

Agenda Item 10 – Report of the Cabinet and Council’s Committees

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e) Cabinet	16 February 2022	Page 205
f) Audit & General Purposes	17 February 2022	Page 211
g) Economic & Social Overview & Scrutiny Committee	31 March 2022	None – meeting cancelled
i) Climate & Environment O&S	7 April 2022	To follow
j) Finance & Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee	13 April 2022	To follow
l) Audit & General Purposes	21 April 2022	Meeting still to take place

Second bundle – ‘Minutes to Follow’

a) Economic & Social Overview & Scrutiny Committee	27 January 2022	Second bundle – 10 a) / Page 1
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WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the

Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Held in the Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney at 6.30 pm on

Thursday, 27 January 2022

PRESENT

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

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive), Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Democratic Services Manager), Chris Hargraves (Planning Policy Manager) and Michelle Ouzman (Strategic Support Officer).

48 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

49 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jake Acock, Laetisia Carter and Maxine Crossland.

50 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

51 Participation of the Public

There was no participation of the public.

52 Presentation from Thames Valley Police

Members received a presentation from Thames Valley Police regarding Stronger Policing and an update on Organised Crime and County Lines.

The following officers joined the meeting virtually: Chief Constable - John Campbell, Superintendent (LPA Commander for Cherwell and West Oxfordshire) - Emma Garside, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Matthew Barber and Staff Officer - Rebecca Neupert.

At previous meetings of the Committee, Members had compiled a list of questions that they required responses to and these had been circulated to Thames Valley Police in advance. The questions included: issues arising from the pandemic and their ongoing effects such as hate crime and domestic abuse; the reduction in PCSO's particularly in West Oxfordshire; enforcing of 20 mile an hour speed limit in villages particularly in West Oxfordshire; an update on County lines and the statistics regarding growing drug use and it's % increase and a breakdown of crime figures into a league table.

Both the PCC and TVP delivered in depth presentations providing an update of the work carried out this year, the challenges faced and future work streams. The topics covered included fraud and cyber-crime, digital investigations, digital forensics, the fast-tracking of domestic violence issues, youth offending, prison leavers and illegal encampments.

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The officers responded to questions from the Committee and provided clarification on what constituted an illegal encampment.

The Community Safety Partnerships were also discussed along with how they were funded. The prevention of anti-social behaviour, an increase in CCTV provision and tackling fly-tipping was also discussed.

Members noted that a recent recruitment drive had seen a significant increase in the number of police officers, with a focus on specials and PCSO's.

Superintendent Garside, addressed the meeting and spoke about rural crime, partnership priorities, the work being undertaken to raise awareness of domestic violence within communities along with the educational work within schools. She also referred to the two county drug lines within West Oxfordshire and the joint work being undertaken with Gloucestershire and Wiltshire to tackle these.

In relation to the questions relating to a 20mph speed limit in areas, Members noted that this was for the local authority to decide and it could be enforced, with speed watch vans available to support this. However, the importance of other measures such as traffic calming methods was highlighted.

The Chair thanked the officers from TVP and the PCC for attending the meeting, especially as some were abroad on leave but had still made time to join the Committee to deliver their presentation.

Following the presentation, Members raised a number of queries including reported incidents of human trafficking, the number of PCSO's on the streets, how Speedwatch was being supported and whether there had been an increase in the use of police helicopters in the area.

It was also noted that in relation to rural domestic violence, no information had been cascaded to the parish councils. Officers agreed to speak to the Community Safety Team as to how this could be improved.

Having received the presentation, the Committee thanked the officers again for their attendance and noted the update.

Resolved that the update be noted.

53 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman confirmed that there was to be an additional Committee meeting set for 10 February 2022.

54 Council Priorities and Service Performance Report 2020-21 - Quarter Two

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

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Councillor Prosser asked for clarification on the figures relating to second homes in the District.

In response to a query from Councillor Poskitt, Mr Hughes provided a definition of the difference between a major and minor planning application.

Councillor Bull raised concerns relating to vulnerable groups and accessibility to book sessions at the Windrush Leisure Centre. She did not feel the booking system was working for disability groups and had raised this with GLL. Councillor Bull felt that, following on from a year affected by Covid, these groups were being discriminated against when they should be encouraged to return to health and wellbeing activities. The Chief Executive proposed that Councillor Bull refer this issue directly to the Council's Leisure Contract Specialist and he could raise it further with GLL.

