

Council



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Date: 9 February 2016
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Summons to attend a meeting of Council

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Reed', written in a cursive style.

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. Apologies for absence

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Minutes

(Pages 7 - 16)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the council minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2015 (attached).

3. Declarations of interest

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

4. Chairman's announcements

To receive any announcements from the chairman.

5. Statements, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting council.

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

6. 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.

7. Petitions under standing order 13

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

8. Questions under standing order 12

To receive the following questions from members of the council under standing order 12.

1. Question from Councillor Bob Johnston to Councillor Mike Murray, Cabinet member for planning policy

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?

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?

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

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?

9. Corporate services procurement

At its meeting on 28 January 2016, 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 council's existing partner, South Oxfordshire District Council.

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

Both South Oxfordshire's and the Vale of White Horse's Cabinets met together informally to discuss the officer's report.

Cabinet agreed with the recommendations set out in the report subject to an amendment to consult the chairman of the Scrutiny Committee on finalising the terms of reference of the joint scrutiny committee and also consultation with the relevant Cabinet member on the terms of reference of the joint committee.

The report of the strategic director, which Cabinet considered on 28 January 2016, was circulated to all councillors. Please bring this report to the meeting. Hard copies are available on request.

RECOMMENDATION: to

1. 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;

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.

10. Treasury management mid-year monitoring report 2015/16

Cabinet, at its meeting on 5 February 2016, considered the treasury management mid-year monitoring report of the head of finance.

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.

The report of the head of finance, considered by the Cabinet on 5 February 2016, was circulated to all councillors. Hard copies are available on request.

RECOMMENDATION: to approve the treasury management mid-year monitoring report 2015/16.

11. Treasury management and investment strategy 2016/17

Cabinet, at its meeting on 5 February 2016, considered the report of the head of finance on the treasury management strategy, the annual investment strategy and the prudential indicators.

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 as attached to the report.

The report of the head of finance, considered by the Cabinet on 5 February 2016, was circulated to all councillors. Hard copies are available on request.

RECOMMENDATION: to

1. approve the treasury management strategy 2016/17 as set out in appendix A to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 5 February 2016;
2. approve 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;
3. approve the annual investment strategy 2016/17 set out in appendix A to the report (paragraphs 25 to 60) and the lending criteria detailed in table 5 to the head of finance's report.

12. Revenue budget 2016/17 and capital programme to 2020/21

Cabinet, at its meeting on 5 February 2016, considered the report of the head of finance on the draft revenue budget 2016/17, and the capital programme to 2020/21.

Cabinet resolved to agree that the Cabinet member for finance, in conjunction with the head of finance, may make minor adjustments to the report and prudential indicators should they prove necessary prior to submission to Council. Any adjustments will be reported to Council.

The report of the head of finance, considered by the Cabinet on 5 February 2016, was circulated to all councillors. Hard copies are available on request.

The Scrutiny Committee will consider this report at its meeting on 11 February 2016. Any views or recommendations will be reported to Council.

RECOMMENDATION: 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;
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.

13. Council tax 2016/17

To consider the report of the head of finance regarding the setting of the council tax for the 2016/17 financial year (**report to follow**).

14. Pay policy statement 2016/17

(Pages 17 - 21)

To consider 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 (**report attached**).

15. Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme - discharge of planning functions

(Pages 22 - 24)

To consider the report of the head of planning on the proposed Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) and seek 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 OFAS (**report attached**).

16. Joint Staff Committee

(Page 25)

At its meeting in July 2008 Council established a Joint Staff Committee with South Oxfordshire District Council to manage the appointments process for the employment of officers to the senior management team and make recommendations on appointments to

Council. The Committee comprises three members from each Council.

In light of the forthcoming retirement of David Buckle, Chief Executive, Council is invited to agree revised terms of reference for the Committee to progress the recruitment of a chief executive and appoint councillors to sit on the Committee (to be the Leader of the council, one Conservative member and one Liberal Democrat member in accordance with the political balance of the council).

Revised terms of reference for the Committee are **attached**.

17. Report of the leader of the council

(1) Urgent cabinet decisions

In accordance with the overview and scrutiny 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).

