

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 18 July 2023 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.25pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Liz Leffman – in the Chair
Councillor Liz Brighthouse OBE (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Tim Bearder
Councillor Duncan Enright
Councillor Andrew Gant
Councillor Kate Gregory
Councillor Michael O'Connor
Councillor Glynis Phillips
Councillor Dr Pete Sudbury

Other Members in Attendance: Councillors David Bartholomew and Donna Ford

Officers:

Whole of meeting Stephen Chandler, Executive Director (People, Transformation and Performance, Lorna Baxter (Director of Finance), Anita Bradley (Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer), Ansaf Azhar (Corporate Director Public Health & Community Safety), Bill Cotton (Corporate Director Environment & Place) Anne Coyle (Interim Corporate Director of Children's Services), Karen Fuller (Interim Corporate Director Adult Social Care), Chris Reynolds (Committee Officer)

The Cabinet 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.

85/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item. 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Miller.

86/23 MINUTES

(Agenda Item. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2023 were approved and signed as a correct record by the Chair.

87/23 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda Item. 4)

There were none received

88/23 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item. 5)

There were no requests received.

89/23 REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

(Agenda Item. 6)

Councillor Charlie Hicks, Deputy Chair of the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, introduced the report "Vision Zero". He outlined the background to the recommendations and referred, in particular, to the proposals for audits of contracts, commissions, briefings for infrastructure delivery, the need for the Council to move towards the CLOCS standard, the recommendations for a road safety campaign and adequate funding.

Councillor Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for Highway Management thanked the Committee for its work and said that a formal response from the Cabinet would be given in due course.

Councillor Nigel Simpson, Chair of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, introduced the report "SEND and Staffing Changes in Children's Services" He explained the background to the recommendations which referred to concerns about the performance of the SEND service. These included a request for the issue of a press release publicising the changes to staffing in the Children's Services SEND and Staffing Changes in Children's Services department.

Councillor Liz Brighthouse, Deputy Leader, thanked the Committee for its excellent work. She reminded members that the issues affecting the SEND service were partly attributed to national funding issues.

Cabinet will formally respond to the Scrutiny Committee in due course.

90/23 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT & MONITORING REPORT - MAY 2023

(Agenda Item. 7)

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

Councillor Liz Leffman, Leader of the Council, introduced the report. She referred to the popularity of the 20mph scheme, and the achievements of carers in the County which were recognised in the Oxfordshire Care Awards. Councillor Leffman then explained the background to the performance indicators and commented in particular, on the indicators showing red in relation to the introduction of LED lighting, household waste recycling, adult social care debtors, and the Council's financial position.

Councillor Leffman then explained the recommendations in the report.

Councillor Phillips, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, explained the background to the percentage of telephone calls abandoned at the Customer Service Centre. She commended all those involved in achieving nationally acknowledged CCA accreditation for customer services.

During discussion, members welcomed the introduction of the Citizens' Portal which would enable the information on the Council's performance indicators to be widely available.

Councillor Leffman moved, and Councillor Enright seconded the recommendations and they were approved.

RESOLVED to

- a) note the report and annexes.**
- b) approve the virement requests in Annex B-2a.**
- c) approve the use of £2.0m from the Transformation Reserve to fund the council's Delivery Unit and associated costs associated with transformation and driving efficiency.**
- d) note the use of £0.1m funding held in the COVID-19 reserve to further extend capacity needed within the Information Management team within Governance to support the council's ability to respond to Subject Access Requests (SARs) and approve the use of £1.5m one – off funding to support pressures in Children's Social Care in 2023/24.**
- e) agree the overall allocation of Homes for Ukraine grant funding as set out in Annex B-6 and authorise the Director of Finance to finalise the agreements with the City and District Councils following consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance.**
- f) approve the write-off of four unrecoverable social care debts with a combined total of £0.070m as set out in Annex B paragraph 93.**

91/23 CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE AND MONITORING REPORT

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet had before it the first quarterly capital programme update and monitoring report for 2023/24 which set out the monitoring position based on activity to the end of May 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 incorporated changes agreed through the Capital Programme Approval Reports to Cabinet in May and June 2023 as well as new funding.

Councillor Liz Leffman, Leader of the Council, introduced the report. She referred to the additional measures introduced to monitor the Council's

Capital Programme and explained the reasons for the changes recommended.

Councillor Phillips proposed and Councillor Enright seconded that, as the Capital Programme was under review, recommendation a) be amended to “note” the Capital Programme. The amendment was approved.

Councillor Leffman moved, and Councillor Brighthouse seconded the amended recommendations and they were approved.

