

Agenda



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Date: 29 November 2018
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A meeting of the **Cabinet**

will be held on Friday, 7 December 2018 at 10.30 am
Meeting Room 1, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB

Cabinet Members:

Councillors

Roger Cox (Chairman)
Ed Blagrove (Vice-Chairman)
Alice Badcock
Eric Batts

Mike Murray
Robert Sharp
Elaine Ware

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Margaret Reed
Head of Legal and Democratic

Council's vision

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

Agenda

Open to the Public including the Press

1. Apologies for absence

To record apologies for absence.

2. Minutes

(Pages 3 - 7)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 28 September and 5 October 2018.

3. Declarations of interest

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

4. Urgent business and chairman's announcements

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

5. Public participation

To receive any questions or statements from members of the public that have registered to speak.

6. Joint gambling policy

(Pages 8 - 47)

To consider the report of the head of housing and environment.

7. Council tax base

To consider the head of finance's report (to follow).

8. Council tax empty homes premium

(Pages 48- 50)

To consider the head of finance's report.

9. Budget setting update

(Pages 51 - 55)

To consider the head of finance's report.

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

None

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Cabinet

held on Friday 28 September 2018 at 10.30 am

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



Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Roger Cox (Chairman), Ed Blagrove (Vice-Chairman), Eric Batts, Robert Sharp and Elaine Ware

Officers: Steve Culliford, Andrew Down, Adrian Duffield, Simon Hewings, Holly Jones and Ian Price

Also present: Councillor Judy Roberts

Number of members of the public: 1

Ca.64 Apologies for absence

Councillors Alice Badcock and Mike Murray had both sent their apologies for absence.

Ca.65 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 9 February 2018 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman signs them as such.

Ca.66 Declarations of interest

None

Ca.67 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None

Ca.68 Public participation

Councillor Judy Roberts asked Cabinet how the joint spatial plan could be valid if the route of the proposed Oxford to Cambridge Expressway was unknown.

In response, it was reported that councillors and officers working on the joint spatial plan had recognised this issue and had raised the question with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government. The Oxfordshire Growth Board had also discussed the matter on 25 September and had requested its chairman to write to the Government to raise this concern.

Councillor Roberts asked if the Vale could seek special stakeholder status in the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway discussions with Government.

In response, it was reported that the Vale would be a stakeholder and would attend such events as the council needed to be involved as closely as possible.

Ca.69 Oxfordshire Joint Spatial Plan

Cabinet considered the head of planning's report on the Oxfordshire Joint Spatial Plan, also known as the Joint Statutory Spatial Plan. The report sought approval of:

- the Local Development Scheme, which set out the timetable for the plan's production;
- the draft Statement of Community Involvement for public consultation; and
- the Scoping Document, setting out the role of the spatial plan.

The Cabinet member for planning outlined the role of the spatial plan and the documents under consideration. The spatial plan would set out the strategic plan for Oxfordshire but would not set out the detail.

In response to the draft documents under consideration, Cabinet noted that the head of planning would meet his counterparts at the other Oxfordshire principal councils to suggest some points of clarification to improve the documents; these are set out in the addendum to these minutes. In particular, he suggested that the wording of the scoping document in the first sentence of paragraph 3.10 should be amended to read: 'Whilst the Joint Statutory Spatial Plan will determine the spatial strategy and strategic growth areas, it will not allocate sites except at the request of the relevant local planning authority'. Cabinet concurred with this suggestion, considering it essential.

RESOLVED: to

- (a) approve the Local Development Scheme for the Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (as set out in Appendix 1 to the head of planning's report to Cabinet on 28 September 2018);
- (b) approve the draft Statement of Community Involvement 2018 (as set out in Appendix 2 to the head of planning's report to Cabinet on 28 September 2018) for the Joint Statutory Spatial Plan for a six-week period of formal public consultation; and
- (c) authorise the head of planning, in agreement with the other Oxfordshire councils' equivalent, to make any necessary minor and presentational changes to the draft Local Development Scheme 2018 and draft Joint Statutory Spatial Plan's Scoping Document before publication, and the draft Statement of Community Involvement 2018 before formal consultation commences.

RECOMMENDATION to Council:

- (d) to approve the Joint Statutory Spatial Plan's Scoping Document (as set out in Appendix 3 to the head of planning's report to Cabinet on 28 September 2018).

The meeting closed at 10.45 am

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Cabinet

held on Friday 5 October 2018 at 10.30 am

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



Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Roger Cox (Chairman), Ed Blagrove (Vice-Chairman), Alice Badcock, Eric Batts, Mike Murray, Robert Sharp and Elaine Ware

Officers: Steve Culliford, Andrew Down, Adrian Duffield, Simon Hewings, Adrianna Partridge, Margaret Reed and David Wilde

Ca.70 Apologies for absence

None

Ca.71 Declarations of interest

Councillor Ed Blagrove declared a personal interest in the Radley Neighbourhood Plan as he was the local ward member.

Ca.72 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None

Ca.73 Public participation

None

Ca.74 Five Councils Capita contract changes

Cabinet considered the report of the head of partnership and insight, which updated on implementing the changes to the Five Councils Partnership corporate services contract with Capita. The report also set out an action plan for the council to address immediate deficiencies in the council's IT systems.

Cabinet considered that progress had been made to service provision to better meet the council's needs and thanked the officers and Capita for this.

RESOLVED: to

- (a) support the proposed changes being progressed with the Five Councils Partnership and to note the process required to enact them;
- (b) confirm that the delegated responsibility for completing the proposed changes rests with the chief executive in line with the Five Councils Partnership Inter-Authority Agreement; and
- (c) request officers to brief Cabinet members on the implications of the proposed changes and the changes in the deed of variation completed earlier this year.

Ca.75 Technology strategy

Cabinet considered the head of corporate services' report, which proposed the adoption of a joint technology strategy, with South Oxfordshire District Council.

The Cabinet member responsible for IT welcomed the production of the technology strategy and believed that it would bring benefits for the council, its residents and businesses. Scrutiny Committee had been supportive also.

The report also recommended a virement of £38,000 of underspent contingency budget, totalling £76,000 across both councils, to allow for the provision of backfill and specialised resources to deliver the immediate priorities set out in the strategy.

Cabinet supported the recommendations and thanked the officers for their work on the strategy.

RESOLVED: to

- (a) approve the joint technology strategy for Vale of White Horse District Council, endorsing the principles documented in the head of corporate services' report to set the direction for any investment in and use of technology and supporting the proposed approach for delivery; and
- (b) approve a virement of £38,000 from the council's contingency budget (totalling £76,000 across both councils) for the provision of backfill and specialised resources to aid delivery of the immediate priorities set out in the strategy, to be managed by the head of corporate services.

Ca.76 Radley Neighbourhood Plan

Councillor Ed Blagrove declared a personal interest in this item as he was the local ward member and stood down from the meeting during its consideration.

Cabinet considered the head of planning's report on the Radley Neighbourhood Plan. The report sought Cabinet's recommendation to Council to make the plan part of the council's development plan.

Cabinet noted that the plan was compatible with the current European Union obligations and complied with the Habitats Regulation Assessment. It would also retain green space

and community networks valued by local residents and would allow Radley to benefit from the advantages that growth could offer to the community and local infrastructure.

The referendum, held on 13 September 2018, had resulted in 87 per cent support for the neighbourhood plan. Therefore, the Cabinet member for planning recommended that Cabinet supported a recommendation to Council to make the neighbourhood plan part of this council's development plan. Cabinet supported the recommendation.

RECOMMENDED to Council to:

- (a) make the Radley Neighbourhood Development Plan so that it continues to be part of this council's development plan; and
- (b) authorise the head of planning, in agreement with the Qualifying Body, to correct any spelling, grammatical, typographical or factual errors in the neighbourhood plan, together with any improvements from a presentational perspective.

Ca.77 Treasury management outturn 2017/18

Cabinet considered the head of finance's report on the treasury outturn in 2017/18. The report had been considered by the Joint Audit and Governance Committee, which was satisfied that the treasury activities had been carried out in accordance with the treasury management strategy and policy.

Cabinet welcomed the report and noted that performance had exceeded targets.

RECOMMENDED to Council to:

- (a) approve the treasury management outturn report 2017/18; and
- (b) approve the actual 2017/18 prudential indicators within the report.

The meeting closed at 11.00 am

Cabinet Report



Report of Head of Housing and Environment

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To: CABINET

Date: 7 December 2018

Joint Gambling Policy

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to consider the recommendations of the Licensing Acts Committee and to recommend Council to:

- (a) adopt the proposed Joint Gambling Policy
- (b) authorise the Head of Housing and Environment to make minor editorial changes to the Joint Gambling Policy
- (c) authorise the Head of Housing and Environment to publish the Joint Gambling Policy in accordance with the Gambling Act 2005 (Licensing Authority Policy Statement) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006.

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the recommendations of the Licensing Acts Committee on the Joint Gambling Policy following the statutory consultation.

Strategic Objectives

2. The Joint Gambling Policy will further the council's role in building an even stronger community and facilitating sustainable communities. The policy will also ensure the council is meeting its statutory responsibilities.