18. 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 Judy Roberts, seconded by Councillor Ed Blagrove.

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.

(2) Motion proposed by Councillor Debby Hallett, seconded by Councillor Catherine Webber.

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.



Minutes

of a meeting of the

Council

held on Wednesday 16 December 2015 at 7.00 pm
at the 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), Matthew Barber, Eric Batts, Ed Blagrove, Yvonne Constance, Roger Cox, Margaret Crick, Stuart Davenport, Charlotte Dickson, St John Dickson, Gervase Duffield, 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, Emily Smith and Elaine Ware

Officers: Steve Bishop, Steven Corrigan and Margaret Reed

Number of members of the public: 3

Co.24 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of councillors Alice Badcock, Janet Shelley and Catherine Webber.

Co.25 Minutes

RESOLVED: to adopt as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2015 and agree that the Chairman sign them.

Co.26 Declarations of interest

None.

Co.27 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman thanked councillors and officers for their support during the year and those who attended the charity ball and quiz.

Co.28 Statements, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting council.

Mr Steven Corrigan, Democratic Services Manager, read out the following question on behalf of Dr Les Clyne to Matthew Barber, Leader of the council:

"Has the Council asked the developers of the Grove airfield development when they expect the current negotiations on land values between the developers, the landowners, their agents and the trustees for the Grove airfield development to be progressed to the point at which all remaining parties can sign the draft Section 106 agreement? If they have asked, what timescale was quoted? If they have not asked, will they please now do so as a matter of urgency, and will you please send me a copy of their response within seven working days of you receiving the response."

In response Matthew Barber thanked Dr Clyne for his question and continued interest in this matter. He confirmed that the council had requested updates and every deadline had been missed. He confirmed that he would provide Dr Clyne with an update when further responses were received and provide a written response of this answer with additional information about responses received to date.

Co.29 Urgent business

None.

Co.30 Petitions under standing order 13

None.

Co.31 Questions under standing order 12

1. Question from Councillor Bob Johnston to Councillor Charlotte Dickson, Chairman of the General Licensing Committee.

"Could the Chairman please explain how council will reconsider and amend its Air Quality Management Area policies and actions in light of recent emissions-rigging scandal?"

Councillor Dickson responded as follows:

"Local authority monitoring has always shown that central government predicted vehicle emissions reductions from cleaner vehicles, which was based on manufacturers' data, were not being recorded in their areas.

This emission rigging scandal will not undermine any of the existing actions in the Vale Air Quality Action Plan because the actions look at the whole fleet and not individual car manufacturers. The actions focus on driving behaviour, traffic flows and improving the take up of electric cars. The fact that some cars are not meeting their predicted emissions standards will mean that the above actions will potentially take longer to achieve the required nitrogen dioxide reductions."

In response to a supplementary question she undertook to provide a written update on the implementation of the council's Air Quality Action Plan.

2. Question from Councillor Bob Johnston to Councillor Roger Cox, Cabinet member for housing.

"Given the Government's stated desire to reduce family benefit to a maximum of £23,000 per annum, which will result in housing associations no longer being able to house them as social housing rents will be unaffordable, could the Cabinet member please explain what contingency arrangements the Vale (as a statutory housing body) is making to deal with the expected increase in social housing need?"

Councillor Cox responded as follows:

“There are many factors that affect any increase in the demand for social housing, but I believe this council is in a good position to deal with the demands in the future. There are two parts in answering this question. Firstly, how will the decrease in benefit affect those households already in social housing? This is an issue for our housing association partners. Sovereign estimates around 60 households would be affected. So we are working strategically with them to assist those households. Initially, those households would qualify for discretionary housing benefit to assist them in paying the rent for a period of six months. Sovereign Housing Association will then work intensively with the household to try and get them back into work or training so that they can be exempted from the benefit cap. They will only need to work 16 hours per week to be exempt. Also we will encourage both Sovereign and SOHA to make best use of their housing stock and internal transfers to move households away from affordable properties to those that charge only social rent.

