

## **CABINET**

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 25 March 2025 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.25pm.

**Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor Liz Leffman – in the Chair  
Councillor Dr Pete Sudbury (Deputy Chair)  
Councillor Andrew Gant  
Councillor Kate Gregory  
Councillor John Howson  
Councillor Dan Levy  
Councillor Dr Nathan Ley  
Councillor Judy Roberts

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillor Donna Ford

**Officers:**

Whole of meeting Martin Reeves (Chief Executive) Lorna Baxter (Executive Director of Resources & Section 151 Officer), Stephen Chandler (Executive Director of People, transformation and Performance), Anita Bradley (Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer), Chris Reynolds (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

*The Cabinet considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting, and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda, reports and schedule, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.*

### **51/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

(Agenda Item. 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tim Bearder and Neil Fawcett.

### **52/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(Agenda Item. 2)

There were none.

### **53/25 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2025 were approved as a correct record.

**54/25 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

(Agenda Item. 4)

There were none received.

**55/25 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item. 5)

9 Citizens' Assembly Update

Danny Yee  
Robin Tucker  
Nasreen Majeed  
Richard Parnham  
Anne Gwinnett

14 Capital Programme Update and Monitoring Report – January 2025

Danny Yee

**56/25 APPOINTMENTS**

(Agenda Item. 6)

There were no appointments to report to this meeting.

**57/25 REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

(Agenda Item. 7)

Councillor Jenny Hannaby, Deputy Chair of the Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented the report on Local Area Partnership SEND Update.

Councillor Liam Walker, Chair of the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented the report on Network Coordination of Road and Street works and Lane Rental for Oxfordshire.

Cabinet received the reports and will respond in due course.

**58/25 RESPONSE TO COUNCIL MOTION ON PART-NIGHT LIGHTING BY COUNCILLOR BRIGHOUSE**

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet had before it a report which proposed a response to the motion on part-night lighting that was passed at Council on 10 December 2024. The report set out the proposed action to be taken and outlined the proposals developed to date following the deferral of original proposal published for the Cabinet Member Decision Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

Councillor Dr Pete Sudbury, Deputy Leader with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment and Future Generations, presented the report. He explained the consultation process that would be progressed involving residents and stakeholders.

During discussion, members welcomed the proposed response and emphasised the importance of knowledge about nighttime behaviour patterns, particularly those of the younger population when considering any changes to street lighting.

Councillor Sudbury moved and Councillor Gant seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

**RESOLVED to:-**

- a) **note the proposal to undertake a full and thorough consultation, including early engagement with key community groups as set out and presented to Place Scrutiny on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025 ([Place and Overview Scrutiny report: Review of Street Lighting and Illuminated Assets policy framework proposals for part night lighting](#))**
- b) **approve a community led approach to any part-night lighting proposal, through an application made by the town/parish council (if there is one) and the local county councillor, which following this request will include an area specific public consultation.**
- c) **request that officers;**
  - i. **Keep councillors informed through regular updates on progress of this work, through locality meetings and/or by way of an all-member briefing.**
  - ii. **Ensure that there is full engagement from a cross section of users in the update of the Street Lighting Policy and development of Part night lighting regime framework.**
  - iii. **Undertake a full, thorough and robust Equalities Impact Assessment for the updated Streetlighting and illuminated assets policy, as well as the Part night lighting framework and during each stage/element of a project.**
  - iv. **Bring the proposals to Cabinet in the summer for decision together with any wider changes to the council's existing Street Lighting and Illuminated Assets policy**

## **59/25 CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY UPDATE**

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet had before it a report which provided an update on the first ever citizens' assembly organised by Oxfordshire County Council. The report described the process followed, presented the key recommendations from the assembly and set out how the Council intended to respond to them using a structured framework.

34 Oxfordshire residents selected by democratic lottery took part in the assembly. The assembly's purpose was to make recommendations on how the vision and targets set out in the council's local transport and connectivity plan (LTCP) could be achieved in ways that best met the needs and preferences of the people of Oxfordshire and other stakeholders. Part of the scope of the assembly was to consider congestion in central Oxfordshire and the core schemes in the central Oxfordshire travel plan.

Cabinet was addressed by a number of speakers who emphasised the importance of informing the public about transport policy and the need for accurate information dissemination. Some speakers criticised the Citizens Assembly process, claiming it was not conducted as intended and lacked meaningful debate.

Councillor Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for Transport Management, presented the report. Councillor Gant responded to the speakers, defending the Citizens Assembly process and emphasising that it was conducted independently and properly.

The Engagement and Consultation Manager answered a number of questions about the conduct of the assembly and its recommendations.

During discussion, members highlighted the importance of the assembly and its role in improving communication with the public. They also praised the diversity and representation within the process.

Councillor Gant moved and Councillor Sudbury seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

### **RESOLVED to:-**

- a) commit to considering and responding to the key recommendations of the travel and transport citizens' assembly included in Annex A to the report.
- b) formally request that Place and Overview Scrutiny Committee consider the council's response to the assembly recommendations, prior to consideration by Cabinet in July 2025.

