



County Council

8 December 2020

Agenda

*If you wish to view proceedings, please click on this [live stream link](#).
However, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.*

Declarations of Interest

The duty to declare.....

Under the Localism Act 2011 it is a criminal offence to

- (a) fail to register a disclosable pecuniary interest within 28 days of election or co-option (or re-election or re-appointment), or
- (b) provide false or misleading information on registration, or
- (c) participate in discussion or voting in a meeting on a matter in which the member or co-opted member has a disclosable pecuniary interest.

Whose Interests must be included?

The Act provides that the interests which must be notified are those of a member or co-opted member of the authority, **or**

- those of a spouse or civil partner of the member or co-opted member;
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as husband/wife
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as if they were civil partners.

(in each case where the member or co-opted member is aware that the other person has the interest).

What if I remember that I have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the Meeting?.

The Code requires that, at a meeting, where a member or co-opted member has a disclosable interest (of which they are aware) in any matter being considered, they disclose that interest to the meeting. The Council will continue to include an appropriate item on agendas for all meetings, to facilitate this.

Although not explicitly required by the legislation or by the code, it is recommended that in the interests of transparency and for the benefit of all in attendance at the meeting (including members of the public) the nature as well as the existence of the interest is disclosed.

A member or co-opted member who has disclosed a pecuniary interest at a meeting must not participate (or participate further) in any discussion of the matter; and must not participate in any vote or further vote taken; and must withdraw from the room.

Members are asked to continue to pay regard to the following provisions in the code that *“You must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself”* or *“You must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned.....”*.

Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting should you have any doubt about your approach.

List of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:

Employment (includes *“any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain”*.), **Sponsorship, Contracts, Land, Licences, Corporate Tenancies, Securities.**

For a full list of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and further Guidance on this matter please see the Guide to the New Code of Conduct and Register of Interests at Members’ conduct guidelines.

<http://intranet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/Insite/Elected+members/> or contact Glenn Watson on **07776 997946** or glenn.watson@oxfordshire.gov.uk for a hard copy of the document.

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.

To: **Members of the County Council**

Notice of a Meeting of the County Council

Tuesday, 8 December 2020 at 10.00 am

Virtual



Yvonne Rees
Chief Executive

November 2020

Committee Officer: **Deborah Miller**
Tel: 07920 084239; E-Mail: deborah.miller@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Due to the current guidelines regarding social distancing this meeting of the County Council will be held remotely. Normally requests to speak at a public meeting are requested by 9 am on the preceding day to the published date of a meeting. However, during the current situation and to facilitate these new arrangements we are asking that requests to speak are submitted by 9am four working days before the meeting i.e. 9 am on Wednesday 2 December together with a transcript of your presentation emailed to deborah.miller@oxfordshire.gov.uk

If you wish to view proceedings, please click on the live stream link on the front page of the Agenda. However, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, notice is given that this meeting will be recorded. The purpose of recording proceedings is to provide an aide-memoire to assist the clerk of the meeting in the drafting of minutes.

AGENDA

1. Minutes (Pages 1 - 46)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2020 (CC1) and to receive information arising from them.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest - see guidance note

Members are reminded that they must declare their interests orally at the meeting and specify (a) the nature of the interest and (b) which items on the agenda are the relevant items. This applies also to items where members have interests by virtue of their membership of a district council in Oxfordshire.

4. Official Communications

5. Appointments

To make any changes to the membership of the Cabinet, scrutiny and other committees on the nomination of political groups.

6. Petitions and Public Address

This Council meeting will be held virtually in order to conform with current guidelines regarding social distancing. Normally requests to speak at this public meeting are required by 9 am on the day preceding the published date of the meeting. However, during the current situation and to facilitate these new arrangements we are asking that requests to speak are submitted by no later than 9am four working days before the meeting i.e. 9 am on 2 December 2020. Requests to speak should be sent to Deborah.miller@oxfordshire.gov.uk together with 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.

Where a meeting is held virtually and the addressee is unable to participate virtually their written submission will be accepted.

Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

7. Questions with Notice from Members of the Public

8. Questions with Notice from Members of the Council

9. Report of the Cabinet (Pages 47 - 48)

Report of the Cabinet Meeting held on 17 November 2020 (CC9).

10. Treasury Management Mid-Term Review (2020/21) (Pages 49 - 68)

Report by Director of Finance (**CC10**).

The report sets out the Treasury Management activity undertaken in the first half of the financial year 2020/21 in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice. The report includes Debt and Investment activity, Prudential Indicator monitoring and forecast interest receivable and payable for the financial year.

Council is RECOMMENDED to note the Council's Mid-Term Treasury Management Review 2020/21.

11. Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Member's Allowances (Pages 69 - 96)

Report by the Corporate Director - Commercial Development, Assets & Investment and Monitoring Officer (**CC11**).

This report presents the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel following a recent full review of the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme.

The Council had asked that a review be undertaken during this Autumn to help shape a Scheme of Allowances to apply from 1 April 2020. The last full review of the allowances agreed by Members was in December 2014. The Independent Remuneration Panel have now met and are recommending some changes to the Scheme as set out in the report.

The Council is RECOMMENDED to consider the following recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and in so doing agree a Scheme of Allowances:

1. ***that the Basic Allowance payable to all councillors increase from £11,014 to £12,000 per annum;***
2. ***that, in addition to the Basic Allowance, a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) be paid as follows:-***
 - a. ***Leader of the Council – raise to three times the Basic Allowance: £36,000***
 - b. ***Deputy Leader of the Council – keep at twice the Basic Allowance: £24,000***
 - c. ***Cabinet Members – keep at 1.6 times the Basic Allowance: £19,200***
 - d. ***Leader of the Opposition – increase to 1 times the Basic Allowance: £12,000***
 - e. ***Shadow Cabinet – keep at 0.25 times the Basic Allowance: £3,000***
 - f. ***Chairs of Scrutiny Committees (Performance, Education) – keep at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance: £7,200***
 - g. ***Chair of the Planning and Regulation Committee – keep at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance: £7,200***
 - h. ***Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee – keep at 0.6 times the Basic allowance: £7,200***

- i. **Chair of the Pension Fund Committee – keep at 0.6 times the Basic allowance: £7,200**
 - j. **Chair of the Remuneration Committee – no allowance**
 - k. **Chairman of the Council – keep at 0.85 times the Basic Allowance: £10,200**
 - l. **Vice-Chairman of the Council – keep at 0.25 times the Chair's Allowance: £2,550**
 - m. **Third Party Leader – no allowance but review in 2021/22**
 - n. **Locality Meeting Chairman – increase from 0.05 to 0.10 times the Basic Allowance: £1,200**
 - o. **Police and Crime Panel Member – no allowance**
 - p. **Police and Crime Panel Chairman – keep at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance: £7,200 but invite the Council to review with the Police and Crime Panel members the principle as to whether all authorities should contribute to this cost**
 - q. **Police and Crime Panel Vice-Chairman – no allowance**
 - r. **Chair of the Oxfordshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – keep at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance: £7,200**
 - s. **Chair of the Horton Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee - keep at 0.45 times the Basic Allowance: £5,400**
 - t. **Adoption & Fostering Panels – introduce an allowance for member attendance at each of £100 per Panel with a cap of £1,200 per year.**
3. **a cap be introduced such that no individual member of the Council should be entitled to receive more than two Special Responsibility Allowances at any one time;**
 4. **a Co-optees' Allowance continues to be payable to an independent co-opted member of the Audit & Governance Committee when the co-opted member serves as Chairman of the Audit Working Group, equivalent to Committee/Scrutiny Committee Chair: £7,200;**
 5. **the Council's Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances and the Co-optees' Allowance to the Chairman of the Audit Working Group be amended annually by reference to the annual Local Government Pay Award for staff and that this should take effect from the date on which the award for staff similarly takes effect; however, if the above increases are agreed, the pay award should not be applied to any increased allowances in 2021/22 but from 2022/23;**
 6. **that Child and Dependant Carer's Allowances be increased:-**
 - a. **Child Care: the hourly rate is equivalent to the Oxford Living Wage, capped at £1,200 per year, payable on production of receipts**
 - b. **Dependent Carer: the hourly rate is twice the Oxford Living Wage capped at £2,400 per year, payable on production of receipts;**
 7. **the Council retains, for members, the travel and subsistence scheme that is applicable to officers. Overnight accommodation to be booked by officers where possible; when alternative accommodation arrangements are to be used, this should be approved by the relevant officer.**
 8. **the amounts for Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances and Co-optees' Allowances be rounded to the nearest pound when first set.**
- 2) **If Council does not wish to accept the Panel's recommendations at this time, in whole or in part, Council is RECOMMENDED to agree a status quo Scheme of Allowances for 2021/22 for any unchanged aspect with the**

proviso that the newly elected Council after May 2021 is asked to revisit the matter during the 2021/22 Council Year.

12. BOB Joint Health Scrutiny & Overview Committee (Pages 97 - 104)

Report by Corporate Director of Commercial Development, Assets and Investment and Monitoring Officer (**CC12**).

The report outlines changes to delegation of health scrutiny powers for a new Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) covering the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West footprint. The changes seek to ensure health scrutiny occurs at an appropriate scale.

Subject to agreement by the other relevant local authorities; Council is RECOMMENDED to agree the Terms of Reference (in Annex 1) for delegation of health scrutiny powers to Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West geography to allow of health issues at a system level.

MOTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

WOULD MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY AMENDMENTS TO MOTIONS WITH NOTICE MUST BE PRESENTED TO THE PROPER OFFICER IN WRITING BY 9.00 AM ON THE MONDAY BEFORE THE MEETING

13. Motion by Councillor Michael Waine

“Council notes with Concern the decision by HM Treasury to bring to an end VAT-free shopping for the majority of goods from 31st December 2020 unless said goods are posted to the buyer’s Home address abroad.

Whilst Council recognises that Brexit will present many challenges, the need for levelling up across the Country as highlighted by the treasury, and the need to ensure such schemes are appropriately used, Council feels that the approach adopted is akin to the proverbial ‘Sledgehammer to crack a nut’.

Council believes the best way to achieve the ‘Levelling up’ agenda is by increasing economic performance in other areas, not harming or penalising existing well performing areas.

In particular Council is concerned of the impact this measure will have on Bicester Village and the wider economy and local jobs supported, but also the knock-on effect to wider tourist attractions and businesses whom rely on visitors who make Bicester just one step of an itinerary around Oxfordshire and who may choose not to do so if the cost of shopping is now 20% more expensive.

Council calls on the Leader and Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the

Exchequer and all the local Members of Parliament opposing such as move and asking them to reconsider or allow exceptions, given the likely detrimental effect this will have on the Oxfordshire Economy.”

14. Motion by Councillor Emma Turnbull

“This Council notes that:

- Many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds undertake apprenticeships. They are more likely to be in apprenticeships at lower levels, be paid lower salaries, and work at smaller companies.
- Due to the economic impact of Covid-19, employers are unlikely to be recruiting apprentices in the numbers we have seen recently, meaning there will be fewer apprenticeship vacancies available for young people to access and more competition for the fewer opportunities.
- New apprenticeships in Oxfordshire are already down by 30-60% on last year, depending on the sector, and are likely to drop significantly further.
- A rising number of Oxfordshire’s young people are not in education, employment or training.
- With young people unable to access face-to-face career guidance, networking events or work experience opportunities it will be harder for disadvantaged young people to access high quality information and skills needed to secure an apprenticeship or job.

This Council resolves to:

- ensure all careers advice for young people produced by this Council is fully accessible online and has a particular focus on those from disadvantaged backgrounds and ask OxLEP and other partners to do the same.
- facilitate a post-16 study and training fund to seek financial support for young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds by inviting contributions from county councillor’s priority fund and partner organisations.
- ask the Leader and Chief Executive to write to central government recommending that social mobility and widening opportunity should be an explicit criterion in a review of the Apprenticeship Levy.”

15. Motion by Councillor Jane Hanna

“The increasing powers of non-elected decision makers is impacting negatively on Oxfordshire’s population.

Buckingham, Oxfordshire and West Integrated Care System (BOB) is an exemplar. A local pilot for an Oxfordshire Population Health and Care Needs Framework has stalled since February awaiting a review by BOB under national instruction. It marks an early test case of the value placed on local communities across Oxfordshire by non-elected agencies.

The pilot in OX12 targeted a population of over 27,000. The local community endured the loss of a GP practice, a vibrant community hospital, with no delivery of infrastructure needed for 1000 new houses. A further 50% increase in housing is planned. There have been many excess deaths in recent months

disproportionately impacting care homes. A starting point for recovery would be a clear commitment to completing the population-based pilot with a plan acceptable locally. A successful completion of this pilot would ensure consideration of local communities by people making decisions who do not know our local communities, who are less effective in securing confidence, and are not accountable to the public.

Council calls on the leader to influence a positive commitment now within BOB to the OX12 pilot. In addition, we request that he send an open letter to the Prime Minister, the Select Committees for Health and Social Care, Housing, Communities and Local Government to urge the vital importance of safeguarding local democracy and scrutiny as non-elected decision-makers implement policy across Oxfordshire.”

16. Motion by Councillor Pete Sudbury

“The Stockholm declaration, endorsed by the UK government in February this year, sets a framework to reduce road deaths and injuries by 50%: A critical measure is to:

“...mandate a maximum road travel speed of 30 km/h in areas where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix in a frequent and planned manner, except where strong evidence exists that higher speeds are safe”

The Spanish Government recently announced it will introduce this limit nationally. 20mph limits are popular with residents, make them feel safer, and increase walking and cycling.

Currently, 20mph limits are only put in place where average speeds are already at relatively safe levels (24mph). This is perverse and sends the wrong message to drivers about the dangers of speeding. Evidence says that simply introducing 20mph limits disproportionately slows those driving the fastest.

This County Council supports the premise that 20mph is the optimum speed limit in built-up areas and therefore:

1. Unless there is compelling evidence for a higher limit, newly adopted residential roads, and adopted highway in commercial areas leading to residential roads, will have 20mph limits or zone.
2. Parish, Town, City Councils will by default be supported in reducing speed limits in existing streets or areas on the basis of their local knowledge and the wishes of their residents, whilst taking note of national guidance. Where funding from any source is available, they will subsequently be supported to put in place necessary speed-calming measures to bring maximum and average speeds down to acceptable levels.”

17. Motion by Councillor Liz Leffman

“On September 20th, an Early Day Motion, the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill, was tabled in the House of Commons. While the Government’s recent Ten Point Plan is an important step towards tackling the UK’s carbon emissions, this Bill recognises that our carbon footprint extends beyond the UK’s borders. The Bill calls

for:

- the UK to make and enact a serious plan to combat climate change. This means dealing with our real fair share of emissions so that we don't go over critical global rises in temperature.
- our entire carbon footprint be taken into account (in the UK and overseas).
- the protection and conservation of nature here and overseas along supply chains, recognising the damage we cause through the goods we consume.
- those in power not to depend on technology to save the day, which is used as an excuse to carry on polluting as usual.

Many Oxfordshire residents have made it clear through social media and by forming campaign groups that they want to see this Bill succeed. This Council agrees with the principles of this Bill and supports Oxfordshire residents in their efforts to see it come into law. This Council, our residents and all local bodies have a role in tackling climate change, and we therefore ask to Leader to urge Oxfordshire's MPs to support this Bill, in order to maximise opportunities for local authorities, communities and businesses to make a real difference in combating climate change and reducing global carbon emissions."

18. Motion by Arash Fatemian

"This Council welcomes recent funding awards for Active Travel measures, and the hard work undertaken by all to encourage greater levels of cycling and walking across the county, including but not limited to:

- The successes of attracting the Women's Tour
- Lasting improvements in cycling infrastructure
- The award of £2.9m from Tranche 2 of the Emergency Active Travel Fund vs our original allocation of £2.4m
- The award of £1.4m for cycling provision from OXLEP

More needs to be done to improve opportunities for cycling and walking. Oxfordshire is a diverse county with a rich mix of urban, suburban and rural communities. Some communities are better connected for cycling, walking, and other forms of transportation, while others are less so. No single policy will therefore suit all divisions.

As with other modes of transport, diversity of approach is needed. What works in cycling and walking for Banbury and its hilly surrounds will not necessarily suit the comparatively flatter and better-established commuter routes between Oxford, Abingdon and the Culham science park. A more consultative approach to policymaking is therefore needed to ensure more collaborative and effective policymaking.

Accordingly, this Council calls on the Leader to:

- (a) abolish the post of Cycling Champion; and
- (b) establish a cross-party, multi-locality Cabinet Advisory Group (CAG) for cycling and walking to better inform strategic decision-making making on cycling infrastructure;
- (c) ensure that this CAG directly influences the next LTP to ensure that the needs

of each locality and its cyclists and pedestrians are better served.”

Pre-Meeting Briefing

There will be a pre-meeting briefing on **Monday 7 December at 10.15 am** for the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Group Leaders and Deputy Group Leaders

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OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 3 November 2020 commencing at 10.30 am and finishing at 3.43 pm.

Present:

Councillor Les Sibley – in the Chair

Councillors:

John Howson	Stefan Gawrysiak	Glynis Phillips
Jamila Begum Azad	Mark Gray	Susanna Pressel
Hannah Banfield	Carmen Griffiths	Laura Price
David Bartholomew	Pete Handley	Eddie Reeves
Dr Suzanne Bartington	Jane Hanna OBE	G.A. Reynolds
Tim Bearder	Jenny Hannaby	Judy Roberts
Liz Brighouse OBE	Neville F. Harris	Alison Rooke
Paul Buckley	Steve Harrod	Dan Sames
Kevin Bulmer	Damian Haywood	Gill Sanders
Nick Carter	Mrs Judith Heathcoat	John Sanders
Mark Cherry	Hilary Hibbert-Biles	Emily Smith
Dr Simon Clarke	Ian Hudspeth	Roz Smith
Yvonne Constance OBE	Tony Ilott	Lawrie Stratford
Ian Corkin	Bob Johnston	Dr Pete Sudbury
Arash Fatemian	Liz Leffman	Alan Thompson
Neil Fawcett	Mark Lygo	Emma Turnbull
Ted Fenton	D. McIlveen	Michael Waine
Nicholas Field-Johnson	Kieron Mallon	Liam Walker
Mrs Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor	Jeannette Matelot	Richard Webber
Mike Fox-Davies	Charles Mathew	

The Council considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and reports, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

52/20 MINUTES

(Agenda Item 1)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 September were approved and signed, subject to the amendments set out on the Schedule of Business.

53/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sobia Afridi, Councillor Maurice Billington and Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale.

54/20 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

(Agenda Item 4)

Council sent best wishes for a speedy recovery to Councillor Maurice Billington.

Council thanked staff for their tireless contributions across all services in the County and for their ongoing commitment during the pandemic.

Council AGREED to add an item of urgent business as Agenda Item 8a.

55/20 APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda Item 5)

Council noted the following appointments:

HOSC

Councillor Susanna Pressel in place of Councillor Laura Price.

56/20 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item 6)

Council received a Petition from Mr Chris Jessop, Chairman of Goring Heath Parish Council requesting Council support to reduce the traffic speed limit through Crays Pond from the current 40mph to 30mph, and to request that Council instruct relevant officers to undertake this reduction with urgency.

57/20 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(Agenda Item 7)

Councillor David Bartholomew received the following question on Notice from Mr Chris Henderson:

As budget setting approaches, I wonder if the Cabinet Member could explain to me the high level of balances and reserves held by the County.

The business management and monitoring report July 2020 forecasts general balances at £30.3 million at the end of 20-21. This is significantly higher than the risk assessed level of £23.4 million. Why?

Answer:

At the year-end any underspend on Council services is transferred into

general balances. The Council's 2019/20 year-end position was better than forecast when the 2020/21 budget was set. Therefore, general balances started the year already higher than the risk assessed level at £28.7m. The current forecast of £30.3m assumes that there may be a further contribution by the end of the 2021/22 financial year. However, given the unprecedented uncertainty regarding the financial impact of Covid-19, this is uncertain. With a net revenue budget of £475m, £30.3m is only enough to meet 23 days' worth of spend.

Similarly looking at "earmarked reserves" there are some very large figures. Capital reserves are set to increase to £35.2 million, with the vague explanation that it is for "financing capital expenditure in future years". If this is not allocated to specific projects with a likelihood of delivery, then does it really qualify as an earmarked reserve at all?

The Capital Programme for the period 2019/20 to 2029/30 which was approved by Council in February 2020 set out how the programme is to be funded. This includes the full use of the Capital Reserve over the period of the programme. If this reserve was not held, then some schemes currently in the programme would not be able to proceed.

The "demographic risk reserve" is set to increase to £6 million. Can the Cabinet member explain exactly what this is for?

This reserve is held to help manage demographic risk, particularly the significant pressures relating to High Needs. At the end of 2019/20, the High Needs part of the Dedicated Schools Grant reserves was in deficit by £11.2m and is forecast to be in deficit by £22m at the end of 2020/21. Whilst the Council is not required to meet the deficit in the High Needs reserve from general funding, it cannot have negative reserves overall. Given the significant deficit forecast, this reserve ensures that overall, the Council has sufficient reserves.

There is an insurance reserve of £11.4 million. It is claimed that this figure is based on experience of claims but since the figure has remained relatively unchanged and the reserve has not been used for some years then is it really necessary?

Each year an independent actuarial assessment is undertaken to review the appropriate level of reserves to be held for future claims. The outcome of this assessment informs the annual review of Earmarked Reserves which is undertaken as part of the Budget and Business Planning process. In 2019/20 £1m was released from the reserve to support service delivery.

I also notice there is a vehicle and equipment replacement reserve of £2.8 million. Can the Cabinet member then explain why the new electric cars for Community Safety at £200,000 were cut from the budget in September and not simply financed from this reserve?

Annual contributions are made into the vehicle and equipment replacement

reserve to allow for the replacement of our fire appliances and other vehicles. These funds are fully committed to replacement of our existing stock and there isn't enough in the reserve to meet additional vehicles.

Many would applaud the County for saving for a "rainy day". However, it might be an idea to look out of the window and see that the weather couldn't get much worse and spend some of these reserves rather than cutting services.

As part of their 'going concern' assessment our External Auditors have used the Institute for Fiscal Studies' Covid risk and resilience indicators for local government (published in June) to assess the level of reserves. Reserves data indicates that Oxfordshire has 'most risk' compared to our peers as our percentage of earmarked reserves to net revenue budget. Furthermore, CIPFA's Financial Resilience Index, which provides information on the level of reserves for all authorities, also identifies that Oxfordshire County Council is more at risk than other Counties in terms of the level of reserves held compared to its net revenue budget. The appropriate level of reserves and balances to be held by the Council is considered as part of the Budget and Business Planning process every year.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for your reply.

The projected figure for balances is from July, well into Covid. I still don't understand why they should be higher than the risk assessed level.

I have looked at the Capital Programme as set out in February. As far as I can see only £18.07 million of the £35.2 million capital reserves are projected to be used by 2029. Perhaps the Cabinet Member can explain why the rest qualifies as an earmarked reserve?

I just hope that when budgets are set for next year Members look closely at reducing the level of reserves.

Answer

The risk assessment determines the minimum level of General Balances that should be held rather than a finite sum. The risk assessment is undertaken annually and with increasing and new risks, it would not be prudent to spend this one-off resource now with the expectation that the risk assessment will require a higher level of General Balances in 2021/22 than in 2020/21.

