

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Council

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



Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Mike Badcock (Chairman), Reg Waite (Vice-Chairman), Alice Badcock, Matthew Barber, Eric Batts, Ed Blagrove, Yvonne Constance, Roger Cox, Margaret Crick, Charlotte Dickson, St John Dickson, Katie Finch, Debby Hallett, Robert Hall, Jenny Hannaby, Anthony Hayward, Dudley Hoddinott, Simon Howell, Vicky Jenkins, Bob Johnston, Mohinder Kainth, Monica Lovatt, Sandy Lovatt, Ben Mabbett, Chris McCarthy, Mike Murray, Chris Palmer, Helen Pighills, Julia Reynolds, Judy Roberts, Robert Sharp, Janet Shelley, Emily Smith, Henry Spencer, Elaine Ware and Catherine Webber

Officers: David Buckle, Steven Corrigan, William Jacobs, Margaret Reed and Anna Robinson

Number of members of the public: 5

Co.40 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Stuart Davenport.

Co.41 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2015 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman sign them as such.

Co.42 Declarations of interest

None.

Co.43 Chairman's announcements

The chairman provided housekeeping information.

Co.44 Statements, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting council.

A. Councillor June Stock, Chairman of Grove Parish Council, made the following statement on behalf of Grove Parish Council.

“The Vale of White Horse District Council, on its website has a Customer Service Charter which states that it will provide a full reply within seven working days to all letters and emails.

Grove Parish Council has written numerous emails on a number of occasions since 1 January 2015 to which we have not received full replies let alone in the promised seven working days. Would the Council please explain why this failure has occurred?

On the 17 July 2015, the Vale of White Horse District Council informed the parish council that any further requests for updates and or questions relating to the Grove airfield development “are to be filtered through the elected district council representatives of Grove and this is an expectation of officers and ensures clear lines of communications with messages not being mixed”.

The parish council totally disagree with this policy as it inhibits parish council officers talking directly to district council officers on specific matters such as the Grove Airfield Development and to date the district council representatives for Grove have not given any substantial information to update the parish council at their full Council meetings.

On 4 January 2016, Grove Parish Council asked for a meeting with a member of the Planning Department to discuss the Grove airfield site. The earliest date given by the Planning department was Wednesday 30 March 2016 (the Wednesday after Easter). It was suggested by the planning department that the meeting would include following:

- To enhance lines of communications between the local planning authority and the parish council
- Update the parish council on current planning legislation/policy
- Receive and answer questions on general planning issues
- Update on the Grove airfield development

30 March, (at the time) was nearly three months off and this timescale is totally unacceptable.

Is the only way we can get a speedier response is for the parish council to turn up at your offices and wait our turn to be seen as per your Customer Service Charter?

Your published complaints procedure states that a full reply will be sent within 20 working days or, if more complicated, 28 working days. It should be apparent that our chasing emails are complaints so that you have failed on a second level of your Charter.

The parish clerk wrote to the chief executive on 4 January 2016 and requested the following;

“David, as you already know, the parish council have become increasingly concerned at the lack of communication between the district council and the parish over planning matters, specifically the Grove airfield development.

Through my own endeavours and with no assistance from the district council, I have been able to make contact with Persimmon Homes and all they have been able to tell the parish council is that they are working to resolve issues regarding the signing of the s106 agreement in respect of the Grove airfield development.

Therefore, can you please ensure that the district councillors elected for Grove are fully briefed on the Grove airfield development so they are able to report at the next parish Council meeting to be held on 26 January 2016 or instruct a senior planning officer to attend and update this Council accordingly?"

This request was made via email but again this has failed to elicit a response!

We represent a large number of people: how can we expect them to respect us or the Vale of White Horse District Council if we, their parish council, cannot get the courtesy of the district council following their own Customer Service Charter?"

The chairman requested Councillor Cox, Cabinet member for development management, to take the points raised in the statement up with officers and offered him the opportunity to respond to the issues raised. Councillor Cox responded as follows:

"I am sorry to learn of Grove's disappointment with our perceived lack of responses and the perception that we had not responded to a meeting request.

I have investigated this matter and I can advise Council that since the date referred to, 1 January 2015, council officers have sent 31 emails to Grove Parish Council in relation to the Grove airfield development. Officers cannot locate any emails asking for updates that they have not replied to and, indeed on 1 February the planning manager asked the parish council chairman to give us details of these so we could investigate the matter. We have not yet received any.

On 5 October 2015 the planning officer advised the parish council that the developer had been unable to sign the section 106 agreement and we could not say when this would happen. This was followed by a further position statement, and several verbal confirmations that until the developers were able to acquire all the land the council could take no action. On 4 January the planning manager again provided a statement that there had been no progress.

