

# Council Agenda



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Date: 3 May 2016  
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## **Summons to attend the annual meeting of Council**

to be held on Wednesday 11 May 2016 on the rising of the preceding special meeting of Council (which starts at 7pm)  
The Ridgeway, The Beacon, Portway, Wantage, OX12 9BY

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

Margaret Reed  
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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# 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. Election of chairman

To elect a chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2016/17.

### 2. Appointment of vice chairman

To appoint a vice-chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2016/17.

### 3. Apologies for absence

To receive apologies for absence.

### 4. Minutes

(Pages 7 - 20)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the council minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2016 (attached).

### 5. Declarations of interest

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

### 6. Chairman's announcements

To receive any announcements from the chairman.

### 7. Urgent business

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.

### 8. Petitions under standing order 13

To receive petitions from members of the council under standing order 13 (if any).

## **9. Questions under standing order 12**

To receive the following questions from councillors under standing order 12.

### **A. Question from Councillor Judy Roberts to Councillor Charlotte Dickson, Cabinet member for leisure.**

Could the Cabinet member please explain the reasons for the delay in publication of the Village and Community Halls Survey, which was due in July 2015?

### **B. Question from Councillor Helen Pighills to Councillor Charlotte Dickson, Cabinet member for leisure.**

In the consultation on Abbey Meadows the public were overwhelmingly in support of Scenario A: 'A place to swim and play'

The consultation leaflet stated 'We would aim to carry out essential repairs to the swimming pool and changing rooms'.

Furthermore under 'Improvements we can make', the leaflet listed 'Repair the outdoor swimming pool' with 'refurbish the changing rooms' appearing in the 'Additional improvements we will consider'.

Why then does the recently issued cabinet decision include refurbishment of the changing rooms with no mention of essential repairs to and upgrading of the pool including its ageing pool tank and heating/filtration system?

### **C. Question from Councillor Dudley Hoddinott to Councillor Roger Cox, Cabinet member for planning (development management and enforcement)**

Objectors to planning applications often raise the issue of cumulative harm. There may be many applications in one area that together cause significant harm. Or there may be many harms from a single application where each one alone is not reason enough to refuse but cumulatively they might be. How do we consider the impact of cumulative harm and what can the council do to prevent it?

### **D. Question from Councillor Emily Smith to Councillor Mike Murray, Cabinet member for planning policy**

The planning department's Statement of Community Involvement defines what the public can expect in term of communications and consultations from planning. It's so out of date it lists Dr Evan Harris as our MP to be consulted. Why hasn't this important policy document been kept up to date?

### **E. Question from Councillor Debby Hallett to Councillor Mike Murray, Cabinet member for planning policy**

The Cabinet has promised to take care of my interests across the Vale with enterprise, energy and efficiency. I don't know what they mean by 'enterprise'. 'Energy' isn't enough if it doesn't produce a good result. Tonight I'm interested in 'efficiency'. Could the Cabinet member please report the total costs so far to create the emerging Local Plan? Please include all costs: officers, consultants, travel & food, phone calls, consultation, printing and distribution, and everything else that we have invested so far in producing our emerging Local Plan.

## **10. Corporate plan review**

(Pages 21 - 25)

Cabinet, at its meeting on 15 April 2016, considered a report on the council's corporate plan for the period 2016 – 2020.

The Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 14 April, considered the report and made a number of suggested amendments which the Leader of the council and Cabinet member for the corporate plan agreed to take into consideration before the submission of a final version to Council on 11 May.

An updated corporate plan is **attached**.

**RECOMMENDATION:** to adopt the Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020.

## **11. Appointment of chief executive**

(Pages 26 - 28)

To consider the report of the head of HR, IT & technical services on the appointment of a chief executive and head of paid service (**attached**).

The Joint Staff Committee will meet on 10 May 2016 to consider the appointment of a chief executive. The recommendations of the committee will be reported at the Council meeting.

## **12. Appointments to committees, panels and joint committees for 2016/17**

(Pages 29 - 34)

To consider the report of the head of legal and democratic services on the appointment to those committees required to be politically balanced together with the Licensing Acts Committee and joint committees and to agree any consequential changes to the constitution (**attached**).

## **13. Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 - proposal to appoint a joint Independent Remuneration Panel**

(Pages 35 - 37)

To consider the report of the head of legal and democratic services (**attached**).

## **14. Report of the leader of the council**

### **(1) Urgent cabinet decisions**

In accordance with the scrutiny committee procedure rules, a cabinet decision can be taken as a matter of urgency, if any delay by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the council's or the public's interest. Treating the decision as a matter of urgency must be agreed by the chairman of the Scrutiny Committee and must be

reported to the next meeting of the council, together with the reasons for urgency.

To receive any details of urgent cabinet decisions taken since the last ordinary meeting of the council, (if any).

(2) Delegation of cabinet functions

To receive details of any changes to the leader's scheme of delegation.

(3) Matters affecting the authority arising from meetings of joint committees, partnerships and other meetings

To receive the report of the leader (if any).

## **15. Notices of motion under standing order 11**

To receive the following notices of motion under standing order 11.

(1) Motion to be proposed by Councillor Barber, seconded by Councillor Cox:

This Council supports the proposal by district council leaders for the abolition of existing councils and the creation of new local unitary councils for Oxfordshire. Furthermore this Council welcomes the appointment of Pricewaterhouse Coopers to examine all options ahead of a public consultation this summer.

(2) Motion to be proposed by Councillor Jenny Hannaby, seconded by Councillor Dudley Hoddinott

This Council calls for our officers to work with Oxfordshire County Council (and other relevant local authorities, Network Rail and Great Western Railway) to produce a business case for an express rail link from Bristol to Milton Keynes via a new station at Grove/Wantage. It must include new track and signalling so as not to obstruct present and future high speed services from Paddington and link with the current electrification scheme.

(3) Motion to be proposed by Councillor Bob Johnston, seconded by Councillor Catherine Webber

Air quality in the Vale is deteriorating. Therefore, this Council calls on HM Government to tighten the regulations on diesel engine vehicles especially in respect of particulates and oxides of nitrogen to address this. Any such regulations should ensure that the new limits are rigorously enforced and they should make the removal of the particle filter from diesel engines a criminal offence.