The Capital Reserve will be used over the period of the Capital Programme not in one specific year.

58/20 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

(Agenda Item 8)

25 questions with Notice were asked. Details of the questions and answers and supplementary questions and answers will be set out in the Annex to the minutes.

In relation to Question 5, Councillor Constance undertook to provide Councillor Sudbury with a written answer clarifying whether the County Council had contact with other local authorities such as Hackney who had ambitious tree planting targets.

In relation to Question 8, Councillor Hudspeth undertook to provide Councillor Bearder with a written answer clarifying what proportion of the £35k cost of the report was paid for by each respective council.

In relation to Question 10, Councillor Bartholomew undertook to provide Councillor Roberts with a written answer on whether there was a likely timescale for when OCC would be signing the funding agreement.

In relation to Question 12, Councillor Stratford undertook to provide Councillor Pressel with a written answer as to whether the Council had a policy in relation to vaping.

In relation to Question 13, Councillor Constance undertook to provide Councillor Pressel with a written answer on why the specialist consultant support was only for 30 to 40 schools and why the council were employing contractors to undertake this work.

In relation to Question 24, Councillor Stratford undertook to provide Councillor Hannaby with a written answer detailing how many homes were participating in designated settings; how much more funding they would receive and how that would be funded.

59/20 ITEM OF URGENT BUSINESS - COVID UPDATE POST PRIME MINISTER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

(Agenda Item)

Under the provisions set out in Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the Chairman of the meeting was of the opinion that the following item - COVID Update Post Prime Minister's Announcement could be taken after Agenda Item 8 as urgent business in view of the recent Government announcement and developing national situation.'

Council received an update from the Leader of the Council as follows:

"When I suggested this debate at the end of last week, I thought we would be discussing the different Tier levels in Oxfordshire. Obviously, that has changed following the announcement of the National Lock down by the Government on Saturday.

However, what has not changed is my thanks and support to Ansaf our Director of Public Health who has been invaluable in his work over recent months. He has been ably assisted by his deputy Val Messenger along with all the Public Health team. Also, I have to thank the amazing hard work of our CEO Yvonne Rees who appears to be working 24 hours a day and making sure I know that by phone calls/emails at all time of the day and night.

The residents of Oxfordshire owe Yvonne and Ansaf a huge thank you for all their hard work and commitment. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our staff who have worked exceptionally hard over the recent months.

We were moving into the recovery phase but that work now has to be changed as now staff will be focusing on supporting our residents especially the vulnerable in Oxfordshire. I know staff will rise to the occasion despite the fact that many are almost running on empty due to their hard work over the recent months. There is a packed agenda for business as usual. I cannot say how proud I am to be Leader of Oxfordshire County Council with the dedication and hard work of both staff and members.

The move to a national lockdown has been triggered by following the scientific advice which is what we were doing locally with our recommendation to move the whole of the county to Tier 2. It was about following the data trends as the virus was spreading across the age groups in all districts across the county.

The virus does not respect boundaries therefore we have to consider what is best for the majority of Oxfordshire. The virus does not suddenly stop just past the Park & Ride on the Botley Road Likewise on Old Road it does not simply disappear as you cross the bridge into South Oxfordshire.

I realise that would impact on some communities that have little or no connection with Oxford however it's important that we do our best to reduce the spread. I know there will be an economic and general health impact but by following the scientific advice at an early stage could have reduced the need for longer stricter messages.

This is as much about protecting the economy as well as resident's health as the 2 go hand in hand. I speak as somebody who ran a couple of small businesses for 30 years and fully understand the pressures that go with running small businesses which are the backbone of the economy. However, I understand the need to protect the NHS and resident's health. The NHS were just starting to reduce the back log of operations and that must continue to protect the health of the nation.

It is important that Test, Track and Trace is improved so that we have the tools to carry out the function. Locally we deliver the system far better than at a national level however we need the funding to deliver the service especially

as it would mean ramping up our local operations to deal with the sheer volume of data that comes in. at which level that is done is always a challenge perhaps the Local Resilience Forum level is the best for the volume with real time information passed down to local Directors of Public Health.

Whilst I know that we in Oxfordshire are prepared to take on Test, Track and Trace some areas might not have the capacity and it's important that Local Government work as 1 to deliver the service.

When we come out of the National Lockdown my current understanding is that we'll return to the Tier system again. I cannot prejudge what the data will say in December however I can assure you that we as a council will follow the scientific advice from our Director of Public Health when we come to make recommendations about which Tier level should apply to Oxfordshire.

I will try to answer questions but as all the regulations have not yet come out there will be some gaps however the CEO and her team are making notes of the meeting so once answers are known they will be provided. We can all play our part by ensuring we follow the rules so that we save lives and protect the NHS.

The Council thanked the Leader for his update and thanked staff across the board for their ongoing Commitment. During debate, wide support was given to the update from the Leader and it was widely acknowledged that a well-informed local response was more effective than a National response and that local test and trace would be better devolved to local systems, to enable swift action following scientific evidence.

The following point were also raised during discussion:

- Were Central Government going to recompense local government for their work during the crisis?
- Council thanked researchers from Oxford on their work into treatments and vaccines.
- Members wished to see Granular data on OCC Website.

60/20 REPORT OF THE CABINET

(Agenda Item 9)

Council received the report of the Cabinet.

In relation to paragraph 1 of the report (Question from Councillor Price to Councillor Heathcoat) Councillor Hudspeth undertook to ask Councillor Heathcoat to provide a written response with the specific details of the total number of posts being held back from recruitment as part of the £15m in year budget cuts?

In relation to paragraph 1 of the report (Question from Councillor Roz Smith to Councillor Heathcoat) Councillor Hudspeth undertook to ask Councillor Heathcoat to provide a written response in relation to concerns about the

rising number of unemployed 18 to 24-year olds and whether more apprenticeships were being offered this year?

In relation to paragraph 4 of the report (Question from Councillor Jane Hanna to Councillor Steve Harrod) Councillor Harrod undertook to provide a written response on whether there was an update of risk assessment of safeguarding in light of OSCB Annual Report statistics.

In relation to paragraph 4 of the report (Question from Councillor Emily Smith to Councillor Steve Harrod) Councillor Harrod undertook to provide a written response detailing what measures had been put in place over the past 3 years to alleviate the impact of the removal of the Youth Service, as highlighted in the OSCB Report.

In relation to paragraph 5 of the report (Question from Councillor Emma Turnbull to Councillor Lindsay-Gale) Councillor Hudspeth undertook to ask Councillor Lindsay-Gale to provide a written response detailing what progress has been made, since the Cabinet Meeting, in undertaking a full review of the High Needs Block and how Councillor Lindsay-Gale was going to ensure that young people did not suffer as a result of the deficit reduction measures when it was known that young people with SEND had been severely impacted by Covid.

In relation to paragraph 5 of the report (Question from Councillor Richard Webber to Councillor Lindsay-Gale) Councillor Hudspeth undertook to ask Councillor Lindsay-Gale to provide a written response detailing whether there was any news of government support for the High Needs Block.

In relation to paragraph 9 of the report (Question from Councillor Judy Roberts to Councillor Constance) Councillor Constance undertook to speak with the parking Manager and provide a written response on when the Website would be amended so that people outside of the City Boundary could report parking enforcement complaints.

In relation to paragraph 11 of the report (Question from Councillor Glynis Phillips to Councillor Bartholomew) Councillor Bartholomew undertook to provide a written response on the progress of the review of the Major Infrastructure Programme pipeline and when the outcome of this review will be shared with members.

In relation to paragraph 13 of the report (Question from Councillor Richard Webber to Councillor Mark Gray) Councillor Gray undertook to provide a comment on the inequality of stop and search of young Caribbean males and to forward the comments to the police.

In relation to paragraph 14 of the report (Question from Councillor Glynis Phillips to Councillor Harrod) Councillor Harrod undertook to provide a written response in relation to the risk register line LR2 which raised the risk of central government intervention in relation to safeguarding children and

adults and the associated assessment of the likelihood of central government intervention.

61/20 COMMITTEE DATES

(Agenda Item 10)

Council had the schedule of meeting dates proposed for the 2021/22 Council Year before it for approval.

The schedule had been drawn up to reflect the various rules about frequency of meetings set out in the Council's Constitution. Attention was drawn to the following proposed changes to previous patterns:

Bring forward April Council in 2021 to 23 March to avoid the restricted period before the elections. Bring forward February Council in 2022 to 8 February to aid District Council budget setting.

Following discussion with Political Group Leaders it was also proposed that whilst meetings of full Council were being held virtually that their start time should be brought forward to 10.00am.

RESOLVED: (on a motion by Councillor Les Sibley, seconded by Councillor John Howson and carried nem con)

- (a) agree the schedule of meeting dates for 2021/22 and in particular to agree to waive Rule 2.1 of the Council Procedure Rules to allow the April 2021 meeting of full Council to be held on 23 March 2021 and the February 2022 Council meeting to be held on 8 February 2022;
- (b) agree that Council meetings start at 10.00am for the period that Meetings are held virtually.

62/20 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN

(Agenda Item 11)

Councillor Liz Leffman moved and Councillor Jane Hanna seconded the following Motion:

"With the closure of schools for an entire term due to the Covid pandemic, restricted access to leisure facilities, and reduced support for their emotional and mental health, the lives of young people in Oxfordshire have been severely disrupted over the past six months. Many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds will have suffered disproportionately and 16-24-year olds are most vulnerable to the resulting economic downturn.

A year ago, this council acknowledged the importance of youth services and agreed to a county-wide review. A partial Youth Study is now being commissioned. Although the outcome of this study will not be known for several weeks, this Council recognises that the need for a well-funded, county-wide youth offer has never been greater, and commits to creating a Youth Strategy for Oxfordshire as soon as possible.

This Council asks the Director for Children’s Services to establish an internal team to work in partnership with voluntary organisations, ensuring that our young people are provided with a youth offer that supports their learning, their physical development, their mental well-being and their employment prospects. This council commits to ensuring that young people in our County receive the informal education and support that they need to recover from the effects of the Covid pandemic so that they can flourish.”

Following debate, the Motion was put to the vote and was lost by 31 votes to 29.

RESOLVED: Accordingly.

63/20 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR CHARLES MATHEW

(Agenda Item 12)

With the consent of Council, Councillor Charles Mathew moved and Councillor Nicholas Field-Johnson seconded the following Motion, amended at the suggestion of Councillor Tim Bearder as shown below in strikethrough and bold italics:

“The decision, last autumn now, by the Oxfordshire LEP to withdraw the funding from the Loop Farm project (Duke’s Cut to Loop Farm Roundabout), a long-promised relief road to the A40 round Oxford, undermines sensible solutions to the endless traffic jams on the A40 between Witney and Oxford roundabouts. Given that the use of public money should be productive.

Council asks Cabinet to review the plans presently being offered and adopt a long-term strategy that will meet the public’s needs for the next twenty years at least and ~~should include serious consideration of a rail link from Carterton, Witney and Eynsham to Oxford~~ **as part of this work Council asks the Cabinet to consider undertaking a feasibility study should funding be confirmed to look at a rail link from Carterton, Witney and Eynsham to Oxford.”**

Following debate, the Motion as amended was put to the vote and was carried nem con, with 1 abstention.

RESOLVED: (nem con, with 1 abstention)

“The decision, last autumn now, by the Oxfordshire LEP to withdraw the funding from the Loop Farm project (Duke’s Cut to Loop Farm Roundabout), a long-promised relief road to the A40 round Oxford, undermines sensible solutions to the endless traffic jams on the A40 between Witney and Oxford roundabouts. Given that the use of public money should be productive.

Council asks Cabinet to review the plans presently being offered and adopt a long-term strategy that will meet the public’s needs for the next twenty years at least and as part of this work, Council asks the Cabinet to consider

undertaking a feasibility study should funding be confirmed to look at a rail link from Carterton, Witney and Eynsham to Oxford.”

64/20 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR LIZ BRIGHOUSE

(Agenda Item 13)

Councillor Liz Brighouse moved and Councillor Emma Turnbull seconded the following Motion:

“The impact of COVID 19 has exposed the enormous inequalities in our County and the senseless death of George Floyd followed by demonstrations across our County have highlighted the injustices and inequalities experienced by many. In particular, there have been calls for changes to the National Curriculum which reflects our past rather than our present or future needs.

Until 1988 Oxfordshire, as the Local Education Authority was responsible for what was taught in Oxfordshire Schools. When that ended, the responsibility went to the Secretary of State for Education advised by a National Curriculum Council, this was revised by Labour. In 2010 Michael Gove, as Secretary of State for Education in the Coalition Government, abolished it completely and took power to himself advised by Dominic Cummings.

Now is the time to consider whether this is the most inclusive or effective way of determining what our children learn. The CBI and the TUC think that the National Curriculum is inappropriate for the needs of industry and the life chances of future employees. We see cries from those demonstrating in the streets that it is not inclusive and diverse. Now is the time for change.

This Council asks the Leader of the Council to seek support from the LGA and the CCN to lobby Central Government to bring forward proposals to devolve responsibility for the Curriculum to Local Government within a framework agreed by an Advisory Council made up of Local Authorities CBI, TUC, Teachers, Faith Groups, EHRC.”

Following debate, the Motion was put to the vote and was lost by 32 votes to 28.

RESOLVED: Accordingly.

65/20 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR SUZANNE BARTINGTON

(Agenda Item 14)

Councillor Suzanne Bartington moved and Councillor Ted Fenton seconded the following Motion:

“Increasing tree cover is recognised as one of the most effective strategies to tackle the climate crisis, given the critical role of trees for absorbing and storing carbon. Additional benefits of appropriate tree species in suitable locations include mitigating flood risks, improving air quality, providing

protected wildlife and contributing to improved mental health. Our Government has pledged to plant 30 million trees each year until 2024, and it is estimated that doubling UK woodland cover could absorb 10% of UK annual greenhouse emissions.

In July 2019 this Council declared a climate emergency and committed to achieving carbon net-zero status by 2030. Currently, trees cover 9% of Oxfordshire's land area, compared with an EU average of 35%. We therefore call upon the Cabinet Member for Environment to:

1. Recognise the critical role of existing tree preservation and planting for effective climate action and consider developing a Trees and Woodland Strategy.
2. Set a target for increased tree cover in Oxfordshire, and explore the viability of doubling coverage by 2045
3. Undertake a survey to identify existing tree cover and suitable sites for new trees (with consideration for habitat protection, land-use and biodiversity)
4. Work collaboratively with District, Town and Parish Councils, civic and commercial partners to deliver tree planting initiatives, considering maintenance responsibilities.
5. Influence developer schemes to ensure tree planting is undertaken, supported by relevant planning agreement contributions.
6. Write to the SoS for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to request additional local authority funding to support tree-planting and maintenance.”

Following debate, the Motion was put to the vote and was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: Accordingly.

66/20 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR BOB JOHNSTON

(Agenda Item 15)

Councillor Bob Johnston moved and Councillor Judith Roberts seconded the following Motion:

“Council asks the Cabinet Member for Environment that full consideration be given to cyclists and pedestrians when future schedules are drawn up for grass cutting and vegetation management.

Along with vision splays, verges next to footpaths and cycle tracks must be given greater priority and cut earlier and more frequently than at present.

Other flower-rich highway verges where these priorities do not apply must be cut only once a year at the end of October when insects and birds have finished breeding. This will both maximise the potential for the County's wildlife to thrive and prevent footways and cycle tracks becoming unpleasant to use, especially in wet weather.”

Following debate, the Motion was put to the vote and was carried by 54 votes to 1, with 3 abstentions.

RESOLVED: Accordingly.

67/20 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR EMMA TURNBULL
(Agenda Item 16)

The time being 3.43 pm, this Motion was considered dropped in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.1.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing

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QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Questions	Answers
<p>1. COUNCILLOR NICK CARTER</p> <p>For more than a decade, I have championed a cycleway from Thame to the nearby mainline station in Haddenham, so that (a) commuters and other train users in Thame can access the station safely and without resorting to their cars, and (b) residents in Haddenham, one of Thame’s satellite villages, can equally access the facilities of their local market town.</p> <p>The benefits of this cycleway will tick every box in the County Council’s list of priorities, from simply improving people’s lives to the more challenging carbon agenda. As a result, the Council has gradually been accruing S106 funds and our officers have remained in close contact with Bucks Council with whom the project will be jointly funded. Hopes were high locally when the cycleway’s importance was acknowledged by its inclusion in the Growth Deal funding, only to be dashed by its subsequent removal.</p> <p>Will the relevant Cabinet member therefore reassure Thame residents that the County Council still shares their ambition to see the cycleway become a reality, and set out how this will happen? In particular, may I have confirmation of:</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>The Thame to Haddenham Greenway is a proposal for a cycleway/footway linking Thame to the Haddenham and Thame Parkway railway station. The off-road cycle/ footway would route through Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. It is a scheme that is supported by both County Councils.</p> <p>The scheme was originally estimated at £10m which £8m was to be funded from the Housing and Growth Deal and the remainder from secured developer contributions.</p> <p>The feasibility of the Thame to Haddenham cycle/ footway scheme was commissioned and through the option appraisals, exploration around land ownership and deliverability the estimate scheme cost dropped to £4m. It was identified that there is 3rd party land required for the delivery of the scheme and if it couldn’t be secured through private agreement would need a Compulsory Purchase Order which would delay the delivery beyond the 2023 funding window.</p> <p>The housing delivery and attribution to this scheme was reviewed by South Oxfordshire and it was found that the accelerated homes were lower than the original estimate, a reduction from 223 to 26 homes.</p> <p>As a result of these changes, the Thame to Haddenham scheme could no longer be justified as a scheme that was funded from the Growth Deal due to the low number of accelerated houses now attributed. This is not a reflection of the value of the scheme, merely that it no longer fitted the criteria for the Growth Deal.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>1) the preferred route and its likely cost; 2) the funds that Oxfordshire and Bucks have each earmarked; 3) other sources of funding that have been or could be investigated; 4) the potential timeline?</p>	<p>The Housing and Growth Deal agreement meant that the councils needed to demonstrate how Government money provided through the deal is being spent in accordance with value for money requirements, alongside additional information on how a longer term step-change will be made to plan for and support the delivery of 100,000 homes by 2031.</p> <p>The County Council as the accountable body had to therefore recommend this scheme was removed from the Growth Deal programme and this was endorsed by the Growth Deal Programme Board in early 2020.</p> <p>There is wide held recognition that the scheme provides wider environmental and social benefits in line with the County Council and Growth Board's aspirations and objectives around climate action, public health and connectivity to stations and key hubs. The scheme therefore remains in place as a pipeline scheme that is currently not fully funded but has some s106 funding from Oxfordshire County Council and Buckinghamshire Council. Other funding sources are being investigated but not confirmed. It will re-enter a construction programme when suitable alternative funding is sourced.</p>
<p>2. COUNCILLOR NICK CARTER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who instigated the Council's recent 'unconscious bias training? • on what basis were the trainers selected • what are their professional qualifications? • how much has it cost to train (a) officers in general and (b) members in particular? • how will the training be evaluated? 	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>who instigated the Council's recent 'unconscious bias training?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC and OCC have statutory duties under the Equality Act (2010) and both organisations therefore produce Equality Policies and take action to ensure equalities, diversity and inclusion are integrated into the running of each Council. These policies and actions are regularly reviewed to maintain currency. • As part of action plans on inclusion and inequality, both councils have previously identified the need for leadership training in unconscious bias as an important step to enhance their ability to meet the challenge of inclusion. Commissioning the training was undertaken by the OCC organisational development team in conjunction with the policy team.

Questions	Answers
	<p>on what basis were the trainers selected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure value for money for CDC and OCC, and in-line with the financial standing orders of OCC, three quotes for the training were sought, judgement is based on cost and quality. • References were sought for the selected provider to ensure value for money; the first from a major combined authority and the second from a County Council. References were positive. <p>what are their professional qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selected provider are experts in the design and delivery of facilitated training sessions which engage employees at all levels. The programme was tailored to OCC and CDC requirements and facilitators matched according to their skills and experience. • The trainer matched with OCC and CDC has over 30 years of experience in learning and development, working with clients in the public, private and charitable sectors on training and consultancy projects in the UK and the US. Trained in the use of development psychometrics like MBTI, Belbin, PPA and Workplace Mediation, the trainer is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and a Fellow of the Institute of Training and Occupational Learning. <p>how much has it cost to train (a) officers in general and (b) members in particular?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have run two sessions for officers, two for Cllrs (one OCC and one CDC) and one further general session for anyone who could not attend their session. • The total cost of delivering five sessions is £6,375 (plus VAT). <p>how will the training be evaluated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A link to evaluation forms has been sent to participants. This will be analysed according to session attended once the training sessions are completed (after the 15th Oct).