Grove Parish Council did not ask for a meeting to discuss Grove airfield. The planning manager wrote to the parish council on 23 December offering a meeting to discuss general planning matters and explore how we could improve working arrangements. The parish council clerk responded that the parish council would welcome a meeting. The parish clerk noted that he had been asked some time before to organise a meeting with the planning officers but, unfortunately he had been busy with other matters.

A date of 16 March has been fixed for a meeting with the parish council to discuss general planning matters as offered in the planning manager's email of 23 December.

The district council is extremely keen to see progress on Grove airfield, however, we have no valid role in any negotiations the developer may be engaged in regarding the development. As noted in the parish chairman's statement Persimmon Homes have advised that they are working to resolve issues regarding the signing of the Grove airfield section 106 agreement.

This bland statement by the developer is the same information as is available to the planning service. We regret that the parish council does not accept that we have no further information.

As soon as progress is made on the land negotiations such that the section 106 agreement can be finalised, I and officers will be delighted to provide further information to the parish council.”

B. Mr Steven Corrigan, Democratic Services Manager, read out the following question on behalf of Ms Helen Marshall, Director of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England to Matthew Barber, Leader of the council:

“Noting the various financial reports to be considered by the Council, we wonder what consideration is being given to the forthcoming ‘refresh’ of the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan and whether, given the lack of public consultation last time round, the draft of the revised document will be subject to debate at a full Council meeting?”

In response Councillor Barber confirmed that there would be wider consultation in May before the Local Enterprise Partnership Board ratification in June. The matter was an executive function and therefore not an issue for full Council although presuming the Strategic Economic Plan progressed as intended he said that he anticipated that councillors would have the opportunity to consider any response from the Vale.

Co.45 Urgent business

None.

Co.46 Petitions under standing order 13

None.

Co.47 Questions under standing order 12

1. Question from Councillor Bob Johnston to Councillor Roger Cox, Cabinet member for planning development management and housing.

“Could the Cabinet member please explain the policy and scheme for collecting money paid from developers in lieu of affordable housing, to build affordable housing elsewhere? For example, we have £1 million in reserve from the Old Gaol. How will that be used for affordable housing?”

Councillor Cox responded as follows:

“Our policy is to seek affordable housing on site and to only accept commuted sums where it is not viable or achievable to deliver affordable housing on site.

Where we accept a commuted sum, secured within a planning obligations Section 106 agreement, we specify when this should be paid.

Planning obligations are managed and monitored by the council’s Section 106 officer, who ensures the money is paid on the due date.

The Housing Development Team, in liaison with the Cabinet member, is responsible for ensuring commuted sums are used in a range of ways that bring forward affordable housing. The sums may be used to top up affordable housing schemes to improve viability or to meet particular housing needs.

Vale of White Horse District Council – Council minutes

The commuted sum agreed in lieu of provision at Harcourt Way was £1 million. A payment schedule was agreed with the developer for £100,000 in 2015 and £180,000 per year for each of the next five years to 2020.

Therefore, we do not have £1 million in reserves, but will use those funds in an appropriate way, as opportunities arise, to increase delivery of affordable housing.”

Councillor Cox undertook to provide a written response to a supplementary question which asked if, in light of impending changes to housing benefit which come into force in 2017, he, as Cabinet Member, could confirm whether any social housing schemes in the Vale have either been postponed or scrapped because they will no longer be financially viable.

2. Question from Councillor Debby Hallett to Councillor Mike Murray, Cabinet member for planning policy.

“Could the Cabinet member please update us on the council’s response to the government’s current consultation on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, which ends on 22 February 2016?”

Councillor Murray responded as follows:

“The current government consultation seeks views on proposed changes to national planning policy on a range of issues including, broadening the definition of affordable housing, increasing the density of development around commuter hubs, development on brownfield land and delivery of starter homes.

South and Vale councils have responded jointly to this consultation. Our response may be seen on our website within the planning policy section, <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy>.”

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

“Of all the homes granted full and outline planning permission since 2011, how many have been completed, how many are not yet started, and what actions have Vale taken to speed up construction and make sure homes are delivered as soon as possible?”

Councillor Roger Cox responded as follows:

“Planning permission has been consented for 3948 homes since 2011.

The total number of homes constructed since 2011 is just below 2000.

As developers do not keep us informed of individual completions, we carry out periodic surveys doing site inspections and correlating our observations with the data provided by developers, to arrive at an accurate figure for starts on sites and completions. This completions number will be updated after the next survey which will take place after the end of the financial year. For the same reason it is not possible to say how many homes have not started. This detailed information will be available and published on completion of the next survey.

