

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 26 February 2019 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.10 pm

Present:

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

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Liz Brighthouse (Agenda Item 6)
Councillor Jenny Hannaby (Agenda Item 6)
Councillor John Sanders (Agenda Item 6 and 10)

Officers:

Whole of meeting Yvonne Rees (Chief Executive); Lorna Baxter (Director of Finance); Nick Graham (Interim Strategic Director of Resources)

Part of meeting	
Item	Name
6	Owen Jenkins, Director of Community Infrastructure
10	Sue Halliwell, Director for Planning & Place; Karen Lister, Head of Estates and Strategy

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.

11/19 MINUTES

(Agenda Item. 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2019 were approved and signed as a correct record, subject to the following correction (in ***bold italics***) to the 4th sentence of paragraph 11 of the preamble to Minute 4/19:

In relation to Oxford City, a number of proposals were being looked at in relation to changes to manage congestion and the overriding principles would be that any changes must be combined with benefits.

12/19 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda Item. 4)

Councillor Howson had given notice of the following question to Councillor Constance:

“Has the county council any views on the idea of creating ‘Home Zone’ streets as defined by the Department for Transport in their design guidelines?”

Councillor Constance replied:

“The Oxfordshire Street Design Guide, on which work is ongoing, will seek to provide guidance on the design of developments from master planning stage to detailed design. We envisage the guide will promote various types of design which are appropriate for different street types. Therefore, we expect to include guidance on the use of shared surfaces and space which may be more appropriate for streets from which properties are directly accessed and are lightly trafficked. Shared surfaces and space encourage motorists to give way to other users of the street and encourage the use of the street for play and social interaction, which is what Home Zones seek to achieve. The aim of the design guide is to help create successful places where people want to live, work and play and to encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport. We hope to undertake stakeholder consultation over the summer months and conclude the project in autumn 2019. “

Supplementary: Councillor Howson highlighted a proposed development in his local area of a hotel without parking provision and noted that schemes such as Home Zones would enable areas to remain as communities. It was an additional tool in addition to Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs). Councillor Constance thanked Councillor Howson for the question and agreed that there were occasions when CPZs would be appropriate and other times when Home Zones could be used.

Councillor Pressel had given notice of the following question to Councillor Hudspeth:

“At our budget meeting, the Leader quite rightly said that ‘we must target our resources to provide vital services to those vulnerable adults and children who require them most’. In the light of this, please can you tell us exactly what criteria will be used for deciding how the new £1 million fund for youth services will be allocated? Can we assume that the data from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment will be used to inform our decisions?”

Councillor Hudspeth replied:

“I was delighted to propose and vote for a budget that was caring and compassionate as it:

Increased the funding on Adult Social Care by £8.8 million
Increased the funding on Children’s Social Care by £9.0 million
Increased the funding on Education by £3.0 million
Provided £1 million for Youth provision across the county.

These measures will help the most vulnerable adults and children across Oxfordshire.

By contrast I noted that Cllr Pressel voted:

AGAINST increasing the funding on Adult Social Care by £8.8 million
AGAINST increasing the funding on Children’s Social Care by £9.0 million
AGAINST increasing the funding on Education by £3.0 million
AGAINST providing £1 million for Youth provision across the county

The criteria for allocating the £1 million for youth provision will ensure that all areas across the county will be able to benefit”

Supplementary: Responding to a comment that the question was unanswered and asking again what criteria would be used and whether the JSNA would be used Councillor Hudspeth, referred to his original answer.

Councillor Phillips had given notice of the following question to Councillor Constance:

“The Growth Deal is funding a feasibility design project for a pedestrian crossing at the bottom of Collinwood Road in Risinghurst to be completed by the end of March 2019.

Will this work be completed on time and will it be made available to the local member? What is your assessment of the likelihood of funding becoming available to deliver this crossing?”

