rent Review Memorandum – Car Park, Great Tew, Oxon	Great Tew Properties Ltd (1)
11900A	Duplicate	
11901	Rent Review Memorandum – Unit 3 Des Roches Square, Witan Way, Witney	Signifo Ltd (2)
11901A	Duplicate	
11902	Deed of Variation of S106 Agreement – Land South of Stanmore Crescent, Carterton (known as Reema Central)	Sovereign Housing Association Ltd (2)
11902A	Duplicate	
11903	Retropective Licence for Alterations – Unit 6 Talisman Business Centre	Sigmatic Ltd (2) South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (3)
11903A	Duplicate	
11903B	Triplicate	
11904	Planning Obligation Deed under Section 106 and S106A of the Town and County Planning Act 1990 – Land at Downs Road, Curbridge – plus plan	Crest Nicholson Operations Ltd (2)
11904A	Duplicate	
11905	Contract for Provision of a Place Promotion Mobile Phone/Devise App	Loyal Free Ltd (2)
11905A	Duplicate	

11906	Temporary Road Closure – Church Lane, Spelsbury (27 June 2021) plus plan	Parish Councillor Rick Leyland (2)
11906A	Duplicate	
11907	Temporary Road Closure – Fox Lane, Chipping Norton (19 June 2021) plus plan	Nardia Shirley (2)
11907A	Duplicate	
11908	HM Land Registry – Discharge of Charge form DSI- 23 Hanborough Road, Eynsham	
11908A	Duplicate	
11909	Deed of Covenant – Unity 1-3 Carterton Industrial Estate (Plots 1-111), Black Bourton Road, Carterton	The Garden Trading Company Ltd (2)
11910	Contract to Assign the Option Agreement – Units 1-3 Carterton Industrial Estate (Plots 1-111), Black Bourton Road, Carterton	HMBA Properties Ltd (1) The Garden Trading Company Ltd (3)
11911	Transfer of Whole (TRI) – Units 1-3 Carterton Industrial Estate (Plots 1-111), Black Bourton Road, Carterton	The Garden Trading Company Ltd (1)
11912	Licence to Assign – Units 1a/1b Carterton Industrial Estate, Black Bourton Road, Carterton	The Garden Trading Company Ltd (2)
11913	Licence to Assign – Plot 1 Carterton Industrial Estate, Black Bourton Road, Carterton	The Garden Trading Company Ltd (2)
11914	Licence to Assign – Units 2a/2b Carterton Industrial Estate, Black Bourton Road, Carterton	The Garden Trading Company Ltd (2)
11915	Deed to Assign – Units 1-3 Carterton Industrial Estate, (plots 1-111) Black Bourton Road, Carterton	HMBA Properties Ltd (1)
11916	Lease – Units 1-3 Carterton Industrial Estate (Plots 1-111), Black Bourton Road, Carterton – plus plans	The Garden Trading Company Ltd (2)
11917	Lease – Unit 2 Graystones Business Units, Burford Road, Chipping Norton – plus plans	CD's Trading Ltd (1)
11918	Deed of Variation – Units 9 & 10 Talisman Business Centre, Talisman Road, Bicester	The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (2)
11918A	Duplicate	
11919	Contract for Provision of Waste Disposal Software	Yotta Ltd (2)
11920	Lease – Unit A, Newman Court, Downs Road, Witney – plus plans	Paul Harflett (t/a Global 360 (1)
11921	Lease – Counterpart – Premises at Ground floor, 37 High Street, Witney – Plus Plans	Ladbrokes Betting & Gaming Ltd (2)
11922	Underlease – Units 1a/1b, 2a/2b and Plot 1 Phase 3, Carterton Industrial Estate, Black Bourton Road, Carterton – Plus Plans	The Garden Trading Company Ltd (2)
11923	Rent Review Memorandum – Plot 11, Phase 2A Black Bourton Road, Carterton	Trevor Oakey and Mary Oakey (2)
11923A	Duplicate	
11924	Supplemental Agreement and Deed of Variation of Section 106 Agreement – Land at Butts Piece, Stanton Harcourt	Deanfield Homes Ltd (2)
11924A	Duplicate	