Background

3. The gambling policy is subject to statutory review every three years. The policy is due for review by 31 January 2019.

Proposed policy

4. There are no significant changes to the gambling policy.
5. There have not been any changes in legislation or guidance within the last three years, therefore there are no significant changes to the gambling policy.
6. Minor changes to the policy are as follows:
 - Information is included on the detail that we require for premises risk assessments, including for them to be kept at the premises.
 - Paragraphs 2.7.2 and 2.7.3 refer to the local area profiles are now available on the council websites to assist operators in developing their risk assessments which are required for the application process.
 - The policy has been updated to refer to refer to GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 and the councils' Licensing enforcement policy
 - Annex 4 now refers to the recent government review of gaming machines and social responsibility measures and the decision that maximum stakes on fixed odds betting terminals will be reduced from £100 to £2.
7. The council currently has a 'no casino' clause which was first adopted in 2006 on the basis of the rural nature of the district with market towns being an inappropriate location for a casino; that casinos are better located in large towns or cities and the council should also protect the most vulnerable people from gambling in casinos.
8. The 'no casino' clause in the current policy means that the council cannot consider any application for opening a casino in the district.
9. If the 'no casino' clause was removed the council could consider an application for a casino subject to a number of controls.
10. Any application to open a casino would first require an amendment of The Gambling (Geographical Distribution of Large and Small Casino Premises Licences) Order 2008 by the Secretary of State.
11. Any application would then to be subject to the council's development control system and the consultation process set out in the Gambling Policy itself.
12. If the Committee recommend the retention of a 'no casino' clause then it must recommend the adoption of such a resolution under Section 166 (1) of the Gambling Act 2005 by Council.

Consultation results

13. The consultation ran four weeks from 10 September to 7 October 2018. This was a public consultation and went to all councillors and responsible authorities as defined under the Gambling Act 2005.
14. The overall response level was very low. The Gambling Commission suggested we include information about the local area profile and risk assessments within the policy. This has been included in section 2.7. We have also updated the policy to refer to both the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010 in section 2.3
15. These changes are minor but do provide some additional clarification for operators.
16. The low level of consultation responses show that the policy can be recommended for adoption subject to the identified responses and minor wording changes which have been incorporated into the policy at appendix 1.

Licensing Acts Committee recommendations

17. The Licensing Acts Committee considered the Joint Gambling Policy on 28 November 2018 and decided to recommend Cabinet to recommend Council on 12 December 2018 to adopt the policy and to authorise the Head of Housing and Environment to make minor editorial changes and to publish the policy as required by regulations.
18. The Gambling Act 2005 specifically excludes the Cabinet from decisions on whether to have a “no casinos” clause in the policy. In all other respects, it is the role of the Cabinet to recommend the Gambling Policy to Council for adoption and to authorise the Head of Housing and Environment to make minor editorial changes and to publish the policy as required by regulations.

Implementation

19. Once the Council has adopted a new gambling policy it must publish a notice of intention to adopt the new policy four weeks before the new policy comes into force. The policy will be due for renewal by 31 January 2022.

Financial Implications

20. There are no financial implications arising from the adoption of the proposed policy.

Legal Implications

21. The policy has been drafted to reflect current legislative requirements and guidance. All applications for licences and permits under the Gambling Act 2005 have to be made and determined in accordance with the council’s gambling policy.

Risks

22. Failure to reflect the requirements of the Gambling Act 2005 and associated regulations could result in the councils not complying with the legislation. Having a clear policy helps to ensure that licensing decisions comply with the legislation and are made fairly and consistently.

Other Implications

23. There are no other implications arising from the adoption of the proposed policy.

Conclusion

24. Cabinet is recommended to consider the outcome of the consultation and recommend Council to:

- (a) adopt the proposed Joint Gambling Policy
- (b) authorise the Head of Housing and Environment to make minor editorial changes to the Joint Gambling Policy.
- (c) authorise the Head of Housing and Environment to publish the Joint Gambling Policy in accordance with the Gambling Act 2005 (Licensing Authority Policy Statement) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006.

Background Papers

none



Statement of Principles

Gambling Act 2005

Joint statement of licensing policy

This policy was adopted by the Vale of White Horse District Council at the meeting of Council on 12 December 2018 and South Oxfordshire District Council at the meeting of Council on 20 December 2018 and comes into force from 31 January 2019 and will be reviewed by 31 January 2022.

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GLOSSARY

Adult gaming centres

Adult gaming centres (AGCs) are a category of gambling premises contained within the Act. Persons operating an AGC must hold a gaming machines general operating licence from the Gambling Commission and must seek a premises licence from the licensing authority. The holder of an adult gaming centre premises licence may have up to four category B3 or B4 machines available for use and any number of category C or D machines.

Amusement arcades

These are not referred to as such in the Act. See adult gaming centres and licensed and unlicensed family entertainment centres.

Betting

Betting means making or accepting a bet on the outcome of a race, competition, or any other event; the likelihood of anything occurring or not occurring; or whether anything is true or not true.

Bingo

Bingo has no statutory definition in the Act. It has its ordinary and natural meaning. There is no distinction between cash bingo, where cash prizes are derived from the stakes, and prize bingo, where prizes were not directly related to the stakes paid. The holder of a bingo operating licence will be able to offer any type of bingo game, whether cash or prize. This also applies to alcohol-licensed premises, club and miners' welfare institutes (up to a total weekly prize value of less than £2,000).

Prize bingo is traditionally played in arcades or travelling funfairs. For these operators, prize bingo is subsumed within the allowances for prize gaming in the Act. This means that adult gaming centres, both licensed and unlicensed family entertainment centres, travelling fairs, and any premises with a prize gaming permit will be able to offer prize gaming, which includes prize bingo.

Casino

A location where people can participate in one or more casino games.

Casino games

Games of chance not being equal chance gaming. i.e. games in which players stake against a "bank".

Councils

The licensing authorities. Vale of White Horse District Council in its capacity as the licensing authority for the area of Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Council in its capacity as the licensing authority for the area of South Oxfordshire.

Equal chance gaming

This is a game where the chances of winning are equally favourable to all participants, and which does not involve playing or staking against a “bank”. It is immaterial how the “bank” is described and whether it is controlled by a player.

Exempt activities

The following are exempt under the Act:

- Private betting - betting which takes place between inhabitants of the same premises or between employees of the same employer.
- Private gaming - gaming that takes place in private dwellings and on domestic occasions providing that no charge is made for participating; only equal chance gaming takes place; and it does not occur in a place to which the public have access.
- Non-commercial gambling - when no part of the proceeds/profits will be for private gain. The proceeds/profits are the sums raised by the organisers, for example, by way of fees for entrance or participation, or by way of stakes, minus an amount deducted by the organiser in respect of costs reasonably incurred in organising the event including the provision of a prize. The following conditions would also have to apply:
 - the profits will be for a purpose other than that for private gain
 - the players are informed that the purpose of the gaming is to raise money for a specified purpose other than that of private gain
 - the event must not take place in premises which either have a premises licence or on premises relying on a temporary use notice under the Act
 - the gaming must not be remote.

Any regulations made by the Secretary of State will need to be complied with and will include for example regulations limiting the amounts staked and limiting participation fees. If the profits from the activity are used for a purpose other than that which was specified, an offence would be committed.

Gambling

Gambling is defined as: gaming, betting or participating in a lottery.

Games of chance

This covers games that involve both chance and skill. This includes games in which skill can eliminate an element of chance and includes games that are presented as involving an element of chance. It does not include a sport. Playing a game of chance need not involve other participants.

Gaming

Gaming means playing a game of chance for a prize.

Guidance

Under section 25 of the Act, the Gambling Commission is required to issue guidance on the manner in which local authorities are to exercise their functions under the Act, in particular, the principles to be applied by local authorities in exercising their functions under the Act.

Interested parties

Interested parties are defined under section 158 of the Act. To accept a representation from an interested party, the council must take the view that the person:

- lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the authorised activities
- has business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities
- represents persons in either of these groups.

Interested parties can also be a councillor or an MP.

Licensed family entertainment centres

These premises require operating licences from the Gambling Commission. They will be able to offer gaming machines in categories C and D. Gaming machines are a form of gambling which is attractive to children and Licensed Family Entertainment Centres may contain machines of the Category D machines on which they are allowed to play as well as category C which they are not permitted to play.

Lottery

A 'lottery' is where persons are required to pay in order to take part in an arrangement, during the course of which one or more prizes are allocated by a process which relies wholly on chance.

Operators

Individuals or companies who provide facilities for gambling.

Operating licence

The Act requires individuals or companies who intend to provide facilities for certain types of gambling to obtain an operating licence from the Gambling Commission.

Operating licences may be issued for the following forms of gambling:

- casino operating licence
- bingo operating licence
- general betting operating licence
- pool betting operating licence
- betting intermediary operating licence
- gaming machine general operating licence (for an adult gaming centre)
- gaming machine general operating licence (for a family entertainment centre)
- gaming machine technical operating licence (to manufacture, supply, install, adapt, maintain or repair a gaming machine or part of a gaming machine)
- gambling software operating licence (to manufacture, supply, install or adapt gambling software)
- lottery operating licence.