## **16. Exclusion of the public**

**Purpose:** to consider whether to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 on the grounds that:

(i) it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part

1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and

(ii) the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

## **17. Application for voluntary redundancy**

The Joint Staff Committee will meet on 10 May 2016 to consider the report of the chief executive on a request for voluntary redundancy. The recommendation of the committee will be reported at the Council meeting.

# **Minutes**

## **of a meeting of the**

# **Council**



**held on Wednesday 17 February 2016 at 7.00 pm**  
**at The Ridgeway, The Beacon, Portway, Wantage, OX12 9BY**

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

#### **Present:**

Members: Councillors Mike Badcock (Chairman), Reg Waite (Vice-Chairman), Alice Badcock, Matthew Barber, Eric Batts, Ed Blagrove, Yvonne Constance, Roger Cox, Margaret Crick, Charlotte Dickson, St John Dickson, Katie Finch, Debby Hallett, Robert Hall, Jenny Hannaby, Anthony Hayward, Dudley Hoddinott, Simon Howell, Vicky Jenkins, Bob Johnston, Mohinder Kainth, Monica Lovatt, Sandy Lovatt, Ben Mabbett, Chris McCarthy, Mike Murray, Chris Palmer, Helen Pighills, Julia Reynolds, Judy Roberts, Robert Sharp, Janet Shelley, Emily Smith, Henry Spencer, Elaine Ware and Catherine Webber

Officers: David Buckle, Steven Corrigan, William Jacobs, Margaret Reed and Anna Robinson

Number of members of the public: 5

#### **Co.40      Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Stuart Davenport.

#### **Co.41      Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2015 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman sign them as such.

#### **Co.42      Declarations of interest**

None.

#### **Co.43      Chairman's announcements**

The chairman provided housekeeping information.

**Co.44      Statements, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting council.**

A.     Councillor June Stock, Chairman of Grove Parish Council, made the following statement on behalf of Grove Parish Council.

“The Vale of White Horse District Council, on its website has a Customer Service Charter which states that it will provide a full reply within seven working days to all letters and emails.

Grove Parish Council has written numerous emails on a number of occasions since 1 January 2015 to which we have not received full replies let alone in the promised seven working days. Would the Council please explain why this failure has occurred?

On the 17 July 2015, the Vale of White Horse District Council informed the parish council that any further requests for updates and or questions relating to the Grove airfield development “are to be filtered through the elected district council representatives of Grove and this is an expectation of officers and ensures clear lines of communications with messages not being mixed”.

The parish council totally disagree with this policy as it inhibits parish council officers talking directly to district council officers on specific matters such as the Grove Airfield Development and to date the district council representatives for Grove have not given any substantial information to update the parish council at their full Council meetings.

On 4 January 2016, Grove Parish Council asked for a meeting with a member of the Planning Department to discuss the Grove airfield site. The earliest date given by the Planning department was Wednesday 30 March 2016 (the Wednesday after Easter). It was suggested by the planning department that the meeting would include following:

- To enhance lines of communications between the local planning authority and the parish council
- Update the parish council on current planning legislation/policy
- Receive and answer questions on general planning issues
- Update on the Grove airfield development

30 March, (at the time) was nearly three months off and this timescale is totally unacceptable.

Is the only way we can get a speedier response is for the parish council to turn up at your offices and wait our turn to be seen as per your Customer Service Charter?

Your published complaints procedure states that a full reply will be sent within 20 working days or, if more complicated, 28 working days. It should be apparent that our chasing emails are complaints so that you have failed on a second level of your Charter.

The parish clerk wrote to the chief executive on 4 January 2016 and requested the following;

“David, as you already know, the parish council have become increasingly concerned at the lack of communication between the district council and the parish over planning matters, specifically the Grove airfield development.



Through my own endeavours and with no assistance from the district council, I have been able to make contact with Persimmon Homes and all they have been able to tell the parish council is that they are working to resolve issues regarding the signing of the s106 agreement in respect of the Grove airfield development.

Therefore, can you please ensure that the district councillors elected for Grove are fully briefed on the Grove airfield development so they are able to report at the next parish Council meeting to be held on 26 January 2016 or instruct a senior planning officer to attend and update this Council accordingly?"

This request was made via email but again this has failed to elicit a response!

We represent a large number of people: how can we expect them to respect us or the Vale of White Horse District Council if we, their parish council, cannot get the courtesy of the district council following their own Customer Service Charter?"

The chairman requested Councillor Cox, Cabinet member for development management, to take the points raised in the statement up with officers and offered him the opportunity to respond to the issues raised. Councillor Cox responded as follows:

"I am sorry to learn of Grove's disappointment with our perceived lack of responses and the perception that we had not responded to a meeting request.

I have investigated this matter and I can advise Council that since the date referred to, 1 January 2015, council officers have sent 31 emails to Grove Parish Council in relation to the Grove airfield development. Officers cannot locate any emails asking for updates that they have not replied to and, indeed on 1 February the planning manager asked the parish council chairman to give us details of these so we could investigate the matter. We have not yet received any.

On 5 October 2015 the planning officer advised the parish council that the developer had been unable to sign the section 106 agreement and we could not say when this would happen. This was followed by a further position statement, and several verbal confirmations that until the developers were able to acquire all the land the council could take no action. On 4 January the planning manager again provided a statement that there had been no progress.

Grove Parish Council did not ask for a meeting to discuss Grove airfield. The planning manager wrote to the parish council on 23 December offering a meeting to discuss general planning matters and explore how we could improve working arrangements. The parish council clerk responded that the parish council would welcome a meeting. The parish clerk noted that he had been asked some time before to organise a meeting with the planning officers but, unfortunately he had been busy with other matters.

A date of 16 March has been fixed for a meeting with the parish council to discuss general planning matters as offered in the planning manager's email of 23 December.

The district council is extremely keen to see progress on Grove airfield, however, we have no valid role in any negotiations the developer may be engaged in regarding the development. As noted in the parish chairman's statement Persimmon Homes have advised that they are working to resolve issues regarding the signing of the Grove airfield section 106 agreement.

