

# Cabinet Agenda



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Date: 6 April 2016  
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## A meeting of the **Cabinet**

will be held on Friday 15 April 2016 at 10.00 am  
Meeting Room 1, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB

### **Cabinet Members:**

#### **Councillors**

Matthew Barber (Chairman)  
Roger Cox (Vice-Chairman)  
Eric Batts  
Charlotte Dickson

Mohinder Kainth  
Sandy Lovatt  
Mike Murray  
Elaine Ware

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Reed'.

Margaret Reed  
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

## **Agenda**

### **Open to the Public including the Press**

#### **Council's vision**

The council's vision is to take care of your interests across the Vale with enterprise, energy and efficiency.

## **1. Apologies for absence**

To receive apologies for absence.

## **2. Minutes**

(Pages 3 - 11)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 28 January and 5 February 2016 (previously published).

## **3. Declarations of interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

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

To receive notification of any matters which the chairman determines should be considered as urgent business and the special circumstances which have made the matters urgent, and to receive any announcements from the chairman.

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

Any statements, petitions, and questions from the public under standing order 32 will be made or presented at the meeting.

## **6. Corporate plan review**

(Pages 12 - 19)

To consider the head of corporate strategy's report.

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

None

# Minutes

of a meeting of the

# Cabinet

held on Thursday 28 January 2016 at 7.13 pm

in Meeting Room 1, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB



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

**Present:**

Members: Councillors Matthew Barber (Chairman), Roger Cox (Vice-Chairman), Eric Batts, Charlotte Dickson, Mohinder Kainth, Sandy Lovatt, Mike Murray and Elaine Ware

Officers: Steve Bishop, David Buckle, Steve Culliford and Margaret Reed

Vale non-Cabinet members: Councillor Yvonne Constance and Councillor Robert Sharp

South Oxfordshire District Council Cabinet members: John Cotton, Elizabeth Gillespie, Will Hall, Tony Harbour, Lynn Lloyd, Jane Murphy, and Robert Simister

Number of members of the public: Nil

**Ca.33 Apologies for absence**

None

**Ca.34 Declarations of interest**

None

**Ca.35 Urgent business and chairman's announcements**

None

**Ca.36 Statements, petitions, and questions relating to matters affecting the Cabinet**

None

**Ca.37 Corporate services procurement - designation of preferred bidders**

Cabinet considered the strategic director's report on the procurement of corporate services. The corporate services project had commenced in April 2014, attracting three new district council partners (Hart, Havant Borough, and Mendip) in addition to the Vale of White Horse District Council – Cabinet minutes

council's existing partner, South Oxfordshire District Council. The project and associated procurement exercises set out to contribute directly to the following corporate objectives:

- the excellent delivery of key services, in particular high performing services
- the effective management of resources, in particular the councils continuing to work together to extend the sharing of services and resources, such as a shared client team and a private sector provider for a number of services

In addition to re-tendering revenues and benefits services that the council and South Oxfordshire had contracted out ten years ago, the five partner councils had also invited tenders for a range of services currently delivered by in-house teams:

Lot 1 (data based services)	Lot 2 (property based services)
Accountancy	Property management
HR	Facilities management
IT operations	Car parks
Land charges	
Licensing	
Procurement	
Already contracted out services: council tax collection and council tax reduction scheme, business rate collection, housing benefit administration, payroll, provision of financial management system, accounts payable and accounts receivable, customer services (switchboard and reception)	

The partner councils had agreed to carry out two simultaneous European Union (EU) procurement exercises using a competitive dialogue process. The project generated market interest with tenders being received and evaluated in late 2015. The report set out the results of the tender evaluation process and recommended how services could be delivered most cost effectively in future. The report recommended a nine years and two months contract term for South and Vale, with Capita being the preferred bidder for the Lot 1 contract, and Vinci being the preferred bidder for the Lot 2 contract. South and Vale would commence these contracts on 1 August 2016, whereas some of the other partner councils would commence their contracted services in 2017. Irrespective of different commencement dates for different councils, the contract expiry date for all partner councils would be 30 September 2025.