This council is a top performing authority in its speed of determining planning applications. We have put in place streamlined processes and we have cut through red tape in negotiations with developers to accelerate the process of issuing planning consents. However, it remains the responsibility of developers to speed up construction as the council is not empowered to force them to do this.

There are several reasons why developers set their own pace for delivery, including levels of purchaser interest. Nevertheless, we work closely with developers to help them overcome barriers to delivery, including taking a lead on negotiations to tackle any delays being experienced in relation to the work of statutory providers.

Another example of the work we do to speed up development, is our partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The HCA operates a Local Infrastructure Fund, which provides front funded loans. This assists developers with cash flows in the early period of a development, thereby enabling them to achieve site set up and start house building more quickly.

And as part of our work, on an on-going basis, we explore all opportunities for accelerating housing development, as it is in both the councils and the communities' interests for us to do so."

In response to a supplementary question regarding what other initiatives Cabinet had considered to speed up housing development Councillor Cox responded that every planning permission included a timescale for delivery."

Co.48 Corporate services procurement

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 28 January 2016, to establish a corporate services joint scrutiny committee.

RESOLVED: to

1. establish a corporate services joint scrutiny committee in accordance with the draft terms of reference outlined in appendix 4 to the strategic director's report to Cabinet on 28 January 2016;
2. authorise the chief executive, in consultation with the chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, to finalise the terms of reference of the committee;
3. authorise the head of legal and democratic services to appoint members and substitutes to the committee in accordance with the wishes of the relevant group leader(s) and make consequential changes to the constitution.

Co.49 Treasury management mid-year monitoring report 2015/16

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 5 February 2016, on the treasury management activities for the first six months of 2015/16.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 25 January 2016 and had not recommended any adjustments to the strategy as a result of the first six months' activities. Likewise, Cabinet concluded that the treasury management activities had operated within the agreed parameters set out in the approved treasury management strategy.

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

Co.50 Treasury management and investment strategy 2016/17

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 5 February 2016, on the council's treasury management strategy and investment strategy for 2016/17.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee considered the report at its meeting on 25 January 2016 and had not recommended any adjustments to the strategy. Cabinet agreed to recommend Council approve the strategy.

RESOLVED: to approve

1. the treasury management strategy 2016/17 set out in appendix A to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 5 February 2016;
2. the prudential indicators and limits for 2016/17 to 2018/19 as set out in table 2, appendix A to the head of finance's report; and
3. the annual investment strategy 2016/17 set out in appendix A (paragraphs 25 to 60) and the lending criteria detailed in table 5 to the head of finance's report.

Co.51 Revenue budget 2016/17 and capital programme to 2020/21

The chairman 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 he would call for a named vote on each of these matters at this meeting.

The chairman 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, appendix G to the budget report, on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of the reserves.

Councillor Barber moved and Councillor Cox seconded a motion to approve Cabinet's recommendations as follows:

That Council:

1. sets the revenue budget for 2016/17 as set out in the appendix A.1 to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 5 February 2016;
2. approves the capital programme for 2016/17 to 2020/21 as set out in appendix D.1 to the head of finance's report, together with the capital growth bids set out in appendix D.2 of the head of finance's report;
3. sets the council's prudential limits as listed in appendix E to the head of finance's report;
4. approves the medium term financial plan to 2020/21 as set out in appendix F.1 to the head of finance's report; and
5. authorises the head of finance, in consultation with the cabinet member for finance, to issue an efficiency statement to government in order to secure a four year settlement, if this is considered to be beneficial to the council.

Councillor Hoddinott moved and Councillor Johnston seconded an amendment to the above budget to provide a video webcasting system for Council and committee meetings held at Milton Park and The Beacon at a cost of £20,000 for each of the six years of the medium term financial plan to be funded by the cancellation of the growth bid in Cabinet's budget proposals to fund car park expansion.

Those councillors who spoke in support of the amendment were of the view that a webcasting system would improve access to meetings and communication with the public, encourage the public to become more involved in the democratic process and take part in local government, increase the accountability of local councillors and potentially increase the pool of potential candidates.

Those councillors who spoke against the amendment stated that the benefits would not justify the cost. The number of viewers would be low, decisions were already published and available on the council's website and, whilst webcasting may increase passive participation, it would not increase the level of active participation by members of the public getting involved in local democracy and attending meetings.