RESOLVED to:

Capital Programme

1. **Accept the latest capital monitoring position for 2023/24 set out in Annex 1.**
2. **Approve the updated Capital Programme at Annex 2 incorporating the changes set out in this report.**

Grant funding

Agree the inclusion in the Capital Programme of the following grant funding updates and allocation:

3. **additional pothole funding of £3.706m to be added to the annual structural maintenance programme (Paragraph 81).**
4. **Sustainable Warmth Fund for Home Upgrade 2 grant of £6.4m to be utilised in 2023/24 and 2024/25 (Paragraph 46).**

Capital Approvals

Agree:

5. **An increase of £0.7m in the Bloxham CE Primary School scheme – new hall and kitchen (paragraph 59).**
6. **An increase of £0.3m in the Botley Road Corridor scheme to reflect the final accounts for the scheme (paragraph 63).**
7. **An update to the agreed funding for Tree Planting Programme to split this into capital (£1.8m) and revenue (£0.8m) elements (paragraph 65).**
8. **Inclusion of £18.0m for the Fleet Management Programme (paragraph 69).**

9. **Release of £0.8m Vision Zero pipeline funding towards Active Travel (paragraph 74).**
10. **The short-term funding arrangements on the North Oxford Corridor Scheme until the confirmation of the revised scheme cost and the reallocation of Growth Deal grant towards the scheme from the overall existing Growth Deal programme (paragraph 76).**

Capital Programme

11. **Note the latest capital monitoring position for 2023/24 set out in Annex 1.**
12. **Approve the updated Capital Programme at Annex 2 incorporating the changes set out in this report.**

Grant funding

Agree the inclusion in the Capital Programme of the following grant funding updates and allocation:

13. **additional pothole funding of £3.706m to be added to the annual structural maintenance programme (Paragraph 81).**
14. **Sustainable Warmth Fund for Home Upgrade 2 grant of £6.4m to be utilised in 2023/24 and 2024/25 (Paragraph 46).**

Capital Approvals

Agree:

15. **An increase of £0.7m in the Bloxham CE Primary School scheme – new hall and kitchen (paragraph 59).**
16. **An increase of £0.3m in the Botley Road Corridor scheme to reflect the final accounts for the scheme (paragraph 63).**
17. **An update to the agreed funding for Tree Planting Programme to split this into capital (£1.8m) and revenue (£0.8m) elements (paragraph 65).**
18. **Inclusion of £18.0m for the Fleet Management Programme (paragraph 69).**

19. **Release of £0.8m Vision Zero pipeline funding towards Active Travel (paragraph 74).**
20. **The short-term funding arrangements on the North Oxford Corridor Scheme until the confirmation of the revised scheme cost and the reallocation of Growth Deal grant towards the scheme from the overall existing Growth Deal programme (paragraph 76).**

92/23 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL PERFORMANCE 2022/23

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet had before it a report on the Council's treasury management activities for the financial year 2022/23. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) 'Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2021' required that the Council and Audit & Governance Committee received a report on Treasury Management activities at least four times per year. This report is the final report for the financial year 2022/23 and sets out the position at 31 March 2023.

Councillor Liz Leffman, Leader of the Council, introduced the report and referred, in particular, to the challenges experienced by officers in monitoring treasury management in the current economic climate.

Councillor Leffman moved and Councillor Phillips seconded the recommendations and they were approved.

RESOLVED to:-

- a) **note the report**
- b) **note the council's treasury management activity and outcomes in 2022/23.**

93/23 DELEGATED POWERS - QUARTERLY REPORT

(Agenda Item. 10)

Cabinet had before it a report referring to executive decisions taken during the period April to June 2023 inclusive. Under the Scheme of Delegation in the Council's Constitution (Part 7.1, paragraph 6.3 (c)(i)), the Chief Executive is authorised to undertake an executive function on behalf of the Cabinet. Cabinet receives a quarterly report on the use of this delegated power in relation to such executive decisions; that is, decisions that might otherwise have been taken by Cabinet.

Councillor Liz Leffman, Leader of the Council, introduced the report.

Councillor Liz Brighthouse, Deputy Leader, explained the background to the 2 decisions taken in relation to the Children's Services department.

Councillor Leffman moved and Councillor Sudbury seconded the recommendations and they were approved.

RESOLVED to note the executive decisions taken under delegated powers, set out in paragraph 4.

94/23 UPDATES TO TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR FUTURE OXFORDSHIRE PARTNERSHIP

(Agenda Item. 11)

Cabinet had before it a report proposing amendments to the Terms of Reference for the Future Oxfordshire Partnership following changes to the programmes within the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.

Councillor Liz Leffman, Leader of the Council, introduced the report and emphasised that, while the current changes to the terms of reference were appropriate, it was likely that further revisions would be necessary in due course.