Questions	Answers
<p>3. COUNCILLOR NICK CARTER</p> <p>To what extent will the County Council's aspiration to become carbon-neutral rely on 'offsetting' measures?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>The Climate Action Framework sets a path for carbon emissions reductions across our estate and operations. Our approach follows the energy hierarchy, prioritising, in this order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reducing energy demand (e.g., active travel and remote meetings) • increasing energy efficiency (e.g., LED street lighting) • replacing fossil fuels with low-carbon or renewable energy (e.g., our electric-by-default vehicle replacement policy) • generating renewable energy (e.g., solar panel in our estate) • buying zero-carbon energy (e.g., REGO-backed green electricity contract) <p>Residual emissions are to be expected due to budgetary and technological challenges, particularly around heavy vehicles such as fire engines. We are currently working on a carbon management plan for our 2030 target, which will identify interim targets to 2030, a pipeline of quantified projects and the scale of the 'technology gap', helping us understand and quantify the need for offsetting. This work has been delayed several months by COVID as it was not possible to access buildings for surveys but is now on track for completion by the year end.</p> <p>The climate action programme includes the development of an offsetting strategy, which aims to benefit the county and our residents and seek synergies with other climate and sustainability goals (e.g. tree planting to support flood prevention and biodiversity). As well as planting trees, we are interested in exploring innovative forms of offsetting, namely through investment in retrofit that is currently not commercially investable.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>4. COUNCILLOR KEVIN BULMER</p> <p>In the 2002 introduction of a 30 MPH speed limit throughout Oxfordshire villages Crays Pond in the Goring Heath Parish was omitted. The Department for Transport Circular 01/2013, Setting Local Speed Limits with criteria to consider all users and conditions was not followed. Poor sight lines less than 4% of the two road B471/B4526 through the village have pavements forcing road sharing, pedestrians and lethal speed machines, a dangerous combination and a failure 'Of Care' by OCC. Our population is older than average with some in wheelchairs and many schoolchildren and younger forced to walk in the road as there is no other option.</p> <p>For the past two years the Parish Council, District Council and our County Councillor have pressed hard through the required process for a reduction of the speed limit from 40 MPH to 30MPH. While it has been agreed by all at Communities, Highways Maintenance that change is required there has been no progress over the past two years. This situation is dangerous.</p> <p>Will the cabinet member please investigate further and instigate all necessary changes to mitigate this danger without delay?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>The Area Operations Traffic Team is exploring Goring Heath Parish Council's request to lower the speed limit on the B471 & B4526 at Crays Pond from 40mph to 30mph. In accordance with 'Setting Local Speed Limits' Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 and OCC's Speed Limit Policy, speed surveys have been carried out on both roads to determine whether a signed-only reduction in speed limit can be implemented, or whether a new lower speed limit will only be allowed with supporting highway measures.</p> <p>We expect to receive all survey results by mid-November. As soon as these results are received the Traffic Team will arrange a meeting with the Parish Council to discuss the way forward.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>5. COUNCILLOR PETE SUDBURY</p> <p>Climate change is accelerating. It is likely that average global temperatures will exceed 1.5C above pre-industrial levels by 2030.</p> <p>The most salient impacts of this are increased incidents of extreme weather (flood, drought, cold, heat, wind) and increased incidences of "stuck" weather patterns, meaning all the above may persist for longer.</p> <p>The most immediate risk to people is from increased numbers of days with temperatures above 30C and nights above 20C, which increase death rates especially in elderly people and young children, both of which groups have difficulty regulating body temperature. The problem is worsened by the poor quality of much old and new-build UK housing.</p> <p>Increasing tree cover to 40% reduces temperatures in towns and cities by 3-5C. What plans do the Council and its partners have to ensure or facilitate this level being achieved in old build and new developments within the next 10-15 years?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Urban cooling is just one of the many benefits that trees provide in towns and cities. Urban areas are also complex environments in which to plant and grow trees, with above and below ground constraints such as services a particular issue. A review of tree cover in urban areas by Forest Research identified that only one of 283 settlements studied had canopy cover more than 40% (Farnham 45%). The median tree canopy coverage was 15.8%. Oxford's canopy cover is 21.4% according to www.urbantreecover.org. Forest Research have proposed an average tree canopy cover of 20% should be set as the minimum standard for most UK towns and cities.</p> <p>To achieve a significant increase in tree canopy cover in old build areas will be a major challenge due to the constraints noted earlier. Incorporating a higher level of tree planting in new build and re-build is a more achievable option yet even in these situations there are significant challenges in terms of competing land demands. The responsibility for specifying levels of tree cover rests with the district councils. The Council does not have any current plans to directly or indirectly require such a significant increase in tree canopy as would be required to reach 40%.</p> <p>Targets for future tree cover should always be informed by considerations of the right tree in the right place for the right purpose. The Council is co-funding, with other local authority partners, the LEP and Friends of the Earth and with the support of the Lord Lieutenant, a study to look in detail at what these three considerations mean for the county's future tree cover. This study includes urban areas as one of its categories and this work may give us a better initial insight as to what level of future tree cover might be appropriate in different urban areas.</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>With regard to OCC's own operations currently there is no central funding provision for tree planting, either to replace trees that have had to be removed or to plant new trees. New Highway schemes and Highway Improvement schemes are being designed with new tree planting where applicable. Better guidance for developers covering best practice and innovative approaches to incorporating tree planting into adoptable new streets will be released shortly as part of the revised Oxfordshire County Council Street Design Guide. The OCC Tree Service are helping to support local community groups with planting advice and are actively encouraging tree planting on the public highway, where appropriate.</p> <p>While tree planting is essential to ensure longevity of tree cover and increase canopy cover across the County, a proactive approach to existing tree management is essential in order to maintain existing/established trees to reach their maximum age and therefore provide maximum contribution to the environment, people and places where they grow. A new four-year strategic plan for tree management across the Highway networks of Oxfordshire began in March 2020 to deliver a proactive approach. The strategy has been informed by a multitude of factors to determine the priority of each parish to be surveyed based on historic tree records and then divided into approximately 80 parish surveys to be completed each year. This financial year, 79/83 parishes have been surveyed with the remaining four parishes to be completed by the end of November 2020.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Has the Council had any contact with other Councils such as the London Borough of Hackney which have ambitious targets.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I have no idea without notice I would not have any reason to ask officers. I will have to come back to you.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>6. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY</p> <p>Noting that currently I have submitted 6 FixMyStreet reports for Bretch Hill and 7 for Woodgreen Avenue, Oxfordshire County Council streetlights contractors are looking to be repaired in the standard time. All the streetlights reports are on old halogen streetlights units. Can I be assured that these will be replaced by LED streetlights units as soon as possible and that all streetlights will be replaced long term with LED units?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS DELIVERY AND OPERATIONS</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council can confirm that the reports submitted regarding streetlights in Bretch Hill and Woodgreen Avenue Banbury will involve replacements with LED lighting solution. This is part of the long-term street lighting LED replacement program and at each site (where replacements are made) the local member will be advised in advance of any proposed changes in their respective areas.</p>
<p>7. COUNCILLOR TIM BEARDER</p> <p>Having invited me to ask questions to you informally I am disappointed that you didn't dignify my questions sent this way with a response, so I ask again, formally. Could you please tell me whether there are any options already secured on the land we own in the Northfields strategic allocation of South Oxfordshire District Council's plans and what the value of the land is currently, and an estimate of its value should the SODC's plan be passed?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE</p> <p>At the last Cabinet Meeting, you said you hadn't read the answer I had provided to your previous question which had been submitted very late. Given officers had interrupted their work programme to provide an urgent response, this was very disappointing. I subsequently suggested that sometimes it is more appropriate to seek an informal response. I provided informal answer to your supplementary question six working days after it was asked. I repeat it here:</p> <p>There are no options secured on the County Council owned land within the area known as "Northfields". The value of the land in its current use is circa £400,000. If this land becomes allocated in SODC's Local Plan the value will increase substantially, but it is difficult to determine that value at present due to uncertainties around specific land use, infrastructure costs and S106 contributions towards education, highways, etc.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>8. COUNCILLOR TIM BEARDER</p> <p>In August Oxfordshire County Council published a report from PwC entitled 'Local Government Reform in Oxfordshire' please could you let me know how much this cost and what you are now doing with it?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>The report was commissioned to set out the options available to Oxfordshire with regards to local government reform and devolution in the light of the white paper (originally set for publication in the Autumn) and the new tests or criteria set out for reform within that context. The work cost £35k and was commissioned in partnership with Cherwell District Council.</p> <p>We continue to engage with discussions locally and nationally with regards to devolution opportunities, but it is important to recognise that the publication of the white paper has now been delayed until next year and therefore there are no immediate opportunities to progress this.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>You said that the money was a joint initiative between Cherwell District and Oxfordshire County Councils, could you tell me what percentage was paid for by each Council?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I will have to come back on that, as it says its jointly commissioned, I don't know the split exactly of it. All the other districts councils were asked if they wanted to join in to understand what the implications were for different forms of local government within Oxfordshire, so we are continually working all the time with the other councils as well.</p>
<p>9. COUNCILLOR TIM BEARDER</p> <p>Writing on Twitter this week Cllr Liam Walker said: "I've always been one to speak my mind forgetting that as elected officials we have a responsibility to ensure we balance personal & professional opinions." This very strongly implies that his personal opinions conflict with his role as Cabinet Member for Highways Delivery & Operations. Are you content to have someone on your cabinet that is not a</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>I think it's important that all members have views as opposed to sitting on the fence or flip flopping around with different policy statements depending on which county you are discussing.</p> <p>I know that Cllr Walker is a strong supporter of active travel as he recently bought a house not only in the same county but in the same division, he represents so he can make use of the nearby train station to reduce his car usage. He has also worked with myself and others to push for improvements to the 233 bus service where we recently used funding for a Sunday service. Cllr Walker also makes regular use of his two 2 bikes and is often seen out</p>

Questions	Answers
proponent of the Active Travel agenda and if not, when will you replace him?	riding in his division whilst also reporting potholes that could be a danger to fellow cyclists. So obviously not only does he support Active Travel, but he does it too.
<p>10. COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member for Finance explain why the County Council has not collected any of the CIL money allocated to it by the Vale of White Horse District Council's CIL Spending Strategy since its implementation in 2017.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE</p> <p>The Vale of White Horse District Council CIL Spending Strategy is announced annually, with available funds reported to OCC at the end of each calendar year. The County Council can apply for the funds at any point during the proceeding financial year subject to negotiation of a funding agreement.</p> <p>In its first year the Vale of White Horse District Council allocated £131,071.45 to OCC for the period 01.11.2017 (start of CIL) to 31.12.2018. In its second year 01.01.2019 to 31.12.2019 the Vale of White Horse District Council allocated £630,250.49 to OCC, to be available for spend in 2020/21, subject to agreement.</p> <p>These funds are held by the Vale of White Horse District Council, but ring fenced for OCC until they are applied for. OCC has applied for the first lot of funding from 2017 until the end of 2018 and the full amount of £131,071.00 has been approved by the District Council. This is the first round of CIL funds to be transferred and has taken some time to work through the process, including the drafting of the Funding Agreement for use in subsequent years. The final part of this current process, to sign the agreement and release the funds, is currently with the District Council. It is hoped that once the funding agreement is approved, all subsequent versions will be processed a lot quicker on both sides.</p> <p>The Vale of White Horse District Council will report the final amount of 2020 funding available for OCC in January 2021 (currently standing at £534,628.64 as of 30.09.2020). These funds will be put into the Vale's 21/22 budget and can be paid to OCC once applied for in 2021/22.</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>The District Council is currently reviewing its CIL spending strategy and although no suggested changes are currently proposed to the OCC proportion the District may wish to remove the restriction on being used for Transport and Education – internal discussions are currently being held between officers.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>If we have full co-operation from the district council can you give me a likely timescale as to when the County Council will sign this legal agreement?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I will need to check into timescales so I will have to come back to you on that.</p>
<p>11. COUNCILLOR RICHARD WEBBER</p> <p>Is the Leader aware that as a result of recent events, including the resignation of the Cycling Champion together with some ill-advised tweets from a member of the Cabinet, that the perception is growing that this Council is not as committed to promoting Cycling in the County as it professes to be in many of its public documents? How does he propose to address this problem?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>The resignation of Cllr Bartington was disappointing to me as she is a strong advocate for cycling, and I respect the work she has done to promote cycling across the county. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank her for all her hard work across the county to promote cycling. I'm sure that she'll continue to engage with cycling groups to promote cycling. The position took a large amount of her time, which was in addition to all her professional work relating to Health agenda.</p> <p>I can reaffirm our continued support for active travel (cycling and walking). The Council is committed to promoting active travel in line with Council policies on public health, climate emergency and encouraging sustainable growth. We have produced and approved Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for Oxford and Bicester which members today can see in the cabinet reports and are working on developing LCWIPs for Didcot and Abingdon. We are also currently developing the Active Travel Hub within the Council to promote active travel in policy and programmes.</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>We are waiting for the outcome of our bid to the DfT for tranche 2 Emergency Active Travel Funding which will fund cycling measures in Oxford, Bicester and Witney.</p> <p>The Council also has an ambitious programme of works to promote active travel throughout the County. In Oxford we are preparing Connecting Oxford and the ZEZ, as well as commitments of £44.5m for the following schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Botley Road (Growth Deal/National Productivity Investment Fund/Developer Funding) <input type="checkbox"/> Banbury Road (Growth Deal – subject to further Growth Board decision) <input type="checkbox"/> Woodstock Road (Growth Deal) <input type="checkbox"/> £10.6m for other cycling schemes in the city (Growth Deal) <p>For Cherwell and West, we are developing a cycle network for Witney. Other schemes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A40 cycle improvements to the route between Witney and Oxford <input type="checkbox"/> B4044 strategic cycle improvement between Eynsham and Botley <input type="checkbox"/> Carterton to Witney cycle route <input type="checkbox"/> Improvements to the A44 and A4165 route <p>For South and Vale, we are developing the Science Vale Cycle Network to link Milton Park, Harwell Campus and Culham Science Centre. Work is currently on-going preparing the following schemes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Wantage to Harwell Campus route 1 – the “Icknield Greenway” <input type="checkbox"/> Abingdon to Milton Park route 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Didcot to Harwell Campus route 5 along Wantage Road <input type="checkbox"/> Abingdon to Culham Science Centre route 7A along Abbey Meadows and Barton Fields <input type="checkbox"/> Didcot to Culham Science Centre route 8

Questions	Answers
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Does the Leader agree that the current Cabinet Member with the responsibility for cycling support suggestion that, opportune cyclist should return to Holland was both offensive and unacceptable?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I think you were misreading what was actually said.</p>
<p>12. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Oxfordshire was hoping to become a smoke-free county, which is a laudable aim. The number of adults who smoke has been falling everywhere in the UK – except in Oxford, where it apparently almost doubled between 2018 and 2019. Why is this and what are we going to do about it?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LAWRIE STRATFORD, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE & PUBLIC HEALTH</p> <p>Smoking prevalence data for local authorities is reported by Public Health England using annual population survey results. These ask a sample of the population about their smoking habits among other things. Between 2018 and 2019, the survey showed that smoking prevalence in Oxfordshire from 10.1% to 12%, and for the Oxford City, the increase was from 8.3% to 13.5%.</p> <p>As data are based on just a sample of the population, figures have wide confidence intervals, suggesting that in Oxfordshire, the smoking prevalence is likely to be somewhere between 9.6% and 14.4%, and for Oxford City the true prevalence will likely be between 6.8% and 20.1%. Importantly, for both Oxford City and for Oxfordshire as a whole, there is an ongoing downward trend in smoking prevalence since 2011.</p> <p>The Council is working hard to reduce smoking rates in Oxford City and across the county. In March 2020 all Oxfordshire Councils signed up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control, and the two NHS trusts signed the NHS Smokefree Pledge. The County launched a new tobacco control strategy on 31st May 2020. This outlines how all partners will work together to reduce smoking rates across four pillars: Prevention, Local regulation and Enforcement, supporting smokers to quit and Creating smoke free environments.</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>Examples of action since March 2020 to reduce smoking prevalence in Oxford City include promoting the smoking cessation service to local employees such as BMW and Unipart, a Smokefree Sidelines initiative where over 30 local youth football clubs such as Rosehill and Summertown have signed up, Trading Standards work with local businesses to prevent under age sales of e-cigarettes to, and sending over 5000 text messages inviting smokers in Oxford to quit and to raise awareness of the free local stop smoking service.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Tobacco Control Alliance, made up of a variety of organisations and professionals, meets three times a year to deliver a cross-Oxfordshire action plan aimed at making Oxfordshire #SmokeFree. The Alliance is submitting a report to the Health Improvement Board on the 19th November where further detail will be provided on action taken to reduce tobacco use across the County.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>My question was about vaping – what is/is there a current policy on vaping?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Thank you, Councillor Pressel for the question. I will need to give you a written answer.</p>
<p>13. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Heavy rush-hour congestion and dreadful air pollution are already back to their levels before lockdown – or worse. However, as has often been pointed out, they are noticeably less awful when the schools are on holiday. The County Council used to work with schools to encourage them to make sure they have up-to-date school travel plans. These often prompt the pupils to persuade their parents to use “active travel” where possible. As well as the sadly small</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>As part of the government’s COVID response, Oxon CC was awarded £150,000 in August 2020 to support school travel demand management work. County wide initiatives that commenced ahead of schools reopening in September include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of information on travel choice/options for parents that were contained in a wider school ‘information pack’; • Collection of data and intelligence to give us the best picture of any gaps in transport or travel challenges. This included asking schools to report problems and all school bus and taxi drivers to complete a daily return about status about travel and situation at the school gates;

Questions	Answers
<p>number of “school streets” we are setting up, can we please find the resources to work with every willing school on a new travel plan? It would have a noticeable effect on congestion and pollution in many parts of the county.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development and delivery of publicity and marketing campaign using social media and technology/apps to promote more sustainable travel. This includes the promotion of Street Tag Oxfordshire: https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/street-tag-app-launched-to-encourage-more-active-children-and-communities/ and Living Streets’ WOW – the year round walk to school programme for primary school age children - and Little Feet – early years focused resources including journey maps, stickers and educational games to reward families for active journeys; • Procurement of access for all Oxon Schools to ‘Mode Shift Stars’ and ‘Pindar Creative’ platforms to enable travel plans to be updated and bespoke walking and cycling maps to be created. <p>As part of a second more targeted phase, we are procuring specialist consultant support for 30-40 schools that have demonstrable issues with access and/or congestion to implement a variety of targeted initiatives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support with the development and updating of School Travel Plans • Development of School Street and Park and Stride initiatives – up to 6 schools • Scoping the feasibility of enhanced school gate parking management/restrictions. <p>Subject to schools remaining open, we expect to have consultants in place and engaging with schools and their communities from early November.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>It is good to hear that we will be resuming our work on supporting school travel plans, but why with only 30-40 schools and why on earth are we employing consultants when we have so many brilliant members of staff in our public health team who used to do this work superbly well?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I will have to get you a full answer, but one of the reasons I know is that we have so far responded to the schools that have shown an interest in schools programmes. It is not possible in every street and it is not possible, of course, to work on a school's programme that requires the co-operation of the Head and the staff without that co-operation. The use of consultants (I am guessing/assuming) comes as a result of trying to find the experience elsewhere. There really is a commitment at the County of trying to do as much as we can about school travel and the assistance of consultants, with their experience elsewhere will well contribute to that. But I will come back to you with a full answer.</p>
<p>14. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>For many years we have been promised better tarmac on our major roads, but we still see the buses in the City causing serious damage quite soon after new tarmac has been put down. When will this problem finally be solved?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS DELIVERY AND OPERATIONS</p> <p>We note your concerns regarding the impact of buses and HGV's across the whole of Oxfordshire's road network. In order to mitigate some of these effects on the network, we have invested in new and more durable materials, some of which have been specifically developed for bus stops and high-stress areas. We have specified these materials at Woodstock Road near the St Edwards School as well as outside the Radcliffe Observatory Site and several bus stops within Kidlington, to name a few examples. I am aware also that Oxford Direct Services have also specified similar materials at Gloucester Green.</p> <p>Unfortunately, as with many different treatments, these materials are not appropriate for every situation. Officers will often have to balance the benefits provided against any additional costs, as well as the traffic management implications of having to keep the road closed for longer as these materials take longer to "set" before they are ready for traffic to run on them.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>How much does it cost to patch up these areas repeatedly (sometimes almost once a month) with inferior materials compared with the cost of using durable materials in the first place?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>It is still far cheaper. It is an issue, particularly in the City, as public buses are getting more towards electric, they are getting heavier which does have an impact on the road surface. Oxfordshire County Council is one of the first councils to try orgravine. In West Oxfordshire, we are currently running a trial on that so perhaps in future, depending on budget constraints that is, something we could use at bus stops and key areas. But it remains cheaper to patch than resurface.</p>
<p>15. COUNCILLOR JEANNETTE MATELOT</p> <p>We are due to facilitate a meeting with Thame Town Council to discuss how the new Civil Parking Enforcement arrangements might work. My aim will be to explore whether the County might delegate the implementation and management of the scheme exclusively to the Town Council, and to reassure the relevant OCC officers about the Town Council's appetite and ability. I am certain the Town Council will be keen to take on this responsibility and will do a very good job of it.</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member for the Environment confirm that, wherever possible, the new CPE scheme will be managed at the most local level possible, and tailored to suit a community's existing needs? If so, what would be the financial structure, and how can OCC apply the new arrangements with equal imagination to</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>It is currently not our plan to devolve the development and implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement to the Town and Parish Councils at this time. During the feasibility phase of the project, we saw that the best result came from a large-scale project run centrally for the Districts that did not have CPE already. The scheme could not be made to pay at a more local level. What we are keen to do is to set ourselves up to maximise the use of local knowledge to inform our deployment models to ensure we can run an efficient and effective service going forward.</p> <p>Officers from the Network Management Service are keen to start the conversation with Thame Town Council at an early opportunity to discuss the options available (including those for large villages like Chinnor).</p>

Questions	Answers
one of our largest villages, Chinnor, which is as big as many towns?	
<p>16. COUNCILLOR EMMA TURNBULL</p> <p>How many children in Oxfordshire are currently eligible for free school meals, and therefore won't be getting a school lunch over the half-term, Christmas, and other school holidays? Is this something that the Cabinet Member would be willing to address for local children?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURAL SERVICES</p> <p>Approximately 10,120 were known to be eligible for FSM (10.5%) – or 9770 of statutory school age (source Jan 2020 census)</p> <p>“We keep all support for food provision to families under review, however there is already a comprehensive network of support available working with our partners, particularly the voluntary sector.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>It is disappointing that the Cabinet was unprepared to fund the pre-school meal vouchers over half-term when we know that Oxford City Council were able to fund vouchers for children in the City up to £15 per child. Given how fundamental reducing childhood hunger is, would you be willing to find the money for free school meals vouchers over the Christmas break.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I think one of the key things you have go to remember is that it is not just Oxford City that were doing this, it was all councils, that is Cherwell District Council, West Oxfordshire, South & Vale were all providing that support working with us as the County Council. You will remember the Government gave £506,000 back in July which was to assist in this work. We passed that straight down to the district councils so that they could then spread the funding out. I know that there was a query on the end date, however, we are working with the voluntary sectors and all organisations to all work together to ensure that in future children won't be in a situation where they don't receive food.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>17. COUNCILLOR PAUL BUCKLEY</p> <p>In view of the sensible recent decision to abandon rushed implementation of two temporary bus gates in the centre of Oxford, in spite of vocal opposition from the City Council, is Cabinet proposing to delete the two further bus gates from its Tranche 2 projects, if and when that money ever appears?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council Tranche 2 Emergency Active Travel Funding (EATF T2) bid is with the Government. Approval is awaited. The T2 bid was designed to meet the criteria set out in the Government EATF bidding document and approved by the Cabinet member for the Environment before submission. If the bid is successful, or partly successful, the Council will review the elements of the bid in light of the total funding available, the period for implementing the schemes and any other additional comments or caveats received from the Government which might affect the overall package. There will be a period of engagement and consultation before finalising the elements that are to be taken forward. It is too early therefore to determine the schemes that will be excluded or included as to do so would be to pre-empt the size of the funding package and the outcomes of the up-coming period of engagement and review.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Tranche 2 still hasn't appeared, so it is now obvious that there won't be time to introduce bus gates with a degree of consultation and sensitivity required to be fair to those residents badly affected by the bus gate. Does Councillor Constance agree with me that the kind thing to do now would be to just acknowledge this, put the fear to rest in the minds of the families worried about it this and just abort the proposal for bus gates in the Tranche 2 bid.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Not at all. The Tranche 2 bid is for a wide range, it is seven low traffic neighbourhoods, some of which include bus gates which are really much more like traffic filters, they are not quite blocks as bus gates, the temporary bus gates were, and we will await the decision of the Department of Transport with great interest. We do know that the department is very concerned, we have had connections and even correspondence declaring the importance of proper consultation which was part of our decision to not to proceed with the temporary bus gates and we expect to have a decision probably with the extension of the time in which to spend it. So that full consultation can take place.</p>