Premises licence

A premises licence issued by a licensing authority authorises the provision of facilities on casino premises, bingo premises, betting premises, including tracks, adult gaming centres and family entertainment centres.

Representations

In dealing with applications the council is obliged to consider representations from two categories of person, referred to in the Act as interested parties and responsible authorities.

Tracks

A track is any premises where a race or sporting event may take place. Facilities for betting on tracks may be permitted by a track premises licence, a temporary use notice or an occasional use notice.

Unlicensed family entertainment centres

These premises can provide category D machines providing prizes of up to £5 cash or £8 in goods. Stakes are limited to 10p (or 30p for a goods prize). They can also offer prize bingo.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope

1.1.1 Gambling activities are regulated by the Gambling Act 2005 ('the Act'). Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils are licensing authorities for the purposes of the Act. This 'Statement of Principles' ('policy') covers the districts of the Vale of White Horse District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council ('the councils'). The Act requires the councils to produce a statement of principles concerning their duties under the Act every three years.

1.1.2 The Act gives the councils various regulatory functions in relation to gambling. The councils' main functions under the Act are:

- licensing premises for gambling activities
- considering notices given for the temporary use of premises for gambling
- granting permits for gaming and gaming machines in clubs and miners' welfare institutes
- regulating gaming and gaming machines in alcohol licensed premises
- granting permits to family entertainment centres (FECs) for the use of certain lower stake gaming machines
- granting permits for prize gaming
- considering occasional use notices for betting at tracks
- registering small societies' lotteries
- maintaining a register of premises licences (for casinos, bingo halls, adult gaming centres, family entertainment centres, betting shops and race tracks).

The councils are required to provide information annually to the Gambling Commission on the of licences, permits and registrations issued.

The councils maintain statutory registers of premises licensed under the Act. The registers can be viewed on the relevant council's website or by prior request at the council offices.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Purpose of policy

It is expected that the councils regulate gambling in the public interest. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the councils' compliance with the Act, to protect the health and welfare of the general public and to assist businesses by ensuring they are aware of the councils' requirements and the way in which the councils carry out their regulatory functions.

2.2 Persons consulted

The following bodies/persons were consulted on this policy and their views taken into consideration:

- the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police
- businesses and individuals in the councils' areas who held a premises licence granted under the Act at the time consultation commenced
- one or more persons who appeared to the authority to represent the interests of persons who are likely to be affected by the exercise of the authority's functions under the Act. A list of persons/bodies responding to the consultation is attached at Annex 1

2.3 Declaration

This policy has been produced with due regard to the licensing objectives, the Gambling Commission's 'Guidance to Licensing Authorities 5th edition' and the responses received as part of the consultation process. The consultation ran for a four week period from 10 September 2018. The policy will be in force for no longer than three years and it may be reviewed and amended at any time within the three year period. The policy does not override the right of any person to make an application, make representations about an application or apply for a review of a licence. Each application and representation will be considered on its own merits and in accordance with the Act. The policy has been agreed taking into account the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010. The councils will consider the need to balance the legislation and the principles contained within the policy with the human rights of all parties, be they licence holders, applicants or interested parties.

2.4 Responsible authorities

2.4.1 Under the Act responsible authorities are public bodies who must be notified of applications and who are entitled to make representations to the licensing authority in relation to applications for and in relation to, premises licences. The responsible authorities for both councils are:

- the licensing authority
- the Gambling Commission
- the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police
- Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
- the planning authority (within the relevant council)
- the local town council, parish council or parish meeting
- the environmental protection team (of the relevant council)
- a body designated in writing by the licensing authority as competent to advise about the protection of children from harm (see 2.4.3)

- HM Revenue & Customs
- any other persons prescribed in regulations by the Secretary of State.

Contact details for the above authorities are included at Annex 2.

2.4.2 In the event that the premises are a vessel, the following bodies are also responsible authorities:

- the Environment Agency
- the British Waterways Board
- the Secretary of State for Transport (who acts through the Maritime and Coastguard Agency)

2.4.3 In exercising the councils' powers under section 157(h) of the Act to designate a body competent to advise them about the protection of children from harm the following principles have been applied:

- the need for the body to be responsible for an area covering the whole of a licensing authority's area
- the need for the body to be answerable to democratically elected persons, rather than any particular vested interest group

Having regard to the above principles, the councils have designated the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board at Oxfordshire County Council for this purpose.

2.5 Interested Parties

2.5.1 Interested parties can make representations about licence applications, or apply for a review of an existing licence. The Act defines interested parties as persons or bodies who, in the opinion of the licensing authority:

- live sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the authorised activities;
- have business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities; or
- represent persons who satisfy (a) or (b) (see 2.5.4)

2.5.2 Whether a person is an interested party is a decision that will be taken by the relevant council on a case-by-case basis, judging each case on its merits. However, the following factors will be taken into account:

- the size of the premises (for example, larger premises may affect people over a wider geographical area)
- the nature of the activities planned or already taking place
- the distance of the premises from the location of the person making the representation
- the potential impact of the premises (number of customers, routes likely to be taken by those visiting the establishment)
- the circumstances of the complainant (which may be relevant to the distance from the premises, for example, it could be reasonable for an authority to conclude that 'sufficiently close to be likely to be affected' could have a different meaning for (a) a private resident (b) a residential school for children with truanting problems and (c) a residential hostel for vulnerable adults
- the catchment area of the premises (i.e. how far people travel to visit); and whether the person making the representation has business interests in that catchment area, that might be affected (this is particularly relevant when representations are made by another gambling business who state their business interests may be affected, however whether there is demand for the premises shall not be taken into account).

2.5.3 This list is not exhaustive and other factors may be taken into consideration if the councils deem it necessary.

2.5.4 The councils consider the following people / bodies to fall within the category of those who represent persons living close to premises, or having business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities: -

- trade associations
- residents' and tenants' associations
- district, county, town and parish councillors
- MPs
- school headteachers
- community groups
- charities
- faith groups
- medical practices
- bodies that exist to help people with gambling addictions such as GamCare or Gamblers Anonymous.

2.5.5 In other cases, the councils shall require written evidence that the person / association / body represent an interested party.

2.6 Licensing objectives

In exercising their functions under the Act, the councils must have regard to the licensing objectives as set out in section 1 of the Act. The licensing objectives are:

- preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime
- ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way
- protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

The councils will aim to permit the use of premises for gambling as required by section 153 of the Act.

- 2.6.1 The councils can only make decisions based on the licensing objectives and not for unrelated moral, ethical or business reasons, for example, a general dislike of gambling, nuisance or expected demand.

2.7 Local area profile and operator risk assessments

- 2.7.1 The councils will maintain a local area profile (LAP) containing information on the makeup of their area and any actual or potential risks from gambling premises that the councils have identified by observation, data or consultation. The local area profiles are available on the relevant council's website to assist operators in developing their risk assessments as required under the revised code of practice published by the Gambling Commission.
- 2.7.2 Operators are required to submit their risk assessments as part of an application for a new premises licence, variation to existing licence or on request from the licensing authority.
- 2.7.3 The risk assessments should consider actual and potential risks to the licensing objectives posed by the provision of gambling facilities at a premises. The licensing authority has an expectation that all local risk assessments will take into account the local social profile of the area. The assessment should detail the policies, procedures and control measures to mitigate those risks.
- 2.7.4 Operators will be made aware of any significant changes in the local area profile during the life of this policy so that their risk assessments can be updated.

2.8 Decision making and delegation of powers

- 2.8.1 All applications for the grant or review of a licence or permit will be considered on their own merits. The Act makes it clear that neither issues of demand for a premises nor compliance with planning or building regulations are to be considered when councils make decisions about applications. With regard to premises licences, the councils will consider all applications in accordance with the principles contained in section 153 of the Act. Responsible Authorities and Interested Parties may only make representations relevant to the licensing objectives listed at paragraph 2.6. For clarification, these are different to the licensing objectives of the Licensing Act 2003.
- 2.8.2 The councils expect applicants to show that they have policies and procedures in place to support the licensing objectives, for example; exactly how they intend to ensure that children cannot gamble in their premises. Applicants are required to consider the following steps in promoting all three objectives:
- proof of age schemes
 - Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
 - supervision of entrances / gambling areas
 - physical separation of areas (for example when gaming machines are provided in pubs where children are permitted or in gaming centres where children may be permitted to play on some but not all of the machines)
 - location of and entry to premises
 - notices / signage
 - training for staff on challenging persons suspected of being under-age
 - training for staff on how to recognise someone with or developing a gambling addiction and what action to take
 - training for staff on the types of crime that may occur as part of gambling and what action to take
 - specific opening hours (for example if the premises are sited near a school or job centre)
 - self-barring schemes
 - provision of information leaflets / helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare.
- 2.8.3 All new applicants are required to submit a risk assessment for their premises as part of their application.
- 2.8.4 The councils will not automatically refuse an application for the grant of a licence because a responsible authority or interested party has concerns relating to one of the licensing objectives; they will take into account any measures the applicant may offer to put into place to overcome the concerns.
- 2.8.5 The Act defines at what level decisions may be made within councils – see Annex 3. Where representations have been received and remain unresolved to the satisfaction of all parties, a Licensing Acts Panel will hold a hearing to decide whether a licence, statement or club gaming permit will be granted.

