

## **Divisions- N/A**

### **COUNTY COUNCIL – 7 November 2023**

#### **REPORT OF THE CABINET**

##### ***Cabinet Member: Leader***

#### **1. Pan-regional partnership for the Oxford-Cambridge area**

*(Cabinet, 19 September 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report providing additional information on the pan-regional partnership for the Oxford to Cambridge area which had been proposed by local authorities and other regional partners, with support from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Members discussed the merits of joining the partnership, the role it will have in influencing policy and decision-making and the question of representation from the County Council.

Cabinet agreed to confirm that the Council will be a participant in the pan-regional partnership.

##### ***Cabinet Member: Deputy Leader and Climate Change Delivery and Environment***

#### **2. Household Waste Recycling Centre Strategy 2023 – 2043**

*(Cabinet, 17 October 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report on the proposed Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) Strategy which had been developed to deliver the Council's obligations under the overarching Oxfordshire Resources and Waste Partnership (ORWP) Waste Strategy and to set out the Council's vision to improve the way the it manages the infrastructure and services offered at the Council's household waste sites.

Cabinet approved the strategy which detailed the Council's aims and deliverables for the HWRC network, and provided an overarching direction to follow so that subsequent HWRC capital funding decisions can be aligned with it whilst being mindful of Local Government budgetary constraints. It would ensure that the HWRC network was not just fit for purpose but was a key component in delivering the Council's climate and sustainability ambitions, encouraging Oxfordshire residents produce less waste and recycle more.

### **3. Local Aggregate Assessment for 2022**

*(Cabinet, 17 October 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report on the annual Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA) which set the level of mineral provision for the County Council as the Minerals Planning Authority, to ensure an appropriate supply for Sand and Gravel and Crushed Rock.

Under the National Planning Policy Framework, July 2021 (NPPF), Mineral Planning Authorities should prepare an annual Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA). The NPPF states that the LAA should ‘forecast future demand, based on a rolling average of 10 years’ sales data and other relevant information, and an assessment of all supply options.’

Cabinet approved the Local Aggregate Assessment and authorised the review and publication of Oxfordshire’s Recycled and Secondary Aggregate findings for 2022 once complete.

#### ***Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care***

### **4. Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2022-23**

*(Cabinet, 17 October 2023)*

Cabinet received and welcomed a report summarising the work of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB) and its partners over the course of the year 2022-23. It was a requirement set out in the Care Act 2014 statutory guidance that the Local Authority receive a copy of the report and that they “will fully consider the contents of the report and how they can improve their contributions to both safeguarding throughout their own organisation and to the joint work of the Board”

#### ***Cabinet Member: Children Education and Young People’s Services***

### **5. Time for Change: Improving Educational Opportunity for All Oxfordshire's Children and Young People - A report by the Oxfordshire Education Commission**

*(Cabinet, 19 September 2023)*

Cabinet considered a report from the independently-chaired Oxfordshire Education Commission which had been established in Autumn 2022 to consider how the Council, collectively with all state-funded schools, other education settings, and partners including children and families, could plan to sustain improving outcomes for all Oxfordshire children.

There had been extensive engagement with children, young people, parents, schools, and community organisations in the County which had provided valuable evidence along with various data insights and information on performance. The Commission had identified a need for incremental change and collaborative working to achieve excellent outcomes for Oxfordshire’s children and young people.

Cabinet welcomed the report and expressed support for the need to step up to the challenges facing the Council and for an action plan to be put in place to monitor progress on improvements.

## **6. Report findings by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)**

*(Cabinet, 19 September 2023)*

Cabinet received a report on the findings of a case investigated by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman concerning the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Service.

Cabinet noted the report and referred to the need for improvements to systems and processes involved in SEND cases to be prioritised. The importance of work with partners, particularly those in the health sector, in delivering an improved SEND service was noted.

## **7. Local Area Partnership/SEND Ofsted Inspection**

*(Cabinet, 17 October 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report presenting the findings of an inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) regarding the planning and commissioning of services for children and young people with SEND in Oxfordshire. The inspection had taken place between 13 July 2023 and 21 July 2023 and the report was published on 15 September 2023.

The County Council was jointly responsible with the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) for the planning and commissioning of services for children and young people with SEND in Oxfordshire.

The inspection's outcome was that "There are widespread and/or systemic failings leading to significant concerns about the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which the local area partnership must address urgently." The Council had unequivocally accepted the report as had its partners.

Cabinet noted the inspection report and welcomed the indicative action plan, development process, and proposed governance which had been introduced as a result of the findings.

## **8. Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2022-23**

*(Cabinet, 17 October 2023)*

Cabinet received and welcomed the annual report of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board. This report highlighted findings from the Board's annual report on the effectiveness of local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Oxfordshire.