Questions	Answers									
<p>18. COUNCILLOR PAUL BUCKLEY</p> <p>Connecting Oxford' includes proposals for several bus gates, with great potential to reduce traffic congestion in Oxford city centre. However, if these are badly planned, they could have painful consequences for the lives of many residents, and for businesses and other organisations, and could just shift traffic congestion elsewhere. What specific steps will be taken to guarantee these problems are avoided?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Cabinet endorsed further work on Connecting Oxford (in January this year) with funding already secured to carry out the detailed technical work and business case development that is required before proposals can be implemented. Extensive public and stakeholder engagement and consultation on the Connecting Oxford proposals is planned over the next three years with implementation programmed to start in 2023.</p> <p>We will be following the Department for Transport's business case process, as this is a requirement to secure government funding and will provide the necessary robustness against potential challenge.</p> <p>This process is undertaken in three stages, with each business case building on the previous. The following outlines the purpose of each business case stage and when we expect to submit each business case to the DfT:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="900 877 2045 1422"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="900 877 1164 1005">Stage</th> <th data-bbox="1164 877 1747 1005">Purpose</th> <th data-bbox="1747 877 2045 1005">Expected submission to the Dft</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="900 1005 1164 1244">Strategic Outline Business Case</td> <td data-bbox="1164 1005 1747 1244"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sets out the need for intervention ◆ Confirms how this will further national aims and objectives; and ◆ Provides suggested or preferred ways forward and presents evidence for the decision </td> <td data-bbox="1747 1005 2045 1244">Winter 2020/21</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="900 1244 1164 1422">Outline Business Case</td> <td data-bbox="1164 1244 1747 1422"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sets out a detailed assessment of the options to find the preferred solution and includes full economic and financial appraisals </td> <td data-bbox="1747 1244 2045 1422">Spring 2022</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Stage	Purpose	Expected submission to the Dft	Strategic Outline Business Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sets out the need for intervention ◆ Confirms how this will further national aims and objectives; and ◆ Provides suggested or preferred ways forward and presents evidence for the decision 	Winter 2020/21	Outline Business Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sets out a detailed assessment of the options to find the preferred solution and includes full economic and financial appraisals 	Spring 2022
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Questions	Answers
	<p data-bbox="913 220 1108 247">Full Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1205 220 1668 284">◆ Sets out plans for monitoring and evaluating benefits; and <li data-bbox="1205 288 1742 384">◆ Details the proposed contract management, resourcing, processes and benefit realisation plans <p data-bbox="1780 220 1953 247">Winter 2023*</p> <p data-bbox="913 427 2027 483"><i>◆ Proposals that don't require government funding including those to be funded by future WPL income can start to be implemented before this</i></p> <p data-bbox="913 520 2027 775">It is fully appreciated that effective communications and engagement will be critical to the successful delivery of Connecting Oxford and the councils have recently developed a Communications and Engagement Plan for Connecting Oxford. This will be particularly important given the views we have received on the temporary bus gates proposal, which generated an unprecedented response but also helpfully highlighted areas that will need careful consideration as Connecting Oxford is developed.</p> <p data-bbox="913 815 2027 1106">The Plan recognises, for example, the need to present a strong business case with quantifiable benefits and clear pledges on when these and supporting measures will be delivered. This is central to the business case, particularly at Outline Business Case stage and which requires us to rigorously assess a wide range of potential transport, economic, social and environmental impacts as detailed here. Evidence collected at this stage would also be used for consultation helping the public and stakeholders to consider and respond to proposals in a more informed way.</p> <p data-bbox="913 1145 1982 1329">As the councils agreed back in <u>January</u>, we will also engage with the public and stakeholders before carrying out formal consultation so proposals are developed in a collaboratively way. This engagement was expected to start earlier in 2020 but has been delayed because of COVID-19. It is hoped however that we can begin to engage with groups this winter 2020/21.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Thank you Councillor Constance for your response about Connecting Oxford, but I did ask specific steps like close examination of the impact on the lives of residence that the bus gates within Connecting Oxford will involve and very detailed Citywide traffic modelling to check all the impacts on traffic – right across the City, especially at the ring road, that would be needed. So would Councillor Constance guarantee that steps such as this will be undertaken before the bus gate proposals in Connecting Oxford are finalised.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Connecting Oxford is the model of proper research, proper planning, proper consultation. We are about to start our consultation on that programme. Councillor Buckley simple identifies work of course which is already been done. The traffic experts, the transport experts at the County are fully aware of the points that he raises, and we will be involved in extremely detailed consideration not only to discuss and to consult with residents but to build the business case. This is going to be a very expensive operation, thank you for drawing attention to the work that I know is already being done.</p>
<p>19. COUNCILLOR PETE SUDBURY</p> <p>Alongside large numbers of new homes, numbers of new schools or extensions to existing ones are also being built in South Oxfordshire on behalf of the County Council.</p> <p>As part of the Council's action on the Climate Crisis, what is the Council doing to ensure those buildings are designed to be zero carbon in operation and built using the lowest-possible carbon construction methods?"</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURAL SERVICES</p> <p>A number of initiatives are being developed as part of the Council's action on the Climate Crisis to ensure new buildings are designed to be zero carbon in operation and built using the lowest-possible carbon construction methods. This includes developing policy, which if adopted, will enable the council to seek enhanced commitments from housing developers which will enable future new schools to be constructed to carbon zero.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>It is an outstanding answer. Given that schools are currently being planned and built how quickly will you expect the new policy to come into place?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I think the policy will always be as up to date as possible and we would always be looking for developers to be fulfilling that, so I would hope that we would do that as soon as possible.</p>
<p>20. COUNCILLOR PETE SUDBURY</p> <p>The Local Plan in South Oxfordshire, (developed, submitted and forced through to inspection by the Conservatives), requires the building of large numbers of houses in rural South Oxfordshire which, as things currently stand, will increase car dependency and result in very large numbers of additional journeys. The Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF), supporting this building, has the effect of creating a Trunk Road from the M40 at Watlington through to Didcot, which will draw many more vehicles onto South Oxfordshire's already congested roads. It is clear that both the South Oxfordshire Local Plan and the HIF are based on thinking that has become outdated during the process of their development. Both need updating to take account of the Climate Emergency and the Challenge laid out in the DoT publication "Decarbonising transport: Setting the Challenge" (May 2020).</p> <p>How does the Council plan to update its transport strategy, specifically in South Oxfordshire, so that the epidemic of</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>The new Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), which looks to 2050 is currently being developed, and is expected to include updated area strategies. The first stage of the strategy development was engagement on a range of topic papers in spring of this year, with feedback received helping us develop the full LTCP. The next stage will be consultation on a draft vision, which will be considered by the County Council Cabinet in January 2021 for consultation in February 2022. Feedback from this consultation will help us develop the full LTCP for full public consultation later in 2021. The LTCP will need to ensure that it takes account of wider strategy delivery, including the County Council Climate Action Framework as agreed by the County Council Cabinet on 13th October, and development of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. It will therefore look to enable a shift to use of active and more sustainable modes of transport and away from unnecessary use of the private car, including for travel from new development in South Oxfordshire as it comes forward.</p> <p>The transport strategy devised by the County Council (as the Local Highway Authority) needs to respond to and facilitate the spatial strategy as set out in the emerging Local Plan, which is the ultimate responsibility of the Local Planning Authority, in this case South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC). The District's spatial strategy in its emerging Local Plan is primarily based on the principle of locating housing growth in places where the need to travel is reduced, such as those on the periphery of Oxford or close to local</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>housebuilding and the creation of new roads become the catalyst for a "Modal Shift" from private cars to active transport (walking, cycling, public transport), to the extent that the roads become less congested for the drivers who really need them?</p>	<p>employment centres in the Science Vale area. Any questions around the need to update the Local Plan should be directed towards the District Council.</p> <p>The emerging Local Plan currently contains within it (subject to the Main Modifications consultation process currently underway) policy provision that requires each strategic residential allocation to provide (either by financial contribution or direct delivery) both on-site and off-site walking and cycling improvements that will connect with key destinations, thus facilitating the encouragement of active modes of travel. Additionally, each site is required to make financial contribute towards the improvement of existing bus services or in many cases facilitate entirely new bus services that will create a significantly improved public transport network across South Oxfordshire, connecting with many important employment locations in the area. These measures will all contribute towards enabling a shift away from car dependency.</p> <p>The Housing Infrastructure Fund was initially identified as essential infrastructure in the Vale of White Horse Local Plan (2031) prior to the inception of the SODC Local Plan 2034 (now proposed to have a planning horizon of 2035). The infrastructure therefore supports these Local Plans as well as growth in other Oxfordshire districts. The HIF1 schemes support historic, recent, and planned growth predominantly in the Didcot area, including the proposed Local Plan housing allocations at Culham and Berinsfield. The four schemes that comprise the HIF1 package of works will significantly reduce congestion in the local and historic villages which will have benefits for a large resident population. Furthermore, HIF1 includes high quality walking and cycling provision and will connect into the existing provision in the Didcot area for the benefit of existing and new residents. This existing provision will also be the subject of the forthcoming Didcot Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), which will set out in detail how walking and cycling facilities can be further improved in the area.</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>The HIF1 schemes will also help to facilitate the aforementioned public transport network improvements associated with the proposed development in the SODC Local Plan. Indeed, without the provision of a new river crossing, the existing and proposed public transport services would have to continue to use the existing river crossings at Culham and Clifton Hampden. The new river crossing will help to ensure better journey time reliability and therefore the attractiveness of these services.</p> <p>Further to this, the HIF1 monies and policy provision in the emerging SODC LP (namely, <i>Policy INF1: Infrastructure Provision</i>) allow the forward funding provided by HIF1 to be recovered from the proposed development and recycled so that it is put towards other relevant infrastructure in the area, enabling opportunities for further walking, cycling, and public transport improvements to be delivered.</p> <p>The HIF1 package of measures are largely single carriageway, local improvements to accommodate local demand. It is therefore not designed to accommodate 'strategic' traffic or proposed to reroute traffic from the trunk road network.</p> <p>I hope that the above information addresses your concerns and articulates how improvements to walking, cycling, and public transport are integral to both the LTCP and HIF1 programmes.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Thank you for that detailed answer. Could you confirm the Council's duty command plans would be consistent with the aspirations set out in the Government paper on decarbonising transport.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I am certain that it will.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>21. COUNCILLOR JANE HANNA</p> <p>What future steps are planned should the government make funds available to continue the business case for restoring the Grove Station and railway service and should the restoring railways bid not be successful can she provide any guarantee that the County will fund this necessary next step so that residents who are experiencing a thousand new houses and a 50% increase in housing in the immediate area as well as the larger hinterland have hope this will be a reality in the foreseeable future.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>A bid to the Department for Transport's Restoring your Railways Fund was submitted in July and we await a decision from DfT, which is likely to be after the 2021/22 Spending Review on 25 November. If successful, the Department for Transport will fund 75% of costs, up to £50,000, to prepare a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) following the guidelines for the 'Determine' stage of the Department's Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline (RNEP). This process has five stages - Determine, Develop, Design, Deliver and Deploy.</p> <p>The SOBC will follow the five-case model - Strategic, Economic, Financial, Commercial and Management, with the scope of each case at a level appropriate to the SOBC. The focus of activity will be to establish the Strategic Case to determine if the investment is needed by setting out the justification for a new station and train service, its fit with local and national development, environmental and rail industry policies and priorities. Importantly it will also consider potential train service options and the infrastructure interventions identified by the Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study as being required to provide the wider system capacity for those services. This will reflect the engineering feasibility and costs now being prepared by Network Rail for the Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study.</p> <p>The Economic Case will consider station demand and revenue, abstraction from existing stations, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, growth forecasts (population, employment), the value of passenger benefits and disbenefits, reliability and infrastructure capital costs. The Financial Case will provide indicative costs for construction and operating the station and running the train service, setting out the potential funding options and affordability and the impact on the income generated by the franchise for Government. The Commercial Case will look at the commercial viability of the scheme and the different procurement options available for its design, delivery and ownership, whilst the Management Case will deal with project planning, governance, risk</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>management, communications and stakeholder management. These four cases will be refined as the scheme progresses through RNEP.</p> <p>The 'Determine' stage is estimated to cost c.£85,000; our bid was for the maximum amount of £50,000, and the Council has committed to find the remaining funding from within existing budgets. Should the bid be unsuccessful, the Council will need to look for alternative sources of funding to progress the scheme, which could be a mix of funding from the County Council and Vale of White Horse District Council, private sector investment by potential developers, and Government or Local Enterprise Partnership grant.</p> <p>Once DfT have reviewed and endorsed the SOBC they will make the 'Decision to Develop' and provide further funding to allow the scheme to move to the next 'Develop' stage.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Thank you, Councillor Constance for a detailed response. As the ongoing lack of infrastructure, rapid growth of housing in this area and expectations raised over decades are a source of local frustration. Can she give reassurance that future communications relating to this will be clear to residents about deliverables and timescales?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>When there is a plan to communicate to residents about deliverables and timescales it will certainly be communicated, at the moment there is none. Right now there is a bid which was initiated by the Conservative MP for Wantage David Johnson to consider Grove in the Governments Restoring your Railways Fund, and that bid - we are expecting news on that in a matter of days, it was due this week, and the commitment to follow the strategic models will be certain in all cases. But we do not communicate with residents until we have a plan to put to them. There is no point in exciting a vast amount angst activity and concern about plans that have not yet been shaped.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>22. COUNCILLOR JANE HANNA</p> <p>Is there an update for members of the Council on the planned review of the Constitution and a date when she will ensure the points made at the County Council meeting of 14th July in respect of the Covid Response and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 19 (a) will be addressed and can she say how members of the Council will be involved in the planned review of the Constitution?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>As part of the annual review of the Constitution, all members will be consulted very shortly about their views on the sufficiency, and efficiency, of the Constitution. A review would normally be carried out during the Autumn and considered by Council in December or early in the New Year. As I mentioned in the meeting in July, it is important that a review of the Constitution should involve as broad a range of member views as possible. This also means listening to members about what role they feel the Constitution has, or could have, in helping them support their communities particularly in the light of the Covid pandemic. It also means hearing from chairs and members of committees for their views on how the Constitution assists the flow of business within their terms of reference of those meetings.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Thank you, Councillor Heathcoat, it is very reassuring so hear you say that this is going to happen very soon. Could you give the Council a date today for the implementation of Clause 8 of the Chief Executive protocol agreed in December 2018 which requires an independent facilitator to meet with opposition group leaders and meet with the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council to discuss a draft appraisal of the Chief Executive officer of the Oxfordshire County Council including any issues and themes every 6 months and share any outcomes?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I will get a written answer to you.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>23. COUNCILLOR JENNY HANNABY</p> <p>Does the Cabinet member report on what improvements can be expected in the near future on Fix My Street to meet the needs of the many frustrated residents who take time to repeatedly report defects but who in many areas experience dissatisfaction with communications as well as their experience of the defect not being fixed at all or the quality or the timeliness of the fix.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS DELIVERY AND OPERATIONS</p> <p>We are continually working with the provider of FixMyStreet to make improvements to the system itself and our own processes - as part of our wider customer services review.</p> <p>The council and users also benefit from national upgrades FMS make and we have been looking at our processes. This includes more individual equipment and assets that have been added onto the system, which helps the reporter specifically identify the location of the issue and helps reduce any misunderstandings or time trying to confirm what is being reported. This currently covers: Streetlights, Grit Bins, Drains, Trees and Traffic Signals.</p> <p>To help avoid frustrations of knowing whether a road is private or not, information on public and private roads are now held by the FMS system. This allows us to send users an instant message (with a more customer friendly and informative tone) when reporting potholes on a private road, replacing the previous automated message that could be perceived as blunt.</p> <p>To avoid duplication and provide greater visibility on what has been reported/being fixed; potholes, identified by our own inspectors, are due to appear on FixMyStreet. Superusers will also be able to use FixMyStreet to directly raise defects rather than the current officer system. To help improve responses provided to enquiries, we have been reviewing the templates officers' use with the aim of providing a more clear, helpful response as well as reducing frustration and misunderstandings. We hope this gives you a flavour of the positive upgrades planned for FixMyStreet however, should you require further information, our officer (Tom Scholes) is happy to give a virtual tour of the proposed changes at your convenience.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Thank you for your answer. Would the service FixMyStreet along with the changes, benefit from more professional inspectors? because we did cut out inspectors some years ago, and they could feed into the system and not rely on voluntary input by frustrated residents and then they could have more contact with their County Councillors who are representing their ward to ensure that these FixMyStreet that have been put in by residents are completed.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>In short, yes it would be great to have more officers to be able to do that, but the reality is that we don't. As you know we have launched the superuser programme, we are constantly rolling out improvements to FixMyStreet and Tom Scholes, the Oxford accountant that looks after this is an expert in the field and as you know from my time on Performance Scrutiny, it is a system I have been frustrated with for some years but we are now slowly making good progress and I encourage everybody to continue using FixMyStreet.</p>
<p>24. COUNCILLOR JENNY HANNABY</p> <p>Can the Cabinet member for Adult Social Services report on whether he shares public concern about government instructions to County Councils to identify accommodation for COVID-positive older people as part of their social care winter plans to keep people out of hospital; what local lessons have been learnt so far from older people with COVID 19 discharged to care settings and whether he can give the necessary reassurances that existing residents in Care Homes will be shielded; that no care home provider will experience pressure in taking COVID 19 patients and that open book policies will be carried out with all providers to ensure the total cost of care is covered.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LAWRIE STRATFORD, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE & PUBLIC HEALTH</p> <p>Thank you Councillor Hannaby for your question.</p> <p>The Adult Social Care Winter Plan published by DoHSC set out the requirement for all local areas to create 'designated settings' to enable discharge from hospital to a care setting for people who have tested positive for Covid-19. These settings will be for people who are no longer clinically unstable but cannot return to their permanent home, whether that is their family home or a care home. This means that no COVID19+ discharges will be made from hospital to care homes, other than those settings specifically designated to receive these.</p> <p>Nationally, strict requirements have been set for designated settings including that they must pass an Infection and Prevention Control Inspection conducted by the Care Quality Commission before any admissions can take place. In addition to the CQC Infection and Prevention Control Inspection which must take place before settings can accept admissions, the Council will also be supporting designated settings with increased advice, information and training</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>on an ongoing basis. This will include close monitoring and ongoing conversations with service providers to ensure that infection control best practice is robustly applied. Designated settings will be identified in partnership and only designated where the care home is fully supportive, and able to deliver the requirements on a cost model that is agreed and covers any associated additional costs.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I was wanting to know how many local nursing homes are participating and how much more will they be paid above the normal rates and how will this be funded?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Thank you for the question and I do like your last point as how it will be funded, like all these schemes they do have to be funded. In terms of detail I am happy to provide a written reply which will go to all members.</p>
<p>25. COUNCILLOR JENNY HANNABY</p> <p>Can the Cabinet member for Adult Services report on any actions taken or planned to ensure the eight day centres across Oxfordshire, including our excellent provision in our ward, have the funding they need to continue giving the excellent care to residents that need these services to help give support and break isolation.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LAWRIE STRATFORD, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE & PUBLIC HEALTH</p> <p>Thank you Councillor Hannaby for your second question.</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Councils Community Support Services have continued to receive funding to support adults who attend the services, in the same manner as other day time providers in the county. They have had to significantly change their operating model as a result of Covid restrictions and this has provided the teams with an opportunity to look at other ways they can provide support and showcase some of the creative ways staff have met people's needs during this time. There are innovative plans to develop and strengthen the community reach for the teams as we look at how we support people in the future in different ways.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p data-bbox="203 220 672 248">SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p data-bbox="203 296 869 587">I would like to know if the new innovation plans that are being developed could be shared with Councillors when ready to enable them to monitor their residents in their area who don't, like me, have a day service to make sure they are receiving the same safe support? I did visit my own care home and I have to say what a wonderful job they are doing there.</p>	<p data-bbox="913 220 1355 248">SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p data-bbox="913 296 2018 400">Thank you Councillor Hannaby, and I am sure you are aware that the services provided by our care homes is appreciated. Obviously as soon as we have something that we can share, I will make sure that everybody does know.</p>

Divisions- N/A

COUNTY COUNCIL – 8 DECEMBER 2020

REPORT OF THE CABINET

Cabinet Member: Deputy Leader of the Council

1. Workforce Report and Staffing Data - Quarter 1 - April - June 2020

(Cabinet, 17 November 2020)

Cabinet noted a report that provided an update on key HR activities during Quarter 2 (1st July – 30th September 2020) along with a refreshed workforce profile and absence data including COVID related absence data.

Cabinet Member: Finance

2. Treasury Management Mid-Term Review (2020/21)

(Cabinet, 17 November 2020)

Cabinet considered a report that set out the Treasury Management activity undertaken in the first half of the financial year 2020/21 in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice. The report included Debt and Investment activity, Prudential Indicator monitoring and forecast interest receivable and payable for the financial year.

Cabinet noted the report, and **RECOMMENDED** Council to note the Council's Mid-Term Treasury Management Review 2020/21.

N.B. This report appears elsewhere on the agenda.

Cabinet Member: All Cabinet Members

3. Business Management & Monitoring Report

(Cabinet, 17 November 2020)

Cabinet noted a report that set out Oxfordshire County Council's (OCC's) progress towards Corporate Plan priorities for 2020/21 for the period of September 2020.

The reports contained three annexes:

- Annex A gave our current performance against targets and summarises progress towards overall outcomes set out in our Corporate Plan.
- Annex B set out the Leadership Risk Register which has been developed as part of the Council's work to strengthen risk and opportunities management.
- Annex C gave a financial update.

IAN HUDSPETH

Leader of the Council

November 2020

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Divisions: N/A

COUNCIL – 8 DECEMBER 2020

TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-TERM REVIEW 2020/21

Report by the Director of Finance

RECOMMENDATION

Council is RECOMMENDED to note the Council's Mid-Term Treasury Management Review 2020/21.

Executive Summary

1. This report covers the treasury management activity for the first 6 months of 2020/21 in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice.
2. During the first 6 months of the year £6m of external debt was repaid bringing the total debt down to £335.38m by 30 September 2020.
3. The average daily balance of temporary surplus cash invested in-house in the six months to 30 September was £383.95m. The Council achieved an average in-house return for that period of 0.93%, above the budgeted rate of 0.85% set in the strategy. This has produced gross interest receivable of £1.80m for the six months to 30 September compared to budget of £1.22m, due to an increase in the long term lending limit, higher than forecast cash balances and an increase of the weighted average maturity of investments. This is £0.58m or 48% more than budgeted.
4. During the first 6 months of 2020/21 the Council maintained its holding in external funds. Weighted by original purchase price, pooled fund investments produced an annualised income return of 3.20% for the period compared to the target return of 3.75% as set out in the Financial Strategy. Forecast returns for the year are £3.06m compared to the original budget of £3.81m. The shortfall of £0.75m is included in the Council's £50.9m forecast financial impact of Covid-19 in 2020/21 and as part of the Revised Budget agreed by Council in September 2020, a virement for this sum has been approved to reduce the budget to £3.06m. The value of the funds increased from £89.97m at 31 March to £94.07m as at 30 September, recovering a proportion of the losses sustained as a result of the pandemic from the original purchase cost of £101.0m. These investments are held with a long-term view and performance is assessed accordingly.

Introduction

5. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2017 recommends that members are informed of Treasury Management activities at least twice a year. This report ensures this authority is embracing Best Practice in accordance with CIPFA's recommendations.

6. The following annexes are attached

Annex 1	Lending List Changes
Annex 2	Debt Financing 2020/21
Annex 3	PWLB Debt Maturing
Annex 4	Prudential Indicator Monitoring
Annex 5	Arlingclose Quarter 2 Benchmarking
Annex 6	Specified & Non-Specified Investments 2020/21

Strategy 2020/21

7. The approved Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 was based on an average base rate forecast of 0.75%.
8. The Strategy for borrowing provided an option to fund new or replacement borrowing up to £100m through internal borrowing.
9. The Strategy included the continued use of pooled fund vehicles with variable net asset value.

