

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 19 November 2024 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 4.05 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Liz Leffman – in the Chair
Councillor Dr Pete Sudbury (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Tim Bearder
Councillor Andrew Gant
Councillor Kate Gregory
Councillor John Howson
Councillor Dan Levy
Councillor Dr Nathan Ley
Councillor Judy Roberts

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Donna Ford

Officers:

Whole of meeting Martin Reeves (Chief Executive) Lorna Baxter (Executive Director of Resources & Section 151 Officer), Anita Bradley (Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer), Stephen Chandler (Executive Director of People and Transformation), Chris Reynolds (Senior Democratic Services 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.

140/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item. 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Neil Fawcett.

141/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Agenda Item. 2)

Councillor Liz Leffman declared an interest in item 13 on the agenda, as a director of Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. Councillor Leffman participated in the debate on this item but did not vote thereon.

142/24 MINUTES

(Agenda Item. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2024 were approved as a correct record.

143/24 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda Item. 4)

See annex.

144/24 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item. 5)

7 Reports from Scrutiny Committees

Shaun Picken

10 Including Everyone Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Framework: 2025 – 2029

Shaun Picken

11 LTCP5 Monitoring Report

Cllr Charlie Hicks

145/24 APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda Item. 6)

There were no appointments to report to this meeting.

146/24 REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

(Agenda Item. 7)

The Chair read out a statement by Councillor Jane Hanna, Chair of the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, on the report on Epilepsy Services.

In the absence of the Chair of the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, members considered the reports on Oxfordshire Flood Response and LTCP Monitoring.

Cabinet noted the reports and will respond in due course.

147/24 CABINET RESPONSE TO COUNCIL MOTION ON SEND SERVICES

(Agenda Item. 8)

Cabinet had before it a report on a proposed response to a motion on SEND services by Cllr Sally Povolotsky carried by the Full Council. Following an inspection of the local area partnership (the local authority and integrated care board) in Summer 2023, the LAP was found to have 'systemic

weaknesses'. As a result, a priority action plan (PAP) was developed to tackle the key issues raised by the inspection. The PAP was approved by the Department for Education (DfE) in December 2023. At its heart, the PAP has a commitment to making the voices of children and young people 'heard' as part of the improvement journey.

Councillor Kate Gregory, Cabinet Member for SEND services, presented the report. She highlighted the importance of addressing the needs of children with SEND and emphasised the need for a comprehensive review of the current SEND services to ensure they met the needs of all children and young people.

During discussion, several members spoke about the existing challenges in the SEND services including long waiting times for assessments and support. There were ongoing concerns about the adequacy of funding and resources allocated to SEND services. The impact of these challenges on families and children was discussed, with a focus on the need for timely and effective support.

The motion passed by Full Council proposed several improvements, including increased funding for SEND services and better training for staff. There was a call for more collaboration between different agencies and stakeholders involved in providing SEND support. The importance of involving parents and carers in the decision-making process was highlighted.

Some members raised concerns about the feasibility of the proposed improvements, particularly in terms of funding and resource allocation.

There was a discussion on the need for a detailed plan to implement the proposed changes effectively.

The Chair expressed disappointment that although she had invited two members of the opposition to take on the proposed position of SEND champion, neither had accepted, and she hoped this would be resolved in the near future.

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

RESOLVED to approve the Cabinet's response to the following recommendations included in the motion to Council as detailed in the report:-

- a) More meaningfully involve young people and youth organisations throughout all policy-making processes within SEND improvement and the PAP.**
- b) Any consultations or engagement with young people by this council must have a visible public follow-up to the outcomes and tangible metrics to ensure outcomes are delivered.**