The South and Vale Joint Scrutiny Committee had met on 21 January 2016 and supported the recommendations contained in the report.

Before the Cabinet meeting, both South Oxfordshire's and the Vale of White Horse's Cabinets met together informally to discuss the proposals, debate the options set out in the report, and consider reasons why options should be approved or rejected. **The minutes of that informal meeting are appended to these minutes.**

The strategic director's report contained several appendices. Cabinet noted appendices 6 to 10, which contained exempt information, but did not discuss these in the meeting. Therefore, the Cabinet meeting did not move into exempt session.

The leader moved the recommendations set out in the report, subject to two amendments (1) for the chief executive to consult the relevant Cabinet member on finalising the terms of Vale of White Horse District Council – Cabinet minutes

reference of the joint committee, and (2) for the chief executive to consult the chairman of the scrutiny committee on finalising the terms of reference of the joint scrutiny committee. Cabinet agreed unanimously.

Cabinet recorded its appreciation to the officers for their work on the corporate services project.

**RESOLVED:** to

- (a) designate Capita as the preferred bidder for Lot 1 of the five councils' new joint corporate services contract from 1 August 2016;
- (b) designate Vinci as the preferred bidder for Lot 2 of the five councils' new joint corporate services contract from 1 August 2016;
- (c) authorise the strategic director for finance, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet member, to agree the final terms and complete the new corporate services contract documents, and authorise the head of legal and democratic services to enter into the contracts and any other necessary agreements;
- (d) agree to enter into an inter-authority agreement with the four partner councils, substantially in the form attached as appendix 1 to the strategic director's report, and authorise the chief executive, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet member, to finalise the terms of, and to enter into, the agreement;
- (e) agree to set up a joint committee as set out in the inter-authority agreement and in accordance with the details set out in appendix 3 to the strategic director's report and to authorise the chief executive, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet member, to finalise the terms of reference of the committee;
- (f) agree to the establishment of a joint client-side team, based on the principles set out in appendix 2 to the strategic director's report;

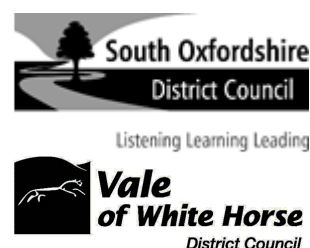
**RECOMMEND** to Council to:

- (g) agree to establish a corporate services joint scrutiny committee in accordance with the draft terms of reference outlined in appendix 4 to the strategic director's report;
- (h) authorise the chief executive, in consultation with the chairman of the Vale's Scrutiny Committee, to finalise the terms of reference of the committee; and
- (i) authorise the head of legal and democratic services to appoint members and substitutes to the committee in accordance with the wishes of the relevant group leader(s) and make consequential changes to the constitution.

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm

## Appendix

### Notes of an informal meeting between the Cabinets of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils



Thursday 28 January 2016 at 6pm  
at 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park

#### Present:

South Cabinet members: John Cotton (Leader), Jane Murphy (Deputy Leader), Elizabeth Gillespie, Will Hall, Tony Harbour, Lynn Lloyd, and Robert Simister

Vale Cabinet members: Matthew Barber (Leader), Roger Cox (Deputy Leader), Eric Batts, Charlotte Dickson, Mohinder Kainth, Sandy Lovatt, Mike Murray, and Elaine Ware

Officers: Steve Bishop, David Buckle, Steve Culliford, and Margaret Reed

Non-Cabinet members: Yvonne Constance and Robert Sharp (both Vale councillors)

**Apologies:** Anna Badcock (South Cabinet member)

### Corporate services procurement – designation of preferred bidders

The Cabinets of South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council met separately on 28 January 2016 to discuss the procurement of corporate services. The formal meetings of each Cabinet considered a report from the strategic director, which recommended each Cabinet took decisions to designate preferred bidders and authorise joint agreements with other partner district councils to monitor and manage the contracts. Prior to each formal Cabinet meeting, both councils' Cabinets met informally to discuss the proposals, ask questions, debate the options set out in the report, and consider reasons why options should be approved or rejected. These notes are a record of that debate and form an appendix to the South and Vale Cabinets' minutes.