External Context – Provided by Arlingclose

10. **Economic backdrop:** The spread of the coronavirus pandemic dominated during the period as countries around the world tried to manage the delicate balancing act of containing transmission of the virus while easing lockdown measures and getting their populations and economies working again. After a relatively quiet few months of Brexit it was back in the news with continued uncertainty over what terms the UK will trade with EU from 1st January 2021.
11. The Bank of England (BoE) maintained Bank Rate at 0.1% and its Quantitative Easing programme at £745 billion. The potential use of negative interest rates was not ruled in or out by BoE policymakers, but then a comment in the September Monetary Policy Committee meeting minutes that the central bank was having a harder look at its potential impact than was previously suggested took financial markets by surprise.
12. GDP growth contracted by a massive -19.8% (revised from first estimate -20.4%) in Q2 2020 (Apr-Jun) according to the Office for National Statistics, pushing the annual growth rate down to -21.5% (first estimate -21.7%). Construction output fell by -35% over the quarter, services output by almost -20% and production by -16%. Recent monthly estimates of GDP have shown growth recovering, with the latest rise of almost 7% in July, but even with the two previous monthly gains this still only makes up half of the lost output.
13. The headline rate of UK Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) fell to 0.2% year/year in August, increasing to 0.5% year/year in September, still below the Bank of England's 2% target, with the largest downward contribution coming from restaurants and hotels influenced by the EOHO scheme. The Office for National Statistics' preferred measure of CPIH which includes owner-occupied housing was 0.5% year/year.

14. In the three months to July, labour market data showed the unemployment rate increased from 3.9% to 4.1% while wages fell -1% for total pay in nominal terms (-0.2% regular pay) and was down -1.8% in real terms (-0.7% regular pay). Despite only a modest rise in unemployment over the period, the rate is expected to pick up sharply in the coming months as the furlough scheme ends in October. On the back of this, the BoE has forecast unemployment could hit a peak of between 8% and 9%.
15. **Financial markets:** Equity markets continued their recovery, with the Dow Jones climbing to not far off its pre-crisis peak, albeit that performance being driven by a handful of technology stocks including Apple and Microsoft, with the former up 75% in 2020. The FTSE 100 and 250 have made up around half of their losses at the height of the pandemic in March. Central bank and government stimulus packages continue to support asset prices, but volatility remains.
16. Ultra-low interest rates and the flight to quality continued, keeping gilts yields low but volatile over the period with the yield on some short-dated UK government bonds remaining negative. The 5-year UK benchmark gilt yield started and ended the June–September period at -0.06% (with much volatility in between). The 10-year gilt yield also bounced around, starting at 0.21% and ending at 0.23% over the same period, while the 20-year rose from 0.56% to 0.74%. 1-month, 3-month and 12-month bid rates averaged 0.02%, 0.06% and 0.23% respectively over the period.
17. At the end of September, the yield on 2-year US treasuries was around 0.13% while that on 10-year treasuries was 0.69%. German bund yields remain negative across most maturities
18. **Credit background:** Credit default swap spreads eased over most of the period but then started to tick up again through September. In the UK, the spreads between ringfenced and non-ringfenced entities remains, except for retail bank Santander UK whose CDS spread remained elevated and the highest of those we monitor at 85bps while Standard Chartered was the lowest at 41bps. The ringfenced banks are currently trading between 45bps and 50bps.
19. After a busy second quarter of the calendar year, the subsequent period has been relatively quiet for credit changes for the names on our counterparty list. Fitch assigned a AA- deposit rating to Netherlands lender Rabobank with a negative outlook and prior to that, while not related to our counterparty list but quite significant, revised the outlook on the US economy to Negative from Stable while also affirming its AAA rating.
20. There continues to remain much uncertainty around the extent of the losses banks and building societies will suffer due to the impact from the coronavirus pandemic and for the UK institutions on our list there is the added complication of the end of the Brexit transition period on 31st December and what a trade deal may or may not look like. The institutions on Arlingclose's counterparty list and recommended duration remain under constant review, but at the end of the period no changes had been made to the names on the list or the recommended maximum duration of 35 days.

Treasury Management Activity

Debt Financing

21. The Council's cumulative total external debt has decreased from £341.38m on 1 April 2020 to £335.38m by 30 September 2020, a net decrease of £6m. No new debt financing has been arranged during the year. The total forecast external debt as at 31 March 2021 is £335.38m. The forecast debt financing position for 31 March 2021 is shown in Annex 2.
22. At 30 September 2020, the authority had 53 PWLB¹ loans totalling £285.38m, nine LOBO² loans totalling £45m and one long-term fixed Money Market loan totalling £5m³. The combined weighted average interest rate for external debt as at 30 September 2020 was 4.46%.

Maturing Debt

23. The Council repaid £6m of maturing PWLB loans during the first half of the year. The details are set out in Annex 3.

Debt Restructuring

24. The premium charge for early repayment of PWLB debt remained relatively expensive for the loans in the Authority's portfolio and therefore unattractive for debt restructuring activity. No PWLB debt restructuring activity was undertaken during the first half of the year. Opportunities to restructure debt remain under regular review.

LOBOs

25. At the beginning of the financial year the Council held £45m of LOBO (Lender's Option Borrower's Option) loans where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the interest rate at set dates, following which the Authority has the option to either accept the new rate or to repay the loan at no additional cost. £15m of these LOBOs had options during 2020/21, to the 30 September 2020 none had been exercised by the lender. The Council acknowledges there is an element of refinancing risk associated with LOBOs although in the current interest rate environment lenders are unlikely to exercise their options.

Investment Strategy

26. The Council holds deposits and invested funds representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves. The guidance on Local

¹ PWLB (Public Works Loans Board) is a Government agency operating within the United Kingdom Debt Management Office and is responsible for lending money to Local Authorities.

² LOBO (Lender's Option/Borrower's Option) Loans are long-term loans which include a re-pricing option for the bank at predetermined intervals.

³ In June 2016, the Council's LOBO with Barclays PLC was converted to a fixed rate loan at its current interest rate of 3.95% to mature on the 29th May 2065 with Barclays waiving their right to change the interest rate on the loan in the future.

Government Investments in England gives priority to security and liquidity and the Council's aim is to achieve a yield commensurate with these principles. The Council continued to adopt a cautious approach to lending to financial institutions and continuously monitored credit quality information relating to counterparties.

27. During the first half of the financial year term fixed deposits have been placed with other Local Authorities as per the approved lending list, whilst Call Accounts and Money Market Funds have been utilised for short-term liquidity. The PWLB continues to charge borrowers 100 basis points over Gilts. As a result, inter Local Authority lending rates have remained attractive. The Council has been able to benefit from these inflated rates with a combination of short and longer term deposits.
28. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/21 included the use of external fund managers and pooled funds to diversify the investment portfolio through the use of different investment instruments, investment in different markets, and exposure to a range of counterparties. It is expected that these funds should outperform the Council's in-house investment performance over a rolling three-year period. The strategy permitted up to 50% of the total portfolio to be invested with external fund managers and pooled funds (excluding Money Market Funds). The performance of the pooled funds will continue to be monitored by the Treasury Management Strategy Team (TMST) throughout the year against respective benchmarks and the in-house portfolio.
29. In May 2020, after an analysis of cash balances, the long-term lending limits of £200m for 2020/21 and £170m for 2021/22 were increased to £215m and £175m respectively.
30. The UK Bank Rate has remained at 0.10% for the 6 months to 30 September 2020. Arlingclose currently forecast the bank rate to remain at 0.10% for the medium term, but with significant near term downside risk. The TMST view is that there will not be another increase in base rate this financial year, with a significant risk that base rate could be cut to 0.00% or lower.
31. If base rate were to go into negative territory, it would have little impact on the 2020/21 interest receivable forecast, as the majority of the investments are pre-arranged and fixed interest. Instant access deposits would likely produce a negative yield, however it is probable that short term inter local authority deposits would remain positive. The Treasury team would seek to move money held on instant access to very short term deposits with other local authorities, or call accounts with suitable financial institutions at 0.00% or above.
32. Negative interest rates would begin to have a greater impact for the Council in 2021/22 as the majority of fixed term deposits are due to mature in 2021/22 and would require refinancing.

The Council's Lending List

33. The Council's in-house cash balances were deposited with institutions that meet the Council's approved credit rating criteria. The approved Lending List is updated to reflect changes in counterparty credit quality with changes reported to Cabinet

on a bi-monthly basis. Changes to the lending list in the first 6 months of 2020/21 are set out in Annex 1.

34. In the six months to 30 September 2020 there were no instances of breaches in policy in relation to the Council's Lending List. Any breaches in policy will be reported to Cabinet as part of the bi-monthly Business Strategy and Financial Monitoring report.

Investment Performance

35. Security of capital has remained the Authority's main investment objective. This has been maintained by following the Authority's counterparty policy as set out in its Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/21 and by purposefully reducing exposure to "bail in" banks and favouring deposits with other Local Authorities. As at 30 September 2020, the Council had £294.5m deposited with 29 other Local Authorities with an average deposit total of £10.16m per authority.
36. The average daily balance of temporary surplus cash invested in-house in the six months to 30 September 2020 was £383.85m. The Council achieved an average in-house return for that period of 0.93%, above the budgeted rate of 0.85% set in the strategy. This has produced gross interest receivable of £1.80m for the six months to 30 September compared to budget of £1.22m. This was achieved by increasing the weighted average maturity of in-house investments from 214 days at 31 March to 255 days as at 30 September and taking advantage of higher interest rates payable for longer deposits.
37. Temporary surplus cash includes; developer contributions; council reserves and balances; trust fund balances; and various other funds to which the Council pays interest at each financial year end, based on the average three month London Interbank Bid (LIBID) rate.
38. The Council uses the three month inter-bank sterling bid rate as its benchmark to measure its own in-house investment performance. During the first half of 2020/21 the average three month inter-bank sterling rate was 0.23%. The Council's average in-house return of 0.93% exceeded the benchmark by 0.70%. The Council operates a number of call accounts and instant access Money Market Funds to deposit short-term cash surpluses. The average balance held on overnight deposit in money market funds or call accounts in the 6 months to 30 September was £82.14m.

External Fund Managers and Pooled Funds

39. During the first 6 months of 2020/21 the Council maintained its holding in external funds. The value of the funds was £94.07m as at 30 September compared to £89.97m at 31 March, recovering a proportion of the losses sustained as a result of the pandemic from the original purchase cost of £101.0m. Weighted by original purchase value, pooled fund investments produced an annualised income return of 3.20% for the period. These investments are held with a long-term view and performance is assessed accordingly.

40. Gross distributions from pooled funds have totalled £1.61m in the first six months of the year.

Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management

41. The Authority confirms compliance with its Prudential Indicators for 2020/21, which were set as part of the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy Statement. The position as at 30 September 2020 for the Prudential Indicators is shown in Annex 4.

External Performance Indicators and Statistics

42. Arlingclose benchmark the Council's investment performance against its other clients on a quarterly basis. The results of the quarter 2 benchmarking to 30 September 2020 are shown in Annex 5.
43. The benchmarking results show that the Council was achieving significantly higher than average interest on inhouse investments, and just under average income on externally managed funds at 30 September 2020, when compared with a group of 128 other local authorities. This has been achieved by placing deposits over a longer than average duration with institutions that are of higher than average credit quality.
44. Oxfordshire had a higher than average allocation to fixed and local authority deposits when compared with other local authorities in the benchmarking exercise. Oxfordshire also had a notably lower than average exposure to money market funds and call accounts.

Training

45. Individuals within the Treasury Management Team continue to keep up to date with the latest developments and attend external workshops and conferences where relevant

Financial and Legal Implications

46. Interest payable and receivable in relation to Treasury Management activities are included within the overall Strategic Measures budget. In house interest receivable for 2020/21 is currently forecast as £3.00m, exceeding the budgeted figure of £2.34m by £0.66m. Of the forecast £3.00m interest receivable, £1.80m had been realised as at the 30 September 2020. The increased interest received is due to the achievement of higher than forecast average cash balances.
47. Dividends payable from external funds in 2020/21 are forecast as £3.06m, which is £0.75m below the original budget. However the budget has been reset to take account of this shortfall as part of the Revised Budget for 2020/21 agreed by Council in September 2020 reflecting the financial impact of Covid-19. Future assumptions for the return on external fund are being incorporated into the Business & Budget Planning Process.
48. Interest payable is currently forecast to be in line with the budgeted figure of £14.99m.

49. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report save for the need for ongoing collaborative working between the S.151 Officer and the Monitoring Office. CIPFA guidance promotes the need for consultative working and collaboration between these respective roles to promote good organisational governance.

LORNA BAXTER
Director of Finance

Contact officer: Tim Chapple – Treasury Manager
Contact number: 07917 262935
November 2020

Lending List Changes from 1 April 2020 to 30 September 2020

Counterparty	Lending Limit	Maximum Maturity
Counterparties added/reinstated		
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	£4m	O/N
Deutsche Sterling Money Market Fund	£25m	O/N
Counterparties suspended		
Close Brother Ltd		
Coventry Building Society		
Handlesbanken UK		
Lending limits & Maturity limits increased		
Morgan & Stanley Sterling Liquidity Fund	£5m to £12.5m	O/N

Pension Fund Lending list changes

None

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DEBT FINANCING 2020/21

<u>Debt Profile</u>		£m
1. PWLB	82%	291.38
2. Other Long Term Loans	14%	<u>50.00</u>
3. Sub-total External Debt		341.38
4. Internal Balances		<u>15.21</u>
5. Actual Debt at 31 March 2020	100%	356.59
6. Prudential Borrowing		37.98
7. Borrowing in Advance		0.00
8. Minimum Revenue Provision		<u>-6.55</u>
9. Forecast Debt at 31 March 2021		388.03
<u>Maturing Debt</u>		
10. PWLB loans maturing during the year		6.00
11. PWLB loans repaid prematurely in the course of debt restructuring		<u>0.00</u>
12. Total Maturing Debt		-6.00
<u>New External Borrowing</u>		
13. PWLB Normal		0.00
14. PWLB loans raised in the course of debt restructuring		0.00
15. Money Market LOBO loans		<u>0.00</u>
16. Total New External Borrowing		0.00
<u>Debt Profile Year End</u>		
17. PWLB	74%	285.38
18. Money Market loans (incl £45m LOBOs)	13%	<u>50.00</u>
19. Forecast Sub-total External Debt		335.38
20. Forecast Internal Balances		<u>52.65</u>
21. Forecast Debt at 31 March 2021	100%	388.30

Line

- 1 – 5 This is a breakdown of the Council's debt at the beginning of the financial year (1 April 2020). The PWLB is a government agency operating within the Debt Management Office. LOBO (Lender's Option/ Borrower's Option) loans are long-term loans, with a maturity of up to 60 years, which includes a re-pricing option for the bank at predetermined time intervals. Internal balances include provisions, reserves, revenue balances, capital receipts unapplied, and excess of creditors over debtors.
- 6 'Prudential Borrowing' reflects Prudential Borrowing taken by the authority whereby the associated borrowing costs are met by savings in the revenue budget.
- 7 'Borrowing in Advance' is the amount the Council borrowed in advance to fund future capital finance costs.
- 8 The amount of debt to be repaid from revenue. The sum to be repaid annually is laid down in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, which stipulates that the repayments must equate to at least 4% of the debt outstanding at 1 April each year.
- 9 The Council's forecast total debt by the end of the financial year, after taking into account new borrowing, debt repayment and movement in funding by internal balances.
- 10 The Council's normal maturing PWLB debt.
- 11 PWLB debt repaid early during the year.
- 12 Total debt repayable during the year.
- 13 The normal PWLB borrowing undertaken by the Council during 2020/21.
- 14 New PWLB loans to replace debt repaid early.
- 15 The Money Market borrowing undertaken by the Council during 2020/21
- 16 The total external borrowing undertaken.
- 18-22 The Council's forecast debt profile at the end of the year.

Long-Term Debt Maturing 2020/21**Public Works Loan Board: Loans Matured during first half of 2020/21**

Date	Amount £m	Rate %
01/06/2020	5.000	3.540%
13/07/2020	0.500	2.35%
31/07/2020	0.500	2.35%
Total	6.000	

Prudential Indicators Monitoring at 30 September 2020

The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Authority to have regard to CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code) when determining how much money it can afford to borrow. To demonstrate that the Authority has fulfilled the requirements of the Prudential Code the following indicators must be set and monitored each year.

Authorised and Operational Limit for External Debt

Actual debt levels are monitored against the Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit for External Debt below. The Operational Boundary is based on the Authority's estimate of most likely, i.e. prudent, but not worst case scenario for external debt. The council confirms that the Operational Boundary has not been breached during 2020/21.

The Authorised Limit is the affordable borrowing limit determined in compliance with the Local Government Act 2003. It is the maximum debt that the Authority can legally owe. The authorised limit provides headroom over and above the operational boundary for unusual cash movements. The Authority confirms that the Authorised limit was not breached in the first half of 2020/21.

Authorised limit for External Debt	£410,000,000
Operational Limit for External Debt	£390,000,000
Capital Financing Requirement for year	£388,303,000

	Actual	Forecast
	30/09/2020	31/03/2021
Borrowing	£335,382,618	£335,382,618
Other Long-Term Liabilities	£ 52,920,382	£ 52,920,382
Total	£388,303,000	£388,303,000

Interest Rate Exposures

These indicators are set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on fixed and variable rate interest exposures. Fixed rate investments are borrowings are those where the rate of interest is fixed for the whole financial year. Instruments that mature during the financial year are classed as variable rate.

Fixed Interest Rate Exposure

Fixed Interest Net Borrowing limit	£350,000,000
Actual at 30 September 2020	£60,382,618

Variable Interest Rate Exposure

Variable Interest Net Borrowing limit	£0
Actual at 30 September 2020	-£11,341,353

Principal Sums Invested over 365 days

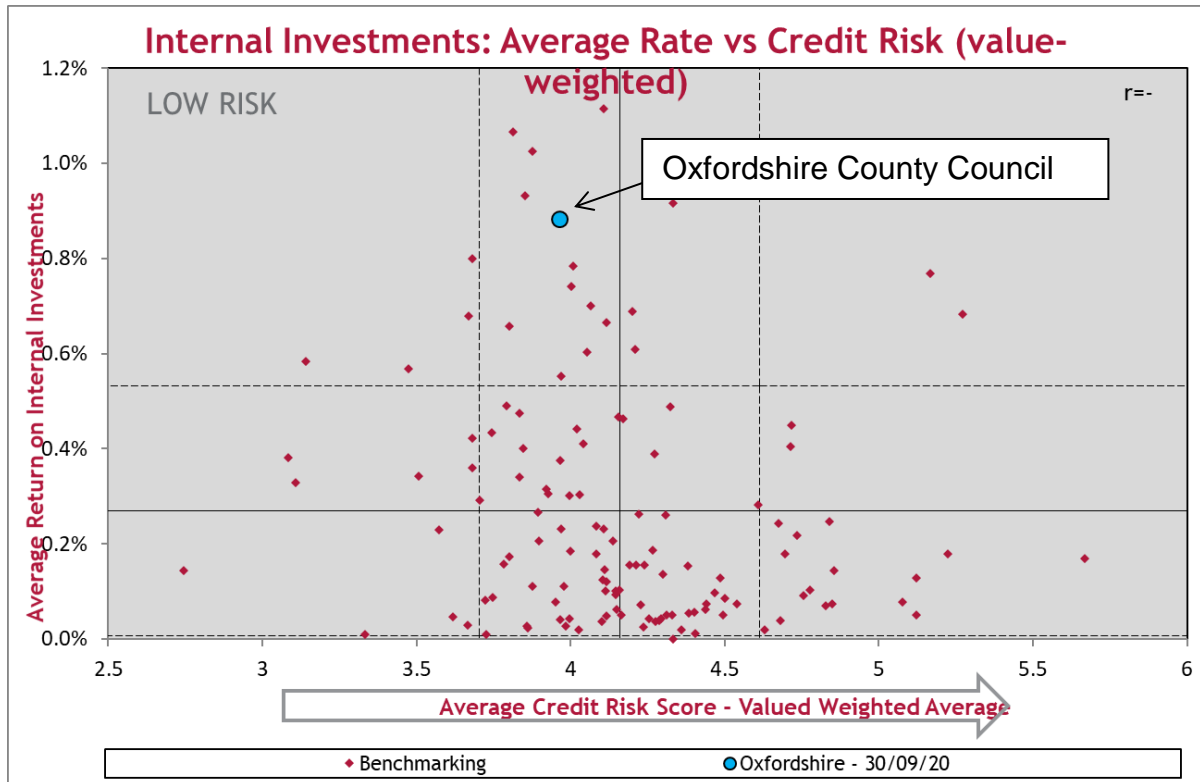
Total sums invested for more than 364 days limit	£215,000,000
Actual sums invested for more than 364 days	£ 72,500,000

Maturity Structure of Borrowing

This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing and the actual structure at 30 September 2019, are shown below. Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

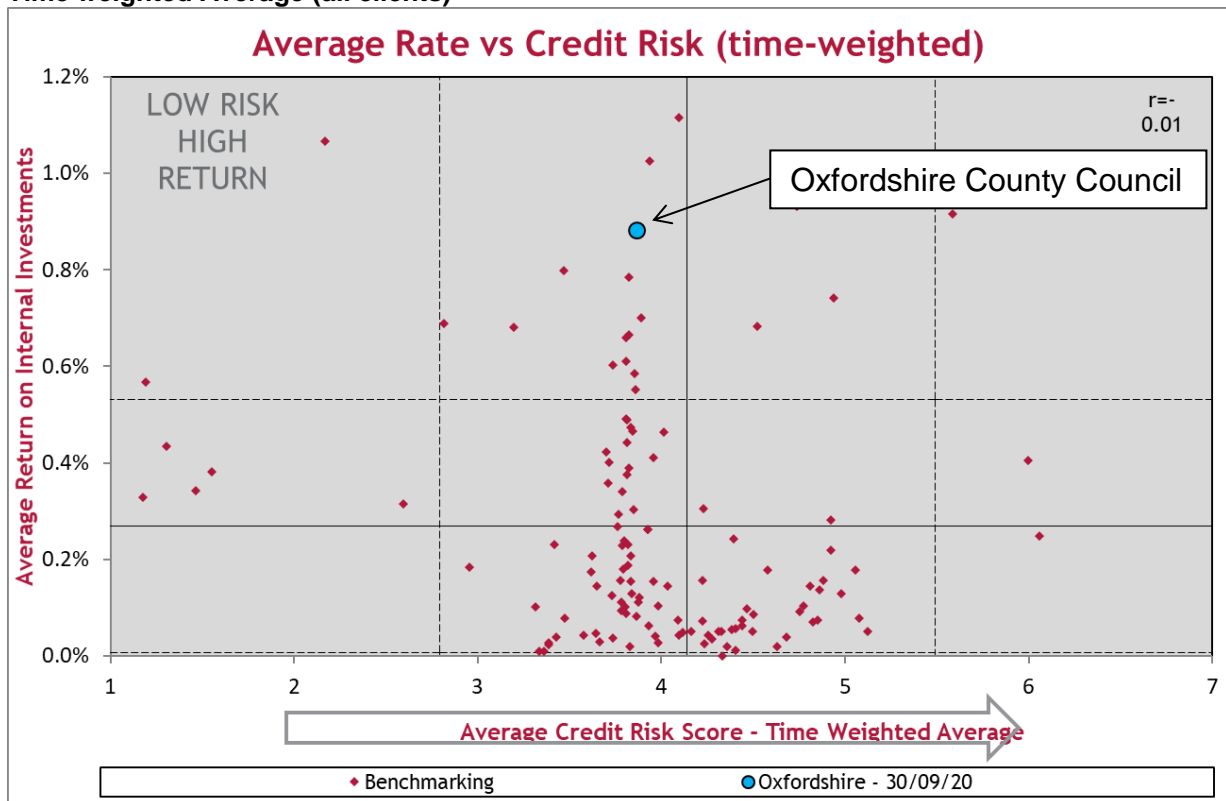
	Limit %	Actual %
Under 12 months	0 - 20	10.44
12 – 24 months	0 - 25	6.56
24 months – 5 years	0 - 35	10.14
5 years to 10 years	5 - 40	25.46
10 years +	40 - 95	47.41

