

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Council



held on Wednesday 14 December 2016 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), Alice Badcock, Eric Batts, Matthew Barber, Ed Blagrove, Yvonne Constance, Roger Cox, Margaret Crick, Stuart Davenport, Charlotte Dickson, St John Dickson, Gervase Duffield, Robert Hall, Debby Hallett, Jenny Hannaby, Anthony Hayward, Dudley Hoddinott, Simon Howell, Vicky Jenkins, Bob Johnston, 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: Steven Corrigan, David Hill and Margaret Reed

Also present: Adrian Duffield, Head of Planning, Andrew Maxted, Interim Planning Policy Project Lead, and members of the planning policy team

Number of members of the public: 7

Co.44 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of councillors Katie Finch and Mohinder Kainth.

Co.45 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2016 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman sign them as such.

Co.46 Declarations of interest

In respect of agenda item 11 – Vale Local Plan 2031: Part 1, Councillors Dudley Hoddinott and Bob Johnston made statements that they are members of the Church of St Peter and St Paul in Botley affected by the Local Plan.

Co.47 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman provided housekeeping information. He thanked those who attended his Awards Dinner and those councillors who had represented the council at Cenotaphs across the district on Remembrance Sunday. He acknowledged the

significant contribution made by residents, parish councils, community groups and the council's staff in preparing the Local Plan which Council would consider later in the meeting.

Co.48 Statements, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting council.

- A. Anne Morgan-Smith, representing Sutton Courtenay Action, made a statement and presented a petition raising concerns about the cumulative impact of development, both commercial and residential, on the village of Sutton Courtenay.

On behalf of the group she congratulated the council on gaining clearance for the Local Plan and welcomed the firmer control on planning development this will provide. In particular, she welcomed the end of speculative developments across the Vale. She called on the council to address some of the perceived anomalies that had arisen and take a holistic view across the district on the cumulative impact of all the developments and find ways to address them.

She referred to a recent march by approximately 150 villagers from Sutton Courtenay to the council offices to highlight the difficulties facing the village, to express their anger and to call for a fair deal for Sutton Courtenay. She welcomed the recent change of attitude of the council and Councillor Matthew Barber's suggestion of setting up a Sutton Courtenay Forum to address their concerns.

She stated that Sutton Courtenay is unique in facing the cumulative impact of a wide range of industrial and housing developments on an inadequate sewerage and highways infrastructure with traffic gridlocked by a narrow bridge over the River Thames. She also referred to the lack of planning condition enforcement (relating to sewage) and concern regarding a recent planning condition that requires traffic lights at the junction with the River Thames crossing.

She asked for the voice and concerns of all those communities which are facing development not just to be heard, but to be listened to and that the cumulative impacts of development and the risks they pose are analysed in the holistic context and measures are put in place to ameliorate them, so the district remains a pleasant place to live and work.

The Chairman thanked her for the petition and advised that it would be dealt with in accordance with the council's petition scheme.

- B. Dr Les Clyne asked the following question of Councillor Matthew Barber, Leader of the council:

"The Leader told me in answer to my question to Council earlier this year that the Section 106 agreement for the Grove airfield development would be signed by the end of December 2016 and he hoped it would be signed by the end of October 2016. Assuming that the Vale local plan still relies on the realisation of the Grove airfield development what is the current situation concerning the signing of one or more Section agreements for all or some of the 2500 housing units ? If no Section 106 agreements have yet been signed what is the expected date when the first Section 106 agreement will be signed by all parties, and how many of the 2500 units will it cover?"

In response Councillor Barber stated that the Council has been in on-going discussions with the developers throughout this year and they have been keeping the council up to date with their active discussions with the landowners of the site. He hoped the Section 106 agreements would be signed by 31 March and anticipated that one agreement would cover all the units.

C. Julie Mabberley, Campaign Manager of the Wantage and Grove Campaign Group, asked the following question of Councillor Matthew Barber, Leader of the council:

“A number of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by governments including the UK Government at the UN General Assembly in September, 2015.

No 3 explicitly relates to health—to “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”.

A related statement suggests that when supported by strong public health policies and with aligned efforts across social, economic, and political domains, primary health care has a central role in achievement of sustainable development.

The National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 7 states “There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

Planning guidance further states that “Local planning authorities should ensure that health and wellbeing, and health infrastructure are considered in local and neighbourhood plans and in planning decision making.”

