

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on Monday, 12 February 2018 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 2.21 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Ian Hudspeth – in the Chair
Councillor Mrs Judith Heathcoat
Councillor Lawrie Stratford
Councillor Steve Harrod
Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale
Councillor Yvonne Constance OBE
Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles
Councillor Mark Gray

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Paul Buckley (Agenda Item 4)
Councillor John Howson (Agenda Item 4)

Officers:

Whole of meeting Peter Clark (Chief Executive); Sue Whitehead
(Resources Directorate)

Part of meeting	
Item	Name
6	Sue Halliwell, Director for Planning and Place

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.

14/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor David Bartholomew.

15/18 MINUTES

(Agenda Item. 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2018 were approved and signed as a correct record.

16/18 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda Item. 4)

Councillor John Sanders had given notice of the following two questions to Councillor Constance:

1. "There is considerable disappointment that Frideswide Square is about to undergo disruption due to proposed road works. Why has this been deemed necessary so soon after the completion of the current design?"

Councillor Constance replied:

"Frideswide Square is an innovative scheme, specifically designed with tight corners to keep the traffic speeds low so that it is safe for all. Unfortunately, as a consequence of unlawful driving, some damage to kerbing and slabs has been caused which require repairing.

At the same time we are taking the opportunity to install new dropped kerbs near the railway station to assist cyclists and to introduce improvements to help visually impaired users at all crossing points.

Phasing of the works will however be supported by tailored traffic management and whilst some delays can be expected disruption will be kept to a minimum by using manual traffic management during the daytime."

2. "There is concern that the widened pavement in Oxford High Street near Turl Street has obstructed bus traffic. What measures does the Cabinet Member's department propose to carry out to ameliorate this problem?"

Councillor Constance replied:

"The pavement widening was proposed because we and the bus companies knew these bus stops would become more popular after Westgate opened, and we all wanted to provide extra space for the waiting passengers.

However the stops are in fact so popular that bus dwell times are long and this is exacerbating the blockages.

We are therefore considering changes to bus stops, loading bays and taxi bays in the area as well as changes to the pavement itself.

Proposals are being drawn up now, there will be consultation on the proposals as soon as they are ready."

Councillor Howson had given notice of the following question to Councillor Hibbert Biles:

"In light of the recent Section 8 report from Ofsted on St Gregory the Great School what steps can the county council take to reassure parents that the school will provide a satisfactory and safe education for their children?"

Councillor Hibbert-Biles replied:

“The situation at the school is clearly very concerning and the council is seeking assurances from the school / academy sponsor that every effort is being made to improve standards for pupils. We have also expressed concerns to the Schools Commissioner, who oversees the performance of academies.

Clearly the council cannot offer reassurances it is not in a position to make. It is ultimately the role of the Schools Commissioner to step in where necessary to ensure academies are providing an acceptable standard of education.”

Supplementary: Councillor Howson commented that another school within the multi academy trust had safeguarding issues and that it raised a question over the suitability of the multi academy trust to run the school. He questioned the tangled roles of the Education & Skills Funding Agency, Ofsted and the Regional Schools Commissioner when looking at the academy schools. Councillor Hibbert-Biles replied that she shared the frustration voiced by Councillor Howson and compared their response to the response of the County Council to a maintained schools in difficulty. Councillor Hibbert-Biles advised that the Council had been in touch with the Regional Schools Commissioner and officers had been into the school but their hands were tied. The matter would be raised again with the Regional Schools Commissioner and she would explore with him the role of the Education & Skills Funding Agency.

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

“The proposal for an Oxford-Cambridge Expressway is currently causing alarm and inflicting planning blight on many residents in the county, living in locations where this new road could potentially be routed. Depending on the choice of corridor, it could for example mean bulldozing of homes in Botley, or loss of huge areas of Green Belt south of Oxford, with massive impacts on communities affected.

Thank you for writing to Highways England (HE), expressing this Council’s concern and its wish for a Public Inquiry into the need for the road. The Chair of the Oxfordshire Growth Board has also written to HE, urging HE ‘very strongly, to engage in a full public consultation’ on the choice of corridor. I understand that HE have recently written back to yourself and the chair of the Growth Board, refusing to engage in a full public consultation until after the corridor has been chosen later this year.

Could you please confirm that this is the case, and indicate what steps you will now be taking as our representative, to protest to HE about this dismissive treatment of Oxfordshire residents, and to persuade HE to reverse their decision to exclude the public from their decision-making, at this pivotal stage of planning the new road.”