The changes made in the Housing Needs Service, will enable the council to assist households trying to access social housing. There is a real emphasis on preventing homelessness. In 2013/14 the Council prevented 245 households from becoming homeless, in 2014/15 this rose to 323. The trend this year shows that the council will exceed this figure again. The council runs a successful social lettings agency and in 2014/15 found 90 homes for families in the private sector. The majority of the rents were kept to the local housing allowance levels, but with incentives for landlords, many households on low incomes have accessed this accommodation.

Households who are subject to the benefit cap, who have a high priority through the housing register, will be given targeted assistance. A protocol has been agreed with both Sovereign Housing Association and SOHA, that if a household bids and is successful for an affordable home and their income is insufficient to meet their rent liabilities, then they will be offered a home with a social rent. We have also set up protocols with Citizens Advice and a variety of other agencies to also assist those households subject to the benefit cap or low incomes to assist them in maximising their income.

Therefore, as you can see the council has taken a strategic view, in partnership to help those households that require our assistance.”

In response to a supplementary question Councillor Cox confirmed that officers would work with housing associations to ensure families on modest incomes were not housed in bed and breakfast accommodation in high drug use areas.

3. Question from Councillor Judy Roberts to Councillor Eric Batts, Cabinet member for technical services.

“Please could the Cabinet member explain why the Vale is continuing to ignore repeated requests from residents and parish councils for a proper hydrology survey for the Cumnor Hill area?”

Councillor Batts thanked Councillor Roberts for her question and responded as follows:

“I recognise the potential benefit of a proper hydrology survey of the Cumnor Hill area. However, this council is not the lead local flood authority. That responsibility lays with Oxfordshire County Council who would be the commissioning authority for such a survey. The county have given informal indication to suggest that they could carry out a survey. However, they would be looking for funding assistance

from potential developers in the Cumnor Hill area in order to make a hydrology survey feasible.”

As a supplementary question Councillor Roberts asked that in light of the extensive number of planning permissions granted in this area what assurance could the Cabinet member give to residents of Dean Court and North Hinksey that there will not be serious flooding following future heavy rainfall?

Councillor Batts responded that he could not provide such an assurance. The appropriate authority, Oxfordshire County Council, was aware of the potential for flooding in the area and he suggested that Councillor Roberts raise her concerns with the ward member for the County Division.

4. Question from Councillor Judy Roberts to Councillor Elaine Ware, Cabinet member for corporate strategy.

“Could the Cabinet member please confirm her intention to review the Grants Scheme in early 2016?”

In response Councillor Ware confirmed that she will review the Grants Scheme in 2016. She referred to a meeting she had held with Councillor Roberts in August and to an email from the Grants Team Leader dated 25 August which states that she is keen to review the scheme in April 2016. She undertook to provide Councillor Roberts with a copy of the email following the meeting.

As a supplementary question Councillor Roberts referred to Article 13.2 in the council’s constitution which requires that actions taken should be proportionate to the desired outcome. She stated that the most appropriate way of distributing grant money would be on the basis of per head of population rather than by parish as had been the case in the previous four years and resulted in the Faringdon area receiving an extra £40,000. She asked for an assurance that the forthcoming review would assess the desired outcome of smaller parishes receiving extra grant money and that this be statistically assessed and the conclusions made public.

In response Councillor Ware confirmed that this issue would be considered as part of her review.

5. Question from Councillor Julia Reynolds to Councillor Matthew Barber, Leader of the council.

“Letcombe Brook is a chalk stream which are globally rare. It is seven miles long, from Letcombe Regis, through Wantage, Grove and East Hanney. It is a key strategic environmental asset and its continual maintenance by the Letcombe Brook Project Officer is vital for flood mitigation and for ensuring the integrity of its habitats by conserving and enhancing the biodiversity and landscape. The Letcombe Brook Project arose from public concern about pollution, low water levels and years of neglect resulting in litter, erosion, poor bank treatments and frequent flooding. The Project officer works with a small team of volunteers, developers, residents who are riparian owners, and organises field visits for local schools, which forms part of the National Curriculum. Advice is given to the East Hanney flood group, tree and bank erosion management is ongoing, indigenous planting has been carried out and invasive species such as himalayan balsam is pulled out on a regular basis. The brook supports a healthy wild brown trout population and priority species such as otter and UK’s most endangered species, the water vole. Funding from the Environment Agency was withdrawn three years ago. Will the Leader commit to additional funding for the Letcombe Brook Project in the forthcoming budget?”