Value weighted average (all clients)



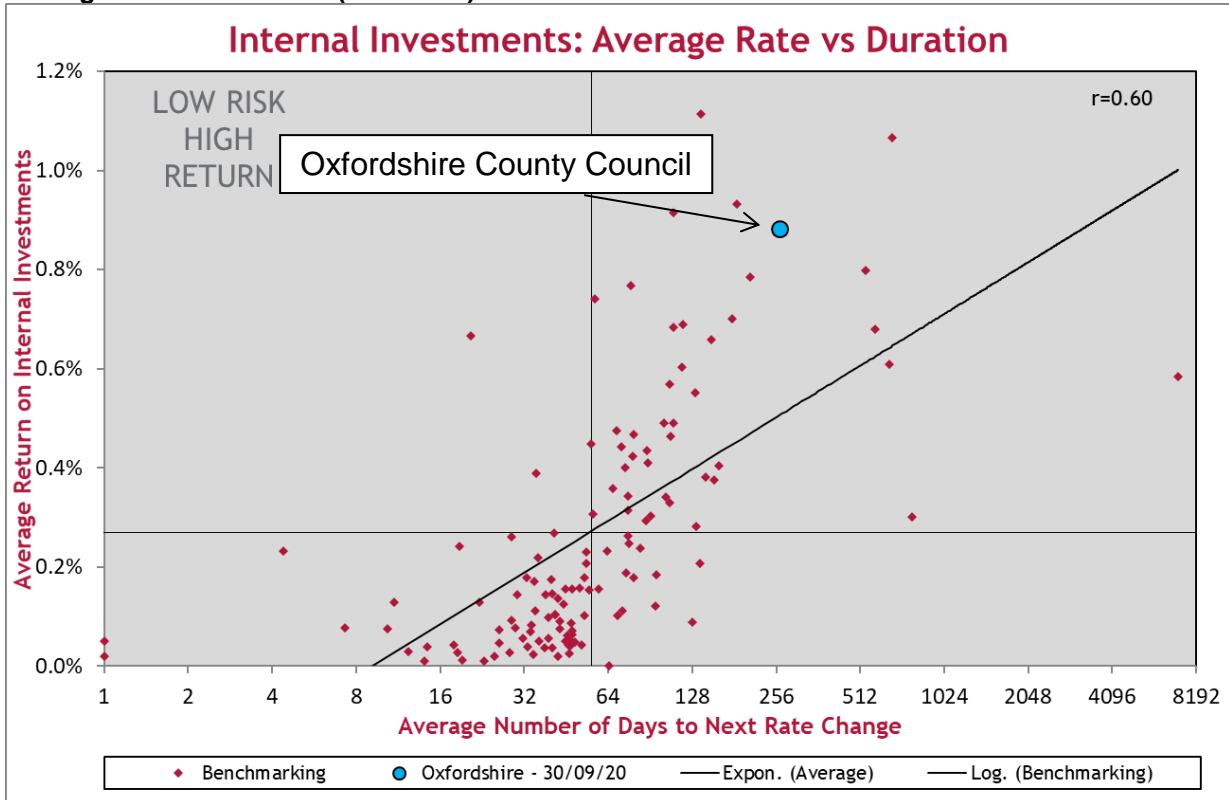
This graph shows that, at 30 September 2020, Oxfordshire achieved significantly higher than average return for lower than average credit risk, weighted by deposit size.

Time weighted Average (all clients)



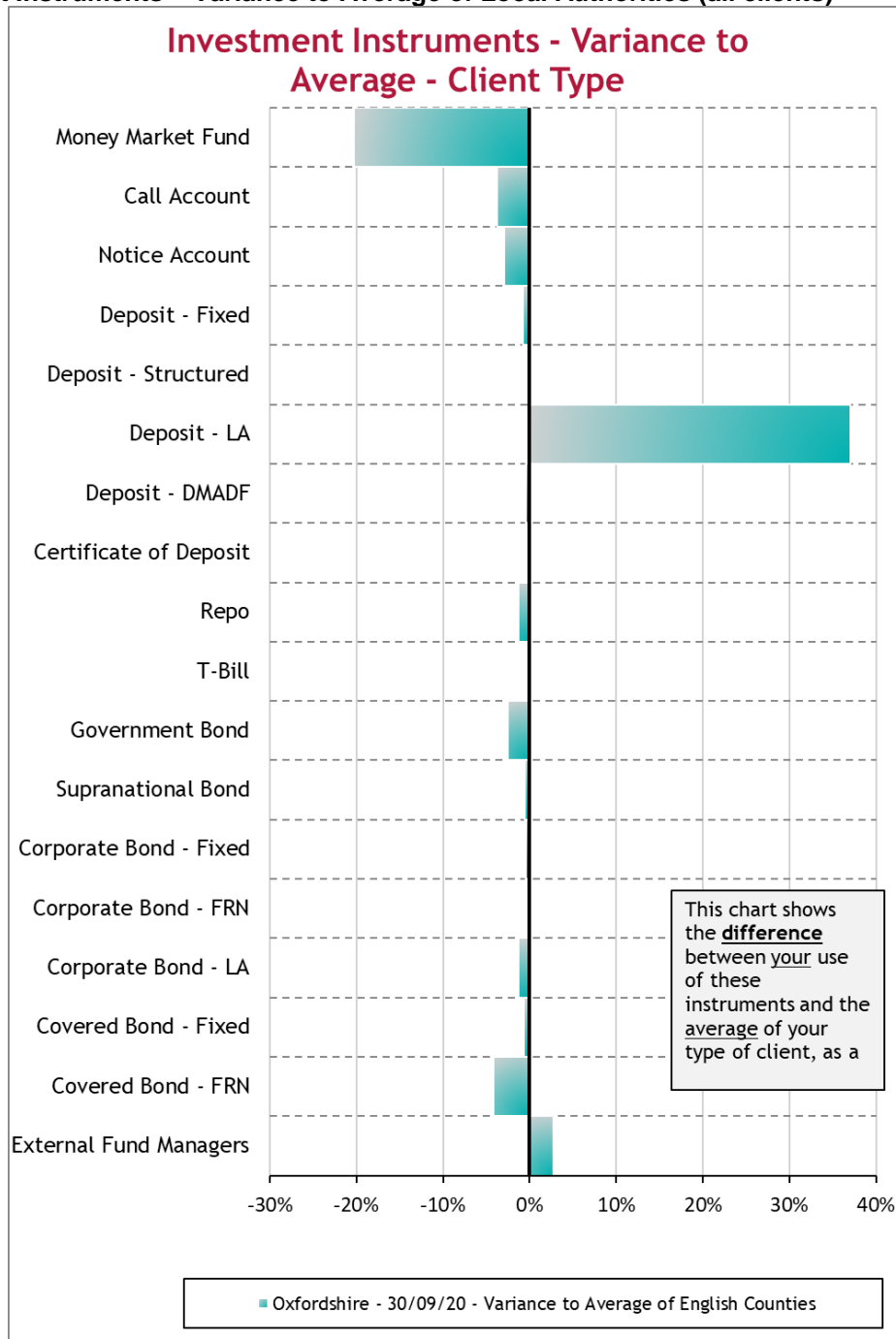
This graph shows that, at 30 September 2020, Oxfordshire achieved significantly higher than average return for lower than average credit risk, weighted by duration.

Average Rate vs Duration (all clients)



This graph shows that, at 30 September 2020, Oxfordshire achieved a higher than average return by placing deposits for longer than average duration.

Investment Instruments – Variance to Average of Local Authorities (all clients)



This graph shows that, at September 2020, Oxfordshire had notably higher than average local authority deposits, and lower than average deposits in money market funds when compared with other local authorities. Oxfordshire also had notably lower exposures to money market funds and call accounts.

Specified and Non Specified Investments 2020/21

Specified Investments

Investment Instrument	Minimum Credit Criteria	Use
Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility	N/A	In-house and Fund Managers
Term Deposits – UK Government	N/A	In-house
Term Deposits – other Local Authorities	N/A	In-house
Term Deposits – Banks and Building Societies	Short-term F1, Long-term BBB+, Minimum Sovereign Rating AA+	In-house and Fund Managers
Certificates of Deposit issued by Banks and Building Societies	A1 or P1	In-house on a buy and hold basis and Fund Managers
Money Market Funds	AAA	In-house and Fund Managers
Other Money Market Funds and Collective Investment Schemes ⁴	Minimum equivalent credit rating of A+. These funds do not have short-term or support ratings.	In-house and Fund Managers
UK Government Gilts	N/A	In-house on a buy and hold basis and Fund Managers
Treasury Bills	N/A	In-house and Fund Managers
Reverse Repurchase Agreements - maturity under 1 year from arrangement and counterparty is of high credit quality (not collateral)	Long Term Counterparty Rating A-	In-house and Fund Managers
Covered Bonds – maturity under 1 year from arrangement	Minimum issue rating of A-	In-house and Fund Managers

⁴ I.e., credit rated funds which meet the definition of a collective investment scheme as defined in SI 2004 No 534 and SI 2007 No 573.

Non-Specified Investments

Investment Instrument	Minimum Credit Criteria	Use	Max % of total Investments	Max Maturity Period
Term Deposits – other Local Authorities (maturities in excess of 1 year)	N/A	In-house	50%	3 years
Term Deposits – Banks and Building Societies (maturities in excess of 1 year)	Short-term F1+, Long-term AA-	In-house and Fund Managers	50% in-house; 100% External Funds	3 years
Structured Products (e.g. Callable deposits, range accruals, snowballs, escalators etc.)	Short-term F1+, Long-term AA-	In-house and Fund Managers	50% in-house; 100% External Funds	3 years
UK Government Gilts with maturities in excess of 1 year	N/A	In-house and Fund Managers	50% in-house; 100% External Funds	5 years in-house, 10 years fund managers
Bonds issued by Multilateral Development Banks	AAA	In-house and Fund Managers	50% in-house; 100% External Fund	25 years
Bonds issued by a financial institution which is guaranteed by the UK Government	AA	In-house and Fund Managers	50% in-house; 100% External Fund	5 years in-house
Collective Investment Schemes ⁵ but which are not credit rated	N/A	In-house and Fund Managers	50% In-house; 100% External Funds	Pooled Funds do not have a defined maturity date
Sovereign Bond Issues	AAA	In-house on a buy and hold	50% in-house;	5 year in-house, 30

⁵ Pooled funds which meet the definition of a collective investment scheme as defined in SI 2004 No 534 and SI 2007 No 573.

CC10

		basis.	100%	years fund
		Fund	External	managers
		Managers	Funds	
Reverse Repurchase	Minimum long	In-house	50% in-	3 years
Agreements - maturity in	term rating of A-	and Fund	house;	
excess of 1 year, or/and		Managers	100%	
counterparty not of high			External	
credit quality.			Funds	
Covered Bonds	AAA	In-house	50% in-	20 years
		and Fund	house;	
		Managers	100%	
			External	
			Funds	
Registered Providers	As agreed by	In-house	50% In-house	5 years
	TMST in			
	consultation			
	with the Leader			
	and the Cabinet			
	Member for			
	Finance			

The maximum limits for in-house investments apply at the time of arrangement.

Divisions: N/A

COUNTY COUNCIL – 8 DECEMBER 2020

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL ON MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

Report by the Corporate Director – Commercial Development, Assets and Investment & Monitoring Officer

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council is **RECOMMENDED** to consider the following recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and in so doing agree a Scheme of Allowances:

1. that the Basic Allowance payable to all councillors increase from £11,014 to £12,000 per annum;
2. that, in addition to the Basic Allowance, a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) be paid as follows:-
 - a. Leader of the Council – raise to three times the Basic Allowance: £36,000
 - b. Deputy Leader of the Council – keep at twice the Basic Allowance: £24,000
 - c. Cabinet Members – keep at 1.6 times the Basic Allowance: £19,200
 - d. Leader of the Opposition – increase to 1 times the Basic Allowance: £12,000
 - e. Shadow Cabinet – keep at 0.25 times the Basic Allowance: £3,000
 - f. Chairs of Scrutiny Committees (Performance, Education) – keep at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance: £7,200
 - g. Chair of the Planning and Regulation Committee – keep at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance: £7,200
 - h. Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee – keep at 0.6 times the Basic allowance: £7,200
 - i. Chair of the Pension Fund Committee – keep at 0.6 times the Basic allowance: £7,200
 - j. Chair of the Remuneration Committee – no allowance
 - k. Chairman of the Council – keep at 0.85 times the Basic Allowance: £10,200
 - l. Vice-Chairman of the Council – keep at 0.25 times the Chair's Allowance: £2,550
 - m. Third Party Leader – no allowance but review in 2021/22
 - n. Locality Meeting Chairman – increase from 0.05 to 0.10 times the Basic Allowance: £1,200
 - o. Police and Crime Panel Member – no allowance
 - p. Police and Crime Panel Chairman – keep at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance: £7,200 but invite the Council to review with the Police and Crime Panel members the principle as to whether all authorities should contribute to this cost
 - q. Police and Crime Panel Vice-Chairman – no allowance

- r. **Chair of the Oxfordshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – keep at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance: £7,200**
 - s. **Chair of the Horton Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee - keep at 0.45 times the Basic Allowance: £5,400**
 - t. **Adoption & Fostering Panels – introduce an allowance for member attendance at each of £100 per Panel with a cap of £1,200 per year**
3. **a cap be introduced such that no individual member of the Council should be entitled to receive more than two Special Responsibility Allowances at any one time;**
 4. **a Co-optees’ Allowance continues to be payable to an independent co-opted member of the Audit & Governance Committee when the co-opted member serves as Chairman of the Audit Working Group, equivalent to Committee/Scrutiny Committee Chair: £7,200;**
 5. **the Council’s Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances and the Co-optees’ Allowance to the Chairman of the Audit Working Group be amended annually by reference to the annual Local Government Pay Award for staff and that this should take effect from the date on which the award for staff similarly takes effect; however, if the above increases are agreed, the pay award should not be applied to any increased allowances in 2021/22 but from 2022/23;**
 6. **that Child and Dependant Carer’s Allowances be increased:-**
 - a. **Child Care: the hourly rate is equivalent to the Oxford Living Wage, capped at £1,200 per year, payable on production of receipts**
 - b. **Dependent Carer: the hourly rate is twice the Oxford Living Wage capped at £2,400 per year, payable on production of receipts;**
 7. **the Council retains, for members, the travel and subsistence scheme that is applicable to officers. Overnight accommodation to be booked by officers where possible; when alternative accommodation arrangements are to be used, this should be approved by the relevant officer.**
 8. **the amounts for Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances and Co-optees’ Allowances be rounded to the nearest pound when first set.**
- 2) **If Council does not wish to accept the Panel’s recommendations at this time, in whole or in part, Council is RECOMMENDED to agree a status quo Scheme of Allowances for 2021/22 for any unchanged aspect with the proviso that the newly elected Council after May 2021 is asked to revisit the matter during the 2021/22 Council Year.**

Introduction

1. This report presents the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel following a recent full review of the Council’s Members’ Allowances Scheme.
2. The last full review of the allowances agreed by Members was in December 2014. The Council had asked that a review be undertaken during this autumn to help shape a Scheme of Allowances to apply from 1 April 2020. The

Independent Remuneration Panel have met and are recommending some changes to the Scheme.

The Panel's Approach

3. In framing its recommendations, the Panel has had regard to a range of evidence, comparative information, survey responses from councillors and interviews a cross-section of members of the council. The Panel has been mindful of its role of assessing the what allowances are appropriate to the roles of elected and co-opted members, having regard to their workload formally and in constituencies and with an understanding of additional responsibilities where these are performed in the Council's governance arrangements.
4. The Panel has also been mindful that political and budgetary implications surrounding the adoption of a Members' Allowances Scheme are for the Council to determine. The Panel members appreciate therefore that members will have such considerations in mind when approaching its recommendations and if and when to accept them. The Panel also recognises that an individual member can choose whether or not to accept an allowance in full or in part. Rather, the Panel has concentrated on providing the Council with an objective, benchmarked view on what allowances it thinks are appropriate to the roles of elected and co-opted members for Oxfordshire County Council.
5. It has also been mindful that a Members Allowances Scheme is intended to present allowances that minimise the potential for any person to be out of pocket as a result of serving their community; recognising of course that some aspect of councillor's service is necessarily voluntary. Therefore, while a Scheme cannot alone influence wider democratic representation, it should at least not be a barrier to it. The recommendations are presented with these principles in mind.

Panel Report and Recommendations

6. The Panel's Report at Annex 1 sets out their recommendations in full and with their rationale given at each stage. The main changes are:
 - Increase to Basic Allowance (BA) – from £11,014 to £12,000
 - Continued use of the Basic Allowance as a multiplier for Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) – consequently increasing, in some measure, all SRAs but making specific increases to:
 - SRA for Leader of the Council (from 2.9 x BA to 3)
 - SRA for Leader of the Opposition (from 0.8 x BA to 1)
 - SRA for chairs of Locality Meetings (from 0.5 x BA to 0.10)
 - Recommending the introduction of an SRA for members serving on Adoption or Fostering Panels (£100 per panel capped at £1200 per year)
 - Recommending a cap of two on the number of SRAs that any individual councillor may receive at any one time

- Recommending that SRAs no longer be included for the positions of a panel member or vice-chairman of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel
 - Increase of the Child and Dependent Carers Allowances
 - Childcare: up to a maximum of £10.21 per hour for a child (i.e. Oxford living wage pertaining from time to time), to a maximum level of £1,200 per annum, on the production of receipts;
 - Adult Care: up to £20.42 per hour for an adult (i.e. twice the Oxford living wage pertaining from time to time), to a maximum level of £2,400 per annum, on the production of receipts.
7. The Council is therefore being invited by the Panel to consider adopting the changes recommended in this report.

Legal Implications

8. The Council is required to adopt a Scheme of Allowances ahead of 1 April 2021 to apply from that date. Under the Members' Allowances (Local Authorities)(England) Regulations 2003, the Council must have regard to the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel when making or revising a scheme of allowances. Any decision not to follow the Panel's recommendations must be published. Consequently, Full Council should consider the Panel's recommendations, but it is for Council itself to agree its own scheme.
9. Therefore, Council can:
- (a) Follow the Panel's recommendations in whole or in part
 - (b) Agree a revised scheme of allowances, either in whole or in part, including a 'status quo' arrangement

Financial Implications

10. If the Panel's recommendations are accepted in full, there will be additional costs of £98k which will need to be considered in the Budget & Business Planning process for 2021/22. A summary of the financial implications is set out in **Annex 2** to this report.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

11. Before making a decision, Section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following "protected characteristics": age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:
- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
 - ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected

characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --

- remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;

- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);

- encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –

- tackle prejudice; and

- promote understanding.

12. Public sector equalities duties have been considered by the IRP as part of their deliberations.

STEVE JORDEN

Corporate Director – Commercial Development, Assets and Investment & Monitoring Officer

Contact Officer:

Glenn Watson, Principal Governance Officer, glenn.watson@oxfordshire.gov.uk
07776 997946

December 2020

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MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES
Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel
to Oxfordshire County Council

November 2020

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

- A. The Independent Remuneration Panel has now carried out a full review of the County Council's scheme of members' allowances and this report sets out the Panel's recommendations.
- B. The Local Government Act 2000 provides that before any new scheme of allowances is agreed, the Council is required to take into account the advice of its duly appointed Independent Remuneration Panel on the levels and types of allowances to be paid under that scheme.
- C. In summary, it's our view that the current levels of allowances are, in the main, lower than for comparable authorities and do not sufficiently recognize the time and workload involved. It's important too that an allowances scheme acts as a means of encouraging a diverse range of people to consider becoming county councillors in Oxfordshire. Clearly, allowances cannot be the only means of overcoming obstacles to wider democratic representation; however, they are an element. We consider our recommendations to be appropriate to the roles performed by county councillors in the service of the people of Oxfordshire.

Principles Adopted

- D. This was the first full review since December 2014. As such we considered this to be an opportunity to consider the entire scheme of allowances by looking at each element afresh.
- E. We were also particularly mindful, and heard from many councillors, that part of the purpose of an allowances scheme is to encourage a diverse range of people to consider standing as councillors and undertaking responsible positions once elected. This is in the interests of a healthy democracy and perhaps particularly so ahead of the County Council elections due to take place in May 2021.
- F. We decided to look objectively at the appropriate level for allowances, noting the relative lowness of the Council's allowances compared to other authorities in the region. As an Independent Remuneration Panel, we must be mindful of affordability, but our main task has been to assess the councillor and co-opted roles objectively. We are however very conscious that we are undertaking this review during a year of a national pandemic, which itself continues to have considerable cost implications to local government, businesses and individuals. We are conscious too of press reports that the Chancellor may consider a public

sector pay freeze. It is for the Council, rather than the Panel, to have regard to the political and financial dimension in considering a review of allowances.

- G. A Council's Independent Panel should therefore give an honest, benchmarked view of the level of allowances appropriate to the various roles and commitments of Oxfordshire County Councillors and Co-opted Members.
- H. We also noted that the pandemic itself has impacted on the work of County Councillors, with virtual meetings rather than physical ones taking place and engagement with parish councils and community groups similarly recast, with consequent effect on the workload that arises. We heard for instance that while travel time has been saved, online meetings and email engagement have increased. Of course, such effects may be time-limited, however it is perhaps likely that some new ways of working may continue.
- I. The Panel's focus has been on reviewing the *roles* in question, within the Council's governance structure, and not on the persons occupying those roles. We have however taken the opportunity to consider the various approaches and levels of allowances set by comparable authorities across the South East and nationally.
- J. We noted that in recent years, the Council's Scheme did not feature a cap on the number of Special Responsibility Allowances that any individual could claim. We decided to review this principle and consider whether a cap was now appropriate and beneficial in encouraging wider representation. We also noted that most County authorities surveyed do have a cap of only one SRA.
- K. As a starting point, we decided to review the Basic Allowance and use this as a base, with Special Responsibility Allowances assessed in terms of multiples of the Basic Allowance. It was also important that we considered the fact that allowances are not a 'salary', are not payment for work done, but are intended to offset the cost of being a councillor so that no one is out of pocket as a result of representing their communities. That said, we were also mindful that becoming a councillor is a choice and has a voluntary element to it.
- L. We also wanted to hear directly from members of the Council themselves and so carried out a survey and a selection of interviews.