2.8.6 Guidance on making applications for licences or permits, to make representations regarding application or to request a review can be found on the relevant council website or by contacting the licensing team.

2.9 Reviews of Premises Licences

2.9.1 Section 197 of the Act provides that an application for a review of a premises licence may be made by a responsible authority or interested party. There are regulations governing reviews (The Gambling Act 2005 (Premises Licences) (Review) Regulations 2007) which state that the person applying for the licence to be reviewed must do so in writing using a prescribed form, stating the reasons why a review is being requested and submitting it to the relevant council with any supporting documents. They must then send the same information to all (other) responsible authorities within seven days. Failure to do this will mean that the review process is halted until the documents are received by all parties.

2.9.2 The relevant council must grant the application for a review unless it thinks the grounds on which it is sought:

- are not relevant to this policy, or any guidance or codes of practice issued by the Gambling Commission, or the licensing objectives
- are frivolous
- are vexatious
- 'will certainly not' cause the council to revoke or suspend a licence or to remove, amend or attach conditions to the premises licence
- are substantially the same as the grounds cited in a previous application or substantially the same as representations made at the time the licence was granted, depending on how much time has passed (the licence should not be reviewed based on the same arguments that have already been considered by the relevant council).

2.9.3 Within seven days of receiving the application to review a premises licence, the relevant council will publish notice of the application in accordance with the regulations mentioned in paragraph 2.9.1.

2.9.4 Representations in response to the application must be made within the 28 days which follow publication of the notice and the relevant council must carry out the review as soon as possible after the 28 days has ended.

2.9.5 If the relevant council deems action is justified, its options are to:

- add, remove or amend a licence condition imposed by the relevant council
- exclude a default condition imposed by the Secretary of State (relating to for example, opening hours) or remove or amend such an exclusion
- suspend the premises licence for a period not exceeding three months
- revoke the premises licence.

2.9.6 The relevant council will notify the licence holder, the applicant for the review, any person who made representations, the Gambling Commission, the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police and HM Revenue and Customs of the outcome of the review as soon as possible.

2.10 Appeals against a decision of the councils

2.10.1 The Act details the process for appeals against the councils' decisions regarding licences, permits, provisional statements and temporary use notices. In all cases appeals are to the local Magistrates' Court within 21 days of the appellant's receipt of the councils' decision.

2.10.2 Any party may apply for a judicial review if they believe that a decision taken by the relevant council is:

- beyond the powers available to it
- subject to procedural impropriety or unfairness
- irrational (a decision so unreasonable no sensible person could have reached it).

2.11 Enforcement

2.11.1 The councils seek to secure compliance with the law in a variety of ways. Most contact with individuals and businesses is informal; providing advice and assistance over the telephone, during visits and in writing. Formal measures will include warnings, licence reviews and prosecution. The objective of these measures will be to ensure compliance with the licensing objectives including any general or specific licence conditions. Any enforcement action will be taken in accordance with our enforcement policy which is based on the principles of the Regulators' Code.

2.11.2 Part 15 of the Act details inspections that may be made to check for compliance with the Act. The councils will adopt a risk-based approach to the inspection of gambling premises which will be operated in conjunction with the councils' current enforcement policy. This will allow for the targeting of high-

risk premises or those where a breach would have serious consequences. Premises that are low risk and / or well run will be subject to a less frequent inspection regime.

- 2.11.3 Section 346 of the Act gives the councils the power to instigate criminal proceedings in respect of the offences specified in that section. The councils will ensure that enforcement is carried out in a fair and consistent manner in accordance the councils' enforcement policy.
- 2.11.4 The councils will endeavour to work with, and avoid duplication with, other regulatory regimes so far as possible.
- 2.11.5 Concerns about manufacture, supply or repair of gaming machines will not be dealt with by the councils but will be referred to the Gambling Commission.

2.12 Exchange of information

- 2.12.1 The councils regard the lawful and correct treatment of information as important to the successful and efficient performance of their functions, and to maintain the confidence of the people / bodies they deal with. The councils will ensure that information is kept and shared lawfully and correctly and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations.
- 2.12.2 The councils may share information in accordance with the following provisions of the Act:
 - sections 29 and 30 (with respect to information shared between the councils and the Gambling Commission)
 - section 350 (with respect to information shared between the councils and the other persons listed in Schedule 6 to the Act).
- 2.12.3 The purpose of information exchange is not only to fulfil the requirements under the Act, but also to enable both the Gambling Commission and the councils to carry out work related to their regulatory functions in a risk-based manner, using the best available information.
- 2.12.4 In the exercise of the above functions, consideration shall also be given to the common law duty of confidence, the law relating to defamation, the guidance issued by the Gambling Commission and to the councils' policies in relation to data protection and freedom of information.
- 2.12.5 Any information sharing between the councils and Thames Valley Police must also be carried out in accordance with the information sharing protocol under the Oxfordshire memorandum of understanding.
- 2.12.6 Any person wishing to obtain further information about their rights under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation or the Freedom of Information Act 2000 may view the councils' policies at

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk or www.southoxon.gov.uk or alternatively members of the public and businesses can also access information and advice regarding licensing by obtaining independent legal advice or contacting the following bodies:

- Local Government Regulation (formerly LACORS)
www.local.gov.uk
- DCMS (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport)
www.culture.gov.uk
- Citizens Advice Bureau
www.citizensadvice.org.uk

2.13 Application procedure

Applications for family entertainment centres, prize gaming and licensed premises gaming machine permits are to be made on the relevant council's forms available at either

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/business/licensing/gambling

or

www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/business/licensing/gambling

For all other types of licences and permits, the standard forms are available from the Gambling Commission at:

<http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/Licensing-authorities/Information-for-licensing-authorities/DCMS-LA-forms/DCMS-Licensing-authority-forms.aspx>

Applicants must ensure that they are aware of what should accompany each application (for example a plan of the premises). Each of the websites mentioned detail these requirements.

2.14 Fees

Maximum licence fees are set by the government; however each council sets its own fees up to these maximums. Fees set by the councils are subject to annual review. A list of current fees to accompany the different licence / permit applications can be found by accessing the councils' websites at either:

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/business/licensing/gambling

or

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/business/licensing/gambling>

3.0 PERMITS

- 3.0.1 Please refer to www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk for the latest details on machine categories including maximum stakes and pay-outs permitted and the entitlement of certain premises to certain categories and numbers of

machines. A summary of gaming machine categories is included at Annex 4 for information, however the stakes are subject to change.

- 3.0.2 The councils will expect applicants to be able to demonstrate a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes of the gambling that is permitted in their premises and that staff are trained to have a full understanding of them.
- 3.0.3 The holder of a permit must comply with any code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission about the location and operation of any machine(s).

3.1 Unlicensed family entertainment centre gaming machine permits (FECs)

- 3.1.1 Unlicensed FECs are able to offer category D machines if granted a permit by the relevant council. If an operator of a family entertainment centre wishes to make category C machines available in addition to category D machines, they will need to apply for an operating licence from the Gambling Commission and a premises licence from the relevant council.
- 3.1.2 The councils can grant or refuse an application for an FEC permit, but cannot attach conditions.
- 3.1.3 As unlicensed family entertainment centres appeal to children and young persons, the councils expect applicants to pay particular attention to the example measures detailed in paragraph 2.8.2.
- 3.1.4 In considering the protection of children, the councils will expect the applicant to show not only how they intend to protect children from gambling but also that they have taken into account wider child protection considerations in their policies and procedures. The efficacy of such policies and procedures will be considered on their merits.
- 3.1.5 The councils will not grant a permit for unlicensed family entertainment centres if the applicant has a relevant conviction (as set out in Schedule 7 to the Act). Applicants will be required to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

3.2 (Alcohol) licensed premises gaming machine permits

- 3.2.1 The Gambling Commission has published several useful leaflets and guidance about gaming machines and other types of gambling specifically to provide information to premises authorised to sell alcohol. This can be found at: <http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/pdf/Advice-on-gaming-in-pubs-and-alcohol-licensed-premises.pdf>
- 3.2.2 Premises licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on the premises are automatically entitled to two gaming machine permits, of categories C and/or

D. The holder of the premises licence authorising the sale of alcohol will need to notify the council and pay the prescribed fee.

3.2.3 The councils can remove the automatic authorisation in respect of any premises if:

- provision of the machines is not reasonably consistent with the pursuit of the licensing objectives
- gaming has taken place on the premises that breaches a condition of section 282 of the Act
- the premises are mainly used for gaming; or
- an offence under the Act has been committed on the premises.

3.2.4 If the holder of the premises licence wishes to have more than two machines in the premises, they will need to apply for a permit.