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

For	Against	Abstentions
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Margaret Crick	Alice Badcock	Mike Badcock
Debby Hallett	Matthew Barber	
Jenny Hannaby	Eric Batts	
Dudley Hoddinott	Edward Blagrove	
Bob Johnston	Yvonne Constance	
Helen Pighills	Roger Cox	
Judy Roberts	Charlotte Dickson	
Emily Smith	St John Dickson	
Catherine Webber	Katie Finch	
	Robert Hall	
	Anthony Hayward	
	Simon Howell	
	Vicky Jenkins	
	Mohinder Kainth	
	Monica Lovatt	
	Sandy Lovatt	
	Ben Mabbett	
	Chris McCarthy	
	Mike Murray	
	Chris Palmer	
	Julia Reynolds	
	Robert Sharp	
	Janet Shelley	
	Henry Spencer	
	Reg Waite	
	Elaine Ware	
Total: 9	Total: 26	Total: 1

Councillor Hannaby moved and Councillor Smith seconded an amendment to Cabinet's budget to hire a full time officer to carry out a feasibility study and promote affordable self-build houses in the Vale at a cost of £75,000 for three years, with a capital provision of £1.5 million to purchase land as necessary, to be funded by the cancellation of the growth bid in Cabinet's budget proposals to fund car park expansion.

Those councillors who spoke in support of the amendment were of the view that the proposal would increase housing supply, provide more affordable housing for those unable to afford commercial houses, tap into the potential for significant numbers of self-build houses as demonstrated by a successful scheme in Cherwell and had the support of developers.

Those councillors who spoke against the amendment stated that, whilst self-build houses had a place in the delivery of housing for a minority, the proposal was premature prior to clarification of the government's policy on this matter and consideration of potential amendments and modifications to the Local Plan. Sufficient housing was coming forward and consideration should be given to compulsory purchase order powers to increase land supply.

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

For	Against	Abstentions
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Margaret Crick	Alice Badcock	Vicky Jenkins
Debby Hallett	Mike Badcock	
Jenny Hannaby	Matthew Barber	
Dudley Hoddinott	Eric Batts	
Bob Johnston	Edward Blagrove	
Helen Pighills	Yvonne Constance	
Judy Roberts	Roger Cox	
Emily Smith	Charlotte Dickson	
Catherine Webber	St John Dickson	
	Katie Finch	
	Robert Hall	
	Anthony Hayward	
	Simon Howell	
	Mohinder Kainth	
	Monica Lovatt	
	Sandy Lovatt	
	Ben Mabbett	
	Chris McCarthy	
	Mike Murray	
	Chris Palmer	
	Julia Reynolds	
	Robert Sharp	
	Janet Shelley	
	Henry Spencer	
	Reg Waite	
	Elaine Ware	
Total: 9	Total: 26	Total: 1

Councillors supporting the Cabinet's revenue and capital budget proposals supported the view that the council continued to manage its financial matters sensibly while maintaining services and continuing its capital programme with no increase in this council's element of the council tax in 2016/17. The budget would increase car parking capacity across the district, introduce a deep cleanse of streets across the district and support market towns.

Other councillors supported the view that Cabinet's budget was not balanced focussing too much on economic issues at the expense of social and environmental issues.

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

For	Against	Abstentions
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Alice Badcock	Dudley Hoddinott	Margaret Crick
Mike Badcock		Debby Hallett
Matthew Barber		Jenny Hannaby
Eric Batts		Bob Johnston
Edward Blagrove		Helen Pighills
Yvonne Constance		Judy Roberts
Roger Cox		Emily Smith
Charlotte Dickson		Catherine Webber
St John Dickson		
Katie Finch		
Robert Hall		
Anthony Hayward		
Simon Howell		
Vicky Jenkins		
Mohinder Kainth		
Monica Lovatt		
Sandy Lovatt		
Ben Mabbett		
Chris McCarthy		
Mike Murray		
Chris Palmer		
Julia Reynolds		
Robert Sharp		
Janet Shelley		
Henry Spencer		
Reg Waite		
Elaine Ware		
Total: 27	Total: 1	Total: 8

RESOLVED: to

1. set the revenue budget for 2016/17 as set out in the appendix A.1 to the head of finance's report to Cabinet on 5 February 2016;
2. approve the capital programme for 2016/17 to 2020/21 as set out in appendix D.1 to the head of finance's report, together with the capital growth bids set out in appendix D.2 of the head of finance's report;

3. set the council's prudential limits as listed in appendix E to the head of finance's report;
4. approve the medium term financial plan to 2020/21 as set out in appendix F.1 to the head of finance's report; and
5. authorise the head of finance, in consultation with the cabinet member for finance, to issue an efficiency statement to government in order to secure a four year settlement, if this is considered to be beneficial to the council.

