

# Council Agenda



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## Summons to attend a meeting of Council

to be held on Wednesday 13 February 2019 at 7.00 pm  
The Ridgeway, The Beacon, Portway, Wantage, OX12 9BY

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

Margaret Reed  
Head of Legal and Democratic

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# Agenda

## Open to the public including the press

### Council's vision

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

### 1. Apologies for absence

To record apologies for absence.

### 2. Minutes

(Pages 12 - 24)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the Council minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2018 – attached.

### 3. Declarations of disclosable pecuniary 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. Petitions

To receive any petitions from the public.

### 7. Local Plan 2031 Part 1: adopted policies map

(Wards Affected: Botley and Sunningwell)

(Pages 25 - 33)

Cabinet, at its meeting on 4 February 2019, considered a report on a factual correction to the Vale of White Horse District Council's Adopted Policies Map (December 2016), which supports the Local Plan 2031 Part 1.

The report of the head of planning, which Cabinet considered on 4 February 2019, is attached.

**RECOMMENDATION** to Council to agree to make a factual correction to the Council's Adopted Local Plan Part 1 Policies Map in relation to the boundary of the Green Belt at North Hinksey village, as set out in Appendix 1 to the head of planning's report to Cabinet on 4 February 2019.

## **8. Local Plan 2031 Part 2: main modifications**

Cabinet, at its meeting on 1 February 2019, considered a report on the Post Hearing letters from the Planning Inspector presiding over the Local Plan 2031: Part 2 Examination.

The report of the head of planning, which Cabinet considered on 4 February 2019, is available [here](#)

**RECOMMENDATION** to Council to:

- (a) agree to undertake a six-week public consultation on the Main Modifications to the Local Plan 2031: Part 2, as identified by the Planning Inspector presiding over the Part 2 plan examination, and necessary for the plan to be found Sound, as set out at appendix 3 of the head of planning's report to Cabinet on 4 February 2019;
- (b) agree to publish the additional Modifications to the Local Plan 2031: Part 2, as set out at appendix 9 of the head of planning's report; and
- (c) authorise the head of planning, in consultation with the Cabinet member for planning, to make any necessary minor amendments and corrections to the Local Plan 2031: Part 2 and its associated documents up to and prior to plan adoption.

## **9. Section 106 request - Marcham Parish Council local facilities**

(Wards Affected: Marcham)

(Pages 34 - 41)

Cabinet, at its meeting on 4 February 2019, considered a report on a request from Marcham Parish Council for section 106 funds of £305,095.74 towards community and sports facilities.

The report of the head of planning, which Cabinet considered on 4 February 2019, is attached.

**RECOMMENDATION** to Council to:

- (a) create a budget for £305,095.74 for a combined village hall and sports pavilion/clubhouse, multi-use games area including tennis court and sports pitches (cricket & football) project in Marcham;
- (b) agree to secure a funding agreement with Marcham Parish Council for the use of these section 106 monies of which the terms included should be passed on to The

Arthur Anson Memorial Trust through a further separate funding agreement between Marcham Parish Council and The Arthur Anson Memorial Trust; and

- (c) agree to pay Marcham Parish Council £305,095.74 once the funding agreements mentioned above are signed.

## **10. Treasury management mid-year monitoring 2018/19**

(Pages 42 - 55)

Cabinet, at its meeting on 4 February 2019, considered a monitoring report on the treasury management activities for the first six months of 2018/19 and an update on the current economic conditions with a view to the remainder of the year.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee considered the report at its meeting on 28 January 2019 and had not recommended any adjustments to the strategy as a result of the first six months' activities.

The report of the head of finance, which Cabinet considered on 4 February 2019, is attached.

**RECOMMENDATION** to Council: to approve the head of finance's 2018/19 treasury management mid-year monitoring report to Cabinet on 4 February 2019.

## **11. Treasury management and investment strategy 2019/20**

(Pages 56 - 89)

Cabinet, at its meeting on 4 February 2019, considered a report on the council's treasury management strategy (TMS) for 2019/20 and set out the expected treasury operations for this period.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee considered the report at its meeting on 28 January 2019 and had not recommended any adjustments to the strategy.

The report of the head of finance, which Cabinet considered on 4 February 2019, is attached.

**RECOMMENDATION** to Council to:

- (a) approve the treasury management strategy 2019/20, set out in appendix A to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 4 February 2019;
- (b) approve the prudential indicators and limits for 2019/20 to 2021/22, as set out in appendix A to the head of finance's report; and
- (c) approve the annual investment strategy 2019/20, set out in appendix A (paragraphs 41 to 82) to the head of finance's report, and the lending criteria detailed in table 5.

## **12. Capital strategy 2019/20 to 2028/29**

(Pages 90 - 101)

Cabinet, at its meeting on 4 February 2019, considered a report on the council's capital

strategy.

The report of the head of finance, which Cabinet considered on 4 February 2019, is attached.

**RECOMMENDATION** to Council: to approve the capital strategy 2019/20 to 2028/29 which is contained in appendix one of the report of the head of finance to Cabinet on 4 February 2019.

### **13. Revenue Budget 2019/20 and Capital Programme to 2023/24** (Pages 102 - 143)

Cabinet, at its meeting on 4 February 2019, considered the report of the head of finance on the draft revenue budget 2019/20, and the capital programme to 2023/24.

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

The report of the head of finance, which Cabinet considered on 4 February 2019, is attached.

The Scrutiny Committee will consider this report at its meeting on 7 February 2019. Any views or recommendations will be reported to Council.

The report of the chief financial officer on the robustness of the budget estimates and adequacy of the reserves is attached.

**RECOMMENDATION** to Council to:

- (a) set the revenue budget for 2019/20 as set out in appendix A.1 to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 4 February 2019;
- (b) approve the capital programme for 2019/20 to 2023/24 as set out in appendix D.1 to the head of finance's report, together with the capital growth bids set out in appendix D.3 to the head of finance's report;
- (c) set the council's prudential limits as listed in appendix E to the head of finance's report;
- (d) approve the medium term financial plan to 2023/24 as set out in appendix F.1 to the head of finance's report.

### **14. Council Tax 2019/20**

To consider the report of the head of finance on the setting of the council tax for the 2019/20 financial year - report to follow.

## **15. Pay policy statement 2019/20**

(Pages 144 - 148)

To consider the report of the head of corporate services on the adoption of a pay policy statement to meet the requirements of the Localism Act - report attached.

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

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

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

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

### **(2) Delegation of cabinet functions**

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

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

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

## **17. Questions on notice**

To receive questions from councillors in accordance with Council procedure rule 33.

### **1. Councillor Margaret Crick to Councillor Roger Cox, Leader of the council**

With memories of the devastating floods in Abingdon in 2007, and climate change predicted to increase instances of flooding, residents in South Abingdon are very concerned about the Environment Agency's decision to cancel plans for a flood storage facility at Abingdon Common.

Has the leader been given any further information about alternative proposals? And how can this council put pressure on the Environment Agency to ensure action is taken to reduce flooding risk in Abingdon.

### **2. Councillor Catherine Webber to Councillor Ed Blagrove, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services**

Vale of White Horse District Council is preparing to return to a purpose-built headquarters in Crowmarsh Gifford. Can the Cabinet member confirm that he will work with South Oxfordshire District Council to ensure that the new building is

designed to be carbon neutral and energy efficient, and that despite the lack of public transport to the site, all efforts are being made to minimise the number of car journeys that staff and members will be required to make?

Bearing in mind the lack of public transport to Crowmarsh Gifford, what plans does the Cabinet member have to ensure residents and members have meeting places available to use within the Vale, so that residents struggling to access council support online or over the phone can reach us?

### **3. Councillor Bob Johnston to Councillor Elaine Ware, Cabinet Member for Housing and Environment**

When established in the 1990's, Registered Social Landlords decorated their properties periodically, especially when tenants exchanged properties or moved out, in order to ensure that properties were in good repair and in good decorative order. I understand that most internal repairs and decorating are no longer routinely provided.

Can the Cabinet member explain why housing providers operating in the Vale no longer carry out routine interior decoration? And is there anything this council can do to help ensure that tenants who are elderly, have disabilities, or are on low incomes are provided with well decorated homes in good working order?

### **4. Councillor Catherine Webber to Councillor Ed Blagrove Cabinet Member for Corporate Services**

In July 2016 Council passed the following motion “This council resolves to manage our public consultations with openness and transparency, using industry best practice. Our public consultations will use open-ended questions that encourage a range of responses, and officers will produce consultation reports that highlight all major concerns raised and the actions to be taken in response. Where we have control of the consultation, we will ensure openness and transparency. Where we are part of a governing body managing the consultation, we will openly encourage openness and transparency.”

What progress has been made since this motion was passed to improve our consultations and ensure responses from the public and parish councils influence our decision making in meaningful ways?

Why are we still seeing situations such as Shippon Parish not being consulted in relation to a bid for Garden Village status, a respondent to the Local Plan consultation having his Reg 19 response missed out, and the ideas from key stakeholders at the launch event for Oxfordshire Plan 2050 not included in the vision and aspirations document?

### **5. Councillor Emily Smith to Councillor Roger Cox, Leader of the Council**

In December 2014 Council passed a motion to: include “written information about Vale activities, service and programmes with future council tax demands”. When

looking into progress on this motion I learned that neither Finance or Communications officers were aware of this decision by Council and confirmed that the requested information for residents was never produced.

Was the Leader aware that this decision by Council was not actioned? Can he seek assurances from officers that other motions passed by members since 2014 have been actioned and that mechanisms are in place to track future motions?

#### **6. Councillor Emily Smith to Councillor Roger Cox, Cabinet Member for Planning**

Last summer Transport for New Homes and the Foundation for Integrated Transport report received national press coverage. Their report highlighted the problems with new housing estates being designed around car use, adding to traffic congestion and preventing healthy communities developing. They highlighted Great Western Park as an example of poor practice and the report appeared on the BBC News website under the headline 'Young couples trapped in car dependency'. In November, Oxfordshire County Council unanimously passed a motion to invest in 'Active Travel' and allocate more space for cyclists and pedestrians. But the County Council cannot ensure pedestrians and cyclists are prioritised in new housing developments without collaboration with local planning authorities.

How is the Cabinet member working with county colleagues and others to ensure that the Vale's planning policies prioritise cyclists and pedestrians and reduce car dependency when we permit new housing developments? Have any specific changes been discussed as a result of the 'Active Travel' motion at the County Council?

#### **7. Councillor Judy Roberts to Councillor Eric Batts, Cabinet Member for Legal and Democratic**

I welcome the announcement that Homes England have approved a grant for the only 'Vale affordable housing in perpetuity project' off the Eynsham Road. The Oxfordshire Community Land Trust have already prepared their planning application for this development but require the easement from the Vale for which this grant was awarded to progress the scheme. The Vale applied for this grant in Summer 2018 and the scheme has been in development for a lot longer. So, please can the Cabinet member explain why the easement has still not been signed?

#### **8. Councillor Debby Hallett to Councillor Roger Cox, Cabinet Member for Planning**

At the request of Council in October 2018, the leader of the council wrote to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to request that they review the definition of housing 'affordability'. The minister for housing's reply told us unequivocally that it has *always* been this council's responsibility and within our power to set our affordable housing policies to reflect local circumstances. We don't need Government to redo anything. Council can set our policies to reflect our own local circumstances. I'm surprised this was apparently news to the leader.

The national policy requires that affordable rent be *at least* 20% below market rents, and similarly, that affordable sales prices be *at least* 20% below market sales prices.

The system is set up so that we rely on market developers to provide solutions to our local affordable housing needs. Clearly that's not been a success. Recent reports tell us local house prices are between 7 and 17 times annual earnings, when we know a healthy ratio is about 4 or 5 times annual savings.

Although it was the leader who wrote the letter to Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government about affordability, it is the cabinet member for planning to whom I direct this question. What are some of the options to consider that could finally make a dent in the problem of a lack of genuinely affordable housing in Vale?

#### **9. Councillor Debby Hallett to Councillor Roger Cox, Cabinet Member for Partnership and Insight**

How much money did Vale decide to contribute to the Environment Agency's recently-cancelled Abingdon flood scheme? What was the evidence supporting this decision, who decided, when, and by what means?

#### **10. Councillor Jenny Hannaby to Councillor Roger Cox, Cabinet Member for Planning**

There is a recurring problem with new build housing developments not being completed to an acceptable standard in line with the approved plans.

There are examples from around the Vale where developers are not building roads, drainage, homes and play areas to the specifications agreed when planning permission was granted which then creates work for this council to rectify – at a cost for this council and disruption to residents.

Does the Cabinet member agree that councils should have more legal powers in relation to planning enforcement? And if so, what is the Cabinet member doing to lobby government to return responsibility for all building control matters to local councils?

### **18. Motions on notice**

To consider motions from councillors in accordance with Council procedure rule 38.

#### **1. Motion to be proposed by Councillor Catherine Webber, seconded by Councillor Debby Hallett**

Council notes that:

a) the recent 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report states that we have just 12 years to act on climate change if global temperature rises are to be kept within the recommended 1.5 degrees Celsius;

b) all governments (national, regional and local) have a duty to limit the negative impacts on climate breakdown, and local governments that recognise this should not wait for their national governments to change their policies. UK county, district and city councils need to commit to aggressive reduction targets and carbon neutrality as quickly as possible;

c) districts are well placed to lead the world in reducing carbon emissions, as their responsibility for planning policies opens up a range of sustainable transport, buildings and energy opportunities;

d) Council has already shown foresight when it comes to addressing the issue of Climate Change, having signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change in 2007. In 2008, Council agreed a Climate Change Strategy, introduced by Councillor Mary de Vere, which provided the framework for the council to set about reducing the carbon footprint of its own activities and of the local community. Between 2008 and 2013, this council collaborated with the Energy Saving Trust on the development of a strategy to reduce area-wide carbon emissions, as well as with the Carbon Trust, to produce a Carbon Management Plan which sets out how the council planned to reduce energy and fuel use in its own buildings and vehicles. All of this has led to a 30% drop in energy use in our buildings through 2018;

e) although the Vale of White Horse District Council is managing to deliver absolute carbon reductions despite the upward pressures on carbon emissions caused by changes in the structure of its operations and services and variability caused by factors such as the weather, it is not delivering the necessary absolute carbon reductions fast enough to meet either the UK's 2050 80% reduction target or the 1.5 degree Celsius target.

In light of the above, the Council therefore agrees to:

1. Join other councils in declaring a Climate Emergency;
2. Ask the leader to write to the Secretary of State requesting that they provide the necessary powers and resources to make local action on climate change easier;
3. Request that, in light of the recent IPCC report and the latest Vale of White Horse District Council data (published June 2018), officers review the council's Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Management Plan with the aim of bringing a report to Cabinet in the autumn of 2019, after consideration by Scrutiny. The review should include the option of adopting an early carbon neutral target for the Vale, and proposals for regular reporting to Scrutiny Committee the progress with the strategy and plan;
4. Ask officers to ensure that as the council's policies are routinely reviewed, specific consideration is given to how policies, and our related decisions and actions, affect our contribution to climate change, and where necessary, update these policies to reduce our impact wherever possible;
5. Ask officers to provide the cost and the most appropriate training for members and officers about how to promote carbon neutral policies for future consideration by Cabinet;
4. Continue to work with partners across the district, county and wider region to deliver widespread carbon reductions.

## **2. Motion to be proposed by Councillor Emily Smith, seconded by Councillor Bob Johnston**

Council notes that although Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet have discussed possible route options, this Council has not debated its position in relation to the proposed Oxford to Cambridge Expressway.

Council notes that all possible routes through the government's chosen corridor will have a direct impact on residents in the Vale of White Horse District and our environment for

decades.

Council recognises the benefits of closer working between Oxford and Cambridge Universities, supporting new business in the region and improving access to amenities and services, but on the basis of the evidence currently available does not accept that spending between £4billion to £7billion on a new road is the best way to achieve these aims.

In particular, Council notes:

- the contradictory nature of the Expressway scheme's stated aims; a strategic highway for through traffic and freight with limited junctions cannot also be a road serving new housing developments.
- claims that the Expressway is a solution to congestion and safety on the A34 are misleading. The A34 is not a stated priority for this scheme, and some of the possible routes will bring more traffic through residential areas.
- insufficient work has been done on the potential of enhanced rail links to deliver better outcomes for passengers, freight, and sustainable economic growth along the corridor
- the risk the Expressway poses to the viability of East-West Rail has not been assessed
- there has been no environmental impact assessment of this scheme, which stands to destroy swathes of countryside and valuable ecosystems.
- that despite the scheme being worked on since 2015 and the devastating impact on our communities, there has been no public consultation
- that increased road building will inevitably have a serious negative impact on air quality and carbon emissions at a time when all public bodies must seek to use every part of their planning, investment and delivery mechanisms to improve air quality and reduce our carbon emissions.

Therefore, Council resolves to oppose the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway.

Council requests that the leader of the council, at stakeholder meetings they attend with Highways England, Department for Transport and relevant Government ministers:

1. make clear this council's opposition to the Expressway
2. call for greater investment by central government in, and more assessment of, sustainable transport infrastructure options for the Oxford to Cambridge corridor.