This bland statement by the developer is the same information as is available to the planning service. We regret that the parish council does not accept that we have no further information.

As soon as progress is made on the land negotiations such that the section 106 agreement can be finalised, I and officers will be delighted to provide further information to the parish council.”

B. Mr Steven Corrigan, Democratic Services Manager, read out the following question on behalf of Ms Helen Marshall, Director of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England to Matthew Barber, Leader of the council:

“Noting the various financial reports to be considered by the Council, we wonder what consideration is being given to the forthcoming ‘refresh’ of the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan and whether, given the lack of public consultation last time round, the draft of the revised document will be subject to debate at a full Council meeting?”

In response Councillor Barber confirmed that there would be wider consultation in May before the Local Enterprise Partnership Board ratification in June. The matter was an executive function and therefore not an issue for full Council although presuming the Strategic Economic Plan progressed as intended he said that he anticipated that councillors would have the opportunity to consider any response from the Vale.

#### **Co.45      Urgent business**

None.

#### **Co.46      Petitions under standing order 13**

None.

#### **Co.47      Questions under standing order 12**

1. Question from Councillor Bob Johnston to Councillor Roger Cox, Cabinet member for planning development management and housing.

“Could the Cabinet member please explain the policy and scheme for collecting money paid from developers in lieu of affordable housing, to build affordable housing elsewhere? For example, we have £1 million in reserve from the Old Gaol. How will that be used for affordable housing?”

Councillor Cox responded as follows:

“Our policy is to seek affordable housing on site and to only accept commuted sums where it is not viable or achievable to deliver affordable housing on site.

Where we accept a commuted sum, secured within a planning obligations Section 106 agreement, we specify when this should be paid.

Planning obligations are managed and monitored by the council’s Section 106 officer, who ensures the money is paid on the due date.

The Housing Development Team, in liaison with the Cabinet member, is responsible for ensuring commuted sums are used in a range of ways that bring forward affordable housing. The sums may be used to top up affordable housing schemes to improve viability or to meet particular housing needs.

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The commuted sum agreed in lieu of provision at Harcourt Way was £1 million. A payment schedule was agreed with the developer for £100,000 in 2015 and £180,000 per year for each of the next five years to 2020.

Therefore, we do not have £1 million in reserves, but will use those funds in an appropriate way, as opportunities arise, to increase delivery of affordable housing.”

Councillor Cox undertook to provide a written response to a supplementary question which asked if, in light of impending changes to housing benefit which come into force in 2017, he, as Cabinet Member, could confirm whether any social housing schemes in the Vale have either been postponed or scrapped because they will no longer be financially viable.

2. Question from Councillor Debby Hallett to Councillor Mike Murray, Cabinet member for planning policy.

“Could the Cabinet member please update us on the council’s response to the government’s current consultation on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, which ends on 22 February 2016?”

Councillor Murray responded as follows:

“The current government consultation seeks views on proposed changes to national planning policy on a range of issues including, broadening the definition of affordable housing, increasing the density of development around commuter hubs, development on brownfield land and delivery of starter homes.

South and Vale councils have responded jointly to this consultation. Our response may be seen on our website within the planning policy section, <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy>.”

3. Question from Councillor Emily Smith to Councillor Roger Cox, Cabinet member for planning development management and housing

“Of all the homes granted full and outline planning permission since 2011, how many have been completed, how many are not yet started, and what actions have Vale taken to speed up construction and make sure homes are delivered as soon as possible?”

Councillor Roger Cox responded as follows:

“Planning permission has been consented for 3948 homes since 2011.

The total number of homes constructed since 2011 is just below 2000.

As developers do not keep us informed of individual completions, we carry out periodic surveys doing site inspections and correlating our observations with the data provided by developers, to arrive at an accurate figure for starts on sites and completions. This completions number will be updated after the next survey which will take place after the end of the financial year. For the same reason it is not possible to say how many homes have not started. This detailed information will be available and published on completion of the next survey.

This council is a top performing authority in its speed of determining planning applications. We have put in place streamlined processes and we have cut through red tape in negotiations with developers to accelerate the process of issuing planning consents. However, it remains the responsibility of developers to speed up construction as the council is not empowered to force them to do this.

There are several reasons why developers set their own pace for delivery, including levels of purchaser interest. Nevertheless, we work closely with developers to help them overcome barriers to delivery, including taking a lead on negotiations to tackle any delays being experienced in relation to the work of statutory providers.

Another example of the work we do to speed up development, is our partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The HCA operates a Local Infrastructure Fund, which provides front funded loans. This assists developers with cash flows in the early period of a development, thereby enabling them to achieve site set up and start house building more quickly.

And as part of our work, on an on-going basis, we explore all opportunities for accelerating housing development, as it is in both the councils and the communities' interests for us to do so."

In response to a supplementary question regarding what other initiatives Cabinet had considered to speed up housing development Councillor Cox responded that every planning permission included a timescale for delivery."

#### **Co.48 Corporate services procurement**

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 28 January 2016, to establish a corporate services joint scrutiny committee.

##### **RESOLVED:** to

1. 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 to Cabinet on 28 January 2016;
2. authorise the chief executive, in consultation with the chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, to finalise the terms of reference of the committee;
3. 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.

#### **Co.49 Treasury management mid-year monitoring report 2015/16**

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 5 February 2016, on the treasury management activities for the first six months of 2015/16.

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.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the treasury management mid-year monitoring report 2015/16

## **Co.50 Treasury management and investment strategy 2016/17**

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 5 February 2016, on the council's treasury management strategy and investment strategy for 2016/17.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee considered the report at its meeting on 25 January 2016 and had not recommended any adjustments to the strategy. Cabinet agreed to recommend Council approve the strategy.

**RESOLVED:** to approve

1. the treasury management strategy 2016/17 set out in appendix A to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 5 February 2016;
2. the prudential indicators and limits for 2016/17 to 2018/19 as set out in table 2, appendix A to the head of finance's report; and
3. 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.