- c) **All Council policies that affect young people, must include an impact assessment, and ensure that reasonable mitigation measures are put in place.**
- d) **Ensuring that where appropriate all future events, in person/online, run or funded by OCC, especially those related to the PAP, LAP, and SEND improvement, are open to appropriate young people with the attendance of their parent or carer.**
- e) **Launching a rapid task force for the voice of the young person and SEND users, and task them to create a framework for a Youth Forum within three months.**
- f) **The leader to appoint a SEND Champion from an opposition group to enable that a wider range of voices in the SEND community are able to feed into SEND improvement and services, and that such person sits on the SEND Improvement board.**

148/24 OUTLINE ALLOCATION OF COST OF LIVING AND ASSOCIATED COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING FUNDING FOR OCTOBER TO MARCH 2024/25

(Agenda Item. 9)

Cabinet had before it a report which set out the intended approach to support those residents who are most negatively impacted by cost-of-living pressures over the remainder of the current financial year. This followed the government announcement of an extension to the Household Support Fund from 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025. The report also provided the latest position on the impact of the cost of living, as well as providing a summary of Cost-of-Living expenditure for the first half of the year.

Councillor Dr Nathan Ley, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Inequalities and Community Safety, presented the report. He emphasised the importance of community wealth building as a strategy to create sustainable economic growth and resilience within local communities. The proposed allocation of funds was explained, with specific amounts earmarked for various initiatives aimed at alleviating the cost-of-living pressures. Key areas of funding included support for low-income households, food security programs, and initiatives to reduce energy costs for vulnerable residents.

During discussion, members made the following points:-

- the importance of community wealth building and the need to invest in local businesses and social enterprises. The potential long-term

benefits of the initiatives, including job creation, increased local economic activity, and improved social cohesion were highlighted.

- Some members raised concerns about the adequacy of the proposed funding and whether it would be sufficient to meet the needs of all residents.
- There was also discussion about the need for effective monitoring and evaluation of the funded initiatives to ensure they delivered the intended outcomes.
- Some reservations were expressed about certain aspects of the allocation, particularly the distribution of funds and the criteria for selecting beneficiaries.

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

RESOLVED to:-

- a) note the cost-of-living support measures delivered during the first half of 2024/25, as summarised in table 2;**
- b) agree to the support package for the second half of 2024/25, as summarised in table 2;**
- c) delegate authority to the Director of Public Affairs, Policy & Partnerships in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health, Inequalities and Community Safety, to amend the programme during the year in response to changing and emerging need, within the overall programme budget**

149/24 INCLUDING EVERYONE EQUALITIES, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION FRAMEWORK 2025 – 2029

(Agenda Item. 10)

The Equality Act (2010) required local authorities to publish equality objectives at least every four years to comply with the public sector equality duty. The previous Including Everyone framework was published in 2020. Cabinet considered a report on the proposed updated framework which was required to be published by the end of 2024.

Councillor Liz Leffman, Leader of the Council, presented the report and highlighted the council's commitment to ensuring that all residents, regardless of their background, had equal access to opportunities and services. The proposed framework outlined several key objectives, including reducing inequalities, promoting diversity, and fostering an inclusive culture

within the council and the wider community. Specific goals included improving representation of underrepresented groups, enhancing accessibility of services, and addressing systemic barriers to equality.

During discussion, the framework received broad support from members, who agreed on the importance of promoting EDI and the positive impact it can have on the community.

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

RESOLVED to:-

- a) agree to adopt the refreshed Including Everyone Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion framework, 2025-2029.**
- b) endorse the data-led approach to implementing the new Including Everyone framework through corporate key performance indicators (KPIs).**

150/24 LOCAL TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY PLAN MONITORING REPORT

(Agenda Item. 11)

Cabinet had before it a report providing an overview of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) monitoring report. It summarised the background to the report and key issues. It also provided an overview of proposed changes to the LTCP. It is proposed that the monitoring report (annex 1) and updated LTCP (changes summarised in annex 2) were agreed by cabinet for publication.

