

Tuesday 7 November 2023

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EXECUTIVE

You are summoned to a meeting of the Executive, which will be held in Committee Room 1, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX28 1NB on **Wednesday 15 November 2023 at 6.00pm.**



Giles Hughes
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Executive.

Councillors: Andy Graham (Leader), Duncan Enright (Deputy Leader), Joy Aitman, Carl Rylett, Andrew Prosser, Alaric Smith, Geoff Saul, Lidia Arciszewska and Tim Sumner.

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Executive, 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 Democratic Services officers know prior to the start of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive any Apologies for Absence from Members of the Executive.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any Declarations of Interest from Members of the Executive on any items to be considered at the meeting.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 7 - 16)**

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Wednesday 11 October 2023.

4. **Receipt of Announcements**

To receive any announcements from the Leader of the Council, Members of the Executive or the Chief Executive.

5. **Participation of the Public**

Any member of the public, who is a registered elector in the District, is eligible to ask one question at the meeting, for up to three minutes, of the Leader of the Council, or any Member of the Executive on any issue that affects the district or its people.

Notice, together with a written copy of the question, must be provided to Democratic Services, either by email to:

democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk

or by post to:

Democratic Services, West Oxfordshire District Council, Woodgreen, Witney OX28 1NB.

Questions are to be received no later than 2.00pm two clear working days before the meeting (e.g. for a Wednesday meeting, the deadline would be 2.00pm on the Friday before).

A response may be provided at the meeting, or within three clear working days

of the meeting. If the topic of the question is not within the remit of the Council, advice will be provided on where best to direct the question.

The appropriate Executive Member will either respond verbally at the meeting or provide a written response which will be included in the minutes of the meeting.

6. **Proactive Delivery of Affordable Housing (Pages 17 - 28)**

Purpose:

To outline the Council's aspiration for a more proactive approach to increase the supply of affordable housing within the district, and outline how this can be achieved with the required resources.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Note the suggestions to be explored, in order to increase the supply of affordable homes within the district;
2. Approve the appointment of a new Strategic Housing Development & Enabling Manager.

7. **Oxfordshire Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (OXLEVI) Programme (Pages 29 - 62)**

Purpose:

To approve the submission of the countywide Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Stage 2 application to install electric vehicle (EV) charging Infrastructure in West Oxfordshire.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

- I. Delegate authority to the Council's Director of Finance, in consultation with the Executive Members for Finance and Climate Change to:
 - i. Approve Oxfordshire County Council's (OCC's) submission of a stage 2 application to the Office for Zero Emissions Vehicles for Oxfordshire's allocation of £3.655 million LEVI funding;
 - ii. Approve that OCC accept and spend LEVI funds in accordance with the submitted proposal;
 - iii. Approve that OCC tender for EV charging contracts in Oxfordshire; the tender will be a joint tender on behalf of all Oxfordshire county and district councils, which OCC will lead;
 - iv. Approve that WODC enter directly into the contract with the Charge Point Operator (CPO) following the tender process and completion of full feasibility studies and sign off at the OXLEVI Programme Board.

8. **Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Penalty and Prosecution Policy (Pages 63 - 76)**

Purpose:

To present Executive with an updated Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Penalty and Prosecution Policy for approval.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Adopt the Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Penalty and Prosecution Policy;
2. Delegate to the Director of Finance to approve future minor amendments to the Policy in consultation with the Business Manager Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service and the Head of Service, Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit.

9. **UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund (Pages 77 - 84)**

Purpose:

To update the Executive of the progress on planning and delivery of the Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Note the progress on planning and delivery of the Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund;
2. Delegate authority for the approval of future schemes and expenditure to the

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, in consultation with the Council's UKSPF / REPF Delivery Group.

10. **Financial Performance Report 2023/24 Quarter Two** (Pages 85 - 100)

Purpose:

To detail the Council's financial performance for Quarter Two 2023-2024.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Note the Council's Financial Performance for Quarter Two 2023-2024.

11. **Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) 2022/23** (Pages 101 - 118)

Purpose:

To note the West Oxfordshire Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) for 2022/23.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Note the content of the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) attached at Annex A, with a view to it being published on the Council's website by 31 December 2023 in accordance with legislative requirements.