## **Co.51 Revenue budget 2016/17 and capital programme to 2020/21**

The chairman referred to regulations that require councils to record the names of those councillors voting in favour, against or abstaining from any vote on the budget, including amendments, and the council tax. In accordance with the regulations he would call for a named vote on each of these matters at this meeting.

The chairman reminded councillors that they were not entitled to vote on any issue affecting the level or administration of the council tax or other decisions which might affect the making of any such calculation such as the budget, if they were over two months in arrears with their council tax payments. Where such circumstances applied, councillors were under a statutory obligation to disclose the restriction placed on them and refrain from voting at the relevant meeting. No councillor made any such declaration.

Council noted the report of the chief finance officer, appendix G to the budget report, on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of the reserves.

Councillor Barber moved and Councillor Cox seconded a motion to approve Cabinet's recommendations as follows:

That Council:

1. sets the revenue budget for 2016/17 as set out in the appendix A.1 to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 5 February 2016;
2. approves the capital programme for 2016/17 to 2020/21 as set out in appendix D.1 to the head of finance's report, together with the capital growth bids set out in appendix D.2 of the head of finance's report;
3. sets the council's prudential limits as listed in appendix E to the head of finance's report;
4. approves the medium term financial plan to 2020/21 as set out in appendix F.1 to the head of finance's report; and
5. authorises the head of finance, in consultation with the cabinet member for finance, 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.

Councillor Hoddinott moved and Councillor Johnston seconded an amendment to the above budget to provide a video webcasting system for Council and committee meetings held at Milton Park and The Beacon at a cost of £20,000 for each of the six years of the medium term financial plan to be funded by the cancellation of the growth bid in Cabinet's budget proposals to fund car park expansion.

Those councillors who spoke in support of the amendment were of the view that a webcasting system would improve access to meetings and communication with the public, encourage the public to become more involved in the democratic process and take part in local government, increase the accountability of local councillors and potentially increase the pool of potential candidates.

Those councillors who spoke against the amendment stated that the benefits would not justify the cost. The number of viewers would be low, decisions were already published and available on the council's website and, whilst webcasting may increase passive participation, it would not increase the level of active participation by members of the public getting involved in local democracy and attending meetings.

The chairman called for a recorded vote on the amendment which was lost with the votes recorded as follows:

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstentions</b>
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Margaret Crick	Alice Badcock	Mike Badcock
Debby Hallett	Matthew Barber	
Jenny Hannaby	Eric Batts	
Dudley Hoddinott	Edward Blagrove	
Bob Johnston	Yvonne Constance	
Helen Pighills	Roger Cox	
Judy Roberts	Charlotte Dickson	
Emily Smith	St John Dickson	
Catherine Webber	Katie Finch	
	Robert Hall	
	Anthony Hayward	
	Simon Howell	
	Vicky Jenkins	
	Mohinder Kainth	
	Monica Lovatt	
	Sandy Lovatt	
	Ben Mabbett	
	Chris McCarthy	
	Mike Murray	
	Chris Palmer	
	Julia Reynolds	
	Robert Sharp	
	Janet Shelley	
	Henry Spencer	
	Reg Waite	
	Elaine Ware	
Total: 9	Total: 26	Total: 1

Councillor Hannaby moved and Councillor Smith seconded an amendment to Cabinet's budget to hire a full time officer to carry out a feasibility study and promote affordable self-build houses in the Vale at a cost of £75,000 for three years, with a capital provision of £1.5 million to purchase land as necessary, to be funded by the cancellation of the growth bid in Cabinet's budget proposals to fund car park expansion.

Those councillors who spoke in support of the amendment were of the view that the proposal would increase housing supply, provide more affordable housing for those unable to afford commercial houses, tap into the potential for significant numbers of self-build houses as demonstrated by a successful scheme in Cherwell and had the support of developers.

Those councillors who spoke against the amendment stated that, whilst self-build houses had a place in the delivery of housing for a minority, the proposal was premature prior to clarification of the government's policy on this matter and consideration of potential amendments and modifications to the Local Plan. Sufficient housing was coming forward and consideration should be given to compulsory purchase order powers to increase land supply.

The chairman called for a recorded vote on the amendment which was lost with the votes recorded as follows:

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstentions</b>
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Margaret Crick	Alice Badcock	Vicky Jenkins
Debby Hallett	Mike Badcock	
Jenny Hannaby	Matthew Barber	
Dudley Hoddinott	Eric Batts	
Bob Johnston	Edward Blagrove	
Helen Pighills	Yvonne Constance	
Judy Roberts	Roger Cox	
Emily Smith	Charlotte Dickson	
Catherine Webber	St John Dickson	
	Katie Finch	
	Robert Hall	
	Anthony Hayward	
	Simon Howell	
	Mohinder Kainth	
	Monica Lovatt	
	Sandy Lovatt	
	Ben Mabbett	
	Chris McCarthy	
	Mike Murray	
	Chris Palmer	
	Julia Reynolds	
	Robert Sharp	
	Janet Shelley	
	Henry Spencer	
	Reg Waite	
	Elaine Ware	
Total: 9	Total: 26	Total: 1

Councillors supporting the Cabinet's revenue and capital budget proposals supported the view that the council continued to manage its financial matters sensibly while maintaining services and continuing its capital programme with no increase in this council's element of the council tax in 2016/17. The budget would increase car parking capacity across the district, introduce a deep cleanse of streets across the district and support market towns.

Other councillors supported the view that Cabinet's budget was not balanced focussing too much on economic issues at the expense of social and environmental issues.