The LTCP adopted by the council in July 2022, outlined the long-term vision for transport and travel in the county and the policies required to deliver this. The LTCP also included a set of headline targets to track delivery of the vision. This included targets to replace or remove one out of every four current car trips in Oxfordshire by 2030, deliver a net-zero transport network by 2040 and have zero, or as close as possible, road fatalities or serious injuries by 2050.

Councillor Judy Roberts, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Development Strategy, presented the report.

During discussion, members referred to the importance of data and reporting to enable better understanding of how the activities of the Council related to delivering LTCP targets.

Councillor Roberts moved and Councillor Gant seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to:-

- a) **note the progress made on delivering the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan to date.**
- b) **approve the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan monitoring report for publication (Annex 1).**
- c) **approve the proposed changes to the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan for publication (Annex 2).**

151/24 CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAMME SIX MONTH UPDATE

(Agenda Item. 12)

Cabinet had before it a report which provided a six-monthly update on the delivery of the 2024/25 Climate Action Programme workstreams.

The report also provided an overview of the council's Carbon Management Plan 2030 delivery. Capital programme workstreams were progressing to support the decarbonisation and resilience of the council's fleet and property. This investment will reduce emissions by a further 64% compared to 2019/20 over the next three years.

Councillor Pete Sudbury, Deputy Leader with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment and Future Generations, presented the report.

The Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Manager gave a presentation on the main aspects of the report and answered questions.

During discussion, members referred to the importance of the initiatives in meeting the Council's long-term climate goals and the need for continuous monitoring and updating of the programme to ensure its effectiveness.

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

RESOLVED to:-

- a) **note the biannual update on the delivery of the Climate Action Programme (Annex 1) and linked requests in the budget setting process.**
- b) **note the greenhouse gas emissions reports for wider Oxfordshire area (Annex 2) which will be presented to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Board on 26 November 2024**

152/24 LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP INTEGRATION - PHASE 2

(Agenda Item. 13)

(Councillor Sudbury, Deputy Chair, in the Chair)

Cabinet had before it a report providing an update following the integration of functions previously exercised by the Local Enterprise Partnership into the council on 1 April 2024.

Councillor Roberts, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Development Strategy, presented the report.

During discussion, members made the following points:-

- The discussion focused on the continued engagement and operation of the company and its future directors.
- The integration of the LEP was seen as crucial for the ongoing development and support of local enterprises.
- Members discussed the financial implications of the proposals and the strategic importance of the LEP integration for the local economy.
- Members emphasised the need for a seamless transition to ensure that the LEP continues to function effectively and support local businesses.
- The importance of maintaining transparency and accountability throughout the integration process.
- Members discussed various measures to ensure that the integration aligns with the council's broader economic development goals. The discussion concluded with a consensus on the importance of the LEP integration and the need for careful planning and execution to achieve the desired outcomes

Councillor Roberts moved and Councillor Gant seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED, 7 voting in favour and 1 against, to:-

- a) note that the county council is now responsible for economic development functions previously the responsibility of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP), including strategic economic planning.**
- b) agree to retain the existing council owned company OxLEP, for the delivery of some of these economic functions as set out in a revised contract and based on the business case attached at Annex A.**
- c) agree to establish a Shareholder Committee as a committee of Cabinet, comprising all members of the Cabinet, with Terms of Reference as set out in Annex B and, with the assumption that**

this is first agreed by Cabinet, that the Shareholder Committee will meet within one month of this Cabinet meeting.