12. **Fixed Penalty Notice Level Increases for Fly Tipping and Waste Crime Offences** (Pages 119 - 124)

Purpose:

To set out the new maximum level fines proposed by the Government, to deter and punish the offences of littering, fly-tipping, householder duty of care, flyposting & the distribution of free printed matter, and to seek approval to introduce these new fine levels.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Note the content of the report;
2. Recommend to Council to agree to an increase in the fine levels to the maximum levels permissible, as outlined in Table I;
3. Recommend to Council to agree an early payment discount as outlined in Table I;
4. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to increase levels of fines, subject to the resolutions of Council on 29 November 2023.

13. **Publica Review** (Pages 125 - 168)

Purpose:

To outline the conclusions from the recent Strategic Review of Publica Services, carried out by Human Engine on behalf of the four Publica Councils, and to consider the next steps.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Note any decisions taken by the Cabinets at Cotswold District Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and Forest of Dean District Council;
2. Support in principle the direction recommended in the Human Engine report to

return a range of services back to the Council and reshape Publica;

3. Instruct the Chief Executive to commence preparatory work and prepare a business case for a new operating model, and an associated transition plan identifying any necessary consultations, in partnership with Cheltenham Borough Council, Cotswold District Council, Forest of Dean District Council and Publica, and to report back to Executive with these;
4. Instruct the Chief Executive to prepare an Equality Impact Assessment as part of the preparatory work;
5. Agree to set the following principles to help guide the preparatory work and transition plan:
 - Recognise the significant contribution of Publica staff and management to West Oxfordshire;
 - Ensure that human resources processes are fair and appropriate, and that there is effective engagement with Unions and staff;
 - Support the financial sustainability of the Council, and the delivery of the Council's ambitions as set out in the Council Plan;
 - Explore the potential for delivering services in partnership to ensure adequate capacity and capability, and realise economies of scale;
 - Ensure that there are effective governance, management and staffing structures in place for the Council, any partnership services, and for Publica, both through the transition process and afterwards;
 - That the transition costs from changes are shared fairly amongst all of the partner Councils;
 - That the funding model for Publica and partnership services in the future is fair and reflects the extent of services received.
6. Instruct the Chief Executive to commence the process for Union recognition for West Oxfordshire District Council staff;
7. Refer the Publica Review and Human Engine Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their comments, prior to further consideration at the Executive and consideration by Council;
8. Agree to set aside £100,000 from the Corporate Priorities earmarked reserve to fund potential transition and preparatory work required for the Council and for the Publica Partnership during the 2023/24 financial year;
9. Agree to set aside a further £200,000 of earmarked reserve to 2024/25 transition costs within the ongoing budget setting process for 24/25 (and update of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy);
10. Agree that for the 2024/25 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (currently being developed for presentation to Council in February 2024) to consider the financial implications more broadly, including on Council's revenue and capital budgets, its risk profile and its balance sheet (reserves and liabilities).

14. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

If the Executive wishes to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the exempt from publication part of the agenda, it will be necessary for the Executive to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of the Paragraph 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 on the grounds that their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

15. **Lease of Council Offices (Elmfield) (Pages 169 - 172)**

Purpose:

To request approval for the lease of Elmfield Offices and the Gables as set out in the report.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Approve the letting of Elmfield Offices and The Gables on the terms detailed within the report.
2. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Property & Regeneration, in consultation with Executive Member for Finance and the Director of Finance to agree the final terms of the lease, including the cost of the Landlord's works.

16. **Disposal And Development of Land At Walterbush Road, Chipping Norton For Custom Build Zero Carbon Homes (Pages 173 - 180)**

Purpose:

To consider a new delivery model for the development of homes at Walterbush Road.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Agree to proceed with GreenAxis based on the model set out in the report, subject to suitable legal agreements being put in place to protect the council's interest; and
2. If agreement cannot be reached, to proceed with seeking formal Expressions of Interest on the site for a development, as agreed by the Executive in June 2023.

(END)