

Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Finance

Friday, 8 November 2024 at 9.00 am

Room 3 - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

If you wish to view proceedings, please click on this [Live Stream Link](#).
However, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.

Items for Decision

The items for decision under individual Cabinet Members' delegated powers are listed overleaf, with indicative timings, and the related reports are attached. Decisions taken will become effective at the end of the working day on 15 November 2024 unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Copies of the reports are circulated (by e-mail) to all members of the County Council.

These proceedings are open to the public



Martin Reeves
Chief Executive

October 2024

Committee Officer: **Democratic Services**
committeedemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Note: Date of next meeting: 13 December 2024

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Items for Decision

1. Declarations of Interest

See guidance below.

2. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am two working days before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet Member's delegated powers.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

3. Petitions and Public Address

Members of the public who wish to speak at this meeting can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection.

Requests to speak must be submitted by no later than 9am four working days before the meeting. Requests to speak should be sent to committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that if the technology fails, then your views can still be taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9 am 2 working days before the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2024.

EXEMPT ITEM

In the event that any Member or Officer wishes to discuss the information set out in the **annex** to Agenda Item(s) **4**, the Committee will be invited to resolve to exclude the public for the consideration of the **annex** by passing a resolution in the following terms:

"that the public be excluded during the consideration of the **annex** since it is likely that if they were present during that discussion there would be a disclosure of "exempt" information as described in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 and specified below the item in the Agenda".

NOTE: The report does not contain exempt information and is available to the public

THE **ANNEX** TO THE ITEM NAMED HAS NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC AND SHOULD BE REGARDED AS 'CONFIDENTIAL' BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS ENTITLED TO RECEIVE THEM.

5. Decision on Options for Site South of Oxford City Centre - Development and Disposal of Land North of Iffley Village, Oxford
(Pages 5 - 10)

Cabinet Member: Finance

Forward Plan Ref: 2024/283

Contact: Michael Smedley, Head of Estates, Assets and Investments

(Michael.Smedley@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer (**CMDF5**).

The information in this case is exempt in that it falls within the following prescribed categories:

3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The annex containing exempt information under the above paragraph is attached.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) **Approve, as a key decision, the freehold sale of land to the north of Iffley Village in Oxford in consideration of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) receiving a capital receipt once planning permission has been granted.**
- b) **Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Director of Property, to consider officer recommendations and agree the final purchaser and sale price.**

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed 'Declarations of Interest' or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your employment; sponsorship (i.e. payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member 'must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself' and that 'you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned'.

Members Code – Other registrable interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your other registerable interests then you must declare an interest. You must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and you must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person's quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing.

Other registrable interests include:

- a) Any unpaid directorships

- b) Any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority.
- c) Any body (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

Members Code – Non-registrable interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under other registrable interests, then you must declare the interest.

In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied:

Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:

- a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

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Agenda Item 4

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Friday, 13 September 2024 commencing at 1.00 pm and finishing at 1.15 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Dan Levy– in the Chair

Officers: Mohamed Cassimjee (Democratic Services Officer)
H.White (Operational Manager-Assets and Investment)
C Dyer (Operational Manager-Senior Project Lead)

The Cabinet Member 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/the following additional documents:] and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports [agenda, reports and schedule/additional documents] are attached to the signed Minutes.

21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
(Agenda No. 1)

There were none

22 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS
(Agenda No. 2)

There were none

23 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS
(Agenda No. 3)

There were none

24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
(Agenda No. 4)

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2024 were approved

25 SALE OF NORTH FARM, ASTON
(Agenda No. 5)

The Cabinet Member considered a report, regarding the freehold of the agricultural unit at North Farm, Aston. The property was historically let on a secure Agricultural Holdings Act tenancy. This tenancy fell away in 2016 on the tenant's death and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) took the site back in in 2017. The decision was taken to add value to the site by seeking planning consent. If planning permission was achieved, the intention was for the farmyard and farmhouse to be marketed for sale.

The Cabinet Member agreed to the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED to:

- a) approve, as a key decision, the freehold sale of land comprising part of North Farm, Aston.**
- b) delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, to consider officer recommendations and agree the final purchaser and sale price.**

26 SPEEDWELL HOUSE - MAIN CONTRACTOR PRE-CONSTRUCTION SERVICES AGREEMENT (PCSA) ENGAGEMENT.
(Agenda No. 6)

The Cabinet Member considered a report regarding the expansion and refurbishment of Speedwell House to achieve a single, city centre headquarters to accommodate the Council's corporate and democratic services. This scheme was part of the City Centre Accommodation Strategy approved at Cabinet on 23rd January 2024.

The Initial Business Case (IBC) for this project was approved by Cabinet on 19 March 2024 and the project entered the capital programme (£22.680m). The building strip-out works had commenced and would be completed by the end of September 2024.

Whilst the strip-out works had been progressing, the Council had tendered the extension and refurbishment of Speedwell House which involved two-stages of appointment. Under the first stage, the contractor would be appointed to work under a Pre-contract Services Agreement (PCSA) to develop the design. As part of the second stage, the contractor would submit their final offer and programme to deliver the works based on the detail of design they had agreed to develop.