Councillor Constance replied:

“The feasibility report and design for a pedestrian crossing at Collinwood Road is on schedule to report by the end of March 2019. The outputs from this work will be made available to the local member. Whilst feedback on these outputs would be welcome we do wish to advise that there is currently no plan to undertake wider consultation at the current time. At the current time there is no committed funding to undertake further design work and delivery of this scheme. Through undertaking the feasibility design work however, the council has advanced opportunities to bid for or negotiate funding opportunities for a scheme in the future”

Supplementary: Councillor Phillips welcomed the feasibility study but sought clarification whether following the report there would be a costed delivery plan available, ready to bid should funding become available. Councillor Constance replied that this was sometimes done but that she was not sure in this case as there was not the expectation that funding would be available. However, the scheme was one where the elements were common to many projects and she would not expect that it would take long to produce a costed plan should it be required. She declined a request to visit the site explaining that it was not possible to visit every site.

13/19 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item. 5)

The Leader had agreed the following requests to speak:

Item	Speaker
Item 6 – Performance Scrutiny Highways Deep Dive Recommendations	Councillor Liz Brighthouse, Chairman of Performance Scrutiny Committee Councillor Jenny Hannaby, Leader member Deep Dive Highways Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment (5 mins)
Item 7 – Staffing Report	Councillor Laura Price, Opposition Deputy Leader (did not attend)
Item 8 – Tank Farm, Chipping Norton – Development Site	Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment

14/19 PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY HIGHWAYS DEEP DIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

(Agenda Item. 6)

The condition of roads has a significant impact on levels of public satisfaction with the Council and their local area. As a result, the Performance Scrutiny Committee commissioned a deep dive into the factors affecting public perception and experience of highways and the Council's approach to improving this. From July to November a small group of councillors worked with officers to identify opportunities for improving the condition of the road network, tackling congestion, better managing the impact of street works and adapting our approach to maintenance contracts and partnership working on highways. The report had been considered by the Performance Scrutiny Committee and was presented to Cabinet for them to consider its recommendations.

Councillor Brighouse, Chairman of Performance Scrutiny Committee speaking in support of the recommendations set out the reasons for the review and thanked the councillors who had been part of the group. The Performance Scrutiny Committee had considered and endorsed the recommendations.

Councillor Jenny Hannaby, lead member on the Working Group thanked officers for their work and particularly Katie Read, Senior Policy and Performance Officer for bringing it all together. Councillor Hannaby introduced the contents of the report highlighting the significant themes that had led to the recommendations. Communication had been a key element of their considerations, both to councillors, parishes and the wider public. Enforcement was another key area impacting on the public's perception of highways and their satisfaction with the service. The group were in favour of the Council becoming a permitting authority. The group had identified the real funding issues and supported the work to press for funding whenever possible. The positive impact of dragon patchers was recognised but there was a need to find a way to use them in urban areas. In commending the recommendations Councillor Hannaby urged Cabinet to act to achieve the quick wins within the recommendations.

Councillor John Sanders, Shadow Cabinet Member for Environment and member of the Group commented that the Group had been careful that their recommendations would save or generate money or at the least be cost neutral. He did not think that there was a need for special costing in the longer term. In supporting the recommendations, he drew attention to the proposal that the Council become a permitting authority. Councillor Sanders also highlighted the importance of community engagement.

Councillor Ian Hudspeth, Leader of the Council, thanked Performance Scrutiny Committee for bringing forward the recommendations for Cabinet to consider. Councillors would be aware that highways issues were the biggest part of their mail box.

Councillor Yvonne Constance, Cabinet Member for Environment, thanked the Performance Scrutiny Committee for taking the time to undertake the review. Councillor Constance thanked Councillor Hannaby for the summary of recommendations and for drawing out the key themes, that were reiterated in several recommendations: member and community engagement, better communication and responses, supervision and flexibility of staff/contracts and enforcement. There was an opportunity to celebrate the good work being done whilst looking at what further was needed.

Owen Jenkins, Director of Community Operations, commented that a number of the recommendations did involve costs and would need work to determine the costs and to evaluate benefits. He noted that as the Highways Asset Management Plan was refreshed then there would be member engagement, possibly through a Transport Cabinet Advisory Group. Officers were already working on increased information to Localities and councillors had been emailed asking for their priorities for highways work. Work was

underway on the wider communication issues. On supervision of staff/contracts more work was needed. Increased supervision would mean increased contract costs and there was a balance to be found. The Directorate was committed to the income review and additional income had been included in this year's budget.