Recommendations

- (a) that the Basic Allowance payable to all councillors increase from £11,014 to £12,000 per annum;
- (b) that, in addition to the Basic Allowance, a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) be paid as follows:-
 - 1) Leader of the Council – raise to three times the Basic Allowance: £36,000
 - 2) Deputy Leader of the Council – keep at twice the Basic Allowance: £24,000
 - 3) Cabinet Members – keep at 1.6 times the Basic Allowance: £19,200
 - 4) Leader of the Opposition – increase to 1 times the Basic Allowance: £12,000

- 5) Shadow Cabinet – keep at 0.25 times the Basic Allowance: £3,000
 - 6) Chairs of Scrutiny Committees (Performance, Education) – keep at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance: £7,200
 - 7) Chair of the Planning and Regulation Committee – keep at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance: £7,200
 - 8) Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee – keep at 0.6 times the Basic allowance: £7,200
 - 9) Chair of the Pension Fund Committee – keep at 0.6 times the Basic allowance: £7,200
 - 10) Chair of the Remuneration Committee – no allowance
 - 11) Chairman of the Council – keep at 0.85 times the Basic Allowance: £10,200
 - 12) Vice-Chairman of the Council – keep at 0.25 times the Chair’s Allowance: £2,550
 - 13) Third Party Leader – no allowance but review in 2021/22
 - 14) Locality Meeting Chairman – increase from 0.05 to 0.10 times the Basic Allowance: £1,200
 - 15) Police and Crime Panel Member – no allowance
 - 16) Police and Crime Panel Chairman – keep at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance: £7,200 but invite the Council to review with the Police and Crime Panel members the principle as to whether all authorities should contribute to this cost
 - 17) Police and Crime Panel Vice-Chairman – no allowance
 - 18) Chair of the Oxfordshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – keep at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance: £7,200
 - 19) Chair of the Horton Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee - keep at 0.45 times the Basic Allowance: £5,400
 - 20) Adoption & Fostering Panels – introduce an allowance for member attendance at each of £100 per Panel with a cap of £1,200 per year
- (c) a cap be introduced such that no individual member of the Council should be entitled to receive more than two Special Responsibility Allowances at any one time;
- (d) a Co-optees’ Allowance continues to be payable to an independent co-opted member of the Audit & Governance Committee when the co-opted member serves as Chairman of the Audit Working Group, equivalent to Committee/Scrutiny Committee Chair: £7,200;
- (e) the Council’s Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances and the Co-optees’ Allowance to the Chairman of the Audit Working Group be amended annually by reference to the annual Local Government Pay Award for staff and that this should take effect from the date on which the award for staff similarly takes effect; however, if the above increases are agreed, the pay award should not be applied to any increased allowances in 2021/22 but from 2022/23;
- (f) that Child and Dependant Carer’s Allowances be increased:-
- 1) Child Care: the hourly rate is equivalent to the Oxford Living Wage, capped at £1,200 per year, payable on production of receipts
 - 2) Dependent Carer: the hourly rate is twice the Oxford Living Wage capped at £2,400 per year, payable on production of receipts;
- (g) the Council retains, for members, the travel and subsistence scheme that is applicable to officers. Overnight accommodation to be booked by officers

- where possible; when alternative accommodation arrangements are to be used, this should be approved by the relevant officer;
- (h) claims made under the Council's travel and subsistence scheme be accompanied by receipts and/or any other relevant evidence of the costs incurred and that claims under the scheme be made, in writing, within two months of the relevant duty in respect of which the entitlement to the allowance arises;
 - (i) the list of Approved Duties for the purpose of travel, subsistence and dependent care allowances continue and be agreed as set out in the attached Annex;
 - (j) the amounts for Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances and Co-optees' Allowances be rounded to the nearest pound when first set.

THE PANEL'S REPORT

Introduction

1. The Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003 require local authorities to review their Allowances Schemes and to maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel to consider and make recommendations on new schemes. In brief, the Regulations say that the following issues are to be addressed by the Panel:
 - Basic Allowance: each local authority must make provision for a basic, flat rate allowance payable to all members. The allowance must be the same for each councillor; it can be paid either in a lump sum or in instalments.
 - Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA): each local authority may make provision for the payment of SRAs for those councillors who have significant responsibilities. The Panel has to recommend the responsibilities that should be remunerated and the levels of the allowances.
 - Co-optees' allowance: each local authority may make provision for the payment of an allowance to co-optees' for attending meetings, conferences and seminars.
 - Childcare and dependant carers' allowance: local authorities may make provision for the payment of an allowance to those councillors who incur expenditure for the care of children or dependent relatives whilst undertaking particular duties.
 - Travel and subsistence: each local authority may determine the levels of travel and subsistence allowances and the duties to which they should apply.
 - Indexation: each local authority may determine that allowances should be increased in accordance with a specified index and can identify the index and set the number of years (not exceeding four) for which it should apply.

- Backdating: each local authority may determine that, where amendments are made to an allowances scheme, the allowances as amended may be backdated.

The Independent Remuneration Panel

2. The Independent Remuneration Panel for Oxfordshire County Council is:-
 - Bronwen Buckley
 - Martyn Hocking
 - Katherine Powley
 - David Shelmerdine
3. The Panel elected David Shelmerdine as its Chairman for this review.

Terms of Reference

4. To make recommendations to Oxfordshire County Council on the allowances that should be payable to County Councillors in Oxfordshire, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003 and to do so in the following circumstances:
 - annual recommendations on the Council's yearly scheme of allowances where the Council is minded to amend the scheme of allowances otherwise than by reference to a duly adopted index
 - when the Council proposes to revise or modify any aspect of an existing scheme or the Council requests a review
 - where required to do so by virtue of Regulations.
5. The County Council wished the Panel to undertake a comprehensive review of the Council's Scheme of Members' Allowances. This last occurred in December 2014, with minor changes to some aspects of Schemes since that time.

The Panel's Work

6. We met three times as a Panel during October and November 2020. On
 - 8th October
 - 20th October
 - 19th November.
7. In conducting our review, we had regard to a significant amount of information, which included the following:
 - The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and of the Government's "Guidance on Consolidated Regulations on Members' Allowances for Local Authorities in England";
 - County Council allowances: details of the allowances of numerous County Councils, especially those comparative authorities adjacent to Oxfordshire and in the South East generally

- Responses to a questionnaire to Oxfordshire County Councillors seeking comments on the Council's allowances scheme
 - The County Council's political management structure.
8. We also interviewed 14 members of the Council, seeking in our selection of interviewees to obtain a sample which was representative of the various roles performed by members. This included all three political group leaders, chairs of committees and backbenchers. The following members were interviewed over five different days:
- 6th November**
- Cllr Keiron Mallon – chairman of the Police & Crime Panel; Locality Chairman; Conservative Independent Alliance Group (CIA Group)
 - Cllr Kevin Bulmer – chairman of the Pension Fund Committee; Locality Chairman; CIA Group
 - Cllr Richard Webber – Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group
- 9th November**
- Cllr John Howson – Liberal Democrat Group Councillor
 - Cllr Tim Bearder – Liberal Democrat Group Councillor
 - Cllr Mrs Judith Heathcoat – Deputy Leader of the Council; CIA Group
 - Cllr Ian Hudspeth – Leader of the Council; CIA Group
 - Cllr Pete Sudbury – Green Councillor
 - Cllr Emily Smith – Liberal Democrat Group Councillor
 - Cllr Liz Brighouse – Leader of the Opposition, Labour Group
 - Cllr Pete Handley – Locality Chairman; CIA Group
- 13th November**
- Cllr Nick Carter – chairman of Audit & Governance Committee; CIA Group; Locality Chairman
- 16th November**
- Cllr Mark Cherry – Shadow Cabinet; Labour Group
- 23rd November**
- Cllr Arash Fatemian – chairman of the Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and of the Horton Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee; CIA Group.
9. An online survey was sent to the 63 councillors and received 39 responses (62%). In addition, we viewed recordings of council meetings, for example Full Council and the Audit & Governance Committee.

Political Structure

10. We noted that the Council had operated a 'Leader and Executive Model' since 5 November 2001 and that the Council reinforced this commitment by adopting a Strong Leader model in August 2009. A Conservative Independent Alliance administration is in place, operating a Cabinet system of decision-making, with a series of scrutiny committees providing challenge and policy focus. Since 2013, the Council had introduced informal locality meetings, all the County Councillors of that particular area meeting together. A number of more regulatory committees are also in operation to carry out statutory non-executive functions. All 63 members meet together as the Full Council to agree the

budget and policy framework. All members were also involved in the important task of community representation within their own electoral divisions.

11. We were therefore concerned in the current review to see if roles and responsibilities had changed over time, to gauge the time-commitment involved and to assess the level of remuneration appropriate to the responsibilities and work done by members.

REVIEW OF ALLOWANCES

Basic Allowance

12. It is required under the relevant legislation that a Basic Allowance be provided to all members of the Council and that it must be of the same value for each. This allowance is intended to remunerate councillors for their time spent as a councillor, covering incidental costs incurred by them as ordinary members of the Council, including the use of their homes.
13. In determining an appropriate level of Basic Allowance, we had regard to:
 - Oxfordshire County Councillors' own views as to the appropriate level of Basic Allowance (as expressed both in written submissions and in answer to interview questions)
 - The current level of Basic Allowance paid by the County Council and the value of the Council's Basic Allowance relative to that paid by other County Councils, principally those immediately adjacent to Oxfordshire and in the South East
 - The need to consider the voluntary service principle as required by the statutory guidance.

What the Basic Allowance should cover

14. The Basic Allowance, in our view, is intended to recognise the many calls on a councillor's time including the costs associated with general constituency work. This includes the use of a councillor's home, home phone and utilities. In our view, it also covers time commitment integral to serving as an ordinary member (or substitute) of a formal meeting of the Council. We also noted that it is the Council's practice to deploy ICT devices to enable seamless working with the Council's systems. In our view, while we can see the business reason for this, we felt that the Basic Allowance should be deemed to cover incidental user-consumables such as printer cartridges for council supplied printers.

Voluntary element

15. We still hold the view that a proportion of a councillor's time should continue to be voluntary and should not be remunerated. It is our view that while the role of county councillor contains an element of voluntary activity – such as the aspiration to serve and represent constituents in the community – it is no longer appropriate or feasible to try to quantify this. The pace of change and the immediacy of contemporary communication means that the demands of the

role are ever more present. Consequently, no specific formula has been used to assess this in the calculation of the allowances arrived at in this report. Rather, we consider that this is bound up in the principle that an allowance is not a payment for work done but a recognition of the time and level of responsibility that such public duty requires.

Determination of the level of Basic Allowance

16. Our starting point was to consider the evidence received from councillors in relation to the Basic Allowance. We heard from councillors that the Basic Allowance was too low, principally in that it did not encourage people of working age to come forward as councillors and did not sufficiently recognize the potential implication that some people may need to reduce working hours in order to undertake the role of councillor. While the allowances scheme alone cannot facilitate a wider demography – the candidate selection of political parties, the governance structure of authorities play a significant part - realistic and benchmarked allowances are one way of contributing to a more level playing field.
17. We considered the various calls on County Councillors' time both in their constituency and formal roles (e.g. attending meetings, engaging with parish councils and community groups). We also looked at the levels of Basic Allowance paid by comparator County Councils, primarily in the South East but also other comparable County Councils across England. We found that Oxfordshire County Council had fallen behind, particularly among South East counties, if not some others nationally, and that an increase was appropriate to rebalance the Basic Allowance better to support a more diverse range of people, reflective of Oxfordshire. We deemed that a Basic Allowance of £12,000 was a modest but important increase sending a clear message about the importance of councillor work in the community and helping facilitate a wider range of representation.
18. In achieving this, we wanted to use the Basic Allowance as a base for assessing the various Special Responsibilities required within the Council.

We RECOMMEND that the Basic Allowance payable to all councillors increase to £12,000.

Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)

19. We then considered which posts should qualify for an SRA and the appropriate level at which each allowance should be set.
20. We had regard to:
 - The political management arrangements set out in the Council's Constitution, the responsibilities performed within that framework and the functions of the various roles.
 - The range and levels of SRA proposed in other County Councils and in the South East.

- Evidence from Oxfordshire County Councillors (in person and through responses to the questionnaire) as to whether current SRAs are appropriate and as to suggestions for additional SRAs.
21. We have considered whether an SRA is appropriate to the following responsibilities within the Council's structure:
- i. Leader of the Council
 - ii. Deputy Leader of the Council
 - iii. Cabinet Members
 - iv. Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees (Performance; Education)
 - v. Chairman of the Planning & Regulation Committee
 - vii. Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee
 - x. Chairman of the Pension Fund Committee
 - xii. Chairman of Remuneration Committee
 - xiv. Chairman of the Council
 - xv. Vice-Chairman of the Council
 - xvi. Leader of the Opposition
 - xvii. Other Shadow Cabinet Members
 - xviii. Third Party Leader
 - xix. Locality Meeting Chairman
 - xx. Police and Crime Panel member
 - xxi. Police and Crime Panel chairman
 - xxii. Police and Crime Panel vice-chairman
 - xxiii. Chairman of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - xiv. Chairman of the Horton Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council

22. We considered changes to the roles and responsibilities of the Leader and Deputy Leader since the last full review. We were mindful of their roles in leading the political direction of the Council as the senior members of the Cabinet. We were also mindful of their considerable responsibility for delivering the Council's budget and policy framework. Their responsibility for steering the partnership dimension of the Council's working e.g. through the Growth Board and as demonstrated in the engagement with key stakeholders through the pandemic, is more important than ever. This increases the level of complexity involved and the roles of Leader and Deputy Leader are similar in terms of workload to those of senior management. We recognise that the complexity and workload mean that these roles are, in practice, only capable of being carried out effectively on a full-time basis. Whilst clear that the allowance is not a wage, we are concerned that the allowance paid should not be a barrier to attracting people to these pivotal roles.
23. We considered the differential allowances paid to the Leader and the Deputy Leader and we continue to be of the view that the Leader's role carries more responsibility than that of the Deputy Leader and this is reflected in our recommendations.
24. We then looked at the levels of SRA paid to the Leader and Deputy Leader by comparator County Councils primarily in the South East but also other

comparable County Councils across England. We found that Oxfordshire County Council was below the average for the region if not with some other authorities nationally. With the aim of resetting these allowances to reflect current workload and responsibilities, and with the objective of providing an allowance that encouraged progression to senior roles, we deemed that this average allowance was an appropriate guide for the level of remuneration.

We RECOMMEND that the Special Responsibility Allowance to the Leader of the Council be set at 3 times the Basic Allowance i.e. increased to £36,000;

We RECOMMEND that the Special Responsibility Allowance to the Deputy Leader of the Council be set at 2 times the Basic Allowance i.e. increased to £24,000.

Other Cabinet Members

25. The consideration given to the Leader and Deputy Leader applied similarly to the role of Cabinet Members. We noted the difficulties inherent in performing a Cabinet role while also maintaining full employment. We heard that a younger member of the Cabinet had previously resigned the role as it would otherwise have detracted from full-time employment. Equally, others had managed to do so. Again, although we consider that these posts should not be treated as a source of paid employment (a view supported by councillors) there is none the less a need to rebalance the amount paid better to reflect the time commitment, workload and level of responsibility.
26. As with other posts we found that the SRA for Cabinet Members lagged below the county council comparator average and, as a starting point, considered an increase to the level. We also considered the level of the SRA against that of the Leader and Deputy Leader.

We RECOMMEND that the Special Responsibility Allowance to Cabinet members be set at 1.6 times the Basic Allowance i.e. increased to £19,200.

Chairs of Performance and Education Scrutiny Committee

27. We noted that the new arrangements had been in place since May 2013 with two Scrutiny Committees. We interviewed the chair of the Performance Scrutiny Committee and a former Scrutiny Chairman. Having considered the demands of the roles, we reached the view that the chair of a scrutiny committee performed a pivotal role in managing the business of that committee in holding the executive to account; and that the burden of the role fell more significantly to the chair rather than the vice-chair. We considered that the chair's responsibilities should receive an allowance in line with comparator averages.

28. In doing so, we recognized that while by convention, the Leader of the Opposition also serves in the role of chair of the Performance Scrutiny Committee, there was no constitutional requirement to this effect. As such, we assessed the roles entirely separately.
29. We received no representations that an additional allowance be paid to the Deputy Chairs of Scrutiny Committees. We consider that the responsibilities of the Deputy Chairmen of the Committee are not onerous and that no SRA is needed.

We RECOMMEND that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairs of the Education and Performance Scrutiny Committees be set at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance i.e. increased to £7,200.

Chair of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Horton Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

30. We heard that both of these Committees still play a significant function in the scrutiny of health services across Oxfordshire. The Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to be a busy Committee. The Horton Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee, while originally created as a time-limited, task-and-finish body, scrutinizing proposals for maternity services, has been refocused by the constituent Councils and still plays a key role in scrutinizing the development of a Horton General Hospital masterplan.
31. We met with the Chairman of both Committees. We remain of the view that an allowance for chairing these meetings is appropriate.

We RECOMMEND that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairs of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Horton Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be set at:

- a) Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 0.6 times the Basic Allowance i.e. £7,200
- b) Horton Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 0.45 times the Basic Allowance i.e. £5,400

Planning and Regulation Committee

32. This significant committee deals with a range of quasi-judicial non-Executive regulatory functions. It meets every six weeks and in addition there are site visits, and it carries a considerable workload. We note that the post of the Chair of the Planning & Regulation Committee needs to be knowledgeable on technical issues, and able to deal with contentious issues, in order to guide the discussion and enable the Committee to focus on the key regulatory issues before it. We heard that there was very little additional preparation needed by the Deputy Chair over and above that as a Committee member and considered that there was no need to introduce an allowance for that role.

33. We considered whether the responsibilities and workload of the post of Chair required a different allowance to that of a Scrutiny Chair and we consider the two posts to be comparable and therefore recommend that the same allowance be paid.

We RECOMMEND that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman of the Planning & Regulation Committee be set at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance i.e. increased to £7,200.

Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee

34. This Committee (including a co-opted representative who also chairs this Committee's Audit Working Group) is responsible for seeing that good governance is maintained, with a strong system of internal control and risk management through the audit function. It meets approximately 6 times a year and the Committee maintains a strong focus on internal and external audit, ethical governance for elected members and gives pre-consideration to key changes to the Council's Constitution. For instance, the Committee had a pivotal role in reviewing the draft governance arrangements for the partnership between Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council. In addition to the Committee meetings there are monthly Audit Working Group meetings.
35. We interviewed the Chairman of this Committee.
36. We heard no representations to introduce an allowance for the Deputy Chair of the Committee and heard that the role was not significantly onerous to require an allowance.

We RECOMMEND that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee be set at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance i.e. increased to £7,200.

Chair of the Pension Fund Committee

37. This Committee manages the significant local government pension fund. It meets 4 times per year and there is required training for members throughout the year.
38. We are of the view that this is a considerable responsibility and requires specialist and technical knowledge with a constant requirement to keep up to date. Leading this Committee's work is a significant role at least equivalent to a scrutiny chairmanship. We interviewed the current chairman of the Committee.
39. We did not hear any calls for the introduction of a Deputy Chair's allowance and understood that the work of a Deputy Chairman was not so significantly more than a member of the Committee to require an allowance.

We RECOMMEND that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman of the Pension Fund Committee be set at 0.6 of the Basic Allowance i.e. increased to £7,200;

Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council

40. We continue to regard the civic, ceremonial and constitutional role of the Chairman of the Council to be significant within the Council. While COVID-19 may have impacted on the range of public engagements and events the Chairman or Vice-Chairman needed to attend was lessened, the requirement to adapt to manage Full Council meetings on line has been a responsibility. As civic head of the authority, the Chairman will continue to have a key role within the community, perhaps even more so once COVID-19 lessens and community engagement can once again take place in full. As such, we continue to regard the roles as important, albeit that each incoming Chairperson can make of certain aspects of the role what they choose, in terms of outreach and involvement.
41. We received no representations about the level of the allowance and recognize that the Vice-Chair does not frequently need to cover formal meetings, and has more of a role in the community, assisting with such events and engagements. Our view is that the responsibilities will remain significant in 2021 and perhaps even more so post-COVID.

We RECOMMEND that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman of the Council be set at 0.85 times the Basic Allowance i.e. increased to £10,200;

We RECOMMEND that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Deputy Chairman of the Council be set at 0.25 times the Chairman of the Council's Allowance i.e. increased to £2,550.

Chairman of the Remuneration Committee

42. We heard that the Remuneration Committee does not meet often and that its membership and chairmanship relate largely to the holders of existing Special Responsibility Allowances, and as part of those responsibilities. It does not appear to us that there is the need for any specific SRA for this Committee.

Leader of the Opposition

43. We consider that an effective Leader of the Opposition is essential to the democratic accountability of the Council. As such, the Leader of the Opposition needs to invest significant time and effort in keeping abreast of the work of Cabinet, Scrutiny and the Council as a whole, which has a public benefit. The role is significant, constitutional and integral to the democratic checks and balances within the Council.

44. We interviewed the Leader of the Opposition.
45. Having regard to the demands of the role, we consider that it does not carry the equivalent responsibility of a Cabinet Member and that there should rightly be a differential between the allowances relevant to those positions. In addition, we have considered the involvement and support provided by Shadow Cabinet Members and have taken this into account when setting an appropriate level. We also believe it is significant that the Council has given a Constitutional role to the Leader of the Opposition and not to the leaders of other opposition groups on the Council. This also, in our view, supports the attraction of an allowance for the responsibilities involved.

We RECOMMEND that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Leader of the Opposition be set at the same level as the Basic Allowance i.e. increased to £12,000.

Other Members of the Shadow Cabinet

46. We note that the Council's Constitution recognizes that the second largest political group on the Council will be regarded as the official Opposition and as such will be entitled to receive briefings from officers in order to carry out this form of democratic challenge. We think this Constitutional recognition is important and we acknowledge that the formation of a Shadow Cabinet to deliver on the holding of the executive to account, is a key means of sustaining the work.

We RECOMMEND that a Special Responsibility allowance be set at 0.25 times the Basic Allowance i.e. increased to £3,000.

Locality Meeting Chairman

47. We noted that when the Locality Meetings were introduced after 2013 and allowances set for the chairing of them, the concept of Locality Meetings was a new one. The meetings then and now do not have formal decision-making powers delegated to them. However, we heard that these meetings – 9 of them area-based around the county, of all the councillors elected for that geographical area – had increasingly become very useful. This is indicated by the officer resource deployed to them, to report on local issues and answer questions. They are a key means of communication about the effectiveness of council activity and policy on the ground, and a means of reflecting back to the Council the particular needs and interests of those areas. The members also often discuss together the scope for using each individual councillor's allocated Cllr Priority Fund.
48. We interviewed several chairs of locality meetings.
49. It is our view that although these meetings are still informal, the co-ordination of the issues discussed and the management of the discussions remains a

pivotal and embedded part of harnessing the Councillor perspective for the benefit of the Council and communities. As such, we think the time has come to give further recognition to the responsibility of chairing them. Clearly as the meetings are not decision-making in the formal sense, the responsibility is not akin to any decision-making role. As such, we considered that an allowance of 10% of the Basic Allowance was appropriate.

We RECOMMEND that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairs of Locality Meetings be set at 0.10 times the Basic Allowance i.e. increased to £1,200.

Police and Crime Panel

50. We noted that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the chairmanship of this Panel, should Oxfordshire County Council be elected to that position (as now), had been refreshed by a Panel previously, with Full Council agreeing to an uplift. We see no diminution in that role and are agreed that it remains a responsible one, with a regular set of meetings for the chairman to attend, plus a range of preparatory and sub-committee responsibilities attendant on the position. The responsibility is equivalent to that of a Scrutiny chair. Our concern is different.
51. We note that, according to the Police and Crime Panel terms of reference, endorsed by the constituent authorities, it is the authority which chairs the Panel which will pay the allowance for its Chairman. We question the equity of this for Oxfordshire's taxpayers. While we need to make recommendations within the current framework, we would ask the Council to revisit this point with its colleague members of the authority: we would question why the County Council's allowances scheme should bear the sole cost of this role when the effectiveness of meetings is the business of all constituent members. We are mindful too that there is perhaps an unexplored source of resource from the Home Office for the funding of some allowances. We would strongly encourage that the Council revisits this point with the PCP on a value for money basis for constituent authorities' residents and businesses.
52. However, we do not consider that there needs to be a current allowance for being a member of the Panel, nor its Vice-Chairman, a responsibility which we heard was not in any case onerous. So we are recommending that those allowances cease from April 2021.