The Council was committed to delivering Speedwell House at pace

The Cabinet Member said that the process should be carried out as quickly as possible and agreed to the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED to:

- a) approve entering the first part of a two-stage contact with Willmott Dixon for them to carry out pre-construction services on the expansion and refurbishment of Speedwell House under a Pre-Construction Service Agreement (PCSA).**

- b) delegate authority to the Director of Property in consultation with the Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer to complete all necessary legal documentation to give effect to this contract award.**

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 200

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Divisions Affected – Isis

DELEGATED DECISION BY CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE

8 November 2024

Decision on Options for Site South of Oxford City Centre - Development and Disposal of Land North of Iffley Village, Oxford

Report by Executive Director Resources and Section 151 Officer

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) **Approve, as a key decision, the freehold sale of land to the north of Iffley Village in Oxford in consideration of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) receiving a capital receipt once planning permission has been granted.**
- b) **Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Director of Property, to consider officer recommendations and agree the final purchaser and sale price.**

Executive Summary

1. The land at Iffley is a former playing field on the northern edge of Iffley Village, within the boundaries of Oxford City.
2. The site was historically used as playing fields for the former St Augustine's School (now re-developed into housing). The site was used as a works compound for the building works at the neighbouring Iffley Academy and has been vacant since.
3. When the former St Augustine's School site was redeveloped in 2008, the site was identified by Oxford City Council as a potential housing site. At the time, the site was being looked at for alternative playing fields for a nearby school. When this need fell away in 2015/16 the site was promoted by OCC in response to Oxford City Councils Strategic Housing Land Assessment (SHLAA) and allocated for residential development in October 2016.

4. The site was placed on the disposals list and the decision made to progress with an outline planning application for residential development. Following the Pre-Application process an application is being submitted.
5. When/if planning permission is achieved, the intention is for the land to be marketed for sale having already been declared surplus.

Background

6. OCC owns the freehold of the land north of Iffley Village, Oxford. The site is approximately 2 hectares, located north of Iffley Academy and to the west of relatively new residential development at St Augustine Way, which is the site of the former St Augustine School.
7. To the north of the site is a City Council owned playing field known as Donnington Recreation Ground and to the west is the residential road Meadow Lane, beyond which are open fields running down to the River Thames.
8. The former village (now suburb of Oxford) of Iffley lies immediately to the south with the Iffley Village Conservation Area abutting the southwest corner of the site.
9. The site shares an access with Iffley Academy at the western most end of Augustine Way.
10. The first recorded use of the site was as a playing field to the former St Augustine's School, before this the site was open space, possibly river meadow. The former school was closed in 2005 and disposed in 2008 for housing, forming the new residential development on St Augustine Way.
11. Oxford City Council identified the playing fields as a possible development site in 2009 and enquired about the possibility of it being bought forward. OCC took the decision to retain the site as playing fields as there was a potential need from the nearby St Gregory the Great School to the northeast. By 2015 the need had been met by alternative property and the site was again considered for development.
12. As part of Oxford City Council's Strategic Housing Land Assessment (SHLAA) in late 2016, the site was allocated for a minimum of 85 residential units. The property was temporarily used for a compound for the construction of Iffley Mead Academy, which put a pause to planning works.
13. The site has been declared as being surplus to the operational needs of OCC and it has been included on the disposal list. To maximise the value of the site the process of preparing a planning application was undertaken.
14. An outline planning application will be submitted in November 2024 in line with Oxford City Council's allocation.
15. Once planning permission is achieved, the property will be marketed for sale.

Risk Management

16. The Council must ensure that all capital payments received come from the client account of a firm of solicitors acting for the purchaser, which has taken responsibility for money laundering checks. The Council may wish to conduct independent checks on the source of the funds and must reserve the right to withdraw from the transaction at any stage in the event that these are not completed to its satisfaction.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

17. The sale of the site supports the agreed Property and Asset Strategy agreed in November 2022, by maximising the value of investments to support the long-term financial sustainability of the Council land and supporting the local community by the provision of land for social housing.

Staff Implications

18. There are no staff implications.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

19. There are no equality and inclusion implications.

Financial Implications

20. The Capital & Investment Strategy for 2024/25 agreed by the Council in February 2024 sets out that the principle that capital receipts should be treated as a corporate resource and used across the capital programme flexibly.

21. The sale will provide a capital receipt as set out in the disposals programme. The agreed sale price will reflect a period of open marketing of the site. The disposal will therefore be compliant with the best value requirements as set out in section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Comments checked by:

Drew Hodgson – Strategic Finance Business Partner (Resources)
drew.hodgson@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

22. The Council has power to dispose of its land assets pursuant to Section 123(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, subject to its duty to ensure it receives best value for them. The Council owns the freehold to the site.

Comments checked by:

Richard Hodby, Solicitor, Law and Governance
Richard.hodby@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Sustainability Implications

23. There are no sustainability implications

Lorna Baxter, Executive Director Resources

Contact Officers:

Michael Smedley, Head of Estates, Assets, and Investment
Michael.smedley@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Henry White, Operational Manager, Assets and Investment
Henry.white@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Exempt Information

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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