Councillor Beaney highlighted the difficulties being experienced by the Planning department and whether complaints were being responded to.

Councillor Graham was concerned that there was an unfilled parking enforcement post. He felt that the narrative of Covid was being used too generally and asked to be informed when the post was filled.

Having been proposed and duly seconded, the Cabinet

Resolved that the report be noted.

55

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

Members received a report from the Planning Policy Manager, Chris Hargraves, which asked them to note the Council's Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for 2020-2021, agreed by Cabinet on 15 December 2021.

Mr Hargraves introduced the report and advised that this was a summary of the key findings for 2020/21 with the AMR containing the detail.

Queries were raised relating to Biodiversity Net Gain as detailed at paragraph 2.9. Mr Hargraves advised that he did not have the full details, which would be case specific. He offered to respond to Councillor Poskitt after the meeting.

Members discussed the details relating to electric vehicle charging points, flood risk sites and air quality reporting. In response to a query from Councillor Poskitt relating to a Conservation Area Appraisal in Woodstock, Mr Hargraves advised that there had been a change in officer and he would respond directly.

Councillor Collins queried the information contained in the Healthy Towns and Villages section relating to mental health and what the Council was doing to address this. He was advised that Heather McCulloch would be the best person to respond directly.

Councillors also discussed the poverty rates and the matrix used to assess this. The Chief Executive felt that housing costs in West Oxfordshire could be a significant factor but would

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look into the methodology. Further queries were responded to relating to the West Oxfordshire Business Park, the Mullins project, neighbourhood plans and CIL.

The Chief Executive and Chair thanked Mr Hargraves and his team for the comprehensive report which it was agreed was quite technical but accessible.

The Committee therefore

Resolved that the content of the Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report be noted.

56 Committee Work Programme

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

Councillor Poskitt raised a concern that scrutiny of the budget by each scrutiny committee had been removed from the process, which she was not happy about. The Chief Executive advised that officers had tried to streamline the rollout of the budget process and would look at how to involve Members more broadly.

Officers advised that the draft budget had been scrutinised by the Finance and Management Overview & Scrutiny in November and would be considered again prior to Cabinet. All of the papers were available to Councillors and they were welcome to attend other scrutiny committees if they wished.

Councillor Bull asked if Members could be made aware of staff shortages in a timely manner. Councillor Leverton felt this enabled Members to have empathy regarding workloads and ways to communicate vacancies was discussed.

Members noted that officers were producing data on Housing up to the end of March with a view to reporting early in the civic year. The annual update from GLL would be due in July and the Chair was receiving regular updates relating to the Afghan Resettlement Scheme.

Having discussed the matter, it was

Resolved that the work programme be updated accordingly.

57 Cabinet Work Programme

The Committee received and considered the report from Democratic Services, which gave Members the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme.

Resolved that the report be noted

58 Members Questions

There were none.

The Meeting closed at 8.42 pm

CHAIRMAN

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the

Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Held in the Council Chamber at 6.30 pm on **Thursday, 10 February 2022**

PRESENT

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

Also present: Councillor Jane Doughty (Cabinet Member for Customer Delivery).

Officers: Jon Dearing (Group Manager - Resident Services), Giles Hughes (Chief Executive), Bill Oddy (Group Manager - Commercial Development), Phil Shaw (Business Manager - Development Management) and Scott Williams (Business Manager - Commissioning Strategy).

1 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2022 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Jake Acock, Owen Collins, Mark Johnson and Alex Wilson.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

4 Participation of the Public

Suzanne McIvor addressed the Committee on Agenda Item 6 - Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation responses.

The Chair thanked Ms McIvor for her participation.

5 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman advised that as external participants were in attendance, the order of the agenda would be reconfigured as follows:

1. Online User Survey – West Oxfordshire Leisure Facilities
2. Phil Shaw and Jon Dearing – Update on staffing
3. Heather McCulloch – Dental Services
4. The Oxfordshire Plan

6 Oxfordshire Plan 2050 : Summary of Consultation

The Council's Chief Executive, Giles Hughes addressed the Committee to provide an update on the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan. He advised that the Plan would be reviewed, revised and monitored as a living document, along with the Section 106 Policy which would also be reviewed.

The Economic & Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee was asked to note the summary results from the recent regulation 18 (part 2) consultation; note the revised scope of the Oxfordshire Plan, with clarification over its relationship to city and district Local Plans and

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supporting evidence base; note the next steps of the Oxfordshire Plan process; and recommend the adoption of the revised Statement of Community Involvement, subject to approval at the cabinets of the five Oxfordshire councils.