The chairman called for a recorded vote on the budget which was carried with the votes recorded as follows:

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstentions</b>
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Alice Badcock	Dudley Hoddinott	Margaret Crick
Mike Badcock		Debby Hallett
Matthew Barber		Jenny Hannaby
Eric Batts		Bob Johnston
Edward Blagrove		Helen Pighills
Yvonne Constance		Judy Roberts
Roger Cox		Emily Smith
Charlotte Dickson		Catherine Webber
St John Dickson		
Katie Finch		
Robert Hall		
Anthony Hayward		
Simon Howell		
Vicky Jenkins		
Mohinder Kainth		
Monica Lovatt		
Sandy Lovatt		
Ben Mabbett		
Chris McCarthy		
Mike Murray		
Chris Palmer		
Julia Reynolds		
Robert Sharp		
Janet Shelley		
Henry Spencer		
Reg Waite		
Elaine Ware		
Total: 27	Total: 1	Total: 8

**RESOLVED:** to

1. set the revenue budget for 2016/17 as set out in the appendix A.1 to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 5 February 2016;
2. approve the capital programme for 2016/17 to 2020/21 as set out in appendix D.1 to the head of finance's report, together with the capital growth bids set out in appendix D.2 of the head of finance's report;



3. set the council's prudential limits as listed in appendix E to the head of finance's report;
4. approve the medium term financial plan to 2020/21 as set out in appendix F.1 to the head of finance's report; and
5. authorise the head of finance, in consultation with the cabinet member for finance, 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.

## **Co.52 Council tax 2016/17**

Council considered the report of the head of finance on the setting of the Council Tax for the 2016/17 financial year.

In accordance with regulations requiring councils to record the names of those councillors voting in favour, against or abstaining from any vote on the council tax the chairman called for a recorded vote which was carried with the voting being as follows:

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstentions</b>
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Alice Badcock		Margaret Crick
Mike Badcock		Dudley Hoddinott
Matthew Barber		Bob Johnston
Eric Batts		Judy Roberts
Edward Blagrove		Catherine Webber
Yvonne Constance		
Roger Cox		
Charlotte Dickson		
St John Dickson		
Katie Finch		
Robert Hall		
Debby Hallett		
Jenny Hannaby		
Anthony Hayward		
Simon Howell		
Vicky Jenkins		
Mohinder Kainth		
Monica Lovatt		
Sandy Lovatt		
Ben Mabbett		
Chris McCarthy		
Mike Murray		
Chris Palmer		
Helen Pighills		
Julia Reynolds		
Robert Sharp		
Janet Shelley		
Emily Smith		
Henry Spencer		
Reg Waite		
Elaine Ware		
Total: 31	Total: 0	Total: 5

## RESOLVED:

1. to note that at its meeting on 16 December 2015 the council calculated the council tax base 2016/17:
  - (a) for the whole council area as **48,176.9** [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the “Act”)]; and
  - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a parish precept relates as in column 1 of appendix 1.
2. that the council tax requirement for the council’s own purposes for 2016/17 (excluding parish precepts) is £5,621,762
3. that the following amounts be calculated for the year 2016/17 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
  - (a) £76,039,313 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by parish councils.
  - (b) £67,056,575 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
  - (c) £8,982,738 being the amount by which the aggregate at (3)(a) above exceeds the aggregate at (3)(b) above, calculated by the council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its council tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B) of the Act).
  - (d) £186.45 being the amount at (3)(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the council, in accordance with Section 31(B) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (including parish precepts).
  - (e) £3,360,976 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act, as set out in column 2 of appendix 1.
  - (f) £116.69 being the amount at (3)(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (3)(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no parish precept relates.
4. to note that for the year 2016/17 Oxfordshire County Council has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Band A	£854.43
Band B	£996.83
Band C	£1,139.24
Band D	£1,281.64
Band E	£1,566.45
Band F	£1,851.26
Band G	£2,136.07
Band H	£2,563.28

5. to note that for the year 2016/17 the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Band A	£111.31
Band B	£129.86
Band C	£148.41
Band D	£166.96
Band E	£204.06
Band F	£241.16
Band G	£278.27
Band H	£333.92

6. in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, to set the aggregate amounts shown in appendix 3 of the report of the head of finance to Council on 17 February 2016 as the amounts of council tax for 2016/17 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings shown in appendix 3 of the report of the head of finance to Council on 17 February 2016.
7. to note the allocation of the town and parish element of the council tax reduction scheme grant payable to each parish shown in appendix 4 of the report of the head of finance to Council on 17 February 2016.
8. to determine that the council's basic amount of council tax for 2016/17 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.

#### **Co.53 Pay policy statement 2016/17**

Council considered the report of the head of HR, IT and technical services on the adoption of a pay policy statement to meet the requirements of the Localism Act.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the pay policy statement for 2016-17 attached to the report of the head of HR, IT and technical services to Council on 17 February 2016.

#### **Co.54 Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme - discharge of planning functions**

Council considered the report of the head of planning on the proposed Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme which sought approval for the delegation to Oxfordshire County Council of any planning responsibilities that would otherwise be exercised by Vale of White Horse District Council in relation to the scheme.

**RESOLVED:** to

1. delegate the discharge of the district planning authority functions of this council to Oxfordshire County Council, in connection with the processing and determination of a planning application for the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, under section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972;
2. authorise the Head of Planning to negotiate and agree a memorandum of understanding with Oxfordshire County Council to determine the operational arrangements of the delegation of the district council's planning functions in relation to the scheme; and

3. place a long stop date on the delegation such that the delegation will be revoked if any scheme application is not determined by 18 February 2019.

### **Co.55 Joint Staff Committee**

Council considered revised terms of reference for the Joint Staff Committee to progress the recruitment of a chief executive and an invitation to appoint councillors to sit on the Committee (the Leader of the council, one Conservative member and one Liberal Democrat member in accordance with the political balance of the council).

#### **RESOLVED:** to

1. approve the terms of reference of the Joint Staff Committee as set out on page 25 of the Council agenda for the meeting on 17 February 2016; and
2. appoint Matthew Barber, Leader of the council, Roger Cox as the Conservative member and Debby Hallett as the Liberal Democrat member to the Joint Staff Committee.

### **Co.56 Report of the leader of the council**

Matthew Barber, Leader of the council, provided the following updates:

- Refugees – the Home Office had requested the council to house six families. No timescale was provided and he undertook to keep councillors informed.
- Oxfordshire devolution – councillors would be provided with a briefing note on developments.
- Housing delivery – the council was working on a joint venture on a site east of Harwell Campus which would require a Council decision.

### **Co.57 Notices of motion under standing order 11**

- (1) Councillor Judy Roberts moved and Councillor Ed Blagrove seconded the following motion:

Council agrees to change the name of the Abingdon Area Committee to the Abingdon and Northeast Area Committee, to more accurately reflect the ward locations of committee members.