In response Councillor Barber stated that the 2016/17 capital base budget included provision of £6,000 for flood alleviation work.

6. Question from Councillor Chris Palmer to Councillor Matthew Barber, Leader of the council.

“Given that the first refugees are due to arrive in Oxford before Christmas, what plans are there locally for any refugees, and what can/ should the Churches in Abingdon do to help?”

There are many different things that the Churches can and may well be willing to do to help out. But they need to know what is expected and how many people they would be expected to help?”

In response Councillor Barber responded that the council had not received a request from the Home Office to house refugees. The most appropriate option was to house refugees in areas where a support network existed and the Vale was unlikely to meet this criteria. However, the Vale was ready to share the burden and would work with partners, including the churches, to help any refugees.

Co.32 Treasury management outturn 2014/15

Council considered the Leader of the council’s recommendation, made on 2 October 2015, on the outturn performance of the treasury management function for the financial year 2014/15.

RESOLVED: to

1. approve the treasury management outturn report for 2014/15;
2. note that the treasury activities in 2014/15 have been carried out in accordance with the treasury management strategy and policy.

Co.33 Joint Statement of Licensing Policy

Council considered the Licensing Acts Committee’s recommendation, made at its meeting on 25 November 2015, on a statement of licensing policy jointly developed with South Oxfordshire District Council.

RESOLVED: to

1. adopt the Joint Statement of Licensing Policy as attached to the Council agenda for the meeting held on 16 December 2015;
2. authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to make minor editorial changes to the Joint Statement of Licensing Policy;
3. authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to publish the Joint Statement of Licensing Policy in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003.

Co.34 Joint Gambling Policy

Council considered Cabinet’s recommendations, made at its meeting on 4 December 2015, on a statement of licensing policy jointly developed with South Oxfordshire District Council.

RESOLVED: to

1. adopt the proposed Joint Gambling Policy attached to the Council agenda for the meeting held on 16 December 2015;
2. authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to make minor editorial changes to the Joint Gambling Policy; and
3. authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to publish the Joint Gambling Policy in accordance with the Gambling Act 2005 (Licensing Authority Policy Statement)(England and Wales) Regulations 2006.

Co.35 Council tax base 2016/17

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 4 December 2015, on the council tax base for 2016/17.

RESOLVED:

1. to approve the report of the Head of Finance to Cabinet on 4 December 2015 for the calculation of the council's tax base and the calculation of the tax base for each parish area for 2016/17;
2. that, in accordance with The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Vale of White Horse District Council as its council tax base for the year 2016/17 be 48,176.9; and
3. that, in accordance with The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Vale of White Horse District Council as the council tax base for the year 2016/17 for each parish be the amount shown against the name of that parish in the revised Appendix 1 attached to the Council agenda for the meeting held on 16 December 2015.

Co.36 Councillors' allowances scheme

Council considered the independent remuneration panel's recommendation on the councillors' allowances scheme.

RESOLVED:

1. to increase only the basic allowance for 2016/17, in line with the staff pay increase for 2016/17;
2. not to increase the special responsibility allowances, the childcare or dependent carer's allowances, or the travel allowances.

Co.37 Review of the council's constitution

Council considered the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on proposed amendments to the council's constitution.

RESOLVED: to

1. note the work done by the Joint Constitution Review Group and the intention to bring forward wholesale revisions of the council's constitution for consideration by Council;

2. note the overall approach of the review group to develop “mirror” constitutions with South Oxfordshire District Council and commonality of wording where possible;
3. authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic services to make the necessary amendments to the constitution to amend the scrutiny call-in procedures and the definition of key decisions;
4. approve the amendments of the officer employment procedure rules for inclusion in the constitution as attached to the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to Council on 16 December 2015;
5. authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services or a deputy monitoring officer to appoint a panel of independent persons drawn from the independent persons appointed by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils under the Localism Act 2011;
6. authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic services to make any minor or consequential amendments to the constitution.