***Cabinet Member: Community and Corporate Services***

**9. Workforce Report and Staffing Data - Quarter 1 - April to July 2023**

*(Cabinet, 17 October 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report providing the workforce profile for quarter one including an overview of headcount, agency spend, sickness, turnover and other relevant management information, and performance indicators. The report also set out some of the actions that would address the trends identified.

Cabinet noted the report and welcomed the proposed actions arising from the statistics.

***Cabinet Member: Finance***

**10. Proposal from Oxford United Football Club to Oxfordshire County Council as Landowner – September 2023**

*(Cabinet, 19 September 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report regarding the approach by Oxford United Football Club (OUFC) to the County Council (OCC) requesting that the Council transfer, by way of a 250-year lease, c.18 hectares (44.48 acres) of land, known as 'land at Stratfield Brake, Kidlington' for the development of a new 18,000 capacity football stadium with ancillary leisure and commercial facilities to include, hotel, retail, conference, and training/community grounds.

Cabinet also received a report and recommendations from the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee and heard from a number of speakers regarding the proposals.

Cabinet noted the feedback from the stakeholder and public engagement exercises and agreed to the leasehold disposal of the land located to the east of Frieze Way/south of Kidlington roundabout known as the Triangle, based on the heads of terms which were to be negotiated with Oxford United Football Club (OUFC) and a number of conditions relating to planning permission, the production of a net zero carbon plan and other proposals by OUFC, a best value assessment of the leasehold disposal and restrictive covenants.

**11. Business Management & Monitoring Report – July 2023**

*(Cabinet, 19 September 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report on the July 2023 performance, risk, and finance position for the council.

Members noted the current position on performance indicators, the projected financial outturn and referred to the demands and inflationary pressures facing the local government sector as a whole.

## **12. Capital Programme Approvals – September 2023**

*(Cabinet, 19 September 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report setting out requests for changes to the Capital Programme requiring Cabinet approval that will be incorporated into the agreed programme and included in the next quarterly update to the Capital Programme in October 2023

Cabinet approved the recommendations for the release of the £1m approved budget to complete Stage 0 of the Didcot Central Corridors South and Vale Programme; the release of £1.55m to progress with Stage 1 of the expanded Zero Emission Zone scheme and the forward funding of £0.55m from the Budget Priority Reserve; a budget increase of £1.495m to a revised budget of £6.99m for Benson Relief Road to enable implementation of construction work, funded from additional S106 contributions and Growth Deal Funding and to forward fund the scheme in advance of secured S106 contributions; a revised budget of £24.1m to the A44 Corridor Improvements between and including Peartree to Cassington Road roundabout, and an additional £4.1m funded from Growth Deal and the inclusion of £0.95m for a programme of works into the Capital Programme, to upgrade two Gypsy and Traveller sites (utility buildings), funded from the agreed capital proposals (February 2023) in earmarked reserves.

## **13. Proposal to dispose of Rewley Road site**

*(Cabinet, 19 September 2023)*

Cabinet considered a report on proposals for the disposal of the Rewley Road site in Oxford and the implications for the Property and Asset Strategy agreed by Cabinet in November 2022 which set out the council's long-term vision for its estate along with a set of objectives aligned with delivering the council's strategic plan priorities. This included a road map for Oxford city centre accommodation and the rationalisation of office and operational accommodation across the county. Members noted the implications of the proposals for the fire station located on the site.

Cabinet approved the disposal of the site subject to negotiations on final heads of terms and completion of legal documentation and other steps necessary to implement the scheme.

## **14. Capital Programme Update and Monitoring Report – July 2023**

*(Cabinet, 17 October 2023)*

Cabinet considered the second quarterly capital programme update and monitoring report for 2023/24 which set out the monitoring position based on activity to the end of August 2023. The report also provided an update to the Capital Programme approved by Council in February 2023 taking into account additional funding and new schemes. The updated programme also incorporated changes agreed through the Capital Programme Approval Reports to Cabinet during the year as well as new funding.

Cabinet noted the report and approved the additions to the Capital programme including two children's residential homes at Oathill Lodge and Greenways, Wooton, and Thames Path Bank Repairs. Members also agreed to grant funding bids for Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Funding and for Property Decarbonisation Programme funding.

### **15. Treasury Management Quarter 1 Report (2023/24)**

*(Cabinet, 17 October 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report on the Council's Treasury Management activity for the quarter to June 2023 measured against the budget agreed by Council in February 2023.

Cabinet noted the report which provided details of the management of the Council's borrowing, investments, and cash flows, including its banking, money market and capital market transactions, the effective control of the risks associated with those activities, and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.