Given that the Health Centres in Wantage, Grove and Faringdon are already running at overcapacity and can’t expand further, what evidence is there that the District Council is “considering” the lack of Health facilities in their planning policy and planning decisions?”

In response Councillor Barber undertook to provide a written response setting out what the council is doing and stated that the adoption of the Local Plan would have a significant impact on the situation.

Co.49 Urgent business

None.

Co.50 Petitions under standing order 13

None.

Co.51 Questions under standing order 12

1. Question from Councillor Judy Roberts to Councillor Matthew Barber, Leader of the council.

“Could the Leader please arrange for members who have statutory or trustee appointments to outside bodies to report back to council at least annually? It’s important for council to know what decisions and actions are being taken in our name. We could use InFocus (or another suitable means) to update all members?”

In response Councillor Barber supported the proposal and confirmed that officers in democratic services, who were currently preparing a guidance note on membership of outside bodies, will include a requirement for appointees to report back to councillors.

2. Question from Councillor Emily Smith to Councillor Charlotte Dickson, Cabinet member for waste.

“Recent changes to our recycling policy have brought complaints that the new policy is hard to comply with. Of course council will address each issue as it arises. But one widespread problem is the difficulty in finding a place to buy the suitable clear plastic bags for recycling. Could the Cabinet member advise members and residents which stores in the four main settlement areas currently stock these bags?”

Councillor Dickson undertook to provide a written answer and to put the list on the council’s website.

Co.52 Council tax base 2017/18

Council considered Cabinet’s recommendations, made at its meeting on 2 December 2016, on the council tax base for 2017/18.

RESOLVED:

1. to approve the report of the head of finance for the calculation of the council’s tax base and the calculation of the tax base for each parish area for 2017/18;
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 2017/18 be 49,406.0; 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 2017/18 for each parish be the amount shown against the name of that parish in Appendix 1 of the report of the head of finance to Cabinet on 2 December 2016.

Co.53 Blewbury and Faringdon neighbourhood plans

Council considered the recommendation of Councillor Roger Cox, Cabinet member for planning, made on 5 December 2016, to make the Blewbury and Faringdon neighbourhood plans part of the Development Plan for Vale of White Horse.

RESOLVED:

1. to make the Blewbury Neighbourhood Plan part of the Development Plan for Vale of White Horse.
2. to make the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan part of the Development Plan for Vale of White Horse.

Co.54 Vale Local Plan Part 1: 2031

On 9 December 2016 the Cabinet member for planning took an individual Cabinet member decision to recommend Council to adopt Local Plan Part 1.

A majority of councillors welcomed the adoption of Part 1 of the Vale Local Plan: 2031. The adoption of the Plan would ensure the council has much greater control over all development in the district to control where housing is delivered and make it easier to secure the much needed infrastructure funding.

However, a number of councillors, whilst welcoming the adoption of the Plan to control housing development and reduce the number of speculative planning applications, expressed the view that the housing targets in the Plan were unrealistic, that the proposed level of housing development would put pressure on infrastructure in the district and that the Plan did not provide adequate protection for the green belt.

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

For	Against	Abstentions
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Alice Badcock		Margaret Crick
Mike Badcock		Debby Hallett
Matthew Barber		Dudley Hoddinott
Eric Batts		Emily Smith
Edward Blagrove		Catherine Webber
Yvonne Constance		
Roger Cox		
Stuart Davenport		
Charlotte Dickson		
St.John Dickson		
Gervasse Duffield		
Robert Hall		
Jenny Hannaby		
Anthony Hayward		
Simon Howell		
Vicky Jenkins		
Bob Johnston		
Monica Lovatt		
Sandy Lovatt		

For	Against	Abstentions
Ben Mabbett		
Chris McCarthy		
Mike Murray		
Chris Palmer		
Helen Pighills		
Julia Reynolds		
Judy Roberts		
Robert Sharp		
Janet Shelley		
Henry Spencer		
Reg Waite		
Elaine Ware		
Total: 31	Total: 0	Total: 5

RESOLVED: to

1. adopt the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031: Part 1; and
2. authorise the head of planning to correct any minor, typographical and grammatical errors prior to publication.

Co.55 Review of the council's constitution

Council considered the report of the head of legal and democratic services and monitoring officer on proposed changes to the council's constitution.