Co.52 Council tax 2016/17

Council considered the report of the head of finance on the setting of the Council Tax for the 2016/17 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 chairman called for a recorded vote which was carried with the voting being as follows:

For	Against	Abstentions
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Alice Badcock		Margaret Crick
Mike Badcock		Dudley Hoddinott
Matthew Barber		Bob Johnston
Eric Batts		Judy Roberts
Edward Blagrove		Catherine Webber
Yvonne Constance		
Roger Cox		
Charlotte Dickson		
St John Dickson		
Katie Finch		
Robert Hall		
Debby Hallett		
Jenny Hannaby		
Anthony Hayward		
Simon Howell		
Vicky Jenkins		
Mohinder Kainth		
Monica Lovatt		
Sandy Lovatt		
Ben Mabbett		
Chris McCarthy		
Mike Murray		
Chris Palmer		
Helen Pighills		
Julia Reynolds		
Robert Sharp		
Janet Shelley		
Emily Smith		
Henry Spencer		
Reg Waite		
Elaine Ware		
Total: 31	Total: 0	Total: 5

RESOLVED:

1. to note that at its meeting on 16 December 2015 the council calculated the council tax base 2016/17:
 - (a) for the whole council area as **48,176.9** [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 2016/17 (excluding parish precepts) is £5,621,762
3. that the following amounts be calculated for the year 2016/17 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) £76,039,313 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) £67,056,575 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (c) £8,982,738 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) £186.45 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) £3,360,976 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) £116.69 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 2016/17 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	£854.43
Band B	£996.83
Band C	£1,139.24
Band D	£1,281.64
Band E	£1,566.45
Band F	£1,851.26
Band G	£2,136.07
Band H	£2,563.28

5. to note that for the year 2016/17 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	£111.31
Band B	£129.86
Band C	£148.41
Band D	£166.96
Band E	£204.06
Band F	£241.16
Band G	£278.27
Band H	£333.92

6. in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, to set the aggregate amounts shown in appendix 3 of the report of the head of finance to Council on 17 February 2016 as the amounts of council tax for 2016/17 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings shown in appendix 3 of the report of the head of finance to Council on 17 February 2016.
7. to note the allocation of the town and parish element of the council tax reduction scheme grant payable to each parish shown in appendix 4 of the report of the head of finance to Council on 17 February 2016.
8. to determine that the council's basic amount of council tax for 2016/17 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Co.53 Pay policy statement 2016/17

Council considered the report of the head of HR, IT and technical services on the adoption of a pay policy statement to meet the requirements of the Localism Act.

RESOLVED: to approve the pay policy statement for 2016-17 attached to the report of the head of HR, IT and technical services to Council on 17 February 2016.

Co.54 Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme - discharge of planning functions

Council considered the report of the head of planning on the proposed Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme which sought approval for the delegation to Oxfordshire County Council of any planning responsibilities that would otherwise be exercised by Vale of White Horse District Council in relation to the scheme.

RESOLVED: to

1. delegate the discharge of the district planning authority functions of this council to Oxfordshire County Council, in connection with the processing and determination of a planning application for the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, under section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972;
2. authorise the Head of Planning to negotiate and agree a memorandum of understanding with Oxfordshire County Council to determine the operational arrangements of the delegation of the district council's planning functions in relation to the scheme; and

3. place a long stop date on the delegation such that the delegation will be revoked if any scheme application is not determined by 18 February 2019.

Co.55 Joint Staff Committee

Council considered revised terms of reference for the Joint Staff Committee to progress the recruitment of a chief executive and an invitation to appoint councillors to sit on the Committee (the Leader of the council, one Conservative member and one Liberal Democrat member in accordance with the political balance of the council).

RESOLVED: to

1. approve the terms of reference of the Joint Staff Committee as set out on page 25 of the Council agenda for the meeting on 17 February 2016; and
2. appoint Matthew Barber, Leader of the council, Roger Cox as the Conservative member and Debby Hallett as the Liberal Democrat member to the Joint Staff Committee.

Co.56 Report of the leader of the council

Matthew Barber, Leader of the council, provided the following updates:

- Refugees – the Home Office had requested the council to house six families. No timescale was provided and he undertook to keep councillors informed.
- Oxfordshire devolution – councillors would be provided with a briefing note on developments.
- Housing delivery – the council was working on a joint venture on a site east of Harwell Campus which would require a Council decision.

Co.57 Notices of motion under standing order 11

- (1) Councillor Judy Roberts moved and Councillor Ed Blagrove seconded the following motion:

Council agrees to change the name of the Abingdon Area Committee to the Abingdon and Northeast Area