Councillor Hudspeth replied:

“I realise that council members were disappointed at the response from Highways England and with that in mind whenever I have been at meetings with Highways England I have pressed the representatives to take note of the request for a public enquiry.

Supplementary: Responding to a request from Councillor Buckley for more detailed information on the consultation, Councillor Hudspeth undertook to pass this information on to all councillors once it was known. He confirmed that there would be a consultation on the corridors and that no decision had yet been taken.”

Councillor Kirsten Johnson had given notice of the following two questions to Councillor Hudspeth

1. “Councillors were informed at the Growth Deal Briefing on 6 February that the infrastructure portion of the Growth Deal monies would be spent as prioritised in the most recent OxIS report. Having looked at this report in detail, I am unsure which cycle infrastructure projects will be prioritised. Could Cllr Hudspeth clarify which of the Oxford Cycling Network strategic cycle network proposals are being supported through the Growth Deal?”

Councillor Hudspeth replied:

“The infrastructure funding from the Growth Deal will be prioritised by the cost benefit of each scheme, which is linked to housing delivery and is not modal specific.”

2. “£60m of the Growth Deal is apportioned to Affordable Housing. Could this please be apportioned to 50% Keyworker Housing, and 50% truly affordable housing for local residents with local jobs, with an exclusion clause which prohibits buy-to-let?”

Councillor Hudspeth replied:

“The apportionment of the Affordable Homes funding has yet to be finalised and will depend on the development and type of housing. I will pass your suggestion on to the Growth Board for consideration.”

17/18 OXFORDSHIRE HOUSING AND GROWTH DEAL

(Agenda Item. 6)

Cabinet had before them a report seeking approval of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Delivery Plan together with associated detailed recommendations: the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal announced by Government in the November Budget, provides £215 million of additional Government funding for Oxfordshire, along with a package of planning freedoms and flexibilities for the Oxfordshire authorities.

The outline agreement set out that full agreement of the Deal is subject to agreement by each local authority and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Board (OxLEP) Board (referred to collectively as the “Oxfordshire Partners”).

Once approved by all Local Authorities confirmation, in writing, will go to the Secretary of State along with submission of the agreed Delivery Plan.

Councillor Hudspeth, Leader of the Council, introduced the contents of the report, outlining what it involved, the role of the Growth Board and the key deadlines in the first year. Councillor Hudspeth moved the recommendations.

Sue Halliwell responded to questions from Cabinet clarifying the expected start of the 3 year land supply would need to be consulted on locally, and once adopted would be used during the development of the Joint Statutory Spatial Plan. Sue Halliwell also confirmed that local planning authorities were leading on the S28 Committee and they had provided a realistic timescale for its establishment. A Cabinet member asked whether the possible question marks over the Chalgrove Airfield proposal which could affect the viability of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan, impacted on the Housing & Growth Deal. Sue Halliwell replied that there was a commitment to having a local plan in place by early 2019 and any major changes would need to be worked through to manage any potential difficulties for the Delivery Plan.

Cabinet expressed its thanks to officers for all their work. Cabinet noted that this was a County Council initiative and the Leader was congratulated on coming together with the Leaders of Councils in Oxfordshire and others to work together for the benefit of all Oxfordshire.

RESOLVED: to:

- (a) Agree to the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal (the Deal) .
- (b) Agree the Delivery Plan (attached as Annex 2 to this report) as the basis for the Deal; noting that elements will be updated as detailed work programmes develop.
- (c) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and the Growth Board, to make minor changes to the Delivery Plan that may be required to secure agreement with Government.
- (d) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with Leader and the Growth Board, to agree the Year 1 affordable housing delivery programme, phasing and processes specified in the Delivery Plan.
- (e) Agree for Oxfordshire County Council to become the accountable body in respect of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.

- (f) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and the Growth Board, to review the terms of reference of the Growth Board and agree any amendments and any appropriate inter-authority agreements required to support the Delivery of the Housing and Growth Deal.
- (g) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader to take any other decisions arising from agreement to the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, until the revised terms of reference of the Growth Board are in place.
- (h) Agree to participate in the preparation of a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (JSSP) for Oxfordshire in accordance with the timescales set out in the Delivery Plan. The milestones for progressing the JSSP being contingent on Government delivering the Planning Freedoms and Flexibilities as described in the Delivery Plan.

..... in the Chair
Date of signing 2018