**RESOLVED:** to change the name of the Abingdon Area Committee to the Abingdon and Northeast Area Committee, to more accurately reflect the ward locations of committee members.

- (2) Councillor Debby Hallett moved and Councillor Catherine Webber seconded the following motion:

Council reconfirms its commitment to Localism principles as laid out by Government in general, and to Neighbourhood Planning in particular, and will continue to both help communities create and adopt Neighbourhood Plans and support their plans once adopted.

**RESOLVED:** that Council reconfirm its commitment to Localism principles as laid out by Government in general, and to Neighbourhood Planning in particular, and will continue to both help communities create and adopt Neighbourhood Plans and support their plans once adopted.

The meeting closed at 8:30pm  
Chairman

## **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 exemplars of housing design through our planning policies
- work with developers and other partners to develop a protocol that will ensure high quality, sympathetic design appropriate to all areas of our district
- actively work to bring forward development where we see gaps in provision, using council resources and delivery mechanisms 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 Stort; St Helen's Mill on the River Ock

and a more comprehensive scheme for the River Ock as well as the major Oxford and Abingdon Flood Alleviation Scheme.

- working with infrastructure partners to find solutions to flooding problems across the district
- maximising contributions from housing development towards road improvements, public transport, health, education and other infrastructure 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
- working with partners as part of the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to deliver the CSP annual plan aimed at reducing crime, tackling ant-social behaviour and supporting vulnerable people
- maintaining the number of people who say they feel safe during the day/at night

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

- continuous improvement programmes for our leisure centres, facilities and schemes
- investing in our parks and gardens across the Vale, 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
- improve street cleaning by carrying out district-wide deep cleans of pavements and public footpaths
- tackling fly tipping and graffiti 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 hold back 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 residents
- 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 promoting 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 facilities 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 district council tax low



- continuing to work in partnership with South Oxfordshire District Council and others to develop new ideas for improving service delivery, including pursuing a proposal to move to a unitary council covering southern Oxfordshire
- continuing to reduce our operational costs, particularly energy costs, through efficiency measures

## **THE COUNCIL'S EQUALITY OBJECTIVES**

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 the Vale for people with disabilities, carers and older people

# Council



Report of Head of HR, IT & Technical Services

Author: Andrew Down

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To: Council (South)

Date: 12 May 2016

To: Council (Vale)

Date: 11 May 2016

## Appointment of chief executive

### Recommendation(s)

Both councils are recommended:

- (a) to consider the recommendations of the Joint Staff Committee and, provided that both councils agree to the appointment, to appoint a shared chief executive of South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council on the terms and conditions agreed by the Joint Staff Committee

Subject to each council agreeing the appointment of the shared chief executive:

- (b) to agree that the chief executive will be employed by South Oxfordshire District Council and placed at the disposal of Vale of White Horse District Council in accordance with the existing agreement between the two councils under section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972
- (c) to appoint the chief executive as each council's head of paid service with effect from the commencement of his or her employment
- (d) to authorise the head of HR, IT & technical services to finalise the terms and conditions of the contract of employment of the chief executive in accordance with the recommendations of the Joint Staff Committee
- (e) to authorise the head of HR, IT & technical services to make any necessary amendments to the councils' published pay policy statement arising from the agreed terms and conditions of appointment of the chief executive.

## **Purpose of Report**

1. This report invites each council to agree the appointment of a chief executive and head of paid service, in succession to David Buckle.
2. The report has been written in advance of the meeting of the Joint Staff Committee (JSC) which will conduct formal interviews and make recommendations to each council on the appointment. The recommendations of the Joint Staff Committee will be presented to each council meeting.

## **Background**

3. David Buckle, the current chief executive, announced his retirement earlier this year. The Joint Staff Committee met formally on 19 February and agreed a process for recruiting his replacement. David has agreed to a flexible departure date in order to fit in with the recruitment timetable and the arrival of his successor.

## **Appointment process**

4. Members of the Joint Staff Committee met informally on 7 March, interviewing a number of recruitment consultants and appointing Penna to act for the councils. The job description was agreed by email and the post was advertised from 24 March both online and in the printed media (the MJ and the Guardian), with a closing date of 13 April.
5. In parallel with the advertising, Penna made direct approaches to a number of potential candidates. 25 applications were received and, in a meeting between Penna and the council leaders, eight candidates were long-listed.
6. Preliminary interviews were held on 25 and 26 April with the council leaders, Penna, and Trevor Holden, chief executive of Luton Borough Council. Following these preliminary interviews, four candidates were short-listed for final assessment on 10 May.
7. At the time of writing this report, the final assessment process has not yet taken place. Before 10 May, Penna will be conducting some psychometric assessments and taking up references for the short-listed candidates.
8. The Joint Staff Committee will meet formally on 10 May and will make its recommendations based on the outcome of the final assessment day. As required by both councils' officer employment procedure rules, all members of both cabinets will be informed of the recommendations and given an opportunity to raise any objections. If there are no material or well-founded objections by cabinet members to the proposed appointment the recommendations from the Joint Staff Committee will be presented to the council meeting on the night.

## **Employing council and head of paid service**

9. The Section 151 Officer recommends that South Oxfordshire District Council should be the employer in accordance with our existing practice for new members of staff. The services of the chief executive will be placed at the disposal of Vale of White Horse District Council in line with our current practice and with the existing Section 113 agreement between the two councils.

10. Each council is recommended to designate the incoming chief executive as its head of paid service for the purposes of Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

### **Electoral registration and returning officer**

11. An early task for the new chief executive will be to develop and implement a revised flatter management structure for the two councils. The chief executive is not expected to take the roles of electoral registration and returning officer: a report and recommendations regarding these roles will be brought forward to a future meeting of each council.

### **Financial Implications**

12. The appointment of a new chief executive, replacing David Buckle, brings very little by way of any financial implication. The recommendations from the Joint Staff Committee will include a proposed salary for the new chief executive, and this is not expected to differ greatly from the current position.
13. If the salary to be offered is not the same as that paid to the current chief executive, it will be necessary for the councils to amend their published pay policy statement.

