

# **Minutes**

of a meeting of the

## **Cabinet**



held on Friday 3 October 2014 at 2.00 pm  
in the Meeting Room 1, The Abbey House, Abingdon, OX14 3JE

**Open to the public, including the press**

**Present:**

Members: Councillors Matthew Barber (Chairman), Roger Cox (Vice-Chairman), Mike Murray and Elaine Ware

Officers: Steve Bishop, David Buckle, Steve Culliford, Adrian Duffield, Sophie Horsley, William Jacobs, Margaret Reed, Anna Robinson and Mark Williams

Also present: Councillors Yvonne Constance, Tony de Vere, Robert Sharp, and Richard Webber

Number of members of the public: 2

### **Ca.1 Apologies for absence**

Councillor Reg Waite had sent his apologies for absence.

### **Ca.2 Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** to adopt as a correct record the minutes from the Cabinet meeting held on 8 May 2014 and agree that the chairman signs them.

### **Ca.3 Declarations of interest**

In relation to minute Ca.6, Draft Local Plan to 2031, Councillor Mike Murray reported that he was a property developer by profession but that his property development activities never took place in the Vale of White Horse.

### **Ca.4 Urgent business and chairman's announcements**

None

### **Ca.5 Statements, petitions, and questions relating to matters affecting the Cabinet**

None

## Ca.6 Draft Local Plan to 2031

Cabinet considered the head of planning's report on the draft Local Plan to 2031. The report set out an overview of the main changes to the draft plan and asked Cabinet to recommend the Council to agree the draft Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies for publication for the purposes of pre-submission (Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012) public consultation, and thereafter for submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination, together with supporting evidence base studies, topic papers and summaries of the consultation responses received (Regulation 22). Also tabled was a schedule of the substantive changes to the local plan.

Cabinet also received the draft minutes from the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25 September when the local plan was discussed. Cabinet welcomed the committee's input and responded as follows:

- The reference on page Sc.5 to ask Cabinet to reconsider the validity of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the basis on which its housing figures were arrived at were noted. However, Cabinet members present at the meeting recalled that this was the view of only one committee member, not that of the committee.
- There was a reference on page Sc.6 to removing Green Belt housing allocation sites from the local plan as there had not been a Green Belt review for the whole Green Belt around Oxford. However, there had been a review of the Green Belt within the Vale's district boundary, focusing on the purposes and principles of the Green Belt. The decision to allocate some sites in the Green Belt had not been taken lightly, but the chosen sites were in sustainable locations. Not all sites identified in the Green Belt had been allocated for housing.
- There was a reference on page Sc.7 to including the Wantage Western Road in the safe-guarded land. However, the route of the western relief road was already safe-guarded in the local plan.
- The reference on page Sc.8 to some strategic employment sites being omitted, such as Sandford Lane at Kennington, was incorrect as this was referred to in 'Appendix D: List of Rural Multi User Sites and Large Campus Style sites as identified in the Local Plan 2011' and this list would be reviewed as part of the local plan part 2 process.

Cabinet believed that it had a duty of care to heed the advice given to Cherwell District Council by the planning inspector on 9 June 2014 following its local plan's public examination earlier this year. The inspector suspended the examination as Cherwell had not used the most up-to-date housing need assessment on which to base its housing figures. Cabinet believed that this left it no option but to adopt the Strategic Housing Market Assessment housing figures in full as the objectively assessed need for the local plan in the Vale of White Horse. The alternative of not adopting the Strategic Housing Market Assessment figures and leaving the Vale of White Horse without a local plan and open to further speculative housing developments was not an option. Cabinet considered that the plan as presented was the best it could achieve following rigorous preparation.

Amended recommendations were tabled at the meeting, including an additional recommendation to delegate authority to allow minor changes and corrections to be made to the local plan before it was presented to the Council on 15 October 2014. Cabinet anticipated making no substantive changes before the Council meeting, only correcting cross-references and typographical errors.

Finally, Cabinet thanked the officers in the local plan team for their work on the local plan to date.

**RESOLVED:** to

- (a) note the views aired at the Scrutiny Committee on 25 September 2014;
- (b) authorise the head of planning in consultation with the Cabinet member for planning policy, to make minor changes and corrections to the Local Plan prior to Council on 15 October 2014;

**RECOMMEND** to Council on 15 October 2014:

- (c) that the Pre-submission draft Local Plan 2031 Part 1: Strategic Sites and Policies, associated documents (submission Policies Map, Sustainability Appraisal, Appropriate Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Consultation Statements) and supporting evidence base studies and topic papers, be published for Pre-Submission public consultation for a period of six weeks under Regulations 19 and 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012, and thereafter;
- (d) to authorise the head of planning in consultation with the Cabinet member for planning policy to submit the Submission Local Plan 2031 and all associated documents together with the summarised Pre-Submission public consultation responses to the Secretary of State for independent examination under Regulation 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012; and
- (e) to authorise the head of planning in consultation with the Cabinet member for planning policy, to make minor changes and corrections to the Local Plan prior to both the publication for consultation and submission.

## **Ca.7 Treasury management outturn 2013/14**

Cabinet considered the head of finance's report which monitored the council's treasury management performance in 2013/14. This showed that the investment income was higher than predicted in the 2013/14 budget.

The Audit and Governance Committee had welcomed the report and was satisfied that the treasury activities were carried out in accordance with the treasury management strategy and policy. Cabinet was pleased with the treasury management performance also.

**RECOMMEND:** to Council on 15 October 2014

- (a) to approve the treasury management outturn report for 2013/14; and
- (b) approve the actual 2013/14 prudential indicators set out in the head of finance's report.

## **Ca.8 Future delivery of corporate services**

Cabinet considered the strategic director's report on a proposal to test the market with a view to extending financial services contract to other corporate services. Cabinet believed

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that the council had excellent services following its decision to share them with South Oxfordshire District Council but the council should not rest on its laurels. Cabinet supported the proposal to test the market but would not determine which services would be outsourced at this stage. Cabinet asked that property management was added to the list of services subject to market testing.

**RESOLVED:** to

- (a) confirm the re-tendering of financial services rather than seek to bring the services back in-house, with the possible exception of the provision of the financial management system which should be linked to the provision of accountancy services;
- (b) confirm the following services should have detailed specifications written: accountancy, internal audit, CCTV operations, democratic services, land charges, legal, licensing, car park administration, the Poppin operations, data capture, human resources, street naming and numbering, IT applications support, IT helpdesk, IT infrastructure support, IT security, facilities management, procurement, engineering, and property management; and
- (c) ask the consultant to undertake market engagement activities ahead of the formal procurement process to inform the council's procurement strategy.

**Exempt information under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972**

None

The meeting closed at 2.40 pm