3.2.5 As children may be present in alcohol licensed premises, the councils expect applicants to pay particular attention to the example measures detailed in paragraph 2.8.2. to protect the children.

3.2.6 It is recognised that some alcohol licensed premises may apply for a premises licence for their non-alcohol licensed areas. Any such application would need to be applied for and dealt with under the Gambling Act, not the Licensing Act.

3.2.7 The councils can decide to grant the application with a smaller number of machines and / or a different category of machines than that applied for, however conditions cannot be attached to the permit.

3.3 Club gaming and club machine permits

3.3.1 The numbers and categories of machine permitted are different to non-clubs. Please refer to www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk for the latest maximum stakes and pay-outs permitted for each machine category and numbers of machine(s) permitted.

3.3.2 The councils may grant members' clubs and miners' welfare institutes (but not commercial clubs) club gaming permits which authorise the establishments to provide gaming machines, equal chance gaming and games of chance.

3.3.3 If a members' club or a miners' welfare institute does not wish to have the full range of facilities permitted by a club gaming permit, they may apply to the councils for a club machine permit under section 273 of the Act.

3.3.4 To qualify, members' clubs must have at least 25 members and be established and conducted 'wholly or mainly' for purposes other than gaming, unless the gaming is permitted by separate regulations. A members' club must be

permanent in nature, not established to make commercial profit and controlled by its members equally. Examples include working men's clubs, branches of the Royal British Legion, sports and social clubs, bridge and whist clubs and clubs with political affiliations.

3.3.5 The councils must satisfy themselves that the club genuinely meets the requirements of the Act to obtain a club gaming permit and therefore may ask for supporting documents. The following is a list of matters that will be considered:

- the procedures for guests accepted into the club
- how the club is advertised
- the running of the club, for example committee meetings, financial accounts and election of committee members.

This list is not exhaustive and the councils may ask for any documents they feel are necessary in determining whether a club is genuine, even if it has already been granted a club premises certificate under the Licensing Act 2003.

3.3.6 An application may only be refused on one or more of the following grounds:

- the applicant does not fulfil the requirements for a members' or commercial club or miners' welfare institute and therefore is not entitled to receive the type of permit for which it has applied
- the applicant's premises are used wholly or mainly by children and / or young persons
- an offence under the Act or a breach of a condition of a permit has been committed by the applicant while providing gaming facilities
- a permit held by the applicant has been cancelled in the previous ten years; or
- an objection has been lodged by the Gambling Commission or the police.

3.3.7 Under section 72 of the Act there is a 'fast-track' procedure available for clubs which hold a club premises certificate under the Licensing Act 2003. Under the fast-track procedure there is no opportunity for objections to be made by the Gambling Commission or the police and the grounds upon which a council can refuse a permit are reduced.

3.3.8 The grounds on which an application under the fast track procedure may be refused are:

- that the club is established primarily for gaming, other than gaming prescribed under schedule 12 of the Act

- that in addition to the prescribed gaming, the applicant provides facilities for other gaming; or
- that a club gaming permit or club gaming machine permit issued to the applicant in the last ten years has been cancelled

3.3.9 The councils may grant or refuse an application for a club gaming or club machine permit but cannot attach any conditions to it. However there are a number of conditions in the Act that the holder must comply with. These are contained in the Gaming Machine Permits Code of Practice issued by the Gambling Commission. This can be found on the Gambling Commission's website www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk

3.4 Prize gaming permits

3.4.1 Section 288 of the Act defines gaming as prize gaming if the nature and size of the prize is not determined by the number of people playing or the amount paid for, or raised by the gaming.

3.4.2 Casinos, bingo premises, adult gaming centres and licensed family entertainment centres do not require a permit in order to offer prize gaming.

3.4.3 Travelling fairs do not require a permit to offer equal chance prize gaming, provided that taken together the facilities for gambling are ancillary to the fair.

3.4.4 Children and young persons may only participate in equal chance prize gaming.

3.4.5 Applicants for a prize gaming permit should set out the types of gaming that they intend to offer. The applicant should be able to demonstrate:

- that they understand the limits on stakes and prizes that are set out in regulations; and
- that the gaming offered is lawful.

3.4.6 The councils can grant or refuse an application for a permit, but cannot attach any conditions to it. However, there are four conditions in the Act that permit holders must comply with. These are:

- the limits on participation fees, as set out in regulations, must be complied with;
- all chances to participate in the gaming must be allocated on the premises on which the gaming is taking place and on one day; the game must be played and completed on the day the chances are allocated; and the result of the game must be made public in the premises on the day that it is played;

- the prize for which the game is played must not exceed the amount set out in regulations (if a money prize), or the prescribed value (if non-monetary prize); and
- participation in the gaming must not entitle the player to take part in any other gambling.

3.4.7 Councils can only grant a permit if they have consulted the chief officer of police about the application. Applicants must disclose any relevant convictions they may have to the council and the council will consider any objections that the police make about the suitability of person or the premises, including its location and the potential for disorder.

4.0 PREMISES LICENCES

4.1 Primary gambling activity

4.1.1 Premises licences authorise the provision of gambling activities in:

- casinos
- bingo premises
- betting premises (including tracks and premises used by betting intermediaries)
- adult gaming centres and
- family entertainment centres.

4.1.2 Premises licences will be considered in accordance with the principles set out in paragraph 2.8.

4.2 Premises

4.2.1 In the Act a premises is defined as 'any place'. No more than one premises licence can apply to any place, however one premises may hold more than one premises licence so long as the building can be genuinely separated. In determining whether the separation is genuine, the councils will base their decisions on the following:

- are the premises registered separately for business rates?
- are the premises owned by the same person?
- can each of the premises be accessed from the street or is access to one only via the other or another gambling premises?

- 4.2.2 Roping off and different coloured carpets are examples of methods used by some proprietors to artificially sub-divide premises and the councils will not consider premises 'divided' as such as two separate premises.
- 4.2.3 Where two or more licences are applied for within the same building and the council does consider separation genuine, the applicant(s) must still demonstrate how they will uphold the licensing objectives, with particular reference to how they plan to control the access from one part of the building into the other, in order to protect children from accidentally or otherwise accessing types of gambling to which they are not authorised.

4.3 Location

- 4.3.1 The location of premises may be relevant to the promotion of the licensing objectives. In particular, premises located in close proximity to the following may give rise to concern
- schools
 - vulnerable adult centres
 - residential areas with a high concentration of children.
- 4.3.2 The councils will consider the location on a case-by-case basis and will take into account the type of gambling that is proposed. If the location does pose a risk to the promotion of the licensing objectives, the applicant must demonstrate how they will overcome such concerns.

4.4 Conditions

- 4.4.1 Conditions may be imposed upon a premises licence in a number of ways. These are:
- (a) mandatory – set by the Secretary of State, some set out in the Act and some to be prescribed in regulations, for all, or classes of licence
 - (b) default – to be prescribed in regulations made by the Secretary of State, to be attached to all or classes of licences unless excluded by the licensing authority
 - (c) specific – conditions that can be attached to an individual licence by the licensing authority
- 4.4.2 Conditions will only be imposed to address specific risks under the licensing objectives. Any conditions imposed by the councils will only be considered where there is evidence of a risk to the licensing objectives and be

proportionate to the circumstances that they are seeking to address. In particular, the councils will ensure that premises licence conditions:

- are relevant to the need to make the proposed building suitable as a gambling facility
- are directly related to the premises and the type of licence applied for
- are fairly and reasonably related to the scale of premises and
- are reasonable in all other respects.

4.4.3 Certain matters may not be the subject of conditions. These are:

- any condition on the premises licence which makes it impossible to comply with an operating licence condition
- conditions relating to gaming machine categories, numbers, or method of operation
- conditions which provide that membership of a club or body be required and
- conditions in relation to stakes, fees, winnings or prizes.

4.5 Door supervisors

4.5.1 It is not a mandatory to impose conditions relating to door supervision. However, if the councils consider it necessary to impose a condition on a premises licence requiring the presence of door supervisors they shall be licensed by the Security Industry Authority (SIA).

4.5.2 There is an exemption for 'in house' employees working as door supervisors at licensed casino or bingo premises, however 'contract' staff employed as door supervisors will need to be licensed by the SIA. The councils may still impose specific requirements on these unlicensed door supervisors if they consider it necessary at particular premises.

4.6 Adult gaming centres

4.6.1 Operators of an adult gaming centre must obtain an operating licence from the Gambling Commission and a premises licence from the relevant council. This will allow the operator to make category B, C & D machines available to their customers.

4.6.2 In considering licence applications for adult gaming centres, consideration will be given to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or

being exploited by gambling. The councils will therefore expect applicants to demonstrate that there will be sufficient measures in place to promote this objective.

4.7 Licensed family entertainment centres

4.7.1 Operators of a licensed family entertainment centre will require an operating licence from the Gambling Commission and a premises licence from the relevant council. This will allow the operator to make category C and D machines available to their customers.

4.7.2 Children and young persons will be able to enter licensed family entertainment centres and play category D machines. They will not be permitted to play category C machines.