Councillor Pete Sudbury, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Delivery, said that while he recognised that the current revision of the terms of reference for the Partnership were technical, he proposed that there needed to be an appointed representative for climate, ecology and the Natural World, planetary boundaries and the circular economy. The Future Oxfordshire Partnership needed to consider climate change solutions, resilience to anticipated climate impacts and embrace the development of a circular economy. Appropriate representation would assist with this work. He suggested that the further revisions to the terms of reference should include such representation.

The Chair acknowledged that the FOP should be more proactive on the issues raised but said that the need for long term sustainable development was included within the objectives of the Partnership.

Councillor Leffman moved, and Councillor Brighthouse seconded the recommendations and they were approved

RESOLVED to approve the Future Oxfordshire Partnership's revised terms of reference and memorandum of understanding. These will take effect following approval by each of the six Oxfordshire councils.

95/23 CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAMME SIX MONTH UPDATE

(Agenda Item. 12)

Cabinet had before it a report giving a six-monthly update on work to address the Climate Emergency, including the delivery of the 22/23 Climate Action Programme workstreams. An updated programme for 2023/24 (Annex 2)

included actions from an internal audit on integration of climate action, and a number of new joint workstreams agreed with the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

Councillor Sudbury, Cabinet Member for Climate Change Delivery and Environment, introduced the report. He referred to the recent examples of the impact of Climate Change including the wildfires in Europe. He said that the report illustrated the Council's performance resulting from its environmental strategies and priorities and referred to the recent staff reorganisation which would double the resources devoted to implementing the Council's policies on climate change. Councillor Sudbury referred to the challenges ahead, including using less energy, elimination of fossil fuels from electricity generation, and electrification. A change of behaviours including diet, travel, and wasteful consumption was also essential. Councillor Sudbury gave examples of how these priorities would be addressed in the Council's strategic objectives.

During discussion members welcomed the thoroughness and presentation of the report. They made the following points:-

- The importance of working collectively with other organisations on Climate Change delivery and working towards a circular economy
- The potential for innovative financing including "green bonds"

Councillor Sudbury moved, and Councillor O'Connor seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to:

- a. note the biannual update on the delivery of the Climate Action Programme (Annex 1).**
- b. approve adjustments to the programme for 2023/24 (Annex 2).**
- c. approve the Council's Carbon Management Plan through to 2030 (Annex 3).**

96/23 HIF2 A40 - OUTCOMES OF SCHEME REVIEW

(Agenda Item. 13)

Cabinet had before it a report which set out the outcomes of a review of the original A40 HIF2 scheme. The report set out the scope of the initial delivery phase and the recommendation that, subject to discussions with Homes England and further scheme development and engagement, it is used as a basis for continued discussions and to undertake a public consultation following the Cabinet's decision, to allow for development and subsequent identification of a preferred option.

Councillor Duncan Enright introduced the report. He explained the reasons for the review of the scope of the project and the benefits of the active travel elements of the scheme, the provision of park and ride facilities, a bus lane into Oxford and interim bus priority measures. He also explained the reasons for the decision to split the project into 2 phases.

During discussion, a member expressed concern about the scheme, particularly regarding the provision of only a single bus lane which, in his opinion, would exacerbate the traffic issues in the areas of Didcot, Carterton and Eynsham. Other members said, that, while the scheme did not provide a complete solution it would encourage the use of public transport and cycling. The congestion issues on the A40 were not acceptable and it was important that some measures be taken to address the issues, including the impact of the development of new housing in the area.

Councillor Enright responded to the comments made and reiterated that this would be a phased approach and emphasised the benefits of the new transport hub at Eynsham. It was also important for serious consideration to be given to a rail link in the area. He considered that this was important infrastructure improvement which would help to improve the lives of residents in West Oxfordshire.

Councillor Enright moved, and Councillor Sudbury seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED, 8 voting in favour and 1 against, to:-

- a) approve the continued development of the initial delivery phase of the HIF2 scheme as set out in this paper**
- b) endorse the continued discussion with Homes England and giving of notice under clause 8.4 of the Grant Determination Agreement (GDA) for revisions to funding window, initial scheme delivery, milestones, ensuring that the required due diligence has been completed to manage programme and financial risk. Once this is completed Authorise the Corporate Director of Environment and Place, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, Director of Finance, Cabinet Member for Travel and Development Strategy and Cabinet Member for Finance, to enter into an amended GDA**
- c) approve the further scheme development, assessment and preparation of materials and Authorise the Corporate Director of Environment and Place to enter into public engagement on the initial delivery phase**

97/23 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.

98/23 FOR INFORMATION ONLY: CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY REPORT

(Agenda Item. 15)

Cabinet noted the response to the Scrutiny report on Cost of Living.

.....in the Chair

Date of signing