

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

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

PRESENT

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

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

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

127. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

130. ALLOCATION OF PARKING FUNDS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DECISION: That

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

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

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

The meeting closed at 3.06 pm

Leader of the Council