4.7.3 As family entertainment centres will particularly appeal to children and young persons, consideration shall be given to child protection issues. Where category C machines are available in licensed family entertainment centres the councils will require that:

- all such machines are located in an area of the premises separated from the remainder of the premises by a physical barrier which is effective to prevent access other than through a designated entrance
- only adults are admitted to the area where the category C machines are located
- access to the area where the category C machines are located is supervised
- the area where the category C machines are located is arranged so that it can be observed by staff of the operator or the licence holder; and
- at the entrance to, and inside any such area there are notices prominently displayed indicating that access to the area is prohibited to persons under 18.

4.8 Tracks

4.8.1 Tracks are sites (including racecourses and dog tracks) where races or sporting events take place. Operators of tracks will require a premises licence from the relevant council, but they do not need to obtain an operating licence from the Gambling Commission (although they may have one).

4.8.2 Tracks may be subject to one or more than one premises licence, provided each licence relates to a specified area of the track.

- 4.8.3 It is a mandatory condition of all track licences that children and young persons are excluded from any areas where facilities for betting are provided and any area where a gaming machine, other than a category D machine, is situated. In relation to the areas used for betting, special dispensation from this rule is provided for dog tracks and horse racecourses on days when racing takes place. On these days families will be entitled to attend a track or racecourse and children may enter the areas where facilities for betting are provided. This race day dispensation does not apply to the areas where gaming machines of category B & C are provided and the councils will therefore expect that suitable measures are in place to prevent children from entering such areas.
- 4.8.4 Holders of betting premises licences in respect of tracks who also hold a pool betting operating licence may make up to four gaming machines available (categories B2 to D) on the track. The councils will therefore expect the applicant to demonstrate that suitable measures are in place to ensure that children are prevented from entering areas where machines (other than category D machines) are made available.
- 4.8.5 The councils will attach a condition to track premises licences requiring the track operator to ensure that the rules are prominently displayed in or near the betting areas, or that other measures are taken to ensure that they are made available to the public, for example, the rules could be printed in the race card or made available in leaflet form from the track office.
- 4.8.6 The councils will require the following information from applicants for premises licences in respect of tracks:
- detailed plans for the racetrack itself and the area that will be used for temporary 'on-course' betting facilities (often known as the 'betting ring')
 - in the case of dog tracks and horse racecourses, details of the fixed and mobile pool betting facilities operated as well as any other proposed gambling facilities.
- 4.8.7 Plans submitted with the application should be clearly marked to show what licensable activities will take place where and how children will be separated from category C machines.
- 4.8.8 The councils will accept occasional use notices for tracks in accordance with section 39 of the Act.

4.9 Casinos

- 4.9.1 The Act states that operators of a casino must obtain an operating licence from the Gambling Commission and a premises licence from the relevant council.

4.9.2 In July 2012 a Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee reviewed the Act and recommended that any local authority should be able to make its own decision about whether to have a casino in its district. The Committee also recommended that the licences for casinos that were licensed under the pre-existing Gaming Act of 1968 be made portable, allowing operators to relocate to any local authority (with the authority's consent).

4.9.3(a) **Vale of White Horse District Council:** Policy not to allow applications for a casino.

Section 166 of the Act gives the council the power to pass a 'no casino' resolution, meaning that applications for a casino would not be considered. The council has adopted a 'no casino' resolution on the basis that this rural district with market towns is an inappropriate place for a casino, that casinos are better located in large towns or cities, and the council should also protect the most vulnerable people from gambling in casinos. This resolution is required to be renewed within three years.

4.9.3(b) **South Oxfordshire District Council:** Policy to allow applications for a casino

Section 166 of the Act gives the council the power to pass a 'no casino' resolution, meaning that applications for a casino would not be considered. The council has not adopted a 'no casino' policy. As such, all applications received for a premises licence to operate a casino in the council area would be judged on their own merits, in accordance with paragraph 2.8 and the requirements set out in paragraph 4.9.4.

4.9.4 Applicants for casino licences are required to:

- submit a procedure with their application for the reporting of any suspicious activity
- follow a policy of requiring proof of identification to be shown on entering the casino in order to act as a deterrent to those considering using the casino for criminal activities (such as money laundering) and to effectively support gambling self-exclusion schemes
- detail any entertainment to be provided
- submit details of employee training to promote the licensing objectives
- submit a policy to promote the protection of children and vulnerable persons
- submit a policy regarding the identification of and interventions in force to aid problem gamblers
- set aside at least one 'training room' where customers can learn how to play the various games offered in a non-threatening environment. The room shall clearly display information on how and where help for problem gambling can be sought
- set aside a quiet area as a refuge from gambling. The room shall clearly display information on how and where help for problem gambling can be sought.

4.10 Betting premises

- 4.10.1 Betting premises are those premises which take bets other than at a track (commonly known as a licensed betting office). Operators of betting premises will require an operating licence from the Gambling Commission and a premises licence from the relevant council.
- 4.10.2 It is unlawful for anyone under the age of 18 to place a bet. Persons under the age of 18 shall not be permitted to enter a premises licensed for betting.
- 4.10.3 The councils expect applicants to demonstrate how they will ensure that neither children nor vulnerable persons are able to place a bet, for example by detailing proof of identification and self-barring schemes and staff training.
- 4.10.4 At the time of writing, the holder of a betting premises licence may make available for use up to four gaming machines of category B (B2, B3 or B4), C or D.
- 4.10.5 The councils may, in accordance with section 181 of the Act, enforce the number of betting machines, their nature and the circumstances in which those machines are made available for use. When considering whether to impose such conditions, the councils will take into account the following:
- the size of the premises
 - the number of counter positions available for person-to-person transactions and
 - the ability of staff to monitor that machines are not used by children and young persons or by vulnerable people.

4.11 Bingo

- 4.11.1 Operators of premises offering bingo (cash or prize bingo) will require a bingo operating licence from the Gambling Commission and a premises licence from the relevant council.
- 4.11.2 The council will need to be satisfied that bingo can be played in any premises for which it grants a bingo premises licence. This is a relevant consideration where the operator of an existing bingo premises applies to vary their licence to exclude an area of the existing premises from its ambit and then applies for a new premises licence, or multiple licences for that or those excluded areas.
- 4.11.3 The councils note the unusual circumstances in which the splitting of a pre-existing premise into two adjacent premises might be permitted and that it is not permissible to exceed 20 percent of the total number of B3 machines available for use in the premises.

4.11.4 Children and young people are allowed into bingo premises, however they are not permitted to participate in the bingo and if category B or C machines are present, these must be separated from areas where children and young people are allowed. Where category C or above machines are available in premises to which children are admitted the councils will require that:

- all such machines are located in an area separate from the remainder of the premises by a physical barrier which is effective to prevent access other than through a designated entrance
- access to the area where the machines are located is supervised
- the area where the machines are located is arranged so that it can be observed by staff of the operator or the licence holder and
- at the entrance to and inside any such area there are prominently displayed notices indicating that access to the area is prohibited to persons under 18.

4.12 Temporary use notices

4.12.1 Temporary use notices allow the use of premises for gambling where there is no premises licence but where a person or company holding a relevant operator's licence wishes to use the premises temporarily for providing facilities for gambling.

4.12.2 There are a number of statutory limits concerning the use of temporary use notices. Please refer to www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk for details of the maximum numbers of days premises may be used and for other restrictions.

4.12.3 If objections are received to a temporary use notice (from the police, Gambling Commission, HM Revenue & Customs or any other licensing authority in whose area the premises are situated), the council must hold a hearing to consider the representation (unless all the participants agree that a hearing is unnecessary).

4.12.4 If the council, after a hearing has taken place or been dispensed with, considers that the temporary use notice should not have effect, it must issue a counter-notice which may:

- prevent the temporary use notice from taking effect
- limit the activities that are permitted
- limit the time period of the gambling or
- allow the activities to take place subject to a specified condition.

4.12.5 The councils will apply the principles set out in paragraph 2.6 of this statement to any consideration as to whether to issue a counter-notice.

4.13 Provisional statements

4.13.1 Section 204 of the Act provides for a person to make an application for a provisional statement in respect of premises they expect to be constructed, altered or expect to acquire the right to occupy. For example, a developer may wish to apply for a provisional statement to see whether a premises licence would be issued prior to entering into a contract to buy or lease the premises. Equally, a provisional statement may be applied for where there is already a premises licence but the application is for a different type of gambling.

4.13.2 An applicant need not hold an operating licence from the Gambling Commission before applying for a provisional statement and the councils shall not consider the likelihood of an operating licence being granted in determining whether to grant the provisional statement.

4.13.3 If a provisional statement has been granted, the fee for the subsequent premises licence application will be less and the councils are constrained in considering matters; no further representations from responsible authorities or interested parties may be considered unless they concern matters which could not have been addressed at the provisional statement stage or they reflect a change in the applicant's circumstances.

