

## CABINET

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 16 March 2021 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.38 pm

**Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor Ian Hudspeth – in the Chair  
Councillor Mrs Judith Heathcoat  
Councillor Lawrie Stratford  
Councillor Ian Corkin  
Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale  
Councillor Yvonne Constance OBE  
Councillor David Bartholomew  
Councillor Eddie Reeves

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillor Liz Brighthouse (Agenda Item 6)  
Councillor Glynis Phillips (Agenda Items 6 & 7)  
Councillor John Sanders (Agenda Items 8, 9, 12 & 14)

**Officers:**

Whole of meeting Yvonne Rees (Chief Executive); Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance; Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance; Steve Jorden, Corporate Director, Commercial Development, Assets and Investment; Sue Whitehead (Law & Governance)

Part of meeting

Item 6 - Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers & Organisational Development; Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes  
Item 9 – Llewellyn Morgan and Elizabeth Bohun, iiHub EV Integration Team;  
Item 10 – Rob MacDougall, Director of Community Safety and Chief Fire Officer; Jody Kerman, Trading Standards Operations  
Item 11 – Rachel Wileman, Assistant Director Strategic Infrastructure and Planning  
Item 12 – John Disley, Infrastructure Strategy and Policy  
Item 13 – Kevin Broughton, Development Management - Policy

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

## **21/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

(Agenda Item. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillors Mark Gray and Steve Harrod.

## **22/21 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item. 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2021 were approved and signed as a correct record.

## **23/21 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

(Agenda Item. 4)

The questions received from County Councillors and responses are set out in an Annex to these Minutes.

## **24/21 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item. 5)

The following requests to address the meeting had been agreed by the Chairman.

Item 6 – Business Management & Monitoring Report: Councillor Liz Brighthouse, Chairman of Performance Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Glynis Phillips, Shadow Cabinet Member Finance

Item 7– Capital Programme Monitoring: Councillor Glynis Phillips, Shadow Cabinet Member Finance

Item 8 – Oxford Zero Emission Zone Pilot Formal Consultation: Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment

Item 9 - Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy: Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment

Item 12 - England's Economic Heartland Final Transport Strategy: Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment

Item 13 - Objection to West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local: Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment

## **25/21 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT & MONITORING REPORT - JANUARY 2021**

(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet considered a report that set out Oxfordshire County Council's (OCC's) progress towards Corporate Plan priorities for 2020/21 – January 2021.

Councillor Liz Brighouse, Chairman of Performance Scrutiny Committee detailed comments from the Performance Scrutiny Committee including concerns with the LED lighting contract and performance with highway's resurfacing. Councillor Brighouse outlined the further information they had asked for in relation to these issues. The Committee had also requested changes to simplify the information in the commentary for listening to residents under the number of pothole enquiries and a request to see the average time for repairs, noting that this work was underway. Councillor Brighouse commented that the Committee had raised the number of drainage issues raised through Fix My Street that did not meet the criteria and that they had queried whether the criteria needed to be reviewed given the importance of this issue to many residents. Questions had been raised over the Skanska contract and noted the assurance given that the new contract would be brought to the Performance Committee for scrutiny. Referring to the backlog in assessments for Education and Health Care Plans the Committee had noted the shortage of educational psychologists and had queried whether this shortage could be addressed using apprenticeships. The Committee had also highlighted as a priority for the Committee to look at this issue and the operation of the CAMHS service.

Councillor Glynis Phillips, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance, highlighted the need for a robust and sustainable action plan to tackle delays to EHCPs. Councillor Phillips noted the positive activity detailed in the report including the recruitment of an air quality programme manager and commented that it would be helpful to know when the County Strategic Framework for Managing Air Quality with partners and service areas would be published in order to support a number of important initiatives. She noted the positive impact of the Family Solutions Programme in families getting help sooner although there had been an increase in referrals to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub linked to a high level of domestic abuse. Councillor Phillips also highlighted the work of the library staff in relation to Making Every Contact Count with the aim of encouraging a healthy lifestyle. Staff needed to have the expertise, confidence and knowledge to have those conversations and the Council could do more to build on the work of the libraries by including such training in the induction programme for new staff.

Councillor Phillips referred to the budget noting that Oxfordshire had received £1.3m for the covid winter grants scheme to support children, families and the most vulnerable and that the funding should be used in the period early December to 31 March. Having worked with Districts Councils on distributing funds she queried whether the spending was being monitored to see that allocations were on track.

Councillor Phillips expressed concern at the changes to the budget set out in the recommendations. The budget and the review of charges was agreed by Full Council only in February and she queried what explanation there was for making such a change so soon. Councillor Phillips expressed thanks for the efforts of the finance team in achieving a balanced budget but noted that the impact of covid would continue into the next financial year.