- c) record its thanks to the residents who participated in the travel and transport citizens' assembly.

## **60/25 TREASURY MANAGEMENT Q3 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2024/25**

(Agenda Item. 10)

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) 'Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2021' requires that committee to which some treasury management responsibilities are delegated, will receive regular monitoring reports on treasury management activities and risks. Cabinet received a report which set out the position at 31 December 2024.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, presented the report. confirming that the Council operated within its prudential indicators. He referred to the details in the report regarding the repayment of loans during the third quarter, and the new debt of £500,000 through a community municipal investment to finance decarbonisation initiatives.

Councillor Levy highlighted that the average rate paid on debt during the quarter was 4.41%, and the strategy on debt remained to utilise internal borrowing over the short to medium term while borrowing rates remained high. On investments, he emphasised prioritising security and liquidity.

During discussion, a member welcomed the repayment of Lobo loans and inquired about the timescale for paying off the remaining loans. Councillor Levy responded that the remaining loans would be paid off as they matured for repayment, and did not pose any financial risk to the Council.

Another member praised the Council's decision to avoid investing in certain banks due to their irresponsible lending to fossil fuel companies. He also noted the high inherent and residual scores for climate impact in the risk register, emphasising the need for comprehensive mitigation efforts.

Councillor Levy moved and Councillor Leffman seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

**RESOLVED to note the council's treasury management activity at the end of the third quarter of 2024/25.**

## **61/25 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING REPORT - JANUARY 2025**

(Agenda Item. 11)

Cabinet considered a report presenting the January 2024 performance, risk, and finance position for the council. The business management reports were

part of a suite of performance, risk and budget documents which set out the council's ambitions, priorities, and financial performance.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, presented the report. He explained the background to the Council's current financial position as detailed in the report. The projected underspend of £10.5 million would be considered by the Cabinet at the June 2025 meeting.

There were ongoing significant issues with the Direct Schools Grant funding for high needs. These had been highlighted to the government, but no sustainable solution had been provided as yet.

During discussion, members made the following comments:-

- The impact of the government's changes to the lane rental application requirements, which affected the Council's budget planning for highways maintenance
- The importance of the music service and its role in supporting children with special education needs and disabilities
- The need for clarity from the government on the high needs block funding and the impact of devolution on this issue

Councillor Levy moved and Councillor Sudbury seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

**RESOLVED to:-**

- a) to note the report and annexes**
- b) write off £0.1m owed to the council by a company who are in liquidation. (Annex B, para 107).**
- c) write off 17 Adult Social Care contribution debts totalling £0.380m. (Annex B, para 110).**
- d) propose to contribute £5.0m to the Local Government Devolution and Reorganisation reserve from the un-utilised contingency (£3.3m) and unallocated pay inflation of £1.7m, taking the total contribution to £10.0m in 2024/25 (Annex B, para 124)**
- e) approve the transfer of £1.0m funding from IFRS9 reserves to the budget priorities reserve to support rural active travel measures. (Annex B, para 134 - 136)**

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**62/25 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS**

(Agenda Item. 12)

The Cabinet considered a list of items for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet together with changes and additions set out in the schedule of addenda.

**RESOLVED to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.**

**63/25 FOR INFORMATION ONLY: CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY ITEMS**

(Agenda Item. 13)

**Cabinet noted the following responses to Scrutiny items:-**

**Disposal of County Hall  
Local Nature Recovery Strategy  
EOTAS Policy (Education Other Than At School)**

**64/25 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND MONITORING REPORT - JANUARY 2025**

(Agenda Item. 14)

Cabinet agreed that it was not necessary to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Cabinet had before it the fourth capital programme update and monitoring report for 2024/25 which set out the monitoring position based on activity to the end of January 2025. The report also updated the Capital Programme approved by Council in February 2025 taking into account additional funding and new schemes. The updated programme also incorporated changes agreed through the Capital Programme Approval Reports to Cabinet during the year as well as new funding.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, presented the report. He explained the background to the current position regarding the capital programme and details of schemes for which approval was requested.

Councillor Levy moved and Councillor Sudbury seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

**RESOLVED to:-**

### **Capital Programme**

- a. Note the capital monitoring position for 2024/25 set out in this report and summarised in Annex 1.
- b. Approve the updated Capital Programme at Annex 2 incorporating the changes set out in this report.

### **Additions to the Capital Programme**

- c. Approve a budget increase for the Speedwell House Redevelopment programme, to be funded from corporate resources. (see paragraph 63 - 65)
- d. Approve the inclusion of £2.500m funding into the Capital Programme to fund a contribution to the Cowley Branch Line. The expectation is that as far as possible, this will be funded by S106 developer contributions. Any funding gap will be met through alternative funding sources. (see paragraph 66 - 70)

### **Funding Updates**

- e. Note £0.868m of Active Travel Tranche 5 (ATF5) funding and a further £2.650m of Consolidated Active Travel Funding (CATF). This additional CATF funding, announced by Active Travel England, will be divided into £2.050m for capital expenditure and £0.600m revenue expenditure. Funds will be held in earmarked reserves, pending business cases coming forward.

.....in the Chair

Date of signing .....