4.13.4 The councils may refuse the premises licence (or grant it on terms different to those attached to the provisional statement) only by reference to matters:

- which could not have been raised by way of representations at the provisional statement stage
- which, in the council's opinion, reflect a change in the operator's circumstances
- where the premises has not been constructed in accordance with the plan and information submitted with the provisional statement application. (There must be a substantial change to the plan and the council shall discuss any concerns with the operator before coming to a final decision).

4.14 Travelling fairs

4.14.1 The Act defines a travelling fair as, 'wholly or principally' providing amusements.

4.14.2 To be exempt from requiring a permit for gaming machines, the fair must be on a site that is not used for a fair for more than 27 days per calendar year

(regardless of whether it is the same or different travelling fairs which occupy the land).

- 4.14.3 Fairs may provide an unlimited number of category D machines provided the facilities for gambling amount to no more than ancillary amusement to the fair.
- 4.14.3 Whilst the gaming machine providers may be exempt from the requirement to hold a permit, they must comply with the legal requirements about how the machines operate.
- 4.14.4 The councils will liaise with neighbouring authorities to ensure that land used for fairs which crosses local authority boundaries is monitored.

ANNEX 1

List of persons / bodies responding to the consultation on this policy

Organisation Details	Responding as:
Gambling Commission	Regulator
Gamcare	Charity
GambleAware	Charity
Equalities Officer – South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils	Equalities Officer
Watchfield Parish Council	Councillor
Councillor Cox	Councillor
Councillor Vicky Jenkins	Councillor
Cllr. St.John Dickson	Councillor

ANNEX 2

List of responsible authorities

The Responsible Authorities for the council areas under the Act, and their contact details are as follows.

Contact details may change, and other responsible authorities may be designated by regulations by the Secretary of State. For latest information, please check with the relevant council's licensing team.

		Contact details for preliminary discussions or follow-up enquiries
Responsible Authority	Address	Telephone, e-mail and website
The licensing authorities	Licensing Team Vale of White Horse District Council 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB	01235 422556 licensing.unit@whitehorsedc.gov.uk www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/business/licensing
	Licensing Team South Oxfordshire District Council 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB	01235 422556 licensing@southoxon.gov.uk www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/business/licensing
The planning authorities	Planning Vale of White Horse District Council 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB	01235 422600 planning@whitehorsedc.gov.uk www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building
	Planning South Oxfordshire District Council 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB	01235 422600 planning@southoxon.gov.uk www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building
Environmental health	Environmental Health Vale of White Horse District Council 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB	01235 422403 env.health@southandvale.gov.uk www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/environment
	Environmental Health South Oxfordshire District Council 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB	01235 422403 env.health@southandvale.gov.uk http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/environment

Gambling Commission	Gambling Commission Victoria Square House Victoria Square Birmingham B2 4BP	0121 230 6666 info@gamblingcommission.gov.uk www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk
Thames Valley Police	Chief Constable, Thames Valley Police Headquarters Oxford Road Kidlington OX5 2NX	01865 266000 licensing@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk www.thamesvalley.police.uk
Fire and Rescue Service	Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service Sterling Road Kidlington OX5 2DU	01865 842999 fire.service@oxfordshire.gov.uk www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/fire-and-rescue-service
Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board	Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board c/o Children, Young People & Families Directorate Oxfordshire County Council, County Hall, New Road Oxford OX1 1ND	01865 815843 oscb@oxfordshire.gov.uk www.oscb.gov.uk
HM Revenue and Customs	HM Revenue and Customs Excise Processing Teams Gambling Duties BX9 1GL	0300 200 3700

ANNEX 3

Licensing authority delegations

Matter to be dealt with	Full Council	Licensing Acts Panel	Officers
Final approval of three year licensing policy statement	X		
Policy not to permit casinos	X		
Fee setting (when appropriate)	X		
Application for premises licence		X Where representations have been received and not withdrawn	X Where no representations received or all have been withdrawn
Application for a variation to a licence		X Where representations have been received and not withdrawn	X Where no representations received or all have been withdrawn
Application for a transfer of a licence		X Where representations have been received from the Commission	X Where no representations received from the Commission
Application for a provisional statement		X Where representations have been received and not withdrawn	X Where no representations received or all have been withdrawn
Review of a premises licence		X	
Application for club gaming/ club machine permits		X Where objections have been made and not withdrawn	X Where no representations received or all have been withdrawn
Cancellation of club gaming/ club machine permits		X	
Applications for other permits			X
Cancellation of licensed premises gaming machine permits			X
Consideration of temporary use notice			X
Decision to give a counter notice to a temporary use notice		X	

X indicates the lowest level to which decisions can be delegated

ANNEX 4

Summary of gaming machine categories

Category of Machine	Maximum stake (from January 2014)*	Maximum prize (from January 2014)*
A	Unlimited	Unlimited
B1	£5	£10,000
B2	£100 (in multiples of £10) *	£500
B3A	£2	£500
B3	£2	£500
B4	£2	£400
C	£1	£100
D – non-money prize (other than a crane grab, coin pusher, penny fall machines)	30p	£8
D – non-money prize (crane grab machine)	£1	£50
D - money prize (other than coin pusher or penny falls machines)	10p	£5
D – combined money and non-money prize (other than a coin pusher or penny falls machines)	10p	£8 (of which no more than £5 may be a money prize)
D – combined money and non-money prize (coin pusher or penny falls machine)	20p	£20 (of which no more that £10 may be a money prize)

- * The Government has published its review of gaming machines and social responsibility measures. As part of the review the Government has decided that the maximum stakes on Fixed Odds Betting Terminals (FOBTs) will be reduced from £100 to £2. No change in prize level has been proposed.

ANNEX 5

Summary of machine provisions by premises

	Machine Category							
	A	B1	B2	B3	B4	C	D	
Large casino (machine/table ratio of 5-1 up to maximum)		Maximum of 150 machines: Any combination of machines in categories B to D (except B3A machines), within the total limit of 150 (subject to machine/table ratio)						
Small casino (machine/table ratio of 2-1 up to maximum)		Maximum of 80 machines: Any combination of machines in categories B to D (except B3A machines), within the total limit of 80 (subject to machine/table ratio)						
Pre-2005 Act casinos (no machine/table ratio)		Maximum of 20 machines categories B to D (except B3A machines) or any number of C or D machines instead						
Betting premises and tracks occupied by Pool Betting		Maximum of 4 machines categories B2 to D (except B3A machines)						
Bingo Premises					Maximum of 20% of the total number of machines available for use on the premises category B3 or B4	No limit on category C or D machines		
Adult gaming centre					Maximum of 20% of the total number of machines available for use on the premises category B3 or B4	No limit on category C or D machines		
Family entertainment centre (with premises licence)							No limit on category C or D machines	
Family entertainment centre (with permit)								No limit on Category D machines
Clubs or miners' welfare institute (with permit)					Maximum of 3 machines in categories B3A or B4 to D*			
Qualifying alcohol licensed premises							1 or 2 machines of category C or D automatic upon notification	
Qualifying alcohol licensed premises (with gaming machine permit)						Number as category C or D machines on permit		
Travelling Fair							No limit on category D machines	
	A	B1	B2	B3	B4	C	D	

*It should be noted that members' clubs and miners' welfare institutes are entitled to site a total of three machines in categories B3A to D but only one B3A machine can be sited as part of this entitlement. Commercial clubs are entitled to a total of three machines in categories B4 to D.

Cabinet Report



Report of Head of Finance

Author: Vicky Johnson

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Wards affected: All

Cabinet member responsible: Robert Sharp

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To: CABINET

Date: 7 December 2018

Council Tax Empty Homes Premium

Recommendation(s)

That the Council be recommended

- (a) That in accordance with the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 the Long Term Empty Property Premium (currently set at a 50%) is:
 - (i) Increased to **100%** from 1 April 2019 for those properties which are empty for **two years** and over
 - (ii) Increased to **200%** premium from 1 April 2020 for those properties which are empty for **five** years and over
 - (iii) Increased to **300%** premium from 1 April 2021 for those properties which are empty for **10 years** and over

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to recommend to Council the level of premium to be applied to long-term empty dwellings.

Corporate Objectives

2. By reviewing and varying the levels of discount that can be applied to long term empty properties it may encourage owners to bring dwellings back into use and therefore contribute the strategic objective of “homes and jobs for everyone”.

Background

3. Long-term empty dwellings that have already received any relevant discounts or exemptions are currently charged an additional 50 per cent of the council tax due, where that dwelling has been empty for at least two years.

Options

4. The Government introduced new legislation on 1 November 2018 (Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018) to allow councils to:
 - apply from 1 April 2019 a premium to long-term empty dwellings of up to an additional 100 per cent of the council tax due, where that dwelling has been empty for at least two years
 - apply from 1 April 2020 a premium to long-term empty dwellings of up to an additional 200 per cent of the council tax due, where that dwelling has been empty for five years and over
 - apply from 1 April 2021 a premium to long-term empty dwellings of up to an additional 300 per cent of the council tax due, where that dwelling has been empty for ten years and over
5. There are currently **136** properties which have been unoccupied and unfurnished for over two years and are already subject to a **50 per cent** long term empty homes premium.
6. There is a lack of available housing within the district and long-term empty dwellings could be put to better use in easing the pressure on housing stock. Applying a premium to long-term empty dwellings should encourage owners to bring them into occupation.
7. There are however certain exemptions to this premium being applied. These include premises owned by members of the armed forces; annexes; and, properties that are genuinely on the market for sale or let.

Financial Implications

8. If the long term empty homes premium was increased to **100 per cent** from the current 50 per cent from 1 April 2019 then, based on the 2018 charge, it could potentially bring in an extra **£138,019.39** of council tax revenue, meaning from Vale’s point of view the annual financial benefit of applying the premium would be **£9,656.59** based on current

property figures. Other principle preceptors such as the County Council will see a more significant additional benefit.

Legal Implications

9. The recommendations to vary existing discount levels and apply a premium are in accordance with proposed regulations under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018. Where a determination is made to amend the premium, the council will be required to publish notice of it in at least one newspaper circulating in its area before the end of the period of 21 days beginning with the date of the determination.

Risks

10. It is hoped that owners would consider bringing properties back into use, but there is a risk of owners avoiding the premium on long term empty properties by just moving furniture into the property and claiming they are occupied (which will pay 100% council tax). **For this reason, if the proposal to increase the premiums is approved, we would assume that only 50 per cent of the current dwellings would attract the 100 per cent premium and increase the taxbase accordingly.**

Conclusion

11. It is hoped that the adoption of higher premiums may encourage the owners of the remaining long term empty properties to bring them back into use, as well as increase the supply of dwellings generally by discouraging second home ownership, thus contributing to the strategic objective of “homes and jobs for everyone”. At the same time, the new flexibility to increase the premium provides additional revenue to the council and other principle preceptors, where owners choose not to bring properties back into use.

Background Papers

- None

Cabinet Report



Report of Head of Finance

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To: CABINET

Date: 7 December 2018

Budget setting update

Recommendation(s)

Cabinet is recommended

- (i) to instruct officers as part of 2019/20 budget setting, to revise the capital programme to include only essential schemes, with all other schemes forming a preparation pool of schemes to be considered when considered affordable, and
- (ii) to note the report.

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on changes to the local government finance landscape that have occurred since Cabinet and Council approved the revenue budget 2018/19 and capital programme to 2022/23 in February 2018, ahead of budget setting in February 2019.

Corporate Objectives

2. The allocation of financial resources within the revenue and capital budgets needs to match the objectives agreed by the council.

Background

3. The revenue budget for 2018/19 and capital programme to 2022/23 was approved by Cabinet and Council in February 2018. In addition to the in-year revenue budget,

Cabinet and Council approved a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The aim of the MTFP is to demonstrate financial viability over a five-year period.

4. As part of the budget setting report, the Head of Finance as the council's Section 151 officer is required to comment on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of the reserves. In the conclusion to his report, the Head of Finance commented that:

“Overall, the level of reserves is adequate in relation to the proposed revenue budget and capital programme and the budgets are sustainable.”

5. The 2018/19 revenue budget and five-year MTFP reflected the fact that 2018/19 was the third year of a four-year settlement and assumed that the fourth year of the settlement would be honoured. It also assumed the receipts under the business rates retention scheme would remain at the minimum possible level under the scheme.
6. The one significant risk to the five-year MTFP was identified as being possible changes to the New Homes Bonus scheme. The report noted that *“should further changes occur a fundamental review of the council's budget may be necessary”* as *“over £16 million of expenditure budgeted for within the MTFP and the capital programme from 2018/19 onwards is dependent on the receipt of NHB not yet received or confirmed as payable by the government.”* The MTFP identified that between 2018/19 and 2022/23 between £4 million and £5 million of New Homes Bonus is budgeted to be used to support the revenue account every year.
7. The New Homes Bonus scheme has already undergone change since its inception in 2011/12. Initially, New Homes Bonus payments were to be made for six years and were based primarily on the movement in the tax base. However, following a consultation exercise in launched in December 2015, this was reduced to four years. In addition, a “baseline” was introduced so that New Homes Bonus would only be payable where growth in tax base exceeded a baseline, set initially at 0.4 per cent.

Developments since February 2018

8. On 24 July 2018 the government issued its Technical Consultation on the 2019/20 Local Government Finance Settlement. The consultation stated that *“the Government's current intention is that the 2019-20 settlement will confirm the final year of the multi-year settlement that has provided certainty for 4 years”*.
9. The consultation sought responses on what level the council tax referendum principles should be set, and on the concept of eliminating so-called “Negative RSG”, which amounted to a reduction of government grant funding identified in future year settlements. In terms of the council's 2018/19 MTFP, the matters on which consultation was being undertaken are not of material impact to the council's financial sustainability.
10. One area where the government chose not to consult on was New Homes Bonus. The consultation document however did refer to New Homes Bonus in two key respects. Firstly, in respect of the baseline referred to above, it noted:

“In 2018-19 the baseline remained at 0.4 per cent. Due to the continued upward trend for house building, the Government expects to increase the baseline in 2019-20”.

11. If this is to occur in 2019/20 then the council will face a financial pressure as the New Homes Bonus payment will be lower than forecast. Secondly, it made the following comment in respect of “*New Homes Bonus 2020 onward*”:

“2019-20 represents the final year of funding agreed through the Spending Review 2015. In light of this, it is the Government’s intention to explore how to incentivise housing growth most effectively, for example by using the Housing Delivery Test results to reward delivery or incentivising plans that meet or exceed local housing need. Government will consult widely on any changes prior to implementation”.

12. This is of even greater concern than the potential change in baseline as it effectively means that, at this time, we do not know whether New Homes Bonus will even exist in its current form after 2019/20.
13. More generally, the Technical Consultation document commented on the future of local government finance as follows:

“The 2019 Spending Review will confirm overall local government resourcing from 2020-21, and the Government is working towards significant reform in the local government finance system in 2020-21, including an updated, more robust and transparent distribution methodology to set baseline funding levels, and resetting business rates baselines”.

14. This means that our level of government funding excluding New Homes Bonus after 2019/20 is also uncertain, making planning future budgets very difficult.

The wider local government picture

15. Against this backdrop of uncertainty over future local government funding, 2018 has seen a number of councils identify that they face severe financial pressures. The most extreme example of this is Northamptonshire County Council, whose Section 151 officer had to issue a Section 114 notice earlier this year as the council was in danger of running out of money. Much of the comment has focussed on the increasing costs of adult and childrens’ social care for which demand continues to increase. Although not dealt with by this council, the increasing costs of this work for unitary and county councils will need to be met within the overall local government funding envelope. To meet this need for increased funding in these areas, the amount of money for other local government services may be reduced.
16. During the year, there has been a noticeable drive by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA), the public sector accountancy body, to focus attention on longer term sustainability of councils. In guidance on preparing a capital strategy, which the council is required to prepare, the emphasis is on preparing a “Long Term Financial Plan” (LTFP), in addition to the MTFP. The expectation is that an LTFP will be for at least 10 years. In addition, CIPFA has consulted on the introduction of a “resilience index”. This would focus on, for example, a council’s reliance on government grant funding, including New Homes Bonus, for financial sustainability.

Impact on this council

17. There is no risk to the council’s financial viability in the immediate future. At 31 March 2018, the council held nearly £40 million in usable reserves, including government grants and other sums ring fenced for specific purposes. However, the council’s

medium to long term financial sustainability faces an at present unquantifiable risk from changes to government funding, particularly but not exclusively New Homes Bonus. Given the heavy reliance on New Homes Bonus to support the revenue budget identified above, any significant change to that funding stream will have a significant impact on the council finances.

18. In light of potential future financial pressures, the council has already instigated a number of actions that will help ensure it is best placed to respond to the challenges. These actions are:

- Non-essential capital spending has been paused pending certainty around future funding
- A line-by-line review of all council base budgets is underway to strip out any over-budgeting
- Curtailment of the discretionary growth bid process during budget setting for revenue and capital spending
- To commission CIPFA to assist with work on benchmarking the base budget with other councils and on a commercial strategy

Next steps

19. Ahead of the budget being finalised in February, officers will continue to work with cabinet on further understanding the council's financial position and its financial sustainability. The cabinet member for finance has asked officers to review the capital programme and, in the light of the potential cuts in funding, propose those schemes that could be removed from the capital programme pending their affordability being established. The schemes would form The Preparation Pool of schemes for consideration for inclusion in the capital programme in the future.

Financial Implications

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

Legal Implications

21. The cabinet needs to make recommendations to the council on its spending proposals. Under the Local Government Act 2000 it is the council that must agree the revenue and capital spending plans, and then set the council tax. Council will meet on 13 February 2019 in order to set the budget, and the council tax including amounts set by the town and parish councils, Oxfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley.

Risks

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

Other implications

23. None

Conclusion

24. Recent developments have shown that local government finances continue to be under pressure. The council's own financial sustainability is now subject to considerable uncertainty over the medium to long term. In the event of significant changes to New Homes Bonus immediate action will be needed so that sustainable budgets can be set over the medium term.

Background Papers

None