- d) recommend to the to be established Shareholder Committee that they then make changes to the Articles of Association as attached at Annex C and change the trading name of the company to Enterprise Oxfordshire.**
- e) agree to the Shareholder Committee immediately appointing the company directors and make any appointments that are required from time to time in accordance with revised Articles of Association.**
- f) agree that the Cabinet will be responsible for developing a new Strategic Economic Plan, in consultation with other partners, founded on the strategic priorities of the council.**
- g) agree to the Shareholder Committee tasking the company directors to oversee the development of a business plan and budget for 2025/26 and future years for sign off from the Shareholder Committee, in line with the economic priorities set out by Cabinet.**
- h) agree to establish an Oxfordshire Economic Partnership Board to support the Cabinet in the discharge of its economic development functions.**
- i) delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Executive Director of Resources and the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer to agree and conclude the details of amendments to the contract with OxLEP Ltd including the revisions in recommendation 2 above, the extension of the contract to 31 March 2026 and confirmation of arrangements regarding the delivery of the Skills Bootcamps initiative**

153/24 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID TERM REVIEW 2024/25

(Agenda Item. 14)

(Councillor Leffman resumed the Chair)

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) 'Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2021' requires that committee to which some treasury management responsibilities are delegated, will receive regular monitoring reports on treasury management activities and risks. Cabinet received a report which set out the position at 30 September 2024.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, presented the report. The report provided insights into the council's investment strategies, borrowing activities, and overall financial health. Members referred to the importance of maintaining a balanced and prudent approach to treasury management to ensure the council's financial stability and sustainability.

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

RESOLVED to note the council's treasury management activity in the first half of 2024/25 and recommend Council to note the council's treasury management activity in the first half of 2024/25.

154/24 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2024

(Agenda Item. 15)

Cabinet considered a report presenting the September 2024 performance, risk, and finance position for the council. The business management reports were part of a suite of performance, risk and budget documents which set out the council's ambitions, priorities, and financial performance.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, presented the report and explained the reasons for the performance exceptions illustrated by the indicators set out in the report and annexes.

Councillor Levy moved and Councillor Roberts seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to:-

- a) note the report and annexes.**
- b) approve the virement requests in Annex B-2a and note the requests in Annex B-2b.**
- c) approve an introduction of a new charge in 2024/25 for monitoring of biodiversity net gain compliance.**
- d) approve the increased charges in 2024/25 for the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

155/24 CAPITAL PROGRAMME APPROVALS - NOVEMBER 2024

(Agenda Item. 16)

Cabinet had before it a report which set out change requests requiring Cabinet approval that will be incorporated into the agreed Capital programme and included in the next update for Cabinet in December 2024.

Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, presented the report and explained the background to the development of the Mini Holland project.

Councillor Levy moved and Councillor Gant seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to approve the inclusion of East Oxford Mini Holland project into the capital programme with a value of £6.646m. £6.000m is to be funded from corporate resources, agreed by Council in February 2024, with the remaining £0.646m to be funded by S106 developer contributions.

156/24 EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY ASSESSMENT SERVICE

(Agenda Item. 17)

Cabinet agreed that there was not a need to exclude the public during consideration of this item as the details in the exempt annex to the report would not be discussed.

Cabinet had before it a report requesting approval, as per the Council's Scheme of Delegation and Contract Procedure Rules, to join appropriate Framework/s to provide Educational Psychology Services (EPS), to meet the needs of the local authority for the provision of high-quality Educational Psychologists.

Educational Psychology assessments and reports were required for children and young people who were being assessed for an Education, Health and Care assessment under the Children and Families Act 2014.

Councillor John Howson, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Young People's Services, presented the report and explained the background to the increased demand for psychology services.

Councillor Howson moved and Councillor Gregory seconded the recommendations, and they were approved.

RESOLVED to:-

- a) approve Oxfordshire County Council (“the Council”) joining appropriate single supplier framework agreements set up by external organisations to enable the Council access to call off contracts with the supplier/s for Educational Psychology services.
- b) approve the Council entering call-off contracts under such framework agreements in November/December 2024 and for a budgetary commitment for a period of 3 years.

157/24 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

(Agenda Item. 18)

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.

158/24 FOR INFORMATION ONLY: CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY ITEM

(Agenda Item. 19)

Cabinet noted the response to the Scrutiny item on Circular Economy Strategy.

.....in the Chair

Date of signing