### **Legal Implications**

14. The legal implications of the proposed appointment are covered in the body of the report.

### **Conclusion**

15. Each council is asked to agree the appointment of a chief executive to be employed by South Oxfordshire District Council, to designate him or her as its head of paid service, and to authorise the head of HR, IT & technical services to complete the necessary formalities.

## Council report



Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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To: COUNCIL

DATE: 11 May 2016

## Appointments to committees, panels and joint committees 2016/17

### Recommendations

That Council:

1. appoints the committees and panels for the 2016/17 year, allocates seats to each political group and appoints councillors and substitutes to sit on them in accordance with paragraphs 8-13 of this report and as set out in the schedule circulated at the meeting;
2. appoints chairmen and vice-chairmen as set out in the schedule circulated at the meeting;
3. appoints all local members representing the wards covered by the relevant area committees to those committees for the 2016/17 municipal year;
4. appoints councillors to the Licensing Acts Committee in accordance with paragraphs 15-17 of this report and as set out in the schedule circulated at the meeting;
5. appoints a representative and a substitute on the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
6. appoints a representative and an observer substitute on the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel;
7. authorises the head of legal and democratic services to make appointments to any vacant committee or panel seat and substitute positions in accordance with the wishes of the relevant group leader;
8. authorises the head of legal and democratic services to amend the constitution as necessary to reflect the arrangements set out in this report.

## **Purpose of report**

1. This report invites Council to agree appointments to those committees required to be politically balanced together with the area committees and the Licensing Acts Committee. It also invites Council to make appointments to joint bodies.

## **Background**

2. The Council is required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to appoint committees, review the political balance and to appoint councillors to the committees annually.
3. In summary the Council has a duty to ensure the following principles are adhered to:
  - (i) not all seats are allocated to the same political group
  - (ii) a majority group should get the majority of seats on each committee
  - (iii) the seats allocated to groups on a committee reflect the membership of the Council as a whole
  - (iv) the allocation of the total number of seats on all committees reflects the membership as a whole
4. Ordinary committees are those that have decision-making powers but excluding the Licensing Acts Committee and area committees.

## **Strategic Objectives**

5. This report supports the council's corporate plan in that it ensures the council manages its business effectively. It is also in line with the council's requirement to review the political complexion of committees and other bodies, having regards to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

## **Political balance**

6. The number of seats held by the various political groups is currently as follows:

Conservative	29	(76.32%)
Liberal Democrat	9	(23.68%)
7. The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 require a constituted political group to be two or more members.

## Composition of committees

8. The ordinary committees and panels that are required to be politically balanced both individually, and overall, are set out below.

Committee	Members	Comments
Vale Scrutiny Committee	9	
Joint Scrutiny Committee	5	10 in total with South Oxfordshire District Council
Joint Audit and Governance Committee	4	8 in total with South Oxfordshire District Council
Planning Committee	11	
General Licensing Committee	12	
Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee	6	
Appeals Panel	3	
Joint Staff Committee	3	6 in total with South Oxfordshire District Council
Corporate Services Joint Scrutiny Committee	2	10 in total with Hart, Mendip and South Oxfordshire district councils and Havant Borough Council
<b>Totals</b>	<b>55</b>	

- Officers propose that the membership of the General Licensing Committee and the Licensing Acts Committee are the same, although they are two separate entities. This allows for a sufficiently large, well trained pool of councillors from which to draw the Taxi Licensing and Licensing Panels, and avoids confusion as to which members are on which committee. These committees may appoint the same, or different chairmen and vice chairmen.
  - The co-chairs of the Joint Scrutiny committee should be the same as the chairs of the district Scrutiny committees to eliminate potential conflict around the call in arrangements and work programmes.
9. The terms of reference of the committees and panels are set out in the constitution and in subsequent agreed council minutes.
10. At its meeting in February Council authorised the chief executive in consultation with the chairman of the Scrutiny Committee to finalise the terms of reference of the

Corporate Services Joint Scrutiny Committee which will be included in the council's constitution. No changes are proposed to existing committees.

11. The political balance calculation and the entitlements to seats on committees are set out in the tables below. Fractional entitlements of less than one half are rounded down and entitlements of one half or more are rounded up.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Group members</b>	<b>Total of council</b>	<b>Total number of committee seats</b>
Conservative	29	76.32%	42
Liberal Democrat	9	23.68%	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>55</b>

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Total number of seats</b>	<b>Conservative</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat</b>
Scrutiny	9	7	2
Planning	11	8	3
General Licensing Committee	12	9	3
Appeals Panel	3	2	1
Joint Scrutiny	5	4	1
Joint Audit and Governance	4	3	1
Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee	6	5	1
Joint Staff Committee	3	2	1
Corporate Services Joint Scrutiny Committee	2	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>13</b>

12. If the Council wishes to allocate any seats not in accordance with the political balance requirements it can only do so if no councillor votes against the proposal.

## **Substitutes**

13. Any member of a group may substitute for another member of their group on scrutiny, joint scrutiny, corporate services joint scrutiny, joint audit and governance and community governance and electoral issues committees. Appropriately trained



group members may substitute for other members of their group on planning and general licensing committees.

### **Area Committees**

14. In 2003, the Council established area committees with the terms of reference set out in the council's constitution. The areas were revised by Council in May 2015. In January 2011 the Executive delegated the award of community grants to the area committees. The area committees consist of councillors for the relevant area only. Council is invited to confirm the membership of the area committees for the next municipal year as those local members representing those areas. The Council is asked to note that the area committees do not need to be politically balanced and, therefore, the area committees are not included in the calculation of seats to political groups. Council is requested to appoint councillors to the area committees as set out in the schedule circulated at the meeting.

### **Licensing Acts Committees**

15. The Licensing Acts Committee is a statutory committee and is not required to be included in the calculation of political balance. The committee meets rarely to deal with licensing and gambling policy matters but a membership of 12 provides a pool of councillors from which panels of three can be drawn to deal with hearings relating to personal licence holders and premises licence applications and reviews.
16. Council has previously agreed to appoint a committee in accordance with the political balance of the Council. The membership will mirror the membership of the General Licensing Committee and will, therefore, be politically balanced but will not in itself contribute to the total political balance of the council's committees.
17. As a statutory committee with a specified membership substitutes may not be appointed.