Co.38 Report of the Leader of the council

The Leader of the council reported government announcements of the second Vale Enterprise Zone and the Didcot Garden Town designation both of which would support infrastructure spending in the district.

He also reported that the district council had achieved the second highest recycling figures in the country.

Co.39 Notices of motion under standing order 11

Council considered the following motions submitted under standing order 11.

- (1) Motion proposed by Councillor Mike Badcock, seconded by Councillor Bob Johnston:

“That Council requests officers to convene a special Council meeting no later than the date of the annual Council meeting in May 2016 in order to grant the freedom of the Vale of White Horse district to 3 Regiment Royal Logistic Corps, 4 Regiment Royal Logistic Corps and 7 Rifles in recognition of their contribution to the service of the country and the residents of the Vale.”

RESOLVED:

That Council requests officers to convene a special Council meeting no later than the date of the annual Council meeting in May 2016 in order to grant the freedom of the Vale of White Horse district to 3 Regiment Royal Logistic Corps, 4 Regiment Royal Logistic Corps and 7 Rifles in recognition of their contribution to the service of the country and the residents of the Vale.

- (2) Motion proposed by Councillor Roger Cox, seconded by Councillor Mike Murray:

“This Council commends the Government’s efforts to support people in having the security and stability of owning a home of their own.

This Council welcomes the Government’s Housing and Planning Bill which will help to create a million new homeowners by 2020. The Council endorses the Bill:

- Turning Generation Rent into Generation Buy. First-time buyers will benefit from the provision of 200,000 Starter Homes which will be available at a 20 per cent discount to first-time buyers under 40.
- Making planning permission simpler and protecting the greenbelt. The Bill reforms complex planning legislation and grants automatic planning permission in principle on brownfield sites.
- Selling high-value vacant council assets. Councils should make the best use of their assets, as high value council homes become empty they should be sold to fund new affordable house building in the same area.
- Extending Right to Buy to housing association tenants. Ending the unfairness of Right to Buy only being available to council house tenants, this will be extended to 1.3 million housing associations tenants. Homes that are sold to tenants will be replaced with new affordable homes on a one-for-one basis.
- Giving local people more of a voice through neighbourhood planning and local plans. Shifting power from Whitehall to local people, so communities will have more of a say in planning in their local areas and where homes and businesses should be built.

This Council supports the Housing and Planning Bill, which will allow people who want to work hard to save and aspire to buy their own home achieve their dream.”

Those councillors in support of the motion welcomed the initiatives to build starter homes to address the lack of affordable housing for first time buyers and to extend the right to buy programme to meet the aspirations of people to own their own home.

A number of councillors spoke against the motion. The new starter homes would be smaller and constructed to a lower standard. Housing associations had borrowed against their housing stock and the extension of the right to buy programme would force them to sell their assets below market value and impact on their ability to borrow against their assets in the future. There was no requirement to replace the housing stock sold or to increase the rental sector. More houses were required to address the housing shortage and address the affordability issue. The Bill had missed an opportunity to build the houses required.

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

For	Against	Abstentions
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Mike Badcock	Debby Hallett	Margaret Crick
Matthew Barber	Dudley Hoddinott	Jenny Hannaby
Eric Batts	Bob Johnston	Anthony Hayward
Edward Blagrove	Emily Smith	Helen Pighills
Roger Cox		Judy Roberts
Stuart Davenport		
Charlotte Dickson		
St John Dickson		
Gervase Duffield		
Katie Finch		
Robert Hall		
Simon Howell		
Vicky Jenkins		

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For	Against	Abstentions
Mohinder Kainth		
Monica Lovatt		
Sandy Lovatt		
Ben Mabbett		
Chris McCarthy		
Mike Murray		
Chris Palmer		
Julia Reynolds		
Robert Sharp		
Reg Waite		
Elaine Ware		
Total: 24	Total: 4	Total: 5

RESOLVED:

That Council commends the Government's efforts to support people in having the security and stability of owning a home of their own.