We RECOMMEND that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman of the Police & Crime Panel be set at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance i.e. £7,200;

We RECOMMEND that no allowance be payable to the role of member of the Police & Crime Panel;

We RECOMMEND that no allowance be payable to the Vice-Chairman of the Police & Crime Panel;

We RECOMMEND that the Council revisits with the Police and Crime Panel and its constituent members, the potential for sharing the costs of the responsibilities required in chairing the Panel, and otherwise explore sources of contributory Government funding.

Third Party Leader and group leaders of other minority groups

53. Currently no allowance is paid for the role of leader of the third party group. We considered whether this should change. We noted that the role, unlike that of Leader of the Opposition, does not have a formal basis in the Council's Constitution; we consider that to be significant. We interviewed the current holder of this role. We also heard that the Third Party Group Leader is regularly and integrally involved in monthly meetings of Political Group Leaders with senior officers, to discuss various plans and proposals. However, we would welcome some further delineation of this role by the Council within the Constitution or otherwise, before we recommend any change to create an allowance for this responsibility. We certainly remain open to that possibility.
54. As such, we are not currently convinced that the role of a Third Party Leader is sufficiently constitutionally embedded to warrant a formal SRA and that the day to day management of a political group is not itself a matter requiring remuneration.
55. For now, we recommend that an SRA is not appropriate for the Third Party Group Leader.
56. We recognize that there are not, currently, any other party groups on the Council. Were this to be the case, and the Council were to consider some degree of involvement for their leaders in the Council's formal and informal governance arrangements, we would be open to revisiting the question of allowances for minority group leaders.

We RECOMMEND that no Special Responsibility Allowances be paid for the role of the Third Party Group Leader but that this be reviewed in 2021/22.

Adoption and Fostering Panels

57. We heard that members of the Council may, but are not required to, serve on Adoption and Fostering Panels. The current member serving on the Adoption Panel commits to at least 6 such panel hearings per year. There is no current member representative on the Fostering Panel. We are of the view that the exceptional level of responsibility in taking part in such a panel, given the life-changing outcomes involved, merits consideration under the Council's Scheme of Allowances. We are mindful of the work in preparing for such hearings and the responsibility of taking part in the decision making.
58. We suggest that the Council should introduce an allowance for a councillor who takes part in such meetings and that this should be reviewed after a year's operation. Rather than a flat fee, we recommend that this begins with a

payment per meeting of £100 capped at £1,200 based on the current trajectory that the Councillor serving on the Adoption Panel attends one such hearing per month.

We RECOMMEND that a Special Responsibility Allowance is introduced for member representatives on Adoption and Fostering Panels, to be set at £100 per Panel hearing capped at £1,200 per year.

Capping of Special Responsibility Allowances

59. We considered that it would best serve the wider representation of the Council if it adopted a cap on the number of Special Responsibility Allowances which any individual councillor could receive at any one time. While it is true that any responsibility does take time and commitment to fulfil, we think it is important to strike the right balance between fair remuneration for a role performed, an encouragement of wider representation and a safeguard from the accrual of remuneration. In practice, it would be rare indeed for any individual to hold more than two SRAs at any given time.
60. We do believe this cap would signify a step-change and a marker towards potentially reducing the cap to one SRA per councillor in a future year, which is the practice of many other authorities. We have not recommended this further step this year so as to allow the Council best to consider its governance arrangements going forward, with this in mind.

We RECOMMEND that the Council's Scheme adopts a cap whereby a councillor may only hold no more than two SRAs at any one time.

Child and Dependant Carers' Allowances

61. We noted that there have been no claims made for these allowances since the last review but agreed that the continuation of these allowances as part of a package of measures (including the increase in the basic allowance), was of significant importance, to encourage those with young families or care responsibilities to stand for Council in the coming years.
62. We considered the rates for hourly allowances for comparator County Councils in the South East and noted that the existing Oxfordshire rates are comparatively low. We also considered the average figures for carer costs across Oxfordshire and were attracted to the approach of achieving a realistic hourly rate with an annual cap. As such, we benchmarked that against other councils' experience.
63. We believe a more realistic rate in this particular area is essential in demonstrating a commitment to enabling those with caring responsibilities to consider performing the role of a councillor. The Approved Duties in the Council's Scheme of Allowances provides a tangible set of circumstances for which such an allowance can be claimed, suitably evidenced.

64. We do not consider a councillor should be able to claim such expenses for care provided by family members. We feel the Scheme should recognize caring responsibilities in respect of dependent children under 16 or dependent adults certified by a doctor or social worker as needing attendance.
65. We considered it appropriate that the hourly rate should also take into account the Oxford Living Wage as a base for the Child Care allowance; and as a multiple of that (twice) for the Dependant Carer allowance. This is reflected in our recommendation.

We RECOMMEND that Child and Dependant Carer's Allowances continue to be paid on the basis that:-

- a) **Childcare: up to a maximum of £10.21 per hour for a child (i.e. Oxford living wage pertaining from time to time), to a maximum level of £1,200 per annum, on the production of receipts;**
- b) **Adult Care: up to £20.42 per hour for an adult (i.e. twice the Oxford living wage pertaining from time to time), to a maximum level of £2,400 per annum, on the production of receipts.**

Co-optees' Allowance

66. We continue in the view that there should not be a general co-optees' allowance payable to all co-opted members on Council Committees and so are not making a recommendation for such an allowance. We also continue to endorse the principle that co-opted members should be able to claim travel and subsistence allowances, provided that these cannot be claimed legitimately from another body.
67. We remain of the view that the independent member of the Audit & Governance Committee should receive the allowance for carrying out the specific role of Chairman of the Council's Audit Working Group, which reports to the Audit & Governance Committee. We concluded that the Chairman of the Audit Working Group is a key role in the financial/business workings of the Council which should be remunerated.

We RECOMMEND that the co-optees' allowance to the independent co-opted member of the Audit Committee when the co-opted member serves as Chairman of the Audit Working Group be set at 0.6 times the Basic Allowance i.e. increased to £7,200.

Indexation

68. A council can apply an index to their allowances and in such a circumstance, if the only change each year is the application of the index, then the Council does not formally need to adopt a scheme of allowances each year. We have for some years recommended linking members' allowances to the local government pay award for Oxfordshire County Council staff. We believe this is

still appropriate particularly in the current economic climate. However, we are mindful that we are recommending increases to allowances in this report and we believe that the index should not be applied (for the year 2021/22) on any increased Basic or Special Responsibility Allowances.

We RECOMMEND that the Council's Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances and the Co-optees' Allowance to the Chairman of the Audit Working Group be amended annually by reference to the annual Local Government Pay Award for staff and that this should take effect from the date on which the award for staff similarly takes effect, with the proviso that no such index should be applied during 2021/22 to any allowances that are increased either as recommended in this report or otherwise.

Travelling and Subsistence Allowances

69. The Panel did not receive any strong views that the current basis of travel and subsistence allowances should change. We noted that claims for travel were low even before COVID-19 prevented actual travel and formal meetings became virtual. We would invite the Council to consider why this was the case and whether the allowances claim systems are themselves a help or a hindrance to members. We noted the existing list of 'Approved Duties' (duties for which claims can be made) and suggest that the Council periodically reminds members of their right to make claims and how to do so.

We RECOMMEND that claims made under the Council's travel and subsistence scheme be accompanied by receipts and/or any other relevant evidence of the costs incurred and that claims under the scheme be made, in writing, within two months of the relevant duty in respect of which the entitlement to the allowance arises;

We RECOMMEND the Council retains, for members, the travel and subsistence scheme that is applicable to officers.

Amounts

70. We recommend that the Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances and Co-optees' Allowance amounts be rounded to the nearest pound at the time they are set each year, to make it easier and clearer to identify the allowances for each role.

We RECOMMEND that the amounts for Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances and Co-optees' Allowances be rounded to the nearest pound at the time of their setting and after any indexation is applied.

Conclusion

71. In conclusion, the Panel considers the current levels of allowances to be, in the main, too low having regard both to the time and workload involved and,

crucially, as a means of encouraging a diverse range of people to consider becoming county councillors in Oxfordshire. Clearly, allowances cannot be the only means of overcoming obstacles to wider democratic representation however they are an element. We did hear from some members that they thought it would be beneficial if allowances were once again pensionable: it is not however open to us to suggest something not currently permissible in law. We do though consider our recommendations to be appropriate to the roles actually performed by county councillors in the service of the people of Oxfordshire. We understand it is for the Council whether to accept these recommendations having regard to the budgetary and political implications of so doing. Our role has been to present a Scheme we feel is reflective of the responsibilities of elected and co-opted members of Oxfordshire County Council.

72. We would be willing of course to give any recommendations to the newly elected Council following the May 2021 election if any aspects of an adopted Scheme are then considered in need of amendment. In any event, the Panel has expressed its wish to meet again in autumn 2021

David Shelmerdine

**Chairman
Independent Remuneration Panel
November 2020**

Financial Implications of the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations

Allowance that the Panel is recommending for change	Current position	Yearly estimated additional costs if the Panel's recommendations are implemented
Basic Allowance	£11,013.77 x 63 = £693,867.51	£986.23 x 63 = £62,132.49
SRA: Leader	£31,940.87	£4,059.13
SRA: Deputy Leader	£22,027.55	£1,972.45
SRA: Cabinet Member	£17,622.65 x 8 = £140,981.20	£1,577.35 x 8 = £12,618.80
SRA: Chairman of the Council	£9,361.55	£838.45
SRA: Opposition Leader	£8,810.81	£3,189.19
SRA: Scrutiny Chairmen, Planning & Regulation Chairman, Audit & Governance Chairman and Pension Fund Committee	£6,608.88 x 6 = £39,653.28	£591.12 x 6 = £3,546.72
SRA: Co-optees allowance – Audit & Governance Committee	£6,608.88	£591.12
SRA: Chairman of Horton HOSC	£4,957.00	£443.00
SRA: Shadow Cabinet Member	£2,753.70 x 9 = £24,783.30	£246.30 x 9 = £2,216.70
SRA: Vice Chairman of the Council	£2,340.65	£209.35
SRA: Locality Chairman	£550.74 x 9 = £4,956.66	£649.26 x 9 = £5,843.34
SRA: Chairman Police & Crime Commission Panel	£6,608.88	£591.12
SRA: Adoption OR Fostering Panel Members	NIL	£100 per session, to be capped per at £1,200 per annum, per Member, per Panel £2,400.00
Estimated total additional cost for the year		£98,251.86
Total cost of the allowances scheme	£996,898.14	<u>£1,095,150.00</u>

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Divisions N/A

COUNCIL – 8 DECEMBER 2020

BOB Joint Health Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Report by Corporate Director of Commercial Development, Investment and Assets and Monitoring Officer

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to agreement by the other relevant local authorities; Council is RECOMMENDED to agree the Terms of Reference (in Annex 1) for delegation of health scrutiny powers to Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West geography to allow of health issues at a system level.

Executive Summary

1. Health Services have a legislative duty to consult a local authority's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee about any proposals they have for a substantial development or variation in the provision of health services in their area. When these substantial developments or variations affect a geographical area that covers more than one local authority, the local authorities are required to appoint a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) for the purposes of the consultation.
2. Oxfordshire has a Joint HOSC which scrutinises almost all health and wellbeing issues for the county of Oxfordshire. The exception to this is a separate committee constituted in 2018, known as the Horton HOSC, which with Northamptonshire County Council and Warwickshire County Council exists to scrutinise NHS proposals related to the Horton General Hospital.
3. In response to the development of an Integrated Care System (ICS) across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) footprint, a health scrutiny committee is needed for the patient-flow geography impacted by service changes at a BOB-level. This includes the authorities of Buckinghamshire Council, Oxfordshire County Council, West Berkshire Council, Reading Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council.
4. This report sets out proposals for a new HOSC which would operate across the BOB geography to allow scrutiny of system-wide issues that impact upon the BOB population.

Background

Health scrutiny powers

1. Health scrutiny powers are held by local upper tier authorities. Chief among health scrutiny powers is the ability to:

- a) Require officers of NHS bodies to attend committee meetings.
- b) Require the local NHS to provide information about the planning, provision and operation of the health service in the area.
- c) Make reports and recommendations to NHS bodies.
- d) Refer proposals for substantial changes to health services to the Secretary of State for decision if the committee believes the consultation has been inadequate, if there were inadequate reasons for not consulting, or if the proposals would not be in the interests of the local health service.
- e) The NHS is obliged to consult the HOSC on any substantial changes it wants to make to local health services, in addition to its wider responsibility to involve and consult the public.

Health scrutiny for Oxfordshire

2. For Oxfordshire County Council, health scrutiny powers are primarily discharged through the Oxfordshire JHOSC. This is a joint committee comprising 12 non-executive voting members (seven county councillors and five district/city councillors) and three co-opted non-voting members. There is a separate committee constituted in 2018, known as the Horton HOSC, which with Northamptonshire County Council and Warwickshire County Council scrutinises NHS proposals related to the Horton General Hospital.

Integrated Care Systems

3. The health and care system is becoming increasingly integrated as a key plank of the NHS Long-Term Plan. The Long-Term Plan aims to deliver improvements by:

Doing things differently: *we will give people more control over their own health and the care they receive, encourage more collaboration between GPs, their teams and community services, as 'primary care networks', to increase the services they can provide jointly, and increase the focus on NHS organisations working with their local partners, as 'Integrated Care Systems', to plan and deliver services which meet the needs of their communities¹.*

4. Oxfordshire is part of an Integrated Care System spanning the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) footprint. Integrated Care Systems (ICSs), are groups of local NHS organisations working together with each other, local councils and other partners, to develop and implement their own strategies for the next five years. These strategies are expected to set out how an ICS intends to take the ambitions of the NHS Long Term Plan, and work together to turn them into local action to improve services and the health and wellbeing of the communities they serve.

Health scrutiny across BOB

5. Health scrutiny legislation requires that a Joint HOSC be appointed where substantial developments or variations to health services affect an area covering

¹ <https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/the-nhs-long-term-plan-summary.pdf>

more than one local authority. A HOSC reflecting the BOB geography is therefore required to reflect the patient-flow geography of BOB. This includes the authorities of Buckinghamshire Council, Oxfordshire County Council, West Berkshire Council, Reading Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council.

6. The BOB ICS is made up of three Integrated Care Partnerships (ICP's)- one for each of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group current geographies. The ICS leaders have identified that they anticipate 80% of activity to remain at an ICP level, with 20% at a BOB level. A new BOB HOSC does therefore not negate the need for local scrutiny arrangements to remain.
7. At Oxfordshire's JHOSC meeting in June 2020, the committee agreed a number of principles to guide the discussion of officers with counterparts across the BOB footprint, which duly followed. During the process, Officers have received advice from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) who endorse the need for a joint health scrutiny committee and see it as a key component of the work of the ICS, they indicated that:
 - Setting up a joint health scrutiny committee for the ICS should be seen as a necessity;
 - Elected Members from across the ICS need to have oversight of what is being planned at system level (at an early stage) and health bodies would gain a greater awareness of the political impact of their proposed decisions;
 - The BOB ICS is a vanguard and at the forefront of ICS development and therefore this joint committee should be viewed as a positive;
 - There is no existing function for scrutinising and holding to account the ICS so a joint committee should be viewed as an opportunity to strengthen and add value to the existing local scrutiny arrangements.

Oxfordshire JHOSC

8. At its meeting on the 26th of November 2020, the Oxfordshire JHOSC considered a Terms of Reference for the BOB HOSC. Members of the committee wished to specify the following change (added as a footnote to point 17 in Annex 1):

There is provision for two co-opted members on the BOB HOSC. One of these places will be offered to Healthwatch to represent patients and the public; it will be for Healthwatch across the BOB geography to discuss and determine whether this is the most effective way to have patient and public views feeding into the committee. If co-opted membership is deemed not to be the most appropriate role for Healthwatch; a standing item on BOB HOSC agendas will be created to allow for Healthwatch to report patient and public views across the ICS.

Vacant co-opted seats on the committee will be advertised and appointed to by the BOB HOSC committee as necessary.

9. The Oxfordshire HOSC voted to support the draft Terms of Reference in Annex 1 and therefore recommend them to Council for their agreement.

10. The establishment of the BOB HOSC requires all relevant local authorities (as outlined in this paper) to agree the draft Terms of Reference, as such, they are subject to agreement by those authorities through their respective Councils

STEVE JORDEN

Corporate Director for Commercial Development, Assets and Investment

Background papers:

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November 2020

Version as at 19 November 2020

Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Reading, West Berkshire, Wokingham) Draft Terms of Reference

Purpose

1. Health Services are required to consult a local authority's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee about any proposals they have for a substantial development or variation in the provision of health services in their area. When these substantial developments or variations affect a geographical area that covers more than one local authority (according to patient flow), the local authorities are required to appoint a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) for the purposes of the consultation.
2. The NHS Long-Term Plan (published at the beginning of 2019) sets out the vision and ambition for the NHS for the next 10 years. It states - "Every Integrated Care System will need streamlined commissioning arrangements to enable a single set of commissioning decisions at system level." The purpose of the JHOSC would be to hold to account and challenge these commissioning decisions at system level. This function would be new and a different part of local health scrutiny arrangements. The powers and duties of health scrutiny would remain unchanged at Place and Neighbourhood level (see definitions below). The creation of a JHOSC to scrutinise system level decisions would strengthen existing scrutiny arrangements.
3. These terms of reference set out the arrangements for Buckinghamshire Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Reading Borough Council, West Berkshire Council, Wokingham Borough Council, to operate a JHOSC in line with the provisions set out in legislation and guidance and to allow it to operate as a mandatory committee.

Terms of Reference

4. The new JHOSC will operate formally as a mandatory joint committee i.e. where the councils have been required under Regulation 30 (5) Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Well-being Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 to appoint a joint committee for the purposes of providing independent scrutiny to activities delivered at system level (as detailed below) by the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System.

The Kings Fund published a report in April 2020 "Integrated Care Systems explained: making sense of systems, places and neighbourhoods" which says that NHS England and NHS Improvement has adopted the terminology used in some systems to describe a three tiered model – System, Place and Neighbourhood.

System - typically covering a population of 1–3 million people. Key functions include setting and leading overall strategy, managing collective resources and performance, identifying and sharing best practice to reduce unwarranted variations in care, and leading changes that benefit from working at a larger scale such as digital, estates and workforce transformation.

Place – a town or district within an ICS, typically covering a population of 250-500,000. This is where the majority of changes to clinical services will be designed and delivered and where population health management will be used to target intervention to particular groups. At this level, providers may work together to join up their services through alliances and more formal contractual arrangements.

Neighbourhood – a small area, typically covering a population of 30-50,000 where groups of GPs and community-based services work together to deliver co-ordinated, pro-active care and support, particularly for groups and individuals with the most complex needs. Primary Care Networks and multi-disciplinary community teams form at this level.

Activities at Place and Neighbourhood would be scrutinised by the relevant local authority through their existing health scrutiny arrangements.

5. The purpose of the mandatory JHOSC across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Reading, West Berkshire, Wokingham is to:
 - a. make comments on the proposal consulted on
 - b. require the provision of information about the proposal
 - c. gather evidence from key stakeholders, including members of the public
 - d. require the member or employee of the relevant health service to attend before it to answer questions in connection with the consultation.
 - e. Refer to the Secretary of State only on where it is not satisfied that:
 - consultation on any proposal for a substantial change or development has been adequate in relation to content or time allowed (NB. The referral power in these contexts only relates to the consultation with the local authorities, and not consultation with other stakeholders)
 - the proposal would not be in the interests of the health service in the area
 - a decision has been taken without consultation and it is not satisfied that the reasons given for not carrying out consultation are adequate.
6. Notwithstanding point (e) above, Member authorities have the right to refer an issue to the Department of Health if the joint health scrutiny committee does not collectively agree to refer an issue.
7. With the exception of those matters referred to in paragraph [3] above responsibility for all other health scrutiny functions and activities remain with the respective local authority Health Scrutiny Committees.

8. The process for determining the appropriate level of scrutiny – ie. System or Place/Neighbourhood will be in accordance with an agreed toolkit which will set out the process for initiating early dialogue between ICS Leads and the Members of the JHOSC. All constituent authorities will be notified of the outcome of those discussions.
9. No matter to be discussed by the Committee shall be considered to be confidential or exempt without the agreement of all Councils and subject to the requirements of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Governance

10. Meetings of the JHOSC will be conducted under the Standing Orders of the Local Authority hosting and providing democratic services support and subject to these terms of reference.

Frequency of meetings

11. The JHOSC will meet at least twice a year with the Integrated Care System Leads to ensure oversight of key priorities and deliverables at system level.

Host authority

12. The JHOSC would be hosted by one of the named authorities. The role of host authority would be undertaken by the chairing authority for the same time period [24 months].

Membership

13. Membership of the JHOSC will be appointed by Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Reading, West Berkshire, Wokingham that have responsibility for discharging health scrutiny functions.
14. Appointments to the JHOSC have regard to the proportion of patient flow. The Joint Committee will therefore have 19 members, consisting of 6 from Buckinghamshire, 7 from Oxfordshire, 2 from Reading, 2 from West Berkshire, 2 from Wokingham.
15. Appointments by each authority to the JHOSC will reflect the political balance of that authority.
16. The quorum for meetings will be 6 voting members, comprising at least one member from each authority.

17. The JHOSC shall appoint two co-opted members to the committee¹. The JHOSC shall also reserve the right to consider the appointment of additional temporary co-opted members in order to bring specialist knowledge onto the committee to inform specific work streams or agenda items. Any co-opted member appointed will not have a vote.

Chairman & Vice Chairman

18. The Chairman of the JHOSC shall be drawn from the members of it and will normally be filled by the member whose authority is hosting the Committee for a period of 24 months.
19. The Vice-Chairman of the JHOSC shall be drawn from members on the Committee and elected every 24 months.

Task & Finish Groups

20. The Committee may appoint such Working Groups of their members as they may determine to undertake and report back to the Committee on specified investigations or reviews as set out in the work programme. Appointments to such Working Groups will be made by the Committee, ensuring political balance as far as possible. Such panels will exist for a fixed period, on the expiry of which they shall cease to exist.

Committee support

21. The work of the JHOSC will require support in terms of overall coordination, setting up and clerking of meetings and underpinning policy support and administrative arrangements.
22. Meetings of the committee are to be arranged and held by the host authority.
23. Should a press statement or press release need to be made by the JHOSC, this will be approved all authorities before being signed off by the Chairman.

¹ *There is provision for two co-opted members on the BOB HOSC. One of these places will be offered to Healthwatch to represent patients and the public; it will be for Healthwatch across the BOB geography to discuss and determine whether this is the most effective way to have patient and public views feeding into the committee. If co-opted membership is deemed not to be the most appropriate role for Healthwatch; a standing item on BOB HOSC agendas will be created to allow for Healthwatch to report patient and public views across the ICS. Vacant co-opted seats on the committee will be advertised and appointed to by the BOB HOSC committee as necessary.*