### **Appointments**

18. Officers have invited group leaders to submit the names of councillors they wish to sit on each of the above bodies. A table of nominations will be circulated at the meeting.

### **Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

19. Council is invited to appoint a representative and a named substitute to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel**

20. Council is invited to appoint a representative to the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel. The constitution of the panel does not provide for formally appointed substitutes but Council may appoint one in an observer capacity.

## **Financial implications**

21. There are no direct financial implications.

## **Legal implications**

22. These are set out in the body of the report.

## **Conclusion**

23. In deciding the committees and panels it wishes to establish for the 2016/17 year, Council is required to allocate seats to political groups in the same proportion as they hold on the council as a whole. Against that background, Council is invited to establish the committees and panels set out in the table in paragraph 8 of this report and to appoint councillors to them. Council is also invited to appoint councillors to the area committees and the Licensing Acts Committee and to appoint representatives to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel. If all committee and panel seats and substitute places are not filled at the meeting, Council is invited to delegate authority to the head of legal and democratic services to make appointments in accordance with the wishes of the relevant group leader. Council is also invited to delegate authority to the head of legal and democratic services to amend the constitution as necessary.

**Background Papers:** None

# Council



Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Author: Steve Culliford

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To: COUNCIL

Date: 11 May 2016

## **Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 – proposal to appoint a joint Independent Remuneration Panel**

### **Recommendations**

Subject to the agreement of South Oxfordshire District Council, to:

- (a) extend the existing independent remuneration panel until the appointment of a joint independent remuneration panel;
- (b) appoint a joint independent remuneration panel with South Oxfordshire District Council to carry out reviews of the councillors' allowances schemes at both councils and make recommendations on any changes to the schemes to the relevant Council;
- (c) make the appointment of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel effective until May 2020, one year after the 2019 district council elections;
- (d) authorise the head of legal and democratic services to make appointments to the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel, and advise councillors in due course of the outcome of the appointments process.

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To invite Council to appoint a joint independent remuneration panel with South Oxfordshire District Council for the purposes of reviewing the councillors' allowances schemes and making recommendations to the councils.

## **Background**

1. The council has a duty to establish and maintain an independent remuneration panel to review councillors' allowances and make recommendations to full Council. Council can only approve a councillors' allowances scheme having first considered the report of its independent remuneration panel.
2. The council adopted its current scheme following consideration of the panel's report, with the new scheme taking effect from May 2015.

## **The current independent remuneration panel**

3. The council appointed five independent persons to its current panel in 2011, with their terms of office running until May 2016, one year after the next district council elections.

## **Proposal for a joint panel**

4. The Council rejected a proposal for a joint independent remuneration panel in December 2014, as the two councils were separate organisations, had different allowances, and the Council believed that a joint panel would achieve limited efficiencies. However, the view was expressed that the new Council should reconsider the issue following the May 2015 elections.
5. In May 2015, South Oxfordshire adopted a revised allowances scheme bringing it almost completely in line with the Vale's scheme. There are some minor differences between the two schemes: the Vale pays a special responsibility allowance to the deputy leader of the council; South Oxfordshire pays special responsibility allowances to its licensing committee chairmen.
6. The leaders of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have agreed that as the two schemes are better aligned, Council should reconsider appointing a joint independent remuneration panel. Officers see merit in this proposal as there are now only minor differences between the two councils' schemes. This will reduce the time taken to review the two councils' schemes and the panel would also gain greater expertise working across the two councils. The aim is as far as possible to produce one joint scheme, which would be more efficient.
7. The panel must consist of a minimum of three independent persons who cannot be members of either council, nor be anyone who is disqualified from being an elected member of the council. Officers recommend that the panel is appointed after an advertisement, and a full application and appointment process.
8. The joint panel should ideally be appointed for a number of years to allow it to build up expertise in the councils' schemes, the regulations, government guidance and other best practice. Officers recommend that the panel is appointed until May 2020, one year after the 2019 district council elections. Council is asked to authorise the head of legal and democratic services to make appointments to the joint panel. Existing panel members from each council will be invited to apply, while simultaneously an advertisement will be placed on the council's website for new panel members. Councillors will be updated of the outcome of the appointments process.

## **Financial Implications**

9. The appointment of a single joint independent remuneration panel should bring economies of scale with less time required to conduct reviews. The process of reviewing the two councils' schemes should be simpler and avoid duplication of resources. The data gathering exercise in any review will be shorter as information can be shared across the two councils. While the aim will be to develop one joint scheme for operation across both councils, it is possible that there may be differences in the schemes the joint panel recommends to the two councils or in the scheme that each council decides to adopt. However, the schemes will have many similarities resulting from government regulations and guidance on councillors' allowances schemes, and that both councils operate a leader and Cabinet style of executive arrangements, and scrutiny committees. The remainder of the committee structures are similar also.

## **Legal Implications**

10. In accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Local Government Act 2000, and The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, councils have a duty to consider the findings of an independent remuneration panel before determining any councillors' allowances scheme. The regulations place a statutory obligation on the council to establish and maintain an independent remuneration panel to look at councillors' allowances and report its views to the council. There is a statutory obligation for a panel of at least three members, none of whom is also a member of the council or is a member of a committee or sub-committee of the council, nor disqualified from being an elected member of the council (s.80 of the Local Government Act 1972, and s79 and 83(ii) of the Local Government Act 2000).

## **Risks**

11. The concerns previously expressed by the Council that the two councils' schemes were significantly different has since been mitigated. The two councils' schemes now almost align. However, there is room for local differentiation where it can be justified.

## **Conclusion**

12. The Council is recommended to appoint a joint independent remuneration panel with South Oxfordshire District Council. This will avoid duplication of effort to conduct reviews of the councillors' allowances schemes and create parity if the councils adopt a single scheme. The Council is also recommended to authorise the head of legal and democratic services to make appointments to the panel.