This Council welcomes the Government's Housing and Planning Bill which will help to create a million new homeowners by 2020. The Council endorses the Bill:

- Turning Generation Rent into Generation Buy. First-time buyers will benefit from the provision of 200,000 Starter Homes which will be available at a 20 per cent discount to first-time buyers under 40.
- Making planning permission simpler and protecting the greenbelt. The Bill reforms complex planning legislation and grants automatic planning permission in principle on brownfield sites.
- Selling high-value vacant council assets. Councils should make the best use of their assets, as high value council homes become empty they should be sold to fund new affordable house building in the same area.
- Extending Right to Buy to housing association tenants. Ending the unfairness of Right to Buy only being available to council house tenants, this will be extended to 1.3 million housing associations tenants. Homes that are sold to tenants will be replaced with new affordable homes on a one-for-one basis.
- Giving local people more of a voice through neighbourhood planning and local plans. Shifting power from Whitehall to local people, so communities will have more of a say in planning in their local areas and where homes and businesses should be built.

This Council supports the Housing and Planning Bill, which will allow people who want to work hard to save and aspire to buy their own home achieve their dream.

(3) Motion proposed by Councillor Gervase Duffield, seconded by Councillor Reg Waite:

"This Council welcomes the recent announcements of the second Vale Enterprise Zone and the Garden Town initiative and calls on all parts of the Council to have regard to protecting and respecting as far as possible the rural character of the villages affected and to work to avoid an urbanised 'greater Didcot'.

In supporting the motion a number of councillors welcomed both the second Vale Enterprise Zone and the Garden Town initiative which would secure the long term

future for local communities within the district. However, it was important that these initiatives did not impact on the historical character and rural nature of the district's villages. Recent planning applications were, due to the density of housing proposed, threatening the traditional image of a number of villages around Didcot and the existing green space between those villages and Didcot. Measures were required to protect green spaces and prevent the coalescence of Didcot and the village settlements and to protect the rural character of the villages.”

RESOLVED:

That this Council welcomes the recent announcements of the second Vale Enterprise Zone and the Garden Town initiative and calls on all parts of the Council to have regard to protecting and respecting as far as possible the rural character of the villages affected and to work to avoid an urbanised 'greater Didcot'.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm

Chairman

Council Report



Report of Head of HR, IT and Technical Services

Author: Andrew Down

Telephone: 01235 540372

E-mail: andrew.down@southandvale.gov.uk

To: Council

Date: 17 February 2016



Pay policy statement 2016-17

Recommendation

That Council approve the attached statement of pay policy for 2016-17.

Purpose of report

1. The Localism Act 2011 requires the council to produce and publish annually a pay policy statement. By approving the attached statement the council will discharge this responsibility.

Background

2. The purpose of the pay policy statement is to promote transparency on public sector pay, particularly in relation to remuneration of senior officers. Comparisons are also made with the remuneration of the lowest paid employees and with average salaries.
3. The pay policy statement must be approved by 31 March each year, by a meeting of the full council. The pay policy statement may be amended during the year by further resolution of the council.
4. Once approved, the pay policy statement must be published on the council website and by any other means that the council sees fit.
5. Because officers of each council are placed at the disposal of the other and their costs are shared, the pay policy statement attached has been drafted jointly with South Oxfordshire District Council.

Recommendation

6. Council is asked to approve the pay policy statement for 2016-17.

Background papers

None

Pay Policy Statement for 2016-17

INTRODUCTION

1. This is a joint statement of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.
2. The Localism Act 2011 requires each council to produce and publish annually a pay policy statement. The statement must be approved by 31 March each year, by a meeting of the full council, and must then be published on the council's website. The pay policy statement may be amended during the year by further resolution of the council.
3. The pay policy statement must as a minimum include details of the council's policy on:
 - the remuneration of its chief officers
 - the remuneration of its lowest-paid employees
 - the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and other officers.
4. For the purposes of the Localism Act 2011 and this statement, the term "chief officers" is defined by Section 2 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. For these councils, the term "chief officers" refers to the chief executive, strategic directors, and heads of service.
5. Chief officers may be employed by either council, and are placed at the disposal of the other by means of an agreement made under Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972.