Councillor Judith Heathcoat, Deputy Leader of the Council, introduced the performance and risk assessment elements of the report. Councillor Heathcoat commented on the largely positive picture of performance that was due in no small part to the Council's workforce and she thanked them for their service. Councillor

Heathcoat detailed that of 27 performance indicators, 14 were green, 12 were able and 1 indicator was unable to be reported on due to covid. No indicators were reported red. Councillor Heathcoat highlighted positive performance in relation to trading standards and referred to the positive inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) of OFRS in relation to their response to covid.

Councillor David Bartholomew, Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the finance element of the report that outlined the forecast revenue budget at the end of January 2021 and an update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The report included information on the financial impact of COVID-19 and Councillor Bartholomew stated that there would be additional costs into 2021/22. Councillor Bartholomew moved the recommendations.

During discussion Cabinet responded to the points raised by Councillor Phillips and highlighted positive performance.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) note this month's business management and monitoring report.
- (b) approve virement set out in Annex C-2b relating to the planned use of the Public Health Savings to fund appropriate expenditure in other services, and the virement from the COVID-19 Budget to the services for the period November 2020 to March 2021;
- (c) note the virements set out in Annex C-2c; and
- (d) approve the bad debt write-offs set out in Annex C.
- (e) approve the 2021/22 Charges set out in paragraph 33 and Annex C-6

## **26/21 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORT - JANUARY 2021**

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet had before them a report that set out the latest monitoring position for 2020/21 capital programme based on activity to the end of January 2021 and provided an update on latest ten-year capital programme to 2030/31.

Councillor Glynis Phillips, Shadow Cabinet Member for Finance referred to the problems with the LED replacement programme and noted that the report stated that delivery would catch up. Councillor Phillips queried what evidence supported this statement. Councillor Phillips also noted that the figures for the programme varied to the numbers in the report at agenda item 6 and sought clarification on the numbers involved in the programme.

Councillor David Bartholomew, Cabinet Member for Finance in moving the recommendations clarified the numbers in relation to the rephrasing of the LED street light replacement and confirmed that the programme was still expected to end on time.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) note the latest capital monitoring position for 2020/21 in Annex 1; and

- (b) note the latest forecast for additional costs to the Capital Programme associated with COVID-19 of £2.7m.

## **27/21 OXFORD ZERO EMISSION ZONE PILOT FORMAL CONSULTATION**

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet considered a report that outlined a final proposal for the Oxford ZEZ Pilot which was published as part of a period of formal consultation between Friday 20 November 2020 and Sunday 17 January 2021.

Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment, spoke in support of the proposals but sought assurance that there would be discussion with local councillors and interest groups.

Councillor Yvonne Constance introduced the contents of the report and moved the recommendations.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) note the content of the report and outcomes of the recent public consultation on the Oxford Zero Emission Zone Pilot; and
- (b) approve the final Zero Emission Zone Pilot scheme at Annex 6 and authorise the scheme to be implemented.

## **28/21 OXFORDSHIRE ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY**

(Agenda Item. 9)

All six of Oxfordshire's councils have declared or acknowledged climate emergencies; Oxfordshire County Council's broader vision includes an ambition to reducing carbon emissions to tackle climate change and improve air quality. Supporting a transition to zero emission road transport is a key component in Oxfordshire's councils achieving their net zero carbon targets, reducing air pollution, and delivering key transport initiatives such as the Oxford Zero Emission Zone.

The government has proposed an end to the sale of petrol and diesel vehicle sales by 2030. Comprehensive, accessible and efficient charging infrastructure is essential in enabling the rapid adoption of electric vehicles. Cabinet had before them The Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (OEVIS) that set out the policies and plans to realise this goal.

Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment, commented that paragraph 6.2 of the report set out pitfalls but it was key to the successful take up.

During discussion: Cabinet:

- Noted that other initiatives such as car clubs were important to encourage car sharing and reduce congestion.
- Referred to the possible issue of electric companies keeping up with demand. In some areas of Oxfordshire power could be lost for six hours at a time making it difficult to charge vehicles regardless of the provision of charging points. Officers

advised that they had discussed this point with the company who were confident of being able to supply sufficient energy for the grid.

**RESOLVED:** to ADOPT the recommended policies and key actions for the Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (2020-2025).

**29/21 TENANT FEES ACT 2019 (AND ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION) - FINANCIAL PENALTY ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

(Agenda Item. 10)

Cabinet had before them a report seeking approval of the adoption of a regime of financial penalties for breaches of relevant legislation governing the activities of lettings agents and other businesses in the property sector.