With the agreement of both Cabinets, the Vale's leader, Councillor Matthew Barber, chaired this meeting.

Steve Bishop, the strategic director updated the report by setting out the options open to the two Cabinets; these were to:

- adopt recommendation (a) in his report to designate Capita as the preferred bidder for Lot 1 of the five councils' new joint corporate services contract from 1 August 2016, and adopt recommendation (b) in his report to designate Vinci as the preferred bidder for Lot 2
- reject recommendation (a) and instead urgently re-contract out the revenues and benefits' services by way of a framework arrangement in time for 1 August 2016 and operate the remaining Lot 1 services in-house
- reject recommendation (b) to either continue operating the Lot 2 services in-house or to investigate re-tendering these services later on

Two of the partner councils (Hart and Mendip) had held their Cabinet meetings and approved similar recommendations to those set out in the strategic director's report. Havant Borough Council's Cabinet was due to meet on 3 February 2016.

The South and Vale Cabinets discussed the report. Some concerns were raised over the proposed delegated authority to complete the contract documents and finalise the inter-authority agreement. However, it was noted that the Cabinets were not being asked to award the contract at this stage but instead were being recommended to designate two contractors as preferred bidders. There was still much detail to be resolved with the other partner councils before the contracts could be awarded. Some of the detail missing from the schedules was contained in the draft inter-authority agreement, and other details were contained in supporting documents that had not been circulated to the Cabinets, such as key performance targets. Cabinet members asked to be briefed on the detail before it was agreed. This would provide a member-level oversight and help to reduce risk to the councils. Officers agreed that if the terms of reference of the joint committee or the joint scrutiny committee changed in a significant way, this would be brought back to Cabinet members before committing the two councils. Likewise, if the mutual aims of the five partner councils changed significantly before letting the contract, this would be brought to Cabinet members' attention.

The Cabinets recognised that the biggest risk to the joint contract procurement was a disagreement between two or more partner councils. The success of the project relied on co-operation between the five councils throughout the contract period. Cabinet noted that if this failed, there would be a right for any partner council to terminate its participation in the agreement, even if there was no breach of contract by the contractor, subject to contractual compensation.

Cabinet members asked what involvement they would have in ensuring the contract ran smoothly. Officers reported that there would be a client team to monitor the contractors' performance and the client team manager would report to the management boards of all five partner councils, as well as a joint committee and the joint scrutiny committee that would oversee the contracts. An advertisement for the client team manager was due to be published shortly. The manager would have an important role in managing the contractors, the client team, and the five councils' expectations. Cabinet members asked if they would have any involvement in the client team manager's appointment. The chief executive reported that he was consulting the other partner councils over the possibility of the councils' leaders being involved.

When asked what access councillors would have to the client team manager, officers reported that the post holder would be contactable by telephone and email but would not be present at the councils' offices every day. The client side manager would be shared between the five councils. Cabinet asked for a briefing on how client services would work from a councillor's perspective.

Cabinet members agreed that the relevant Cabinet member should be consulted before officers finalised the terms of reference of the joint committee. Likewise, the chairman of the scrutiny committee should be consulted before officers finalised the terms of reference of the joint scrutiny committee.

Cabinet members noted that some of the partner councils would not commence the new contract until later in 2017, and asked whether the existing South and Vale revenues and benefits contract with Capita could be extended until then. Officers confirmed that the existing contract could not be extended any further without the risk of legal challenge. It was noted that the other partner councils were investigating commencing the new contract earlier than they had first planned.

It was noted that the South and Vale councils' Internal Audit could be undertaking audit work on the corporate services project next year. The head of legal and democratic services reported that an external consultant had been working on the process and procurement, and external specialist lawyers had prepared the draft contract in consultation with the councils' legal officers. Partner councils had been involved in the legal dialogue, and the detailed contract specifications and service delivery plans had also been prepared in consultation with the lead officers across all five councils. The tenders had been assessed against the quality and financial criteria. Officers would consult Cabinet members if any significant issues arose during finalisation of the agreements. It was hoped that contracts could be signed by the end of March or early April 2016.

The councils' internal audit function would continue much as before. However, as the large majority of functions audited were covered by the proposed contracts, internal audit functions could be aligned across the five councils in years to come.

Cabinet members stressed the importance of correct branding. Staff and vehicles employed by the council to provide the contracted out services must show the correct council branding when in public. For example, car parks were provided by the council, not the contractor, therefore signage, car park patrollers' clothing and service vehicles should all be branded with the council's name and logo.

In conclusion, Cabinet members from both South and Vale councils supported designating the preferred bidders for Lots 1 and 2 corporate services contracts but asked for briefings on how client services would work from a councillor's perspective, and on the detail within the contract such as key performance targets. Once finalised, such detail should be shared with other councillors.

Cabinet members considered that the contracts for Lots 1 and 2 would achieve the councils' project objectives of the excellent delivery of key services, and the effective management of resources, in particular the councils continuing to work together to extend the sharing of services and resources, through a shared client team and a private sector service provider. By awarding these contracts to the preferred bidders, the councils would achieve greater value in terms of cost and quality than the alternatives of not awarding the contracts. The preferred bidders would provide:

- transition arrangements to transfer the current operations
- ability to improve day-to-day services
- capacity to deliver continuous improvement throughout the contract term
- robust plans to properly resource for future change
- investment in better software, equipment and technology
- best practice to overcome the future pressures on local government

Cabinet members agreed that the recommendations in the report should be amended so that the relevant Cabinet member should be consulted on finalising the terms of reference of the joint committee, and the chairman of the scrutiny committee should be consulted on finalising the terms of reference of the joint scrutiny committee.

The informal meeting of the South and Vale Cabinets closed at 7.12pm



# Minutes

of a meeting of the

# Cabinet

held on Friday 5 February 2016 at 10.00 am

in the Meeting Room 1, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB



## Open to the public, including the press

### Present:

Members: Councillors Matthew Barber (Chairman), Roger Cox (Vice-Chairman), Eric Batts, Charlotte Dickson, Sandy Lovatt, Mike Murray and Elaine Ware

Officers: Steve Bishop, David Buckle, Steve Culliford, Simon Hewings, William Jacobs, Margaret Reed and Anna Robinson

Also present: Councillors Yvonne Constance, Robert Sharp and Reg Waite

Number of members of the public: Nil

### **Ca.38 Apologies for absence**

Councillor Mohinder Kainth had sent his apologies for absence.

### **Ca.39 Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18 January 2016 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman signs them as such.

### **Ca.40 Declarations of interest**

None

### **Ca.41 Urgent business and chairman's announcements**

None

### **Ca.42 Statements, petitions, and questions relating to matters affecting the Cabinet**

None

## **Ca.43 Treasury management mid-year monitoring report 2015/16**

Cabinet considered the head of finance's mid-year monitoring report on the council's treasury management function. This covered the first six months of 2015/16 financial year (up to 30 September 2015) and, looking forward, updated on the current economic conditions.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 25 January 2016 and had not recommended any adjustments to the strategy as a result of the first six months' activities. Likewise, Cabinet concluded that the treasury management activities had operated within the agreed parameters set out in the approved treasury management strategy.

**RECOMMENDED** to Council to approve the treasury management mid-year monitoring report 2015/16.

## **Ca.44 Treasury management and investment strategy 2016/17**

Cabinet considered the head of finance's report on the council's treasury management and investment strategy for the period 2016/17 to 2018/19. The strategy set out how the council's treasury management operated, how the treasury service would support capital investment decisions, set limits on treasury management activity governed by the prudential indicators, within which the treasury function must operate, and set a minimum revenue provision policy for 2016/17.

It was a requirement of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Treasury Management Code 2011 that this report was approved by the Council annually.

Cabinet noted that the Joint Audit and Governance Committee had recommended the adoption of the strategy. Cabinet concurred.

**RECOMMEND** to Council to:

- (a) approve the treasury management strategy 2016/17 set out in appendix A to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 5 February 2016;
- (b) approve the prudential indicators and limits for 2016/17 to 2018/19 as set out in table 2 of appendix A to the head of finance's report; and
- (c) approve the annual investment strategy 2016/17 set out in appendix A (paragraphs 25 to 60) and the lending criteria detailed in table 5 to the head of finance's report.

## **Ca.45 Revenue budget 2016/17 and capital programme to 2020/21**

Cabinet considered the head of finance's report on the revenue budget 2016/17 and the capital programme to 2020/21. The report brought together the relevant information for Cabinet to recommend a budget and capital programme to Council on 17 February 2016. Tabled at the meeting was appendix E setting out the prudential indicators for recommendation to Council. A budget briefing had taken place earlier in the week, to which all councillors had been invited.

The leader recommended Cabinet to forward the budget on to the Council for approval. Cabinet agreed, and thanked the officers for their work in preparing the draft budget.

**RESOLVED:** to agree that the leader of the council may make minor adjustments to the budget report and the prudential indicators, in conjunction with the head of finance, should they prove necessary following the publication of the final Local Government settlement and prior to the budget's submission to Council on 17 February 2016.

**RECOMMENDED** to Council to:

- (a) set the revenue budget for 2016/17 as set out in appendix A.1 to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 5 February 2016;
- (b) approve the capital programme for 2016/17 to 2020/21 as set out in appendix D.1, together with the capital growth bids set out in appendix D.2 of the head of finance's report;
- (c) set the council's prudential limits as listed in appendix E to the head of finance's report;
- (d) approve the medium term financial plan to 2020/21 as set out in appendix F.1 to the head of finance's report;
- (e) authorise the head of finance, in consultation with the leader of the council, to issue an efficiency statement to government in order to secure a four year settlement, if this is considered to be beneficial to the council.

The meeting closed at 10.06 am

# Cabinet Report



Report of Head of Corporate Strategy

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Wards affected: All

Cabinet member responsible: Matthew Barber

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To: CABINET

DATE: 15 April 2016

## Corporate Plan 2016 - 2020

### Recommendation

That Cabinet recommends that Council adopts the 2012 – 2016 corporate plan attached to this report.

### Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to approve the council's corporate plan for the period 2016 – 2020, and recommend its approval to Council.

### Corporate Objectives

2. The development of the council's corporate plan is fundamental to the way that the council manages its business effectively. The purpose of the plan is to identify the strategic objectives and priorities, which will drive the council's business during a four year period and help to guide decisions on the allocation of resources. The draft corporate plan for the period 2016 - 2020 proposes a set of new objectives and priorities to replace those set out in the current corporate plan, which ends in 2016.

### Background

3. In May 2015, the council began work on a fundamental review of the current corporate plan.
4. Evidence considered as part of the review includes results from recent biennial residents' surveys; demographic and other data about the district prepared by the District Data Service, recent board reports and the annual addendum report.

5. The attached represents the Cabinet's draft plan for the period 2016 – 2020.
6. The plan also includes the council's equality objectives, which we are required to publish under the Equality Act. These have been the subject of a stakeholder consultation. The objectives underpin all of the council's activities.
7. Subject to endorsement by Cabinet and final approval by Council on 11 May, the plan will be graphically designed prior to publication on the Council's website. Copies will be available on request to anyone who is unable to access it electronically.
8. The draft plan is on the agenda for Scrutiny Committee on 14 April, and the Committee's comments will be reported to the Cabinet meeting.
9. The plan is a high-level statement of objectives and actions that the Cabinet wishes to achieve over the next four years. Further detail, including measures, targets and specific actions will be included in a corporate development plan, which will be reviewed by Cabinet annually, and annual reports on progress will be provided to Cabinet.