REMUNERATION OF CHIEF OFFICERS

6. Chief officers are paid a spot salary. The spot salaries which apply for the whole of 2016-17 are increased by 1.5 per cent from the 2015-16 salaries, and are as follows:
 - chief executive: £136,943
 - strategic directors: £104,684
 - heads of service: £78,579.
7. Where heads of service have previously received additional allowances for the responsibilities of monitoring officer or Section 151 officer, their total salaries may be protected at a higher level.

8. Chief officers do not receive any performance-related pay or bonuses.
9. The chief executive has been appointed as the councils' returning officer. In this role he receives additional remuneration, which varies from year to year. He may also employ other chief officers to support him in his work. Fees payable for district and parish council elections have been agreed by each council. Fees for other types of election are agreed and payable by the government or other bodies such as Oxfordshire County Council.
10. Chief officers do not receive essential car user allowances, overtime, on-call or stand-by payments.
11. On recruitment of a new strategic director or head of service within the current management structure, the gross base salary on recruitment will be the spot salary stated in paragraph 6, though this may be varied if an interim appointment is made.
12. On recruitment of a new chief executive, the gross base salary will be determined by the Joint Staff Committee.
13. In the event of a chief officer's post becoming redundant, any severance payment will be made on the same basis as to any other employee, according to the councils' organisational change policy. Other than any pension to which they are statutorily entitled, no other payments will be made to chief officers on their ceasing to be employees of the council unless in settlement of any dispute.
14. Chief officers' contributions to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) are determined by their salary and by the rules of the scheme. For those who are members of the LGPS and paying contributions on the whole of their salary, heads of service currently pay 9.9 per cent of their salary into the scheme, while directors and the chief executive pay 11.4 per cent.
15. No enhancements will normally be paid to chief officers' pensions other than in the event of a chief officer being offered early retirement on efficiency grounds, and only then with the approval of the Joint Audit and Governance Committee.
16. The councils will not re-employ a chief officer who has left their employment and is now drawing a local government pension, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

LOWEST-PAID EMPLOYEES

17. Although the councils have not sought accreditation as a "Living Wage Employer", our policy is that our employees' salaries should meet or exceed the Living Wage rate which is currently £8.25 per hour.
18. The lowest salary paid for 2016-17 to staff currently on the payroll will be £16,865. The chief executive's salary is thus 8.12 times the salary of the lowest-paid member of staff.

REMUNERATION OF CHIEF OFFICERS COMPARED WITH OTHER OFFICERS

19. Employees who are not chief officers are paid according to locally agreed pay scales, with annual increments paid until the employee reaches the top of the scale. These pay scales will increase by 1.5 per cent with effect from 1 April 2016.
20. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published in February 2015 a code of recommended practice for local authorities on data transparency. This code of practice recommends publishing the “pay multiple”, the ratio between the highest paid salary and the median average salary of the whole of the authority’s workforce. For these councils the median salary during 2016-17 will be £32,799 (based on current data). The pay multiple defined above is thus 4.18.

Council Report



Report of Head of Planning

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To: Council

DATE: 17 February 2016



Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme – discharge of planning functions

Recommendations

Council is recommended to

- (a) 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;
- (b) 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
- (c) 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.

Purpose of Report

1. This report briefly outlines the proposed Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) and seeks approval for the delegation to Oxfordshire County Council of any planning responsibilities that would otherwise be exercised by the Vale of White Horse District Council in relation to the OFAS.

Strategic Objectives

2. The OFAS aims to reduce the flood risk for homes, businesses and infrastructure along the Oxfordshire stretch of the Thames, including Oxford and Abingdon.