Mr Hughes also gave an overview of the members of the staff working on the document, including Andrew Thompson, a WODC planner, who had been seconded into the team. The decision making process was explained along with the long term strategic view of the document. Officers had been working closely with the County Council and were conscious of the importance of scrutiny, with this document being considered a month ahead of its final consideration at Cabinet.

Councillors were pleased with the open and transparent manner decisions about the Plan were being made and noted the number of emails they had received from CPRE and the organisation 'Need not Greed'.

A number of Councillors addressed the meeting with their support for the document, highlighting the aspirational tone. It was queried if the definition of infrastructure was strong enough and the potential to include Health and Wellbeing as an element.

Councillor Bull welcomed the Specialist Housing Need element, which was felt to be much more local along with the potential for lifetime homes to be adapted.

Councillor Prosser agreed with the comments made about Health and Wellbeing and housing need and received clarification on the process. Mr Hughes advised that the document had to refer to government policy as there were fundamental topics that needed to be addressed before housing.

Members also noted that homes did not have to mean houses, as there were different types including flats. There was a request to use the word 'homes' more and a desire to get the graphics right.

Finally, Members felt that an explanation on the housing numbers needed to be provided in a clear and transparent way.

Resolved that

- a) the summary results from the recent regulation 18 (part 2) consultation are noted;
- b) the revised scope of the Oxfordshire Plan, with clarification over its relationship to city and district Local Plans and supporting evidence base, is noted;
- c) the next steps of the Oxfordshire Plan process are noted; and
- d) the adoption of the revised Statement of Community Involvement, subject to approval at the Cabinets of the five Oxfordshire Councils, is recommended.

7

Committee Work Programme

Work Programme 2 - Leisure Services Questionnaire

Rachel Biles, Strategic Projects Lead, introduced herself and presented a slideshow summary of the on-line survey, which had been carried out during June to August 2021. Numbers of responses, statistics relating to the respondents and the quality of the responses was outlined.

Cleanliness had featured as an issue in the survey feedback, so as part of contract monitoring new monitoring officers were being appointed. These officers would act as 'mystery shoppers', and one of the key issues would be the cleanliness of the facilities. Officers explained that 'Quest' was a national scheme for facilities, with the monitors using this as a benchmark.

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Scott Wilson addressed Members and provided an overview of the steps that GLL had taken to tackle the Covid pandemic and encourage users back to the centres.

Following a discussion relating to accessibility, Councillors were concerned as to how the surveys reached all age groups. It was noted that not many younger age groups had completed the survey and, as it was online only, many of the older generation, who did not have social media access, would have been unable to participate in the survey. Officers confirmed that focus groups were held regularly with Age UK and youth groups but it had not always been possible to hold the sessions in person due to Covid. In addition, the survey had been circulated to all parish clerks alongside using social media platforms.

The Chairman thanked the officers for attending and looked forward to seeing the outcome of the new monitoring officers and their 'mystery shopper' visits.

Work Programme 3 - Staffing Resources

Phil Shaw, Business Manager - Development Management, and Jon Dearing, Group Manager for Resident Services, addressed the Committee.

Members noted that the retention of planning officers was a national problem, and that in the past WODC had lost planners to other local authorities. The Council now had a career graded structure which meant they could nurture Planners into a graded structure and which in turn meant they could progress their career and have a salary to reflect this too.

Officers advised that with a larger administration support team and IT Dashboard with live data, it was easier to spot large caseloads. The future planned move to agile working and the recent successful recruitment of new planners should also help. In addition, the continuation of benchmarking with other Councils to ensure the Council kept up with the current trends of recruitment and staff retention.

In summary, the pandemic had stretched resources to the limit with the increase in applications, however, there was a belief that the worst was over. However, it had left scars with some staff suffering with mental health issues over the stress of the amount of applications coming through. Mr Shaw confirmed that Publica had measures in place to support the staff.

Conservation and Ecologist officers were also under pressure, with two flooding reviews ongoing. However, skills mentoring and sharing over Ecology and Conservation areas was helping with the workload and broadening individual skillsets.

Councillors discussed the pressures of the last year and were pleased to hear that new measures had been put into place to address the challenges.

Councillors also praised the Planning Team and their efforts over the past year to maintain the service and requested that their thanks be noted.

Work Programme 1 – Dental Services

Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager addressed the Committee.

Mrs McCulloch outlined the difficulties being experienced with dentistry and made reference to the Military Covenant which stated that military children and families should have access to dentistry, and to ensure that they were not disadvantaged.

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Members noted that problems accessing dentistry was a much wider issue covering everyone and was a national issue too. A discussion followed with Councillors commenting on the issue of dentistry as a whole.

Councillor Levertton suggested that in order to move this issue forward, the Council could write to the local Member of Parliament, asking him to look into the problems being encountered.

Councillor Crossland suggested that the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire should be made aware whilst Councillor Poskitt suggested writing a letter to the Armed Forces Minister.

Following advice from the Chief Executive, it was suggested that the relevant Cabinet Member be asked to write to the MP.

Mrs McCulloch highlighted a Youth Needs Assessment which would focus on Years 7 and 8 pupils of secondary schools. She suggested that Members may like to hear the outcome and see the data once it had been gathered.

Committee Work Programme

Having considered the items above, it was agreed that the Youth Needs Assessment be added to a future workstream for the committee.

8

Cabinet Work Programme

Having considered the Cabinet Work Programme, the Committee

Resolved that the report be noted.

9

Members Questions

There were no member questions.

The Meeting closed at 8.45 pm

CHAIRMAN

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the

Joint Climate & Environment and Economic & Social Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Held in the Council Chamber, Woodgreen, Witney at 2.30 pm on **Monday, 14 March 2022**

PRESENT

Councillors: Andrew Beaney (Chair), Alaa Al-Yousuf, Jill Bull, Mike Cahill, Andrew Coles, Julian Cooper, Rupert Dent, Harry Eaglestone, Ted Fenton, Andy Goodwin, Andy Graham, Mark Johnson, Nick Leverton, Martin McBride, Lysette Nicholls, Elizabeth Poskitt, Alex Postan, Andrew Prosser, Carl Rylett, Harry St John and Dean Temple.

Also present: Councillor Haine, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning.

Officers: Chris Hargraves (Planning Policy Manager) and Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Democratic Services Manager).

1 Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jake Acock, Owen Collins, Maxine Crossland and Ben Woodruff.

Councillor Dean Temple substituted for Councillor Alex Wilson, and Councillor Julian Cooper substituted for Councillor Liz Leffman.

2 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Beaney declared a personal interest because he taught the children of one of the developers present.

3 Participation of the Public

David Knight, Vice Chairman of Eynsham Parish Council addressed the meeting, stating that the Parish Council were very disappointed with the consultation process carried out. He noted that there had been a community event held in December but felt this document was flawed as various community groups had not been consulted including 'EPIC' and Green TEA. Mr Knight referred to the lack of detail with regard to ecology and the climate emergency and the potential need to retrofit properties. Concerns were raised about the lack of confidence in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain, no reference to active community groups in Eynsham, the lack of provision for custom and self build properties and the need for additional burial space. Mr Knight also referred to the County Council's concern, shared by residents, of construction traffic using Thornbury Green.

Councillor Cooper queried the reference to the community group 'EPIC' and was advised that this was the Eynsham Planning Improvement Committee.

Daniel Lampard and Niamh Hession addressed the meeting on behalf of the developers, advising that the report was comprehensive in detail. They advised that any future planning applications would come before the Local Authority and in producing the Masterplan, a dedicated liaison group had been set up. The group consisted of Oxfordshire County Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, EPIC and Green TEA. Developers had produced a newsletter, created a dedicated website in November 2021 and had held face to face meetings. Mr Lampard advised that this document was a stepping stone and was not the end of the process.

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Ms Hession advised that the Masterplan was designed to set out what could be delivered. It would also establish where development could be delivered, advise on transport, ecology and highways and would deliver 1,000 new homes. The process had identified challenges and had shaped strategies to respond to these. In addition, place making had been built into the Masterplan along with the enhancement of green spaces and ecology.

Following a question from Councillor Dent, officers advised the sewage concerns and details would be dealt with at the planning permission stage.

Councillor Levy addressed Members as one of the Ward Members for Eynsham. He advised that Eynsham had been at the centre of a flurry of major projects and this development needed to be as good as it possibly could be. He felt the document contained a lot of thoughtful information but residents had struggled to get the developers to talk in any great detail. He highlighted various areas of concern including a lack of detail on Active Travel and green space, the separation of the school and shops and the potential need to retrofit properties. Councillor Levy thanked the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Councillor Harvey for his letter to the developers regarding the climate emergency. He went on to express concerns about construction traffic using Thornbury Green, lifting of the 7 and half tonne limit, the potential loss of the bridleway and the lack of detail in relation to flood mitigation. Councillor Levy highlighted that there was no binding contract between the four separate landowners which would result in four separate planning applications, S106 funding arrangements and the phasing of works. He therefore requested that the Committee recommend that Cabinet did not adopt the Masterplan until the gaps in the document had been rectified.

4 West Eynsham Strategic Development Area (SDA) Masterplan

The Committee received a report from the Planning Policy Manager which asked them to consider the masterplan document which had been prepared on behalf of the main landowners/developers to guide the future development of the West Eynsham Strategic Development Area (SDA).

The Committee were being asked to scrutinise the report and recommend that Cabinet agree the document at their meeting on 16 March 2022.

The Planning Policy Manager, Chris Hargraves outlined the report and reminded Members of the process and decisions taken up to this point. Members noted that whilst this meeting was close to the Cabinet consideration date, officers had only received the masterplan on 25 February leaving relatively little time to compile the report.

The Chair signposted Members to paragraph 5.2 of the report which explained the position relating to policy requirements and a new revised local plan. Following a question from Councillor Leverton, Mr Hargraves advised that the document would be a material consideration at any future planning stage and contained a proportionate level of detail.

Councillor Graham felt there were inconsistencies within the masterplan and a lack of detail in certain areas. Councillor Rylett expressed his concern that this was no longer a Council led document and could have repercussions for the area. In response, Mr Hargraves explained that Cabinet agreed to update the Local Development Scheme last May resulting in this

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situation. He also highlighted that the Local Plan did not mention a supplementary planning document but did refer to the preparation of an agreed masterplan for the site.

Other concerns and queries raised by Councillors included the existence of a landowner consortium agreement and the repercussions the lack of one could have and the type of communication undertaken with landowners. The impact on flooding and flood assessments were also discussed along with whether an upper limit on the number of homes could be included. Officers advised that it would be inappropriate to specify a maximum ceiling on housing numbers. However, following further discussion it was agreed that this should be captured in the comments to Cabinet.

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Councillor Haine addressed the meeting and clarified the position with regard to housing numbers in the Local Plan, the constraints of the site, natural limitations and the flood zones. It was noted that many of the queries raised by Members were for discussion at the planning stage, when the more detailed proposals would come forward.

Further concerns were raised about the layout of the school and a lack of consultation with the County Council. The access point to the site was also discussed as some felt it was inaccurate.

In relation to Green Amenity and Leisure, the provision of a burial site was raised and discussions were had around the current lack of capacity in the Eynsham area.

Councillor Graham queried what play space provision was being made for teenagers and in response, Mr Hargraves advised that a variety of areas was being proposed. Councillor Prosser noted that any football playing fields should be within walking and cycling distance with suitable provision provided for this. Other issues raised included dog walking areas and the provision of play parks for residents or visitors with a disability.

Members highlighted a number of areas that needed further clarification and thought in relation to drainage including information on foul drainage, the cumulative impact and the need for robust strategies. Councillors Graham, Prosser, St John and Rylett all felt strongly that detailed drainage plans that had been robustly tested needed to be in place as Thames Water were felt to be unreliable and the infrastructure was not adequate to deal with the increased capacity.

Councillor Rylett did not feel that the infrastructure was moving forwards and suggested that the Council undertake work on an Infrastructure Delivery Phasing Plan to address this. Officers did not feel that it would be possible to commit to a further piece of work at this time. In response, Councillor Rylett reiterated that this was an important issue and should be considered for the whole area, with detail of phasing and trigger points for investments.

With regard to Ecology, Councillors requested the use of pollinators, hedgehog highways at development stage and the need for Biodiversity Net Gain across the whole site.

Councillor Coles advised that the document incorrectly detailed the bus routes and this needed amending. Further discussions were had relating to the A40 access and plans, a potential subway and the park and ride system. Officers confirmed that there would be a

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signalised junction, not a roundabout and it was agreed that construction traffic should not be directed through the village. Members felt strongly that no construction traffic should go through Thornbury Close, which was now treated as a through road. In addition, it was noted that the bridleway should be preserved as it was the only access to the countryside.