During discussion Cabinet:

- 1) Noted that only a handful of councillors had responded to the email seeking their views on priorities and that this indicated part of the problem with engagement, that needed effort both ways.
- 2) Commented on efforts to bid for any available infrastructure funding and their considerable success in this area.
- 3) Responding to surprise about the recommendation on the out of hours service when this was provided in partnership with other authorities such as the Police, Councillor Hannaby confirmed that it was more about the opportunities for integration as the service was provided from multiple centres. Owen Jenkins confirmed that there was a comprehensive out of hours service in operation and Councillor Constance paid tribute to the god working between agencies.

Councillor Ian Corkin, Cabinet Member for Cherwell Partnership, highlighted the important issue of enforcement that was a cross authority responsibility. It was a fertile area for cross authority working and he welcomed the opportunity to work with Councillor Constance and officers.

Councillor David Bartholomew, Cabinet Member for Finance recognised highways as an important topic but expressed concerns that the recommendations would carry costs and he therefore proposed an amended recommendation that allowed the recommendations to be evaluated and costed.

RESOLVED:

- (a) To thank the Performance Scrutiny Committee for their work on the deep dive into highways;
- (b) To note the recommendations and to ask officers to evaluate and cost the proposals and to report back in the Autumn to the deep dive group and Performance Scrutiny Committee before reporting back to Cabinet;
- (c) That those activities already in train not be halted or paused and that Performance Scrutiny Committee members and Cabinet receive updates as appropriate.

15/19 STAFFING REPORT - QUARTER 3 - 2018

(Agenda Item. 7)

Cabinet considered a report that gave an update on staffing numbers and related activity during the period 1 October 2018 to 31 December 2018. It gave details of the actual staffing numbers at 31 December 2018 in terms of

Full Time Equivalents. In addition, the report provided information on the cost of posts being covered by agency staff and an Agency Trend analysis. Cabinet noted the correction to the agenda summary set out in the addenda.

Councillor Judith Heathcoat, Deputy Leader of the Council, introduced the contents of the report highlighting the changes made in response to queries and comments made previously and noting that with transportation the report would continue to develop. Councillor Heathcoat added that more detailed information was on the website. In relation to agency staff Councillor Heathcoat commented that there were legitimate reasons for using agency staff, such as, to provide continuity of service when recruiting to vacancies to cover a time limited piece of work. Councillor Heathcoat added that regarding all recruitment there were strict controls in place to manage recruitment.

Councillor Heathcoat, responding to a question about the high use of catering and hospitality agency staff in Quarter 1 compared with the rest of the year, explained that this had been connected to Carillion and staff had become employed.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

16/19 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

(Agenda Item. 8)

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.

17/19 TANK FARM, CHIPPING NORTON - DEVELOPMENT SITE

(Agenda Item. 10)

Cabinet discussion was held in public session without detailed reference to the information contained on the annex, that remains exempt.

The information contained in the annex is exempt in that it falls within the following prescribed category:

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

and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, in that disclosure would undermine the process to the detriment of the Council's ability properly to discharge its fiduciary and other duties as a public authority.

Approval was given on 21 December 2018 by The Leader of the Council with the agreement of the Director of Finance, to authorise the Strategic Director of Communities to negotiate, up to a specified maximum value, the purchase of Pearman's land, being 13.32 ha (32.91 acres) adjoining the Council's land at Tank Farm, in order to ensure the County Council's control, influence and deliverability of the programmed capital receipt for Tank Farm.

The negotiations are now complete, and Cabinet considered a report that detailed the provisionally agreed terms of acquisition.

Councillor Eddie Reeves, Cabinet Member for Transformation, introduced the contents of the report and highlighted the benefits of the proposed recommendations.

RESOLVED: to

- (a) authorise the Strategic Director of Communities in consultation with the Portfolio member to complete the purchase, for the value specified in Annex B, of Pearman's land, being 12.51 ha (30.91 acres) adjoining Tank Farm.
- (b) authorise the Director of Law & Governance in conjunction with the Director of Capital Investment & Delivery and Director of Finance to undertake appropriate due diligence and prepare the necessary legal agreement on the terms referred to in Annex B.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 2019