## **Options**

10. It is good practice for councils to publish a corporate plan to set out plans for future years. It helps to focus activity, and guides policy and operational decisions and allocation of resources over the life of the plan.
11. Many policy choices have been made during informal discussions on the draft plan. At this stage the plan is in draft, and Cabinet are able to make further amendments prior to recommending its adoption to full council.

## **Financial Implications**

12. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report although the corporate plan will be used to guide decisions on the allocation of resources.
13. Funding for some of the activity set out in the draft plan has been approved as part of the 2016/17 budget, the financial implications of other specific actions or of progressing any of the ambitions contained in the plan will be considered as part of more detailed planning and consideration of future years' budgets.

## **Legal Implications**

14. There are no legal implications arising from this report. Any legal implications connected with specific actions in the plan will be considered as part of detailed planning for implementation.

## **Risks**

15. Risks will need to be identified specific to individual corporate priorities and included in the operational service area risk register. The key corporate risks arising from this report are reputational ones of demonstrating listening to feedback we received in the residents' survey and reflecting the views of residents in our plan; and of agreeing a final plan that we can deliver on.

## **Other implications**

16. A high level equality impact check has been carried out on the draft plan and no adverse implications have been identified at this stage. Any potential equality implications in relation to specific actions will be considered where relevant as part of detailed planning for implementation.

## **Conclusion**

17. We have carried out a major review of the corporate plan and developed a draft plan for 2016-2020 setting out new objectives and priorities for the next four years. The plan will provide a focus for the council's work and will also guide decisions on the allocation of resources.
18. Cabinet is asked to approve the corporate plan and recommend its adoption to Council.

## **Background Papers**

- Vale Vision, Our Priorities for the Vale, conservative party manifesto
- Reports of biennial residents' surveys 2014, 2015
- Joint South and Vale board reports, and annual addendum report
- Vale of White Horse overview of evidence pack

# VALE DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2016 - 2020

## HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### Through an ambitious housing strategy we will

- deliver the right balance of types and tenure of new homes to meet housing need and support economic growth
- develop a range of starter home and low cost home ownership initiatives, that provide entry points to home ownership
- ensure a good supply of affordable rented homes for those unable to buy
- promote self-build and custom build initiatives, ensuring land is made available for this purpose
- promote exemplar housing design through our planning policies
- work with developers and other partners to develop a protocol that will ensure high quality, sympathetic design across our district
- actively work to bring forward development where we see gaps in provision, using council resources and delivery vehicles as appropriate

### We will reduce homelessness by

- assisting households to remain in their home through mediation and enforcement of their rights to occupy
- providing a holistic housing advice service, in partnership with other agencies, to maximise the housing options for all households
- helping low income families to access affordable rented accommodation through Deposit Bonds, Rent-In-Advance loans and tenancy support

### We will tackle infrastructure challenges by

- providing funding towards work on temporary flood barriers in South Hinksey and for the investigation of options to manage flood risks at sites in Abingdon, including Hillview Road on the River Stert; St Helen's Mill on the River Ock and a more comprehensive scheme for the River Ock

- working with infrastructure partners to find solutions to flooding problems across the district
- maximising contributions from housing development towards road improvements and public transport, ensuring that funding is directed towards the most effective schemes
- seeking to maximise the amount of business rates income from our two Enterprise Zones towards infrastructure projects in Vale

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND WELLBEING**

### **We will facilitate sustainable communities by**

- supporting and resourcing the development of neighbourhood plans for our towns and villages
- supporting community groups and community events through our grants scheme
- assisting voluntary and community groups that provide important services to residents to attract volunteers