Councillor Judith Heathcoat, Deputy Leader of the Council introduced the contents of the report and moved the recommendations.

**RESOLVED:** to approve a new mechanism for the Trading Standards Service to take action against property agents for breaches of relevant housing legislation by means of civil financial penalties, as outlined in the supporting Enforcement Policy (adopted from the model implemented nationally by the National Trading Standards Estate and Lettings Agency Team).

**30/21 STATEMENT OF INTENT A COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE AND RENEWAL**

(Agenda Item. 11)

Cabinet considered a report seeking support for the intention of the County Council to support the establishment of a new County wide environment advisory group ( as part of Oxfordshire Growth Board Governance and subject to endorsement by the Oxfordshire Growth Board) and to agree the Oxfordshire - Cambridge Arc environmental principles (subject to endorsement at the OxCam ARC Plenary meeting)

Councillor Ian Hudspeth, Leader of the Council introduced the contents of the report and moved the recommendations.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) acknowledge the breadth of County Council partnership activity for climate action, environmental resilience and renewal in Oxfordshire.
- (b) support the establishment of an Environment Advisory Group of the Oxfordshire Growth Board and its Terms of Reference as set out at Appendix 1, subject to the outcome of the meeting of the Growth Board on 22 March.
- (c) endorse the shared principles for protecting, restoring and enhancing the environment in the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, as set out at Appendix 2.

- (d) support the development of an Arc Environment Strategy which will provide for how the principles can be delivered and delegate authority to the Corporate Director Environment and Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment to take this forward.
- (e) note progress concerning the development of a Local Nature Partnership for Oxfordshire.

### **31/21 ENGLAND'S ECONOMIC HEARTLAND FINAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

(Agenda Item. 12)

The England's Economic Heartlands (EEH) Transport Strategy directly supports a number of the Council's strategic priorities in the Corporate Plan, in particular reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality, reducing the need to travel, promoting public transport and active travel over private use of the car where appropriate and strengthening investment in strategic transport and digital connectivity, notably rail investment such as East-West Rail. The Strategy before Cabinet

The County Council has had significant input into the Strategy at both officer level (via the EEH Transport Group) and Member level (via the Strategic Transport Forum (STF)) and given the recent launch and importance of the Transport Strategy to the emerging County Council Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), Cabinet had before them a report asking them to formally endorse the final EEH Transport Strategy.

Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment welcomed the commitment to consider all options as set out at paragraph 16 of the report and welcomed the focus on mass transport. However, he considered that there should be reference to the motion of council on 5 November 2019 rejecting the Expressway in favour of support for prioritising the East West Rail link. Councillor Hudspeth, Leader of the Council explained that the Strategy was not an OCC document.

Councillor David Bartholomew, referred to reference in the earlier consultation response that there should be greater recognition in the strategy of the need for cross boundary working with surrounding sub-national transport bodies on connectivity. He expressed concern that there was no response to these comments. He proposed an amendment, seconded by Councillor Yvonne Constance to reflect this concern. The amendment was agreed unanimously, and it was:

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) Cabinet endorses the England's Economic Heartland (EEH) Transport Strategy in broad terms but is concerned to note that the previous consultation response "*...that there should be greater recognition in the strategy of the need for cross boundary working with surrounding sub-national transport bodies on connectivity and scheme proposals that have impacts across both areas,*" appears to have been ignored; and
- (b) to continue our representation on the EEH Board and Strategic Transport Forum (STF) to ensure alignment with our emerging Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP).

**32/21 OBJECTION TO WEST BERKSHIRE MINERALS AND WASTE LOCAL PLAN**

(Agenda Item. 13)

The Cabinet are asked to endorse the officer recommendation to raise an objection to the R19 West Berks Minerals and Waste Local Plan pre-submission draft.

Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment spoke in support of the recommendations.

Councillor Yvonne Constance, Cabinet Member for Environment commented that it was unexpected that West berkshire would continue to rely on Oxfordshire. An officer added that they were working closely with West Berkshire and had suggested a possible way forward.

**RESOLVED:** to:

- (a) endorse the officer response to the West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Consultation (Reg 19 Submission) and the Statement of Common Ground (appended).
- (b) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Environment and Place in conjunction with the Cabinet member for Environment, to:
  - (i) seek to overcome and where possible withdraw the objections set out in the appended Officer response through duty to co-operate discussion with West Berkshire Council; and
  - (ii) approve the Statement of Common Ground with West Berkshire.

**33/21 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS**

(Agenda Item. 14)

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

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

..... in the Chair

Date of signing ..... 2021