Following comments relating to the use of the car in rural areas and the potential for the access to become a 'rat run', Councillor Poskitt queried how the issue would be tackled as the masterplan did not address this.

Councillor Graham spoke to the Parking Strategy which he felt was lacking, ambiguous and not definitive. It was noted that the document referred to plans for electric vehicle charging points which weren't in place yet. Councillor Beaney felt the document had focused on parking for the top part of the development with none for the bottom. It was also highlighted that the masterplan should reflect the guidance from Thames Valley Police in relation to cycle parking.

In relation to the proposed Primary School, Councillor Poskitt queried the form entry and officers signposted Members to the addendum which included a recommendation from the County Council. However, reference to form entry was inconsistent throughout the document.

Councillor Poskitt raised concerns about the Building Heights Strategy and felt that density related to height. She received clarification on the height of three storey dwellings.

Councillor Rylett was disappointed with the lack of detail on self-build which he felt was a missed opportunity. He felt that greater certainty should be provided in relation to areas of proposed self-build within the site. It was also felt that a mix of affordable housing should be evenly distributed throughout the development.

In relation to the Sustainability Charter, some of the Committee felt this offered nothing, was mis-information and should be deleted. However, Members noted and welcomed the recommendations put to the developer from Councillor Harvey as Cabinet Member but there was a feeling that the masterplan needed to include an ambition to achieve greater sustainability levels.

Following a formal proposal and vote, it was agreed that a specific recommendation be passed to Cabinet that the sustainability pages in the masterplan be rejected and a requirement that the 2025 future homes standard be met from day one of development.

It was agreed that the phasing of the development should be implemented as per the recommendation from the County Council and that the developer should be asked to look at an Infrastructure Phasing Delivery Plan. Members felt there was a lack of detail on the Infrastructure Requirements and suggested that any gaps in the plan could be funded or commissioned by the Council. Councillor Graham highlighted that it was too late to bring in community infrastructure at Phase 5 and the community needs had to be addressed earlier.

Mr Hargraves gave an overview of the risk assessment, with the main risk being the housing land supply. He reminded the meeting that the Local Plan was reliant on strategic sites coming

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forward in the second half of the plan period and that two tranches of land within the West Eynsham SDA already have planning permission.

Councillor Graham felt that there was too much onus on the developer led masterplan which gave the developer the upper hand but it was noted that this was due to the decision taken by Cabinet in May last year.

Overall, whilst Members recognised the reasons that this document was now developer led, some felt the masterplan was lacking in ambition and detail.

Resolved that the following comments be provided to Cabinet prior to their meeting:

- 1) The number of houses referred to is described as 'about 1000 houses' – Members would like this to be a more finite number following experiences in Carterton / Brize Norton where development had vastly exceeded initial understandings;
- 2) Concerns were raised regarding the layout of the school and associated access points – can these be checked by Cabinet? It was also noted that OCC should be consulted on this;
- 3) It was noted that no reference had been made to the provision of a burial site – Cabinet are asked to consider future provision or at least reference to a contribution in Appendix I;
- 4) Drainage
 - a) It is noted that there will be 4 separate landowners and applications - strategies need to be in place that are robust and tested;
 - b) There is no information regarding foul drainage so further indication is required as to how this will be managed;
 - c) The drainage needs to be looked at as a cumulative impact & the Council needs to find ways to get Thames Water to invest, looking at the site as a whole rather than piecemeal;
- 5) There should be an ambitious net gain in biodiversity across the whole site, with developers aiming for 10% as a minimum – a request for pollinators and hedgehog highways to be incorporated from the beginning. Please can Cabinet look to the incoming Environment Act for guidance?;
- 6) The bus routes detailed in the masterplan are incorrect and need amending;
- 7) Construction traffic should not be directed through the village and Members support the comments made by OCC. Cabinet are requested to insist that there is no construction via Thornbury Road and alternative routes are detailed;
- 8) The Chill Bridge bridleway needs to be preserved and remain as existing, because it is the only access to countryside;