Councillor Yvonne Constance moved and councillor Debby Hallett seconded the recommendations in the report. In moving the recommendations they thanked officers and members of the review group for the effective work undertaken to produce a thorough, complete, and above all readable constitution.

A councillor requested clarification in due course of the ability of a ward councillor to call in an application after the initial 28 day period in circumstances where amended plans are submitted after this period.

RESOLVED: to

1. note the considerable work done by the Joint Constitution Review Group in bringing a revised constitution for consideration by Council;
2. note that, for completeness, the entire constitution has been brought before Council for consideration, but that some sections have already been approved by Council; areas of substantive change are listed within the report, under key changes;
3. note the ongoing overall approach of the review group to develop a single constitution with South Oxfordshire District Council with separate sections where necessary;
4. note the overall approach to streamline the constitution, avoiding unhelpful repetition and confusion;
5. note the overall approach to make sections self-contained, especially those relating to specific committees;

6. note the more consistent approach given to the general governance of meetings, including: quorum, time limits and public speaking, the rules aiming to promote robust democracy and effective running of council meetings;
7. approve the constitution attached as appendix one to the report of the head of legal and democratic services and monitoring officer to the Council meeting held on 14 December 2016 for implementation on 1 March 2017;
8. authorise the head of legal and democratic services to update the constitution to reflect any changes in staff responsibilities;
9. authorise the head of legal and democratic services to make any minor or consequential amendments to the constitution for consistency and to reflect the councils' style guide.

Co.56 Report of the Leader of the council

Council noted a change to the Leader's scheme of delegation: Councillor Elaine Ware now has executive has responsibility for grants.

The Leader of council stated that he had no additional matters to report which were not covered as agenda items for the meeting.

Co.57 Notices of motion under standing order 11

Motion moved by Councillor Matthew Barber, Leader of the council and seconded by Councillor Yvonne Constance:

"This Council endorses the work of Oxfordshire's Local Authority Leaders and the Local Enterprise Partnership through the Oxfordshire Growth Board to explore the opportunity for transformational changes in service delivery across a range of areas including, but not exclusively: infrastructure, skills, economic development, strategic spatial planning, public assets, business rates, health and social care.

In order to support the achievement of significant improvement in the provision of local services, this Council confirms its support for a review of the future functions of the Oxfordshire Growth Board, which should include an assessment of the merits of establishing a mayoral combined authority for Oxfordshire".

In moving the motion Matthew Barber, Leader of the council, stated that the government wanted to see devolution deals with collective governance arrangements, preferably elected mayors. A firm commitment from the Oxfordshire local authorities to such an arrangement was more likely to bring about a deal and therefore achieve investment for Oxfordshire. The issue was discussed at a recent meeting of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) which suggested that each council in Oxfordshire demonstrate its commitment to a devolution deal in Oxfordshire.

The majority of councillors supported the motion as a means of indicating support for a direction of travel. This would enable work to progress on a devolution bid to government to secure investment in the infrastructure essential for the economic growth of the county.

A number of councillors expressed concern regarding the lack of detail of how a combined authority would operate and at the lack of democratic accountability of both the LEP and Oxfordshire Growth Board.

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

For	Against	Abstentions
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Alice Badcock	Margaret Crick	Judy Roberts
Mike Badcock	Jenny Hannaby	
Matthew Barber	Dudley Hoddinott	
Eric Batts	Bob Johnston	
Edward Blagrove	Helen Pighills	
Yvonne Constance	Emily Smith	
Roger Cox	Catherine Webber	
Stuart Davenport		
Charlotte Dickson		
St.John Dickson		
Gervase Duffield		
Robert Hall		
Debby Hallett		
Anthony Hayward		
Simon Howell		
Vicky Jenkins		
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: 28	Total: 7	Total: 1

RESOLVED:

To endorse the work of Oxfordshire's Local Authority Leaders and the Local Enterprise Partnership through the Oxfordshire Growth Board to explore the opportunity for transformational changes in service delivery across a range of areas including, but not exclusively: infrastructure, skills, economic development, strategic spatial planning, public assets, business rates, health and social care.

In order to support the achievement of significant improvement in the provision of local services, that this Council confirms its support for a review of the future functions of the Oxfordshire Growth Board, which should include an assessment of the merits of establishing a mayoral combined authority for Oxfordshire.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm