

Council Agenda



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Date: 7 July 2020

Website: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Summons to attend a meeting of Council

to be held on Wednesday 15 July 2020 at 7.00 pm
Virtual meeting

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M Reed".

Margaret Reed
Head of Legal and Democratic

Joining instructions for members of the public: To watch the virtual meeting, you must copy the following link to your internet browser:

<https://tinyurl.com/y7qegvzg>

When your web browser opens, select "Watch on the Web instead" button and then when the "Welcome to the live event!" window opens select "join anonymously".

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Agenda

Open to the public including the press

1. Apologies for absence

To record apologies for absence.

2. Minutes

(Pages 9 - 20)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the Council minutes of the meetings held on 12 and 19 February 2020 - 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 chair's announcements

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

5. Chief Executive's update

To receive any updates from the chief executive.

6. Public participation

To receive any written questions or written statements from members of the public.

7. Petitions

To receive any petitions from the public.

8. Recommendations from Cabinet, individual Cabinet members, and committees

At its meeting on 1 June 2020, the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee considered a public statement from Extinction Rebellion Abingdon regarding the creation and improvement of cycling infrastructure. The committee noted that Oxfordshire County Council was working on the promotion of active travel and considering traffic restriction measures and welcomed this move. The committee resolved to ask its chair to write to the county council to show support of the active travel and traffic restriction measures being developed and support these to become a permanent measure. The committee also asked Cabinet to recommend to Council that it writes to the county council to show the district council's support for these measures.

Any recommendation of Cabinet will be reported to Council.

9. Progress on approved Council motions

(Pages 21 - 35)

To note progress on the approved Council motions – report attached.

10. Virtual meeting procedure rules and scheme of delegation

(Pages 36 - 45)

To consider the report of the head of legal and democratic – attached.

11. Report of the leader of the council

To receive the report of the leader.

12. Questions on notice

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

A. Question from Councillor Simon Howell to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Emily Smith

In March, this Council launched a COVID-19 Grant Scheme aimed at supporting community initiatives in our respective areas to respond to the pandemic. Three months on, I believe that there is no visibility as to how much has been spent and what remains of this funding. Can the Leader provide an update on the status of this scheme and whether community groups can still apply for any funds still available?

B. Question from Councillor Nathan Boyd to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Emily Smith

On 27 May 2020 the Leader wrote a letter to the Prime Minister Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP regarding the behaviour of one of his advisors, Dominic Cummings. Considering the reluctance of the administration to even support the proposal of writing a letter on a planning matter, which directly affected this council previously, can the leader please explain why it was appropriate to write, on behalf of the council, with no motion being put before council beforehand?

C. Question from Councillor Elaine Ware to Councillor Helen Pighills Cabinet Member for Community Services

In July 2019 the Leader reported that a Health & Well-being Strategy was being developed. What progress has been made in preparing this strategy?

D. Question from Councillor Hayleigh Gascoigne to Councillor Emily Smith, Leader of the Council

We were all horrified to hear in the world media about what happened to George Floyd at the hands of the Minnesota Police Department, and all the other similar events that have been highlighted, involving wrongful killing of black people at the hands of the very people who are meant to protect them. This has spurred a huge movement across the UK to address racism. In our own district, a number of groups have formed such as Black

Lives Matter Didcot, and Black Lives Matter Abingdon and they are fiercely committed to tackling racism. One of their demands is “Accountability in Council Policy & Decision Making”.

What are we doing as a district council to tackle racism within our own operations and within our communities? How can we strive for better representation of ‘the Black voice’?

13. Motions on notice

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

Motion 1: Councillor Simon Howell to propose, Councillor Nathan Boyd to second.

Establishment of a Local Economy Resilience Advisory Committee.

Council recognises that the COVID-19 pandemic has thrown both the national and local economy into a state of turmoil and crisis. The impact on our local businesses and our local communities will only grow in the coming months and requires an immediate response.

This Council will urgently set up a new committee called the Local Economy Resilience Advisory Committee, to guide this council’s response to this crisis. Following the model of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee, this new committee will be advisory to the Cabinet and should be made up of seven members in total based on political balance (the head of legal and democratic to make appointments to the committee seats and substitute positions in accordance with the wishes of the relevant group leader). The term of reference for the new committee should be drawn up by the Acting Deputy Chief Executive – Place, in consultation with the Cabinet member for development and regeneration and group leaders. It will operate alongside and have equal weight to the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee, to ensure this council works cross party and does everything it can to help local business, the high streets of our market towns and villages, and our communities survive this economic shock.

Motion 2: Councillor Nathan Boyd to propose, Councillor Elaine Ware to second

Future publication of all communication within five days.

Council notes that when a councillor is asked a question or a follow up, the constitution states that the response should be published within five days. It is only right that all communications from ministers or government departments that either thank officers and councillors for their hard work on behalf of residents or bring up any shortcomings or failures of the council are published in a similar way. This seems only fair to our residents and would help us further abide to the principles of Objectivity, Accountability and Openness that The Nolan Principles demand.

Therefore Council requests that all future official central government correspondence to and from the Vale of White Horse District Council is published within five working days so that there is openness and transparency in how central government correspondence influences decisions we make for our residents and that any embargoed or confidential correspondence is circulated to councillors in the same timeframe.

Motion 3: Councillor Nathan Boyd to propose, Councillor Matthew Barber to second.

Local Government Re-organisation

This Council recognises the excellent work of all local government staff across Oxfordshire during the COVID-19 crisis. Councils have worked together in difficult times, showing that organisational barriers to joint working can be overcome.

All Councils have gone the extra mile in delivering services to our residents that prioritise the most vulnerable. This has inevitably incurred additional costs.

All Councils acknowledge the additional Government funding to date, but we have a duty to respond to the national financial challenge ahead and to be open with residents.

All Councils across Oxfordshire are now considering how they can balance budgets and protect frontline services. No Councillor nor party wants to see drastic cuts to vital Council services.

We, as a group of democratically elected representatives, should take the opportunity provided by the devolution white paper to ensure that we provide the best possible public services for our residents.

Further to the motion passed at the December 2019 Council meeting, and reflecting that much has changed since, Council calls on the Leader to write to the Secretary of State requesting that we re-open and actively pursue consideration of a Unitary Authority for Oxfordshire and re-start a wide-ranging conversation with our local authority partners, residents and stakeholders to explore all options for a new future for Oxfordshire. Our aims are clear: safeguard public services in the future, support a vibrant local democracy and ensure a strong economy.

Motion 4: Councillor Andrew Crawford to propose, seconder to be notified

This Council notes that the latest data show the number of COVID 19 deaths per 1,000 Care Home beds in the Vale of White Horse to be almost twice that of the average of local authorities across the UK.* This picture is reflected across the majority of Oxfordshire's District Councils.

We also note that the County's rate of COVID 19 infection to be close to the average of local authorities, so the anomaly highlighted above is not explained by a higher general infection rate. We further note Oxfordshire is listed as the 6th worst Local Authority in England for the percentage of care homes which have experienced an outbreak of COVID 19 with 73% of all care homes affected.**

As the first serious phase of the pandemic recedes, we owe it to all those who have died, their relatives and all those that have worked hard throughout the pandemic to determine the reasons for these significant anomalies.

Council therefore asks the Leader of the council to request the Chair of the Joint Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee of Oxfordshire County Council to convene a meeting with the aim of setting up a rapid and transparent Task Force to analyse and ascertain the reasons for the observed excess deaths and infection rates in Oxfordshire's care homes during the previous three months. Such a review would allow lessons to be learnt and recommendations to be made to reduce both future COVID 19 infections and subsequent deaths, as well as the additional pressure this puts on local public services and the economy.

*Cumulative deaths to 12.6.20 show the Vale of White Horse has 53.8 COVID related deaths per 1,000 care home beds against a mean for all English counties of 28.1. Source LG Inform using ONS data. https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/view/lga-research/covid-19-and-care-homes?mod-area=E07000180&mod-group=AllDistrictInRegion_SouthEast&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup

** Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, University of Oxford. COVID-19 Care Homes in England. <https://www.cebm.net/covid-19/covid-19-care-homes/>

Motion 5: Councillor Eric de la Harpe to propose, Councillor Hayleigh Gascoigne to second

This Council notes that:

- The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and set a goal to achieve a carbon-neutral District by 2045.
- Towns in this District suffer from traffic congestion and, consequently, poor air quality.
- Low levels of physical inactivity contribute to poor health outcomes for many residents in this District.
- All three of the above challenges can be addressed, in part, by encouraging more residents to use active travel more often.
- During the recent COVID-19 lock-down, levels of active travel increased significantly with some bicycle retailers seeing nearly 200% increase in sales (1) and air pollution fell by 60% in some places. Many residents remarked how pleasant it was.
- As we come out of lock-down, however, the situation may revert to status quo unless bold and ambitious action is taken towards a new normal.
- There is a groundswell of public enthusiasm for creating a new and different normal and an available resource in volunteer groups willing to become involved.
- New developments, such as Didcot Garden Town, present ideal opportunities to incorporate and showcase a new normal for active travel networks.
- While people usually adopt active travel for recreational purposes, the primary goal is to reduce car usage in day-to-day activities. Active travel networks need, therefore, to be coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive connectors between:
 - Oxford and surrounding towns and villages as proposed in the Oxfordshire Greenways Project,
 - Towns and villages themselves,
 - Towns and villages and the Science Parks as in the Science Vale Cycling Network, and
 - Residential areas and places of employment and retail within towns as proposed in Local Cycling and Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)

While not strictly a form of active travel, this Council recognises the benefits of e-scooters and includes them under a broader definition of active travel that also includes e-bikes.

This Council therefore:

1. calls upon the Cabinet to:
 - i. Include policies to enhance active travel outcomes across the district as part of the new Vale Local Plan and more urgently as part of the Design Guide.
 - ii. Include active travel as part of the proposed new Active Communities Strategy.
 - iii. Actively engage with the County's consultations on their emerging Local Transport and Connectivity Plan to ensure the County are better aware of this Council priorities.
2. calls upon the Leader of the Vale to write a letter to Leader of County Council, Cabinet Member for the Environment and the Walking and Cycling Champion asking them to:
 - a. Prioritise quality control of all active travel infrastructure in accordance with the Oxfordshire Cycling Design Standards, ensuring all proposals are audited for safety and encouragement of active travel.
 - b. Review their Parking Standards considering the risks poor car parking poses to people on cycles and pedestrians.
 - c. Establish systems for the County to work with Town and Parish Councils to identify CIL funding that could be used to enhance cycle ways and footpaths that link with new routes within new housing development
 - d. Continue to resource the work on the Science Vale cycle network and expand this work planning cycle networks within the designated Science Vale area across the Vale of White Horse District.
 - e. Continue to resource the Oxfordshire Greenways project.
 - f. Expedite the development of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for all towns and parishes in the Vale District, engaging with local cycling and walking group volunteers to undertake the preliminary groundwork.
 - g. Work with our towns and parishes to identify local needs in addition to sources of funding to implement their LCWIPs.
 - h. Fast-track bold and ambitious measures in our towns and parishes to make social distancing possible at pinch-points and consider these measures permanent rather than temporary.

Motion 6: Councillor Emily Smith to propose, Councillor Simon Howell to second

Council notes that since early March the Covid-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on our district and the country. At least 120 have lost their lives. Many have been seriously ill and are still fighting the virus.

Local businesses have and will continue to suffer the economic impact of this pandemic and young people have had disruption to their education and employment prospects damaged by the resulting lockdown.

Council recognises the huge effort of our officers during the period. Adjusting to working remotely, volunteering to go beyond the day to job to help support shielded people and those isolating and working long hours to keep vital council services running. Council also recognises the quick establishment of new ways of working with community groups and responding incredibly quickly to the demands made of us as part of the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum operation to protect the NHS.

Council thanks and recognises the huge response from every town, village and hamlet to put in place an infrastructure to help. It is the feet on the street and the community effort that has truly helped look after all elements of the community across the Vale.

Council thanks every officer for the heroic part they have played, and will continue to play, helping residents in need of support through this dangerous and uncertain time.



Minutes of a meeting of the Council

held on Wednesday 12 February 2020 at 7.00 pm
at The Ridgeway, The Beacon, Portway, Wantage, OX12 9BY

Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Margaret Crick (Chair), Jerry Avery, Matthew Barber, Paul Barrow, Ron Batstone, Eric Batts, Nathan Boyd, Cheryl Briggs, Andy Cooke, Andrew Crawford, Eric de la Harpe, Amos Duveen, Neil Fawcett, Andy Foulsham, Hayleigh Gascoigne, David Grant, Debby Hallett, Jenny Hannaby, Simon Howell, Alison Jenner, Bob Johnston, Diana Lugova, Robert Maddison, Sarah Medley, Helen Pighills, Mike Pighills, Judy Roberts, Val Shaw, Janet Shelley, Emily Smith, Bethia Thomas, Max Thompson, Elaine Ware, Catherine Webber and Richard Webber

Officers: Steven Corrigan, Simon Hewings, William Jacobs, Margaret Reed and Mark Stone

Number of members of the public: 3

Co.53 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bowring and O'Leary.

Co.54 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2019 as a correct record and agree that the chair sign them as such.

Co.55 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest

Councillor Duveen made a statement that as a potential recipient of changes to the council tax reduction scheme he would not take part in or vote on agenda item 7 – council tax reduction scheme 2020/21.

Co.56 Urgent business and chair's announcements

The chair provided general housekeeping information and advised there were no items of urgent business.

Co.57 Public participation

No members of the public had registered to address Council.

Co.58 Petitions

No petitions were submitted to Council.

Co.59 Council tax reduction scheme 2020/21

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 3 February 2020, on the adoption and implementation of a modified council tax reduction scheme for the financial years 2020/21 onwards.

RESOLVED: to adopt, for 2020/21 onwards, the 2014/15 adopted council tax reduction scheme with the following amendments:

1. to remove the 91.5 per cent limit when calculating their council tax bill, and remove the band E restriction for single parents with children under age five, qualifying residents will have their council tax reduction calculated at 100 per cent of their council tax bill after any deductions and based on their property's actual council tax band, as set out in the interim head of finance's report to Cabinet on 3 February 2020;
2. to widen the definition of who is considered disabled, in order to be exempt from paying council tax (e.g. council tax reduction will be calculated on 100 per cent of their council tax bill and their actual council tax band), as set out in the report; and
3. to disregard Bereavement Support Payments as income when calculating an applicant's council tax reduction, as set out in the report.

Co.60 Capital strategy 2020/21 to 2029/30

Council considered Cabinet's recommendation, made at its meeting on 3 February 2020, on the capital strategy for 2020/21 to 2029/30. Cabinet agreed to recommend Council approve the strategy.

RESOLVED: to approve the capital strategy 2020/21 to 2029/30 which is contained in appendix one of the interim head of finance's report to Cabinet on 3 February 2020.

Co.61 Treasury management mid-year monitoring report 2019/20

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 3 February 2020, on the treasury management activities for the first six months of 2019/20 and an update on the current economic conditions with a view to the remainder of the year.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 27 January 2020 and had not recommended any adjustments to the strategy as a result of the first six months activities. That committee and Cabinet had concluded that the treasury management activities had operated within the agreed parameters set out in the approved treasury management strategy and policy.

RESOLVED: to

1. note that the Joint Audit and Governance Committee is satisfied that the treasury activities are carried out in accordance with the treasury management strategy and policy; and
2. approve the interim head of finance's report to Cabinet on 3 February 2020.

Co.62 Treasury management and investment strategy 2020/21

Council considered Cabinet's recommendation, made at its meeting on 3 February 2020, on the council's treasury management and investment strategy for 2020/21.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 27 January 2020 and had not recommended any adjustments to the strategy and resolved to recommend Cabinet to approve the treasury management strategy, the prudential indicators and limits for 2020/21 to 2022/23 and the annual investment strategy 2020/21 as set out in the report. Cabinet agreed to recommend Council approve the strategy.

RESOLVED: to

1. approve the treasury management strategy 2020/21, set out in appendix A to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 3 February 2020;
2. approve the prudential indicators and limits for 2020/21 to 2022/23, as set out in appendix A to the head of finance's report; and
3. approve the annual investment strategy 2020/21, set out in appendix A (paragraphs 41 to 82) to the head of finance's report, and the lending criteria detailed in table 5 to that report.

Co.63 Revenue budget 2020/21 and capital programme to 2024/25

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

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

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

Councillor Crawford, Cabinet member for finance, presented the Cabinet's proposals for the revenue budget 2020/21 and capital programme to 2024/25.

Council thanked officers and particularly William Jacobs and Simon Hewings for their part in preparing the draft budget. Council thanked William Jacobs for his service to the council and wished Simon Hewings well in the role.

Councillor Crawford moved and Councillor Smith seconded a motion to approve Cabinet’s recommendations as follows:

1. set the revenue budget for 2020/21 as set out in appendix A.1 to the interim head of finance’s report to Cabinet on 3 February 2020;
2. approve the capital programme for 2020/21 to 2024/25 as set out in appendix D.1 to the report, together with the capital growth bids set out in appendix D.3 of the report;
3. set the council’s prudential limits as listed in appendix E to the report; and
4. approve the medium-term financial plan to 2024/25 as set out in appendix F.1 to the report.

Those councillors who spoke in support of Cabinet’s recommendation noted the difficult funding issues facing the council with lower central government funding, lower investment returns and a need to use reserves to balance the budget. They welcomed the budget which identified base budget and service review savings with the deletion of vacant posts. The budget included funding to support manifesto commitments - a new local plan and climate change issues with grants to support community initiatives to help tackle climate change and a budget for the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee (CEAC) to fund its one year climate emergency work programme. The funding for transformation activity will be used to identify ways to generate income and identify further areas for savings.

A number of councillors spoke in opposition to Cabinet’s budget. Small savings would have an adverse impact on small rural parishes – for example a charge for the production of neighbourhood plan maps which whilst saving £500 would involve greater costs for those involved in preparing plans. The budget proposals to axe jobs in planning enforcement and environmental health, community grants funding and reduce neighbourhood planning support would have a detrimental impact on customers. The budget provision for the CEAC was for one year only and capital spending had been cut. The budget failed to address the funding gap between expenditure and income with a continued reliance on reserves which was not sustainable.

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

For	Against	Abstentions
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Jerry Avery	Matthew Barber	
Paul Barrow	Eric Batts	
Ron Batstone	Nathan Boyd	
Cheryl Briggs	Simon Howell	
Andy Cooke	Janet Shelley	
Andrew Crawford	Elaine Ware	
Margaret Crick		
Eric de la Harpe		
Amos Duveen		
Neil Fawcett		
Andy Foulsham		

For	Against	Abstentions
Hayleigh Gascoigne		
David Grant		
Debby Hallett		
Jenny Hannaby		
Alison Jenner		
Bob Johnston		
Diana Lugova		
Robert Maddison		
Sarah Medley		
Helen Pighils		
Mike Pighills		
Judy Roberts		
Val Shaw		
Emily Smith		
Bethia Thomas		
Max Thompson		
Catherine Webber		
Richard Webber		
Total: 29	Total: 6	Total: 0

RESOLVED: to

1. set the revenue budget for 2020/21 as set out in appendix A.1 to the interim head of finance's report to Cabinet on 3 February 2020;
2. approve the capital programme for 2020/21 to 2024/25 as set out in appendix D.1 to the report, together with the capital growth bids set out in appendix D.3 of the report;
3. set the council's prudential limits as listed in appendix E to the report; and
4. approve the medium-term financial plan to 2024/25 as set out in appendix F.1 to the report.

Co.64 Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Steering Group

Council noted that Oxfordshire County Council is proposing to develop an Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy to establish the principles and an action plan to deliver the charging infrastructure needed to support the transition to low emission vehicles in the county.

To assist with the development of the strategy, the county council had invited Vale of White Horse District Council to appoint a councillor to the Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Steering Group. At its meeting on 28 January 2020 the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee considered an officer proposal that Vale of White Horse District Council's representative should be a member of the committee. The committee agreed to recommend Council to appoint Councillor David Grant as the council's representative.

RESOLVED: to

1. appoint Councillor David Grant as the council's representative on the Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Steering Group;

2. appoint all members of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee as substitute members.

Co.65 Pay policy statement 2020/21

Council considered the report of the acting deputy chief executive – transformation and operations on the adoption of a pay policy statement to meet the requirements of the Localism Act.

RESOLVED: to approve the pay policy statement for 2020/21 attached to the report of the acting deputy chief executive – transformation and operations to Council on 12 February 2020.

Co.66 Report of the leader of the council

Councillor Emily Smith, Leader of the council, provided an update on a number of matters. The text of her address is available on the council's [website](#).

Co.67 Questions on notice

A. Question from Councillor Janet Shelley to Councillor Catherine Webber, Cabinet member for planning

“What are the contingency plans to allocate additional housing should South Oxfordshire District Council withdraw its plan”?

Answer

“Firstly, we have an adopted Local Plan 2031 that deals with our own housing requirement as well as any unmet housing needs arising from elsewhere. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will consider the housing needs for the County going forward and any impact on housing needs from South Oxfordshire withdrawing its plan can be considered through that process and the subsequent and respective Local Plans, such as our new Vale Local Plan.

Secondly, South Oxfordshire have not identified any unmet housing needs and thus there is no unmet housing needs arising to be delivered/allocated for in the Vale or elsewhere in the County, regardless of whether their plan proceeds to Examination or is withdrawn”.

Supplementary question

In response to the following supplementary question, Councillor Webber undertook to provide a written response:

“So, you don't have a contingency plan, yet when speaking as the local ward councillor for Grove at the Planning Committee meeting held on 8 January 2020, Councillor Hannaby implied that Local Plan Part 3 would identify a more appropriate location for a Class 1 retail food store in Grove. Would this plan not be a part of contingency planning”?

B. Question from Councillor Janet Shelley to Councillor Catherine Webber, Cabinet member for planning

“Can you confirm that the administration is fully supportive of Neighbourhood Plans”?

Written answer

“Yes, we strongly support neighbourhood planning. Our support includes:

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- Advice and guidance throughout the process
- A lead officer to attend meetings, where appropriate, and offer expert advice
- Advice on sources of funding and technical support
- Advice on engaging the wider community and key stakeholders
- Advice on what evidence is required to support policies
- Consultation on area designation proposals (where appropriate) as well as submitted plans
- Review of draft neighbourhood plans to ensure they meet the basic conditions
- Organising and paying for the independent examinations and referendums”

Supplementary question

Councillor Shelley referred to an email received from Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Plans Alliance (ONPA) regarding a recommendation to withdraw funding to help create neighbourhood plans by South Oxfordshire District Council. She asked whether Councillor Webber agreed that withdrawing early-stage financial support to towns and villages would deter communities from considering starting these plans, and that this is a time when neighbourhood involvement in future planning of the Vale is more important than ever.

In response Councillor Webber confirmed that the council continued to support the development of neighbourhood development plans. Other sources of funding are available from government to support the progression of neighbourhood plans. The council has a strong neighbourhood planning team which will continue to support and motivate groups throughout the process. Officers will continue to support communities in accessing the alternative sources of funding.

Co.68 Motions on notice

Councillor Alison Jenner moved, and Councillor Ron Batstone seconded the motion as set out in the agenda at agenda item 16

On being put to the vote the motion was agreed.

RESOLVED:

That Council notes the risks associated with modern life are significantly different from those of 1847 when the Town Police Clauses Act was passed, and even from those of the 1970s when the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 came into force. Clearly, the legislation has not kept pace with developments, in particular with the way we use technology, apps, and mobile phones. It is difficult to facilitate a regulatory system when the legislation is based on the use of horse-drawn carriages and landline phones.

There is also a lack of consistency across the legislation. For example, the law requires a person who takes bookings for private hire vehicles to be licensed but there is no similar requirement for someone who does the same for hackney carriages. This lack, apart from the potential for sensitive personal information to fall into the wrong hands, can make it very difficult to investigate allegations of improper conduct by drivers of hackney carriages. This could undermine public confidence in the licensing regime. In addition, it provides a mechanism for private hire operators who have lost their licence to continue in business. They simply move to only “operating” hackney carriages, and no controls can be placed on them at all.

Examples of recent local issues include hackney carriage ‘operators’ who have pressured drivers to work excessively long hours with no proper breaks, and those

who do not maintain their vehicles properly and continually present vehicles to testing stations which fail the test. The overriding aim of any licensing authority when carrying out its functions relating to the licensing of hackney or private hire drivers, vehicle proprietors, and operators is the protection of the public.

The Oxfordshire district councils and the county council share information under a Joint Operating Framework, and there is a national register of revoked and refused licences operated by the National Anti-Fraud Network. However, this does not address situations where drivers have allowed their licence to lapse pending enforcement action at one local authority and apply to another authority without declaring that enforcement action or the previous licences held. Local authority prosecutions are not currently detailed on enhanced DBS disclosures and there are recent local examples of the councils only finding out about such prosecutions by chance and after the licence has been granted.

Council therefore requests that the Leader of the council write to the district's two Members of Parliament and to the Minister for Transport to request that the following action be taken:

1. The Government should move forward without delay on the three key measures recommended to achieve a safe service for passengers in the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Task and Finish Group report, namely:

- The introduction of a national taxi licensing database;
- Some form of cross border enforcement for local authorities;
- National minimum standards for licences.

2. The Government should provide an update in respect of how they propose to deal with cross-border working;

3. The Government should legislate to require any person taking bookings for more than one vehicle to be licensed as an operator, with national standards for the information recorded by licensed operators in respect of bookings.

Co.69 Exclusion of the public

RESOLVED: To exclude members of the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business under Part 1 of Schedule 12A Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 on the grounds that: (i) it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and (ii) the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Co.70 Corporate services contract

Council considered and agreed Cabinet's recommendation, made at its meeting on 3 February 2020, on the corporate services contract (see confidential minute).

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

Chair

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Council



held on **Wednesday 19 February 2020 at 7.00 pm**
at The Ridgeway, The Beacon, Portway, Wantage, OX12 9BY

Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Margaret Crick (Chair), Jerry Avery, Matthew Barber, Paul Barrow, Ron Batstone, Eric Batts, Nathan Boyd, Cheryl Briggs, Andrew Crawford, Amos Duveen, Andy Foulsham, Hayleigh Gascoigne, Jenny Hannaby, Alison Jenner, Bob Johnston, Diana Lugova, Robert Maddison, Sarah Medley, Helen Pighills, Mike Pighills, Judy Roberts, Val Shaw, Emily Smith, Bethia Thomas, Max Thompson and Elaine Ware

Officers: Steven Corrigan and William Jacobs

Number of members of the public: 0

Co.71 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bowring, Cooke, de la Harpe, Fawcett, Grant, Hallett, Howell, Shelley, Catherine Webber and Richard Webber

Co.72 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest

None.

Co.73 Urgent business and chair's announcements

The chair provided general housekeeping information and advised there were no items of urgent business.

Co.74 Public participation

No members of the public had registered to address Council.

Co.75 Petitions

No petitions were submitted from members of the public.

Co.76 Council tax 2020/21

Council considered the report of the interim head of finance on the setting of the Council Tax for the 2020/21 financial year.

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

For	Against	Abstentions
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Jerry Avery		
Matthew Barber		
Paul Barrow		
Ron Batstone		
Eric Batts		
Nathan Boyd		
Cheryl Briggs		
Andrew Crawford		
Margaret Crick		
Amos Duveen		
Andy Foulsham		
Hayleigh Gascoigne		
Jenny Hannaby		
Alison Jenner		
Bob Johnston		
Diana Lugova		
Robert Maddison		
Sarah Medley		
Helen Pighills		
Mike Pighills		
Judy Roberts		
Val Shaw		
Emily Smith		
Bethia Thomas		
Max Thompson		
Elaine Ware		
Total: 26	Total: 0	Total: 0

RESOLVED:

1. To note that at its meeting on 18 December 2019 the council calculated the council tax base 2020/21:
 - (a) for the whole council area as 52,686.4 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and
 - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a parish precept relates as in column 1 of appendix 1.

2. That the council tax requirement for the council's own purposes for 2020/21 (excluding parish precepts) is £7,201,704
3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2020/21 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) £72,423,971 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by parish councils.
 - (b) £60,980,550 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (c) £11,443,421 being the amount by which the aggregate at (3)(a) above exceeds the aggregate at (3)(b) above, calculated by the council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its council tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B) of the Act).
 - (d) £217.20 being the amount at (3)(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the council, in accordance with Section 31(B) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (including parish precepts).
 - (e) £4,241,717 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act, as set out in column 2 of appendix 1.
 - (f) £136.69 being the amount at (3)(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (3)(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no parish precept relates.
4. To note that for the year 2020/21 Oxfordshire County Council has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Band A	£1,018.29
Band B	£1,188.01
Band C	£1,357.72
Band D	£1,527.44
Band E	£1,866.87
Band F	£2,206.30
Band G	£2,545.73
Band H	£3,054.88

5. To note that for the year 2020/21 the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Band A	£144.19
Band B	£168.22
Band C	£192.25
Band D	£216.28
Band E	£264.34
Band F	£312.40
Band G	£360.47
Band H	£432.56

6. That the council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in appendix 3 as the amounts of council tax for 2020/21 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings shown in appendix 3.
7. To determine that the council's basic amount of council tax for 2020/21 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Co.77 Items from Council meeting held on 12 February (if required)

All business included on the agenda for the meeting held on 12 February was completed.

Co.78 Report of the leader of the council

Councillor Emily Smith, Leader of the council, referred to the flooding situation in the district and the ongoing updates provided by the Environment Agency and communities under high risk. She stated that the council's website contained useful information to assist those likely to be impacted by flooding including links to relevant websites.

Co.79 Questions on notice

No questions were submitted by councillors under Council procedure rule 33.

Co.80 Motions on notice

No motions were submitted by councillors under Council procedure rule 38.

At the close of business Councillor Andrew Crawford, Cabinet member for finance, thanked William Jacobs, the outgoing head of finance and Section 151 officer, for his service to the council, wished him a fruitful retirement and presented him and his wife with gifts of appreciation. On behalf of Council, Councillor Crick, Chair of the council, reiterated her thanks and best wishes.

The meeting closed at 7.07pm

Vale of White Horse Council Motions – May 2019 to Present

Date	Motion	Substantive Actions Required	Progress
17 July 2019	<p>Council notes that, given all possible routes through the government’s chosen corridor, the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway will have a direct impact on communities, businesses, and the environment across the Vale of White Horse District. This council should therefore agree a position on this matter.</p> <p>Council notes with concern the lack of public consultation and lack of clarity from Government on proposals about whether an Expressway is the most effective way to enhance connectivity within the Oxford to Cambridge Arc and before Corridor B was chosen.</p> <p>Council notes that published evidence on similar road building schemes, such as widening the M25, led to increased car use without any benefit in terms of congestion or journey time after a few years.</p> <p>Council notes that the increased carbon emissions, damage to our countryside and biodiversity associated with road building would be significant.</p> <p>Council notes our recent declaration of a Climate Emergency and our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint through our policies, decisions and actions. The Expressway will have a serious negative impact on the achievement of climate change targets at a time when all public bodies are being actively encouraged to improve air quality and contribute to significant carbon reductions.</p> <p>Therefore, Council resolves to oppose the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway as proposed.</p> <p>Council requests that the Leader of the council, and members of the Cabinet, make our opposition to the road building scheme clear at relevant partnership meetings.</p> <p>Council requests that the Leader of the council write to the district’s two Members of Parliament and to the Minister for Transport to make clear this council’s position as set out above and to request that the following action be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That the Expressway proposal be abandoned; - That the estimated £3-7billion cost of the scheme to be invested instead into completing and enhancing phase three of the East-West Rail link and to local government to enhance cycle infrastructure and public transport; - That all new transport schemes proposed by Department for Transport be subject to full public consultation and environmental assessments be published from the beginning; - That the government prioritise rail and sustainable active travel when developing policy and awarding grant funding for infrastructure. 	<p>Vale are opposed to the Oxford Cambridge expressway as proposed</p> <p>The Leader of the Council will write to the Minister for Transport, Ed Vaizey and Layla Moran.</p>	<p>Letters sent and relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones, to ensure that engagement with partners reflects this position.</p>

17 July 2019	<p>Council notes the inspector's Report of the Examination of Vale's Local Plan Part 2, dated 25 June 2019. In his report, the inspector lists the four objectives of LPP2, one of which is to set out policies and locations for new housing to meet the unmet need of Oxford City.</p> <p>Council notes that the inspector (in para 26) reminds us that the Oxfordshire Growth Board agreed a 'working assumption' that Oxford City's unmet need was 15,000 homes, of which Vale should supply 2200 homes over the plan period. He says (in para 28) that this 'working assumption' is to be 'confirmed or adjusted' through the examination of Oxford's Local Plan and the preparation of Oxfordshire's Joint Statutory Spatial Plan, which is currently in its early stages. He reminds us again (in para 92) that the additional housing requirement is a 'working assumption rather than definitive and warrants some caution in allocating sites in the LPP2'. There is no guidance or explanation of what this would mean in practice.</p> <p>Council notes that Oxford City has submitted its Local Plan for examination, but the inspector has found some issues that require more work before it is ready to be examined in public hearings; he discusses the issues in his letter to that council (undated, but to be found on Oxford City's Local Plan examination website page). Inspector is concerned that the housing figures are based on figures in the 2014 SHMA, which are based on 2011 ONS population and household projections that 'are now a few years old' (page 2). He also points out there may have been double counting. Therefore, the housing need figure is questionable. This housing need figure 'could have a bearing on the level of unmet need which would have to be accommodated by neighbouring local authorities'.</p> <p>Council notes that LPP2 allocates 1200 homes at Dalton Barracks, for Oxford's unmet need. Dalton Barracks and the neighbouring village of Shippon are to be removed from the Green Belt for future housing development.</p> <p>Council notes that para 137 of the NPPF requires Green Belt boundaries to only be modified under exceptional circumstances. The inspector for Vale LPP2 says (in para 29) that the housing required for Oxford's unmet need must be close to Oxford, and much of it is to be social rented housing. The inspector says (in para 55) that the number of houses to meet Oxford's unmet need, and the fact that they must be near Oxford, demonstrates there are exceptional circumstances to justify the removal of Dalton Barracks and Shippon from the Green Belt.</p> <p>Council notes that CPRE wrote to the planning Inspectorate in May 2019 to object to the order in which Oxfordshire's Local Plans are being examined, citing rules in NPPF</p> <p>It is this council's opinion that in order for Vale's Local Plan to be sound, the exact, evidenced number of houses that Oxford requires in order to meet its real need should be determined before Vale includes them in Vale's Local Plan Part 2. Oxford's assessment of its housing need must include evidence that Oxford City has done all it can to accommodate its own need, including evidence that the use of land for employment sites over housing sites is justified and lawful. There must be a public examination of the Oxford City Local Plan to definitely identify the unmet need (if any) to precede any adoption of neighbouring authorities' Local Plans to accommodate it. Until this is done, there are no exceptional circumstances to allow removal of Dalton Barracks and Shippon from the Green Belt.</p>	The Leader of the Council will write to the Secretary of State, Ed Vaizey and Layla Moran regarding Local Plan Part 2 and Oxford's unmet need	Letters Sent and relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones, to ensure that engagement with partners reflects this position.
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	<p>Council therefore requests the Leader of the council to write to the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Let the Minister know that Vale is assessing its options with regard to the Local Plan Part 2 and of council's opinion as stated. b. Point out that in Oxfordshire the various Local Plans are not independent of each other. That fact should have been considered in the examination process by ensuring Local Plans that are part of another authority's evidence, as is Oxford City's Local Plan, are examined first. Current examination procedures are deficient. c. Point out that the Duty to Cooperate should include Oxford City's duty to have a clear evidenced housing target before asking its neighbours to help meet its need. This Duty to Cooperate should run both ways. d. Ask for the Minister's advice about how we should 'confirm or adjust' our Local Plan Part 2 once Oxford's unmet need is established, if our local plan is already adopted. e. Ask the Minister to explain to us how this Local Plan Part 2 can be considered sound and legal when the housing figures used are based solely on a 'working assumption' of Oxford's unmet need, the Plan allocates housing development in the Green Belt in clear contravention of para 137 of the NPPF, and the Plan removes Dalton Barracks and Shippon from the Green Belt without the exceptional circumstances that the regulations require. <p>And to write to our two local Members of Parliament, explaining the situation and asking them for their support.</p>		
<p>July 2019</p>	<p>Council resolves to remove the current 'vision' of the council "taking care of your interests throughout the Vale with Enterprise, Energy and Efficiency" and develop a new vision statement that better reflects this council's priorities as part of the work on our new corporate plan.</p>		<p>A new vision statement has been created by Cabinet as part of the Corporate Plan 2020-24 development and will be communicated as part of that process. Officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones of the removal of the previous vision.</p>

<p>9 October 2019</p>	<p>Council notes that a hierarchy of organisations has grown up which influence regional development, some more accountable than others. These are collectively making increasing incursions into the decision-making abilities of elected local councils and placing significant growth demands on our districts.</p> <p>These organisations or bodies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England's Economic Heartland • The Oxford-Cambridge Arc Region • The Oxfordshire Growth Board (and associated Oxfordshire 2050 Joint Statutory Spatial Plan) • OxLEP (and the Local Industrial Strategy) <p>Council notes that officers and members attend meetings related to these bodies, and welcomes the opportunity for regional collaboration, as many of us share the same concerns, but wishes to update its formal position to assist those representing our district.</p> <p>This Council believes that development within our district must balance the needs of people and their communities, the environment and the local economy. Specifically, it should contribute to this Council's (and the Government's) commitment to carbon neutrality.</p> <p>It should be based on genuine consultation and demonstrable public support.</p> <p>It should ensure that infrastructure, both strategic and local, is in place to support development, with the aim of building communities, not just houses.</p> <p>This Council supports the following approaches in relation to regional economic growth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planned development should demonstrate how it will help our economy move towards its zero-carbon target 2. Housing targets should be based on an up-to-date objective assessment of need 3. Planned housing should reflect the needs of the local community, offering a range of sizes and tenures including genuinely affordable housing to buy, and rent at affordable and social rates 4. Housing developments should be sited near to existing or proposed public, mass and active transport facilities, not based on ever increasing road traffic 5. Seek greater developer contributions to expand rail capacity and bus services and cycle paths 6. All housebuilding and other development should meet zero-carbon standards or better. 7. Strategic planning should reduce the need to travel by building homes near to employment sites 8. The priority for transport investment should be in the rail network (e.g. an electrified East-West rail, electrification of the Didcot-Oxford line, re-opening of Grove Station), improved bus (and similar) services, and substantial investment in 'active travel' – including cycle and pedestrian infrastructure - within and between settlements 9. Opposition to the proposed Oxford-Cambridge Expressway 		<p>All relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones, to ensure that engagement with partners reflects this position.</p>
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	<p>10. Increasing biodiversity, protecting landscapes, capturing carbon naturally and increasing access for residents to green spaces</p> <p>11. Genuine consultation with the public on the rate of growth and housing development to produce plans that carry genuine public support</p> <p>12. Genuine democratic accountability and scrutiny for any plans or strategies that come forward (i.e. we do not support basing spatial planning solely on the Local Industrial Strategy which faced no democratic scrutiny.)</p> <p>13. Spatial planning decisions to be informed by strong evidence</p> <p>14. Flexibility in plans and strategies in order to take account of changing circumstances and public opinion</p> <p>This Council is positive about working with other Oxfordshire authorities, regional colleagues and the Government to deliver growth where it is sustainable, and to provide housing that meets residents' needs. Strategies and plans to achieve this should be based on the above positions.</p>		
9 October 2019	<p>The Vale of White Horse District Council welcomes the progress made on climate change in as much as Environmental, Social and Governance issues are now recognised as a risk to the Oxfordshire Local Government Pension Scheme. However, it would now like matters to be taken further.</p> <p>Council requests that the Leader writes to the Chair of the Oxfordshire Pensions Committee asking them to consider as part of its new investment strategy for the Brunel Partnership investing in a passive low carbon fund, now that one is available, and that generates similar financial returns to the wider investment market.</p>	Letter from the Leader of the Council to the Oxfordshire Pension Fund	Letter sent and relevant officers who engage with the Pension Fund briefed.

<p>9 October 2019</p>	<p>Council notes that Non-UK EU nationals are part of our shared communities. They are our husbands, wives, parents, friends and colleagues. They are an integral part of our vibrant and thriving district and local economy.</p> <p>Since 2016 EU nationals were promised again and again that "there will be no change for EU citizens already lawfully resident in the UK and [...] will be treated no less favourably as they are at present". After three years of living in limbo, their homes and livelihoods are yet again being threatened by the further uncertainty brought about by the prospect of a chaotic no-deal Brexit.</p> <p>Council recognises that some businesses in the Vale report that the uncertainty around Brexit is making it harder for them to recruit and retain staff who are non-UK EU nationals.</p> <p>Council notes that much work has been undertaken, and significant cost to the public purse, by this council and other public bodies to ensure it can maintain access to key services, should Brexit happen.</p> <p>But, according to the Home Office's June statistics, only a third of non-UK EU nationals had applied for Settled Status and many of them had been granted the inferior Pre-Settled. There is no way of knowing exactly how many EU nationals need to apply, leaving vulnerable non-UK EU nationals at risk of becoming unlawful residents. Lack of clarity regarding differentiating between EU citizens arriving before and after the UK's exit from the EU could lead to discrimination in the labour market and may prevent many from accessing the services that they are entitled to.</p> <p>Therefore, Council asks that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Officers prepare a report to the Leader (to be shared with all members) on what more the Council may be able to do to mitigate adverse impacts on the rights of non-UK EU nationals (including but not limited to, informing landlords and employers about immigration status and therefore avoid potential discrimination against non-UK EU nationals) 2. The Leader of the Council writes to the Home Secretary to ask that the current European Settlement Scheme is clarified by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Providing a clear deadline for application to the EUSS in case of no-deal exit from the EU b. Providing physical proof of settled status that can be used to access services c. Confirming that there will be no changes to the rights of settled non-UK EU citizens that they currently have by ratifying the Immigration Bill as primary legislation before the exit day 	<p>Report to the Leader of the Council</p> <p>Letter to the Secretary of State</p>	<p>An open letter from the Leader of the Council to EU residents was published on the Vale of White Horse website and sent to all EU citizens in the district giving them advice on how to apply for settled status. There were 2662 letters sent.</p> <p>An officer group is in place to monitor Brexit activity and discuss any additional mitigating actions that may arise from service area risk registers.</p> <p>There is a dedicated website page for the EU Settlement Scheme - http://www.white-horsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/community-advice-and-support/brexit-%E2%80%93-advice-residents/brexit-advice-eu-national</p>
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			<p>Promotional materials were displayed within reception area, signposting to local ID verification services and national guidance for EU citizens.</p> <p>A briefing note was circulated to members In January 2020 to provide an overview of both national, Oxfordshire and council Brexit activity.</p>
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<p>9 October 2019</p>	<p>Council notes that the re-routing arrangements for scheduled closures of the A34 in southern Oxfordshire are creating a totally intolerable blight on the lives of many of the residents of Wantage, Charlton Ward and further afield. These closures, which typically operate between 10pm and 6am, re-route traffic on to the A338 and the A417. In the 3 months to the end of October 2019 closures will have occurred on 25 occasions. Council further notes that the consequence of these arrangements is to divert very high volumes of traffic, much of it heavy commercial, from a Designated Primary Route to minor roads, occasionally single lane, not considered suitable for heavy traffic in built up residential areas. Residents of impacted houses report that this creates intolerable noise, sleep deprivation and vibration and structural damage to properties, as many of their homes are only a matter of feet away from the highway. Council is also aware that the diversions create significant road safety issues and that damage has occurred to Infrastructure and other vehicles.</p> <p>Council is aware that alternatives exist, including re-routing via a designated Primary Route or introducing a contraflow system on the A34 itself. Furthermore, Council is concerned that any future re-routing scheme may be ineffective due to increased use of satellite navigation systems which could risk the use of rat runs.</p> <p>Therefore, Council requests that the Scrutiny Committee consider including this matter in their work programme, noting that Scrutiny has the power to invite parties such as Highways England, OCC, Thames Valley Police, Kier Group plc and Wantage Traffic Diversion Group to attend any such meeting.</p>	<p>Scrutiny Committee should consider adding this matter to its work programme.</p>	<p>Scrutiny Committee has added this issue to their work programme</p>
<p>8 December 2019</p>	<p>In the context of the Climate Emergency, this Council welcomes the Government's review of fracking and its potential environmental impacts. Council urges Government to move towards a position of banning fracking altogether. Quite apart from the many environmental concerns, developing yet one more carbon-based fuel flies in the face of our ambition to strive for carbon neutrality.</p> <p>Council notes that onshore wind is the lowest cost low-carbon technology currently available, yet the Westmill Wind Farm at Watchfield remains the only onshore wind farm in the whole of the Vale of White Horse. This situation is being exacerbated by the Government making their 'Contracts for Difference' funding available for offshore wind farms but excluding onshore.</p> <p>Council notes that, while Government has looked on solar energy production more favourably, there remains huge untapped potential within the Vale to generate energy through Solar PV.</p> <p>Council therefore commits to exploring planning policies which positively encourage all renewable sources of energy including onshore wind farms as part of the next Vale Local Plan and Oxfordshire Plan 2050.</p>	<p>Council commits to exploring planning policies which positively encourage all renewable sources of energy including onshore wind farms as part of the next Vale Local Plan and Oxfordshire Plan 2050</p>	<p>Relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones, to ensure that engagement with partners reflects this position and Cabinet Member for Planning retains a focus on this in their regular meetings with officers – as do our Economic Development Team in discussions with OxLEP and others</p>

<p>18 December 2019</p>	<p>Council notes the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism is the most widely accepted and recognized definition of anti-Jewish racism. It states that: Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.</p> <p>Council notes the All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims (APPG) definition of Islamophobia: Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness. Council notes that by using these definitions it helps understand, identify, and tackle antisemitism and Islamophobia. Council holds the right to freedom of speech and freedom of religion are fundamental but freedom of speech is not freedom to demonise, scapegoat and discriminate.</p> <p>Council resolves to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - condemn all hate crimes and deplores the rise in hate crimes against members of the Jewish and Muslim communities in Britain - condemn all inflammatory rhetoric in political discourse: including antisemitic and Islamophobic tropes used by politicians and public servants. - adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism in full and without amendment - adopt the APPG definition of Islamophobia in full and without amendment. - ask officers to update this council's equality policies to this effect 	<p>Adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism in full and without amendment</p> <p>Adopt the APPG definition of Islamophobia in full and without amendment.</p> <p>Ask officers to update this council's equality policies to this effect</p>	<p>Motion forwarded to the Council's Equality Officer.</p> <p>Council policies being reviewed and updated.</p>
<p>December 2019</p>	<p>Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Believes that young people should be allowed a say over their future. 2. Recognises that 16 and 17 year olds are knowledgeable and passionate about the world in which they live and are as capable of engaging in the democratic system as any other citizen. 3. Notes that there is currently an unequal situation across the United Kingdom, with 16 and 17 year olds having voting rights in Scotland and Wales that are not available to them in England and Northern Ireland. 4. Supports the need for greater engagement with young people, leading to greater involvement of young people in the decisions that affect their community. 5. Believes that lowering the voting age to 16, combined with strong citizenship education, would empower young people to better engage in society and influence decisions that will define their future. 6. Believes that people aged 16 and 17, who can consent to medical treatment, work full-time, pay taxes, get married or enter a civil partnership and join the armed forces, should also have the right to vote. 7. Recognises and supports the ongoing 'Votes at 16' campaign by the British Youth Council, the UK Youth Parliament and other youth organisations, supported by thousands of young people across the UK. 8. Calls for 16 and 17 year olds to have the right in all elections and referendums across the UK. <p>Council therefore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requests that the Leader write to relevant Ministers and local MPs: expressing this Council's support for the Votes at 16 campaign; calling for the extension of the franchise to 16- and 17-year olds in all elections and referendums across the UK; - and asks the ERO/ RO to consider participating in any pilot scheme. 	<p>That the Leader write to relevant Ministers and local MPs: expressing this Council's support for the Votes at 16 campaign; calling for the extension of the franchise to 16- and 17-year olds in all elections and referendums across the UK</p> <p>Asks the ERO/ RO to consider participating in any pilot scheme</p>	<p>Letters sent and relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones, to ensure that engagement with partners reflects this position.</p>

<p>18 December 2019</p>	<p>Council notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that confidence and trust in both Parliament, the UK's democratic system and politicians has been falling for some time. - that the House of Commons and council chambers have long been unrepresentative of the votes cast by the electorate of the United Kingdom. - that the UK's First Past the Post voting system curtails voter choice, makes millions of votes ineffective, and leaves millions feeling unrepresented. <p>Council believes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that these factors have contributed to dangerous levels of distrust and disillusionment with our democratic process - that democracy is distorted and failed by the fact that, due to this system, barely half of voters now feel able to cast their vote for their preferred candidate or Party. - that it is essential that faith is restored in our democratic system and that the public see Parliament as fairly reflecting their views. - that our First Past the Post voting system is a significant barrier to restoring this faith and all but guarantees that the balance of opinion among the electorate is not reflected in Parliament and our council chambers. - that a system of Proportional Representation in which seats match votes at all levels, including councils, and in which all votes count equally, would help to rebuild public trust by ensuring that political views are represented. <p>Therefore:</p> <p>Council requests that the leader write to the relevant government minister and our two local MPs setting out our position and requesting that all elections be run using a form of Proportional Representation in which all votes count equally and seats match votes.</p>	<p>That the leader writes to the relevant government minister and our two local MPs setting out our position and requesting that all elections be run using a form of Proportional Representation in which all votes count equally and seats match votes.</p>	<p>Letters sent and relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones of the Councils position.</p>
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<p>18 December 2019</p>	<p>"In March 2017 this council voted to support 'Better Oxfordshire'; a proposal to create a unitary authority.</p> <p>The unitary authority outlined in the 'Better Oxfordshire' submission was for a single authority based on the current County Council boundary. Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council also took formal decisions to support the submission of this proposal.</p> <p>The proposal was sent to the Secretary of State for approval, however, no further action has been taken. The proposal was submitted under legislative provisions containing a sunset clause, which expired in March 2019, meaning that at this time the proposal is not under active consideration.</p> <p>However, over the past six months, Robert Jenrick MP, in his role as Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, has spoken publicly about an approach that could mean the end of smaller District Councils. He has also committed to a new push for devolution and raised the potential for further local government reorganisation. Additionally, these themes feature in all the main political parties' General Election manifestos.</p> <p>In light of the above, with a new Council administration, and the significant financial uncertainty this council faces due to the delayed spending review, Council now wishes to clarify its position in relation to local governance models for Oxfordshire.</p> <p>Council therefore confirms that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises that much of the financial and economic data and analysis that underpinned the 'Better Oxfordshire' submission is now out of date; • Remains open to considering a new unitary proposal in principle, assuming it is able to secure appropriate local public support. A new unitary proposal may be based on a whole Oxfordshire basis as with the original unitary proposal or may differ, i.e. comprising different boundaries better representing local communities; and • Restates its opposition to a "combined authority" based on the Oxfordshire County boundary or a Mayoral lead authority model of devolution. <p>Council asks officers to ensure that any future unitary proposal impacting the Vale of White Horse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addresses the significant financial challenge faced by local government, as evidenced within in our Medium Term Financial Plan and those of other Oxfordshire Councils; • reflects a logical geography, • delivers increased value for money; and • creates a Council of an appropriate size, that can think and act strategically whilst ensuring meaningful decision making is brought closer to communities <p>Council requests that:</p>	<p>Officers make contact with the MHCLG to explore the approach the new Secretary of State will take to any proposals for unitary based reorganisation</p> <p>A report on this matter is brought to full council, by the Chief Executive and Leader, outlining their understanding of the new Government's intentions by Summer 2020</p> <p>Officers bring forward proposals for the Vale of White Horse to consider a formal merger with South Oxfordshire District Council, with the same total number of District Councillors, creating a single district council based on their combined geography with increased financial resilience.</p>	<p>An SMT briefing paper was reviewed on 5 December 2019. It outlined the process and considerations for a merger proposal and provided some case studies from other Councils. MHCLG officials indicate that these criteria may change in the forthcoming White Paper.</p> <p>Visits to East Suffolk and Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils were also made by the Acting Deputy Chief Executive – Partnerships, in January 2020 to discuss experiences of merging and attempting to merge.</p> <p>MHCLG officials have been contacted and a meeting between all Oxfordshire</p>
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- officers make contact with the MHCLG to explore the approach the new Secretary of State will take to any proposals for unitary based reorganisation;
- a report on this matter is brought to full council, by the Chief Executive and Leader, outlining their understanding of the new Government's intentions by Summer 2020; and
- officers bring forward proposals for the Vale of White Horse to consider a formal merger with South Oxfordshire District Council, with the same total number of District Councillors, creating a single district council based on their combined geography with increased financial resilience.

Leaders, CEs and officials held.

A joint letter is to be sent by all Oxfordshire Leaders and OxLEP Chair to the SoSs MHCLG and BEIS requesting a meeting regarding options that may be possible within the forthcoming Local Recovery and Devolution White Paper.

Outside of this process, MHCLG officials advise that individual requests or suggestions for structural change will not be considered at this time.

A paper and report will be brought forward as soon as possible following any meeting that is held with the SoS or MoS and/or once the Local Recovery and Devolution White Paper is published,

			<p>whichever is the sooner.</p> <p>Relevant officers are briefed on the Councils position and are engaging with partners and Government to make them aware of Vale's views regarding some of the outcomes any Unitary proposal should achieve.</p>
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<p>12 February 2020</p>	<p>Council notes the risks associated with modern life are significantly different from those of 1847 when the Town Police Clauses Act was passed, and even from those of the 1970s when the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 came into force. Clearly, the legislation has not kept pace with developments, in particular with the way we use technology, apps, and mobile phones. It is difficult to facilitate a regulatory system when the legislation is based on the use of horse-drawn carriages and landline phones.</p> <p>There is also a lack of consistency across the legislation. For example, the law requires a person who takes bookings for private hire vehicles to be licensed but there is no similar requirement for someone who does the same for hackney carriages. This lack, apart from the potential for sensitive personal information to fall into the wrong hands, can make it very difficult to investigate allegations of improper conduct by drivers of hackney carriages. This could undermine public confidence in the licensing regime. In addition, it provides a mechanism for private hire operators who have lost their licence to continue in business. They simply move to only “operating” hackney carriages, and no controls can be placed on them at all.</p> <p>Examples of recent local issues include hackney carriage ‘operators’ who have pressured drivers to work excessively long hours with no proper breaks, and those who do not maintain their vehicles properly and continually present vehicles to testing stations which fail the test. The overriding aim of any licensing authority when carrying out its functions relating to the licensing of hackney or private hire drivers, vehicle proprietors, and operators is the protection of the public.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire district councils and the county council share information under a Joint Operating Framework, and there is a national register of revoked and refused licences operated by the National Anti-Fraud Network. However, this does not address situations where drivers have allowed their licence to lapse pending enforcement action at one local authority and apply to another authority without declaring that enforcement action or the previous licences held. Local authority prosecutions are not currently detailed on enhanced DBS disclosures and there are recent local examples of the councils only finding out about such prosecutions by chance and after the licence has been granted.</p> <p>Council therefore requests that the Leader of the council write to the district’s two Members of Parliament and to the Minister for Transport to request that the following action be taken:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Government should move forward without delay on the three key measures recommended to achieve a safe service for passengers in the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Task and Finish Group report, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The introduction of a national taxi licensing database; - Some form of cross border enforcement for local authorities; - National minimum standards for licenses. 2. The Government should provide an update in respect of how they propose to deal with cross-border working; 	<p>Letters from the Leader of the Council to the Minister and the two local MPs</p>	<p>Letters sent and relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones, to ensure that engagement with partners reflects this position.</p>
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	3. The Government should legislate to require any person taking bookings for more than one vehicle to be licensed as an operator, with national standards for the information recorded by licensed operators in respect of bookings".		
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Council



Report of Head of Legal and Democratic

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To: COUNCIL

DATE: 15 July 2020

Virtual meeting procedure rules and scheme of delegation

Recommendations

That Council:

1. adopts the revised Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules attached at appendix one to this report which provide for public participation at virtual formal council meetings, to apply from the date of this meeting;
2. agrees corrected wording for the head of planning's delegation 1.1 a i in the council's constitution to clarify call-in of planning applications by ward councillors as set out in appendix two to this report, to apply from the date of this meeting;
3. notes the intention to resume Planning Committee site visits but authorises the head of planning, in consultation with the chair of the Planning Committee, to suspend them if at any time it becomes unsafe to do so;
4. authorises the head of legal and democratic to make the necessary changes to the constitution and to make any minor or consequential amendments to the constitution and the rules for consistency and to reflect the council's style guide.

Purpose of Report

1. To consider proposed amendments to the Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules, the scheme of delegation to the head of planning and to note that site visits will be resumed by the Planning Committee.

Strategic Objectives

2. The constitution underpins all of the council's areas of activities and, therefore, contributes to the achievement of all its strategic objectives and reflects the council's duty to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic to deliver its statutory functions.

Background

3. On 18 May 2020 the chief executive, under emergency powers, agreed for the council to hold virtual meetings, including the adoption of virtual meeting procedure rules, temporary changes to the delegations to the head of planning to allow alternative arrangements for the determination of applications that would ordinarily be determined by the council's planning committee and the temporary cessation of planning committee site visits.
4. These changes were introduced in response to the government's announced lockdown due to Covid-19 on 23 March and new powers handed to local authorities under the Coronavirus Act 2020 and associated regulations to hold virtual public meetings through video or telephone conferencing technology from 4 April 2020.

Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules

5. The Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules, agreed by the chief executive on 18 May 2020, provided for members of the public to submit statements or questions in writing for circulation at a virtual meeting. In respect of meetings of the Planning Committee, the public, who have already registered an interest in the planning application, can submit a concise written statement by 12 noon two working days before the committee meeting. Written statements received by the deadline are circulated to the committee members in advance of the meeting and published to the council's website.
6. The reason for the lack of public participation was due to the software the council uses for virtual meetings which meant the council couldn't initially include invitations to external parties like towns and parishes although many have submitted written statements.
7. The council undertook to review this arrangement after six months, whilst keeping the operation under review with the ambition to return to public speaking at meetings as soon as possible. Officers have tested a number of options and will undertake a live test at the Joint Audit and Governance Committee on 13 July. Assuming this test is successful (an update will be provided at the meeting), officers recommend that public participation is provided for at all council meetings. Revised Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules are attached at appendix one to reflect this change.

Planning scheme of delegation to officers

8. Under emergency powers, the chief executive agreed temporary changes to the delegations to the head of planning in the council's constitution to allow alternative arrangements for the determination of applications that would ordinarily be determined by the council's planning committee. This change was brought in as a response to the challenges presented by the pandemic to reduce the number of applications referred to committee whilst strengthening the links between council planning officers, ward councillors and parish councils. The temporary changes will be reviewed after six months.
9. In operating the scheme, it has become apparent that the wording of the head of planning's delegation 1.1 a is unclear as to who makes the final decision on the referral by a ward councillor of a planning application to the planning committee. In line with other delegations to the head of planning it is the intention that he determine this in consultation with the chair/vice-chair and local ward councillor(s). Attached at appendix two is a revised schedule to reflect this.

Planning Committee Site visits

10. At the time the chief executive agreed changes under emergency powers, it was not practical and in accordance with government advice on social distancing to hold planning committee site visits. However, the government has announced an easing of lock down measures from 4 July with a reduction in social distancing and the ability to meet in small groups.
11. Whilst there is no legal requirement to hold planning committee site visits, they are considered good professional practice and enable councillors assessing an application to consider all material matters such as topography, noise, odour and relationship to neighbouring properties which cannot easily be assessed through photographs and videos.
12. Officers have undertaken a risk assessment in line with the latest government guidance and produced a protocol on the running of committee site visits. Based on this and in consultation with the chair of the Planning Committee, officers are satisfied that safe committee site visits can now be undertaken. It should be noted, however, that if circumstances change making it unsafe to do so then the practice would need to be suspended. Council is asked to authorise the head of planning to do this, in consultation with the chair of the Planning Committee, should it prove necessary for safety reasons.

Financial Implications

13. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

14. The Coronavirus Act 2020 and associated regulations provided for councils to hold virtual public meetings through video or telephone conferencing technology from 4 April 2020 until 6 May 2021. The chief executive acting under his emergency powers agreed to adopt the Virtual Meetings Procedure Rules without public participation to allow meetings to go ahead and planning decisions to be made, to make temporary changes to the scheme of delegation to the head of planning and

suspend site visits. The procedure rules can now be updated by Council to allow public participation.

15. The arrangements for ward councillors to refer applications to the Planning Committee need to be corrected to provide clarity. The delegation needs to be to the head of planning in consultation with relevant councillors as decision-making powers cannot be granted to the chair or vice-chair of the Planning Committee or ward councillors.

Conclusion

16. This report sets out proposed changes to the council's Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules to allow for public participation at meetings, to correct administrative errors to the scheme of delegation to the head of planning and to note the resumption of site visits for the Planning Committee as long as it remains safe to do so.

Background Papers

- Decision taken by the chief executive under emergency powers dated 18 May 2020

Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules

The Government has issued The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392. The Regulations have been issued under Section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020. They allow the council to hold virtual meetings between 4 April 2020 and 6 May 2021. These Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules set out the procedure to be followed when the council conducts formal virtual meetings and should be read in conjunction with the procedure rules in the Constitution for the Council, Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees, Joint Audit and Governance Committee, Planning Committee, General Licensing Committee, Licensing Acts Committee, Climate Emergency Advisory Committee, Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee, Area Committees, Community Grants Panel, and licensing and taxi panels. Except as varied by these rules, the procedure rules for meetings set out in the Constitution also apply to virtual meetings.

Annual meeting of Council

1. Council Procedure Rule 1, requiring an annual meeting of Council to be held, shall not apply between the date of adoption of these procedure rules and 6 May 2021. Council may hold an annual meeting if it wishes but is not required to do so during the period specified above. An annual meeting of Council may be called by:
 - (a) the Chair of the Council or
 - (b) a resolution calling for an Annual Meeting being passed at an ordinary or extraordinary meeting of Council.

Virtual meetings

2. Between the date of adoption of these procedure rules and 6 May 2021, the council may hold meetings:
 - (a) at a physical location, with some councillors in attendance in the meeting room and with some councillors attending through remote access, or
 - (b) at a virtual location, being a web address or a conference call telephone number or a combination of these.
3. The council will live stream these meetings for the public to listen to or watch.
4. A virtual meeting that is open to the public held between the date of the adoption of these procedure rules and 6 May 2021 includes any meeting specified in paragraph 2 above where business is transacted that is open to the public and press.

Participants in the virtual meeting

5. The following shall be deemed to be participants of the virtual meeting:
 - (a) Members of the meeting or their substitutes
 - (b) Other district councillors who have indicated a wish to speak at the meeting
 - (c) Members of the public or other invitees to speak to a specific agenda item
 - (d) Officers in attendance
6. When participants are speaking, they must be able to be heard by other participants. There is no requirement to be able to see other participants, although this is preferable.

Observers

7. The council must provide a facility so that members of the public who are listening to or watching the virtual meeting, rather than participating, can hear the participants speaking at the meeting.

Notice of meetings

8. The head of legal and democratic will give notice of a meeting by publishing the agenda to the council's website at least five clear days in advance of meeting.
9. The notice will set out the date and time of the meeting, and the business to be transacted. The council will publish details of how the public may listen to or watch the virtual meeting.
10. Participants will be notified by email of how to join the virtual meeting.
11. The agenda will not be available as a paper copy if the meeting is completely virtual.

Attendance at virtual meetings

12. Attendance at virtual meetings can be either:
 - (a) by being present in the physical place the meeting is held or
 - (b) by joining the virtual meeting.
13. Participants will be asked to join the virtual meeting at least 15 minutes before the advertised start time. Councillors joining the virtual meeting must use their council-supplied device.
14. Any video camera should show a non-descript background or where possible, a virtual background. Participants are asked not to eat or drink while their audio and video link is active and wear appropriate clothing for a public meeting.
15. At the commencement of each meeting, the Chair shall take a register of all councillors and officers joining the meeting to allow their presence to be recorded and explain the protocol for councillor and public participation and the rules of debate.

Quorum

16. The normal quorum rules apply to each meeting.

Public participation

17. Members of the public may make a statement, ask a question or present a petition in accordance with the relevant meeting's procedure rules, as set out in the Constitution. To be able to speak at a meeting, the public must first register to do so. The rules on deadlines for registering to address meetings and the time limits on statements, questions and petitions at those meetings are set out in the relevant meeting's procedure rules in the Constitution. The public may either:
 - (a) address the meeting in person if the meeting is held in a physical location or

- (b) submit their address in writing to democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk so that it can be circulated at a virtual meeting or
 - (c) join and address a virtual meeting.
18. Members of the public who have registered to address a meeting are encouraged to submit a written statement of their address to democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk by 12 noon on the working day before the meeting so that this can be read out by the democratic services officer if they experience technical difficulties in joining or remaining in the meeting that cannot be overcome within a reasonable time.

Non-committee member's participation

19. If a councillor who is not a member of the meeting, wishes to address the meeting during a particular agenda item, they should inform the Chair and Democratic Services by 12 noon on the working day before the meeting.

Technical failure during a virtual meeting

20. If the Chair becomes aware that the virtual meeting is not accessible to the public through remote means, due to technical failure or other means, the Chair may adjourn the meeting.
21. If the Chair becomes aware that the meeting is not accessible by one or more members of the meeting through remote means, due to technical failure or other means, the Chair may adjourn the meeting immediately but is not required to, unless the meeting is inquorate.
22. If a councillor temporarily disconnects and re-connects to the meeting due to technological issues, they are still considered to be present throughout the meeting as long as any matters discussed during their absence are repeated.
23. If a technical connection to a councillor is lost during a Planning Committee or licensing panel hearing for a prolonged period, the Chair will announce that the relevant councillor is absent. The meeting may proceed as long as a quorum can be established, but the councillor who was disconnected will not be able to vote on the matter under discussion as they would not have heard all the evidence.
24. If a member of the public or other invitee experiences technical difficulties in joining or remaining in any meeting that cannot be overcome within a reasonable time the meeting may proceed and if so the democratic services officer will read out any written statement of their address submitted before the meeting.
25. If the provision of access through remote means cannot be restored within a reasonable period, the Chair may adjourn the meeting or close the meeting and defer the remaining business to the next appropriate meeting.
26. If the Chair has technical issues and cannot take part in the meeting, the Vice-Chair or another councillor may take over the chair to allow the virtual meeting to proceed.

Consideration of agenda items, the debate and decision-making

27. During the meeting, each participant must specify their name to introduce themselves at the start of every contribution, unless they have been introduced by the Chair. This is particularly important for audio-only meetings or when video cameras are switched off.
28. The Chair will ask councillors if they have any interests to declare. Any councillor who declares a disclosable pecuniary interest in an item of business must not participate in the debate or voting and must leave the virtual meeting for that item.
29. The Chair will in turn invite each member of the public who has registered or been invited to speak to address the meeting. The meeting may ask the members of the public questions of clarification only. Once the member of the public has spoken and answered any questions, they must turn off their video and mute their sound and remain silent to allow the consideration of that agenda item to continue; if they fail to do so when requested they may be ejected from the meeting. Once the agenda item has been completed the member of the public must leave the meeting and may continue to listen to or watch the live stream of the meeting. The public must not use the Chat facility to comment on the proceedings.
30. The Chair or officer will refer the meeting to any written statements submitted.
31. The Chair will ask the relevant officer/Cabinet member to present their agenda item/report. Councillors may raise questions of clarification to the officer/Cabinet member.
32. Councillors or officers will indicate their wish to speak by the method agreed by the Chair, such as by raising their hand when video is available or by using the Chat facility.
33. Participants may unmute their audio and turn on their video when invited by the Chair to speak or to indicate their wish to speak. Participants shall address the Chair at all times, and not one another. Participants are not required to stand when speaking. Only one person may speak at a time.
34. Participants should turn off their video and mute their sound when not talking to the meeting.
35. The virtual meeting Chat facility must not be used for private or political conversations and does not constitute any part of the meeting's debate.
36. The Chair will determine the order of those speaking and may limit the length and content of speeches.
37. The Chair may ask councillors or officers to specify the relevant agenda page number and paragraph number when raising a particular point covered in the agenda. This allows others to follow the debate.
38. The Chair may ask the meeting as a whole or each councillor in turn for any further comments before completing the debate on that agenda item. If the meeting is in general agreement with a proposal, a vote need not be taken. Normal rules in the

Appendix one

Constitution on proposing motions and amendments apply to allow votes to be taken where necessary.

39. If a vote is required, the Chair or the democratic services officer will ask each councillor in turn, alphabetically, to verbally announce whether they are voting in favour or against a motion or abstaining. The voting results will be declared by the democratic services officer and the decision will be confirmed by the Chair. A recorded or named vote will not be kept unless such a request was made prior to the vote.
40. In the case of virtual meetings considering planning applications and licensing panel hearings, councillors may be required to confirm that they have heard all of the discussion and indicate their vote.

Exclusion of the public and press

41. In the case of confidential/exempt business, councillors and relevant officers will be sent a separate link to a virtual, confidential meeting session that will follow the public meeting (after a short break). This virtual, confidential meeting session will not be accessible to the public.
42. If during a public debate, a meeting needs to move into confidential discussion to receive some confidential or exempt information before making a decision in public, the public debate will be deferred until the item can be discussed in confidential session. The final decision will either be taken in public at the next appropriate meeting, in confidential session and published after the meeting, or by individual Cabinet member decision or officer key decision as appropriate.
43. In confidential/exempt session, each councillor and officer present must ensure that no other person can hear or see the virtual meeting.
44. Councillors must ensure they do not share confidential or exempt content in the video feed.

Closing the meeting

45. The Chair will close the meeting. All participants must leave the virtual meeting quickly and quietly. Any subsequent discussion will not form part of the meeting, nor be recorded in the minutes.

Chair's discretion

46. The Chair shall exercise discretion on how the virtual meeting is conducted and may waive any of these virtual meeting procedure rules. The Chair's ruling on any procedure shall be final.

Head of Planning			
Ref	Function	Consultation (where appropriate)	
1.0	Planning		
	To determine all applications made to either District Council relating to planning matters, except in the following cases:		
1.1			
Vale	(a)i	A ward councillor (to include adjacent ward councillor whose parish has been consulted) calls in the application to be considered by the Planning Committee within 28 days of the date of registration of the application (unless an extension to the consultation period has been granted) and the request is agreed by the Head of Planning This request must be in writing and refer to material planning matters to ensure the audit trail for making that decision is clear and unambiguous. Councillors' right of call-in does not apply to applications for certificates of lawful use or development, prior approvals and notifications.	Chair or, in their absence, the Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee
P outh Page 45	(a)ii	A ward councillor (to include adjacent ward councillor whose parish has been consulted) calls in the application to be considered by the Planning Committee within 28 days of the date of registration of the application (unless an extension to the consultation period has been granted) and the request is agreed by the Head of Planning . This request must be in writing and refer to material planning matters to ensure the audit trail for making that decision is clear and unambiguous. Councillors' right of call-in does not apply to applications for certificates of lawful use or development, prior approvals and notifications.	Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee and relevant ward councillor(s) (to include adjacent ward councillor(s) whose parish has been consulted)