Background

3. The Environment Agency advises that “there are 4,500 properties in Oxford at a 1% or higher annual risk of flooding. This figure could rise to nearly 6,000 by the year 2080 with the predicted effects of climate change. Major roads, railway lines, schools and businesses could also be affected by flooding. The Environment Agency carries out regular maintenance activities and operates its assets to reduce the flood risk as much as possible, reducing this to 1,800 properties at risk”. The Environment Agency also advises that its “investigations have shown that a flood relief channel can increase capacity in Oxford’s western flood plain” (Executive Summary of the Environment Agency Options consultation and response document 19 January – 1 March 2016).
4. The Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme aims to:
 - reduce flood damage to at least 1,000 homes and businesses in Oxford
 - reduce flood impacts on road, rail and utility infrastructure
 - safeguard Oxford’s reputation as a thriving centre of commerce
 - create and maintain new recreational amenities, wildlife habitat, and natural watercourses accessible from the centre of Oxford
5. The Environment Agency is working with a range of partners including the Vale of White Horse District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and Thames Water to develop a scheme to reduce flood risk in Oxford and around Oxford. This will involve improving the capacity in Oxford’s western flood plain, between the Botley Road and Sandford-on-Thames, by constructing a flood relief channel.
6. The present options for the OFAS are within the jurisdictions of three district planning authorities (Oxford City Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council). Elements of the scheme, for example gravel extraction to create the new relief channel, would come within the jurisdiction of the County Council.
7. The OFAS will require planning permission. Rather than applying for planning permission from the three separate district planning authorities i.e. submitting three separate planning applications, which could result in different decisions and if approved, varying planning conditions, in addition to applying separately to the county council on specific elements, it is proposed that a single application is submitted to and determined by Oxfordshire County Council. This is logistically simpler, financially cheaper, avoids conflicting planning decisions and reduces the risks of legal challenge.
8. Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows a local planning authority to discharge its functions by another authority. In this case the function for processing and deciding a planning application for the OFAS could be delegated to Oxfordshire County Council.

9. For the avoidance of doubt, this delegation is specific to the OFAS, including all its various aspects across all three districts.
10. In addition to the OFAS there are several much smaller associated Abingdon flood alleviation schemes which are being coordinated alongside the OFAS under the 'Oxford and Abingdon Flood Alleviation Schemes' banner. It should be noted that any planning applications in respect of the smaller discrete Abingdon schemes would be outside this discharge. In other words those planning applications would still be considered and determined by the Vale planning authority.

Financial Implications

11. None

Legal Implications

12. The relevant statutory power is set out in the body of the report.

Risks

13. To enable the proposal to proceed, South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxford City Council will need to agree similar delegations to the county council.

Other Implications

14. None

Conclusion

15. Delegating the function of determining the planning application relating to OFAS to Oxfordshire County Council could simplify the application procedure and provide consistency in approach and decision making on the application.

Background Papers

- None

Terms of Reference for the Joint Staff Committee

The purpose of this committee is to undertake those non-executive functions relating to the employment of officers in the shared senior management team.

The terms “senior staff” and “senior posts” refer to the head of paid service, strategic directors, and heads of service.

The committee comprises three members from each council and may determine those matters delegated to it by both councils or, where this is not the case, make recommendations to each Council.

The membership shall comprise:

- South Oxfordshire District Council – Leader and two Conservative members
- Vale of White Horse District Council – Leader, one Conservative and one Liberal Democrat member.

The Leader may be substituted by another Cabinet member. Other members of the Committee may be substituted by any member of that Council’s political group (executive or non-executive).

The terms of reference for this Committee shall be:

- to establish the framework and procedure for recruitment of senior staff
- to determine the terms and conditions of service to apply to senior posts
- to act as the appointment panel for the short-listing and interviewing for all senior posts and in the case of head of paid service or strategic directors to make recommendations on appointments to each Council
- to consider any proposed redundancy dismissals of the head of paid service, strategic director, monitoring officer or chief finance officer, and to make recommendations on redundancy dismissals to each Council
- to consider any proposed redundancy dismissals of heads of service other than monitoring officer and chief finance officer, and to make recommendations to the head of paid service
- to determine any proposed efficiency retirement of the head of paid service, subject to proposals for enhanced benefits being determined by the joint audit and governance committee
- to consider any proposed efficiency retirements of strategic directors or heads of service and to make recommendations to the head of paid service, subject to proposals for enhanced benefits being determined by the joint audit and governance committee.