### **We will increase participation in sport and leisure through**

- continuous improvement programmes for our leisure centres and facilities
- investing in our parks and gardens, including Abbey Gardens and Wantage Park
- building a new leisure centre at Grove
- expanding the range and quality of activities at The Beacon in Wantage

### **We will continue to improve our environment by**

- maintaining our position as a top-performing council on waste collection and recycling
- carrying out district-wide deep cleans of pavements and public footpaths
- tackling fly tipping by clearing fly tips quickly and taking tough action against the perpetrators



- working positively with developers and applicants through the planning process to minimise breaches of planning control that could otherwise lead to enforcement action

## **BUILDING AN EVEN STRONGER ECONOMY**

### **We will create the right conditions for economic growth, so that businesses, residents and workers can prosper**

- We will directly address matters that fetter growth within our control, such as housing supply and provision of affordable housing. We will work with partners to seek to overcome infrastructure bottlenecks that impact adversely on business competitiveness
- We will support enterprising small and medium sized businesses to grow, ensuring the right package of initiatives is available on demand, including the potential for business rate discounts
- We will work with UKTI, the Local Enterprise Partnership, business parks and others to ensure inward investment is maximised
- We will take a strong lead on delivery of our two Enterprise Zones in Science Vale, to maximise growth and inward investment and create high value jobs for residents. We will seek to capture the business rates growth from the Enterprise Zones for reinvestment in Vale
- We will invest in land and property where appropriate to achieve our corporate objectives

### **We will optimise employment opportunities by**

- working with delivery partners to ensure a good supply of appropriate business premises for start-ups and small and medium enterprises
- ensuring the skills needs of our employers are identified and that training programmes are in place to provide a skilled labour force
- working with developers to introduce local apprenticeship and local workforce schemes that benefit our young people
- looking for opportunities to extend local development orders which simplify and speed up the planning process to encourage business growth in Vale

- supporting and encouraging business collaboration through the Vale4Business brand

### **We will support tourism in Vale by**

- promoting Vale as a must-see visitor and cultural destination, providing up to date information on amenities and events
- enabling the development of additional hotel accommodation to encourage more overnight visitors

### **We will ensure the success of our town centres by**

- improving car parking by increasing the number of parking spaces where possible, refurbishing the Charter multi-storey car park in Abingdon, and maintaining the two-hour free parking period
- working with providers and partners to improve broadband access, mobile phone reception and public access to wi fi in our town centres
- securing the redevelopment of the West Way shopping centre area in Botley
- exploring the potential for redevelopment of the Charter area in Abingdon, building on the success of the Bury Street redevelopment
- expanding our Town Teams to support our thriving town centres of Wantage and Faringdon
- supporting the successful operation of the Abingdon Business Improvement District

## **RUNNING AN EFFICIENT COUNCIL**

### **We will maintain high levels of resident satisfaction with how the council runs things by**

- keeping council tax low
- continuing to work in partnership with South Oxfordshire district council to develop new ideas for improving service delivery including moving to a unitary council covering southern Oxfordshire
- continuing to reduce our operational costs, particularly energy costs, through efficiency measures

## **ADDITIONAL TEXT TO BE ADDED AT THE END**

In delivering on the commitments in this Corporate Plan we will provide fair and accessible services and employment opportunities that meet the needs of everyone, and positively promote inclusion, in line with the Equality Act.

The Council's agreed equality objectives are to:

- continue to improve physical access to council owned or leased buildings or land
- ensure new projects, policies or strategies, changes to services, and communication take account of the needs of all users
- increase our understanding of the communities we serve, through consultation, engagement and using existing evidence (e.g. census data) to inform the decisions we make
- continue to monitor the impact of our employment policies and practices to ensure all groups have access to employment opportunities
- support communities to deliver better outcomes for disadvantaged groups and encourage community cohesion
- seek to improve access to major new developments and town centres in South Oxfordshire and the Vale for people with disabilities, carers and older people