### **16. Budget & Business Planning Report - 2024/25 - 2026/27**

*(Cabinet, 17 October 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report on the budget and business planning process for 2024/25. It explained the process for developing and agreeing the budget for 2024/25 and the assumptions on which the Council's current medium term financial strategy (MTFS) agreed in February 2023 was based. It also provided updates on information arising from government and other announcements plus the on-going impact of challenges apparent in 2023/24 and new or emerging financial issues for 2024/25 and beyond which would be incorporated into the new MTFS.

Cabinet approved the recommendations which included the budget and business planning process for 2024/25, a three-year period for the medium-term financial strategy to 2026/27 and ten-year period for the capital programme to 2033/34 and noted the requirement for the Council to set a sustainable balanced budget which showed how income will equal spending plans.

## ***Cabinet Member: Infrastructure and Development Strategy***

### **17. Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP) Monitoring Report**

*(Cabinet, 17 October 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report providing an overview of the LTCP monitoring report proposed for publication alongside the council's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP).

The LTCP was adopted by the council in July 2022 and outlined the long-term vision for transport and travel in the county and the policies required to deliver this.

Cabinet welcomed the progress that had been made in delivering the LTCP in its first year, as detailed in the monitoring report, and agreed to its publication alongside the LTCP.

### ***Cabinet Member: Public Health, Inequalities and Community Safety***

#### **18. Oxfordshire County Council Fire & Rescue Service Property and Emergency Response Strategy for Oxford City and Carterton.**

*(Cabinet, 19 September 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report on the proposed Property and Emergency Response Strategy for Oxford City and Carterton which had been developed to support the redevelopment of Rewley Road fire station (as set out in the proposal to dispose of Rewley Road agenda item), the renovation of Slade Park Fire Station, an offsite training facility in the Oxford and the new build of a fire station and training facility at Carterton. The strategy set out the County Council's approach to the redevelopment of its fire stations and training facilities in Oxford and Carterton.

Cabinet approved the strategy and noted the benefits that would be realised for the Fire Service as a result of the proposals.

### ***Cabinet Member: Transport Management***

#### **19. Oxford : East Oxford Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) - Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)**

*(Cabinet, 17 October 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report presenting recommendations and alternative options considered following the trial of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) in three areas of East Oxford. The trial had been approved by the Council in December 2021. The restrictions had been implemented by the introduction of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) in May 2022 which was due to expire in November 2023.

Cabinet had received a large number of representations on the proposals and were addressed by members of the public and County Councillors at the meeting.

Members noted that LTNs were in line with the County Council's priorities to take action to tackle the climate emergency and cut carbon emissions, prioritise the health and well-being of residents and invest in an inclusive, integrated, and sustainable transport network that was rebalanced in favour of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users. However, they also recognised that the LTNs had created disbenefits for some, including longer and more unpredictable journey times for less mobile individuals who could not easily achieve modal shift away from a car, certain trades, and professions, and (combined with other factors) public transport. Bus journey times had been particularly negatively affected, but there was evidence that this situation had begun to improve during the trial period. Communities outside the immediate area of the scheme had not benefitted as much as those within LTN areas and had experienced inconvenience. They had, however, benefitted from an improved walking and cycling network.

Cabinet approved the recommendations to introduce the permanent Traffic Regulation Orders for Divinity Road St. Clement's and St. Mary's; the replacement of the bollards in Divinity Road, James Street and Magdalen Road with automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras; exemptions for emergency services, waste and postal vehicles, taxi and private hire vehicles, and other measures to provide for the enforcement of the traffic restrictions, and the investigation of measures to improve public transport journey times.

## **20. Future Highways Maintenance Contract Model**

*(Cabinet, 17 October 2023)*

Cabinet had before it a report setting out proposals for a new highways maintenance contract. The Council currently operated (via the existing highway maintenance contractor) an aging winter gritting fleet which was increasingly expensive to maintain. When the new maintenance contract commences on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 there was a risk that the Council could be without a suitable gritting fleet due to long lead in times for replacement fleets. To manage this risk, it was proposed that the Council procure a 'contract hire' agreement for a replacement fleet.

Cabinet endorsed the approach set out in the recommendations and authorised the procurement process for the new contracts.

## ***Scrutiny Reports***

### **21. Reports received from scrutiny committees**

*(Cabinet, 19 September, and 17 October 2023)*

Cabinet received reports on, and committed to respond formally to, the following:

Performance and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on:-

LGA Peer Review on Comms (28 April 2023)  
Consultation and Engagement Strategy (28 April 2023)  
Business Transformation Programme (21 July 2023)  
EDI Strategy and Action Plan (21 July 2023)  
Workforce Strategy (21 July 2023)  
Workforce Report and Data Q4 2022/23 (21 July 2023)

Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on:-

Area SEND Inspection of the Local Area Partnership (21 September 2023)  
Healthy Weight (21 September 2023)  
Health and Wellbeing Strategy Update (21 September 2023)

People Overview & Scrutiny Committee on Local Area SEND Inspection (2 October 2023)