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- 9) The parking strategy is lacking, ambiguous and not definitive. Whilst the EVCP proposals were ambitious, it was not tested against capacity to deliver. The document was not clear if it was aiming to deliver lower car usage;
- 10) Cabinet to ensure the Masterplan blends with the guidance from Thames Valley Police relating to cycle stores / parking as it was felt this contradicted their security advice;
- 11) Primary school – the references to form entry need to be consistent throughout document and should reflect the comments from OCC;
- 12) There needs to be more detail about self build provision, in line with Council policy as the 5% requirement is not prescribed in the document;
- 13) Sustainability – whilst Members noted and welcomed the recommendations put to the developer from Cllr Harvey there was a feeling that the masterplan needs to include an ambition to achieve greater sustainability levels;
- 14) Formal recommendation that the sustainability pages in the masterplan are rejected and there should be a requirement that the 2025 future homes standard is met from day 1 of development;
- 15) The phasing should be implemented as per the recommendations made by OCC;
- 16) Request that the developer looks at an Infrastructure Phasing Delivery Plan and more information should be given around the bullet points on page 123. It was felt that any gaps in the plan could be funded / commissioned by Council officers as per the Garden Village AAP; and
- 17) It was felt that phase 5 was too late to be bringing in community infrastructure and the local centre needed to be developed earlier in the scheme to encourage community cohesion.

Note: Whilst Members recognised the reasons that this was a developer led document, following the decision made by Cabinet in May 2021, there was some feeling that this had been a retrograde step, resulting in a Masterplan that was lacking in ambition and detail.

The Meeting closed at 5.40 pm

CHAIRMAN

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the

Cabinet

Held in the Council Chamber at 2.00 pm on **Wednesday, 20 April 2022**

PRESENT

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

Also present: Councillors Julian Cooper, Derek Cotterill, Andy Graham, Gill Hill and Alex Postan.

Officers: Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Democratic Services Manager), Jan Britton (Managing Director - Publica), Georgina Dyer (Business Partner Accountant), Giles Hughes (Chief Executive), Jasmine McWilliams (Estates Manager) and Frank Wilson (Group Finance Director - Publica).

Also present: Chris Urwin, Finance Director for Publica.

99 Notice of Decisions

The notice of the decisions taken at the meeting held on 16 March 2022 were agreed.

100 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

101 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

102 Participation of the Public

There was none.

103 Receipt of Announcements

Electric Vehicles

Councillor MacRae advised that three electric panel vans had been added to the Council's fleet, following a minor delay.

End of Civic Year

The Leader addressed the meeting and highlighted that it was the last Cabinet meeting of the Civic Year. She took the opportunity to thank all members of her Cabinet along with the officers who had supported them throughout that time. Councillor Mead concluded by reflecting on the active year that had passed.

104 Publica Business Plan

Members received a report from the Chief Executive which asked them to consider the Publica Business Plan 2022-25 and any comments made by the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the draft Business Plan. The Cabinet were asked to recommend that the Leader (as Shareholder Representative) approve the plan, subject to any comments the Cabinet wished to make, and those made by other Shareholder Councils.

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The report explained that as part of the establishment of Publica Group (Support) Ltd. (Publica), twelve items were identified as Reserved Matters for Shareholder approval to ensure that shareholder Councils retained the necessary control over their Teckal company.

The Reserved Matters decisions fell to the Shareholder Representatives to determine. For each shareholder Council, the Shareholder Representative was designated as the Leader of the Council and “Adopting or amending the Business Plan in respect of each Financial Year” was one of these responsibilities.

The Business Plan for 2022-25 was attached as Annex A to the report.

There were no alternative options detailed in the report.

The Business Plan had been considered by the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 April 2022 and the comments they made, mainly relating to grammatical amendments were noted.

The Leader introduced the report and thanked the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their consideration of the report and subsequent input. She advised that this document had been worked on for some time, with the initial draft being considered by the Shareholders at a meeting in February. Councillor Mead felt that it was a good plan that focused on Planet, People and Place as the key themes and she advised that the final version, incorporating the amendments, would be circulated.

This was seconded by Councillor Harvey, who agreed that the key themes supported the Council's own plan and aspirations.

Following a question from Councillor Cooper, clarification was provided on the differing recruitment processes between Ubico and Publica. He asked what the cost implication would be if Publica started the recruitment process when they first became aware of a staff member leaving.

The Managing Director of Publica, Jan Britton addressed the points raised which had also been discussed at the scrutiny meeting the week before. The Leader reminded Councillor Cooper that Ubico and Publica were separate companies and could therefore manage their recruitment as they wished.

Councillor MacRae highlighted that due to the service being delivered, Ubico needed to recruit quickly should a vacancy come to light. Chris Urwin, Finance Director from Ubico, addressed the meeting and concurred with the comments made by Councillor MacRae. He advised that Ubico would often employ agency staff to cover any vacancies, however, there was more leeway when it came to replacing members of the corporate team.

In response to Councillor Cooper's query relating to the removal of the vacancy factor, the Locality Directory, Frank Wilson, advised that this would cost each authority approximately £200,000.

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Councillor Graham asked when the other partner Council's were considering the Business Plan and was advised that it had already been approved by the relevant Cabinet at Cotswold and the Forest of Dean District Councils.

Having been proposed and duly seconded, the Cabinet

Resolved that the Publica Business Plan 2022-25 be approved by the Leader, as the Council's Shareholder Representative for Publica Group (Support) Ltd and subject to any minor amendments that might arise from the final stages of consultation with the Shareholder Councils and/or general editing.

I05 Ubico Business Plan

Members received a report from the Chief Executive which asked them to consider the Ubico Business Plan 2022-23 and any comments made by the Finance and Management and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committees, on the draft Business Plan and to recommend that the Leader (as Shareholder Representative) approve the plan, subject to any comments the Cabinet wishes to make and those made by other Shareholder Councils.

The report explained that West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC), was a shareholder of Ubico Limited, a teckal company, designed to deliver environmental services, offering better value for money than commercial contracts. As part of the establishment of Ubico, a number of items were identified as reserved matters for council approval to ensure that shareholder councils retained an element of control over their company. Approval of the Business Plan therefore fell to the Leader, as the Council's representative, to determine.

The Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed the Draft Business Plan. Feedback from the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 3 February was incorporated into the final draft. The comments made by the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on the 13 April would be given verbally at the meeting.

An alternative option was that the Cabinet could make comments in relation to the plan, but proposed amendments would need to be agreed by the other shareholder councils.

The Cabinet Member for the Environment, Councillor MacRae introduced the report and thanked the scrutiny committee members for their input into the process. He reminded Members that the collection rate for the waste and recycling service was 99.5% and, despite some challenges, Ubico had continued to maintain this high level of service. He therefore proposed the recommendation as laid out.

This was seconded by Councillor Coul, who thanked Councillor MacRae and all of the staff at Ubico for their dedication and hard work throughout the past twelve months. She noted that there had been cancellations of the service throughout other parts of Oxfordshire but West Oxfordshire had maintained a full service to residents.

Councillor Graham added his thanks to Ubico and their staff for hard work and stated that he had received very few complaints considering the challenging times encountered. He therefore supported the report.

Chris Unwin, Finance Director for Ubico, thanked Members for their comments and assured them that he would pass them onto the staff.

Having been proposed and duly seconded, the Cabinet

Resolved that the Ubico Business Plan 2022-23 be approved by the Leader, as the Council's Shareholder Representative of Ubico Limited and subject to any minor amendments that might arise from the final stages of consultation with the other Shareholder Councils and/or general editing.

106 Exclusion of Public and Press

RESOLVED: That, in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the public were excluded from the meeting for the remaining item of business.

107 Investment Property - Surrender and Grant of New Lease

Members received a report from the Business Manager for Assets and Council Priorities which asked them to consider approval to complete a surrender of an existing commercial lease and grant a new lease to a new tenant.

The report explained that a Council owned property, purchased in July 2012, was currently occupied by a tenant on a long term tenancy. The company had since entered into a Company Voluntary Arrangement and had been seeking an alternative tenant to take over the lease. Two separate companies had expressed an interest and their offers were detailed at section 2.2 and 2.3 of the report.

Having considered the options, officers were proposing that a new tenant should be secured, subject to terms, to preserve the Council's revenue income at the property. Of the two companies, one was forecast to generate a higher revenue income than the other.

An alternative option was that the Council could decide not to agree to the surrender and grant of a new lease. The existing lease would continue until September 2025 at which point it was likely that the tenant would vacate and the Council would have a void period pending the acquisition of a new tenant.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Coul, introduced the report and proposed the recommendations as laid out. This was seconded by Councillor MacRae.

Following discussions relating to the purchasing criteria for local authorities and clarification from officers on the rent free period, Members agreed with the officer's recommendation.

Having been proposed and duly seconded, the Cabinet

Resolved that

- a) the proposal to agree to a surrender of the existing lease and the grant of a new lease to the company detailed in the report, is approved; and

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- b) delegated authority is granted to the Interim Head of Legal Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Group Manager for Commissioning, to approve the final terms of the transactions.

The Meeting closed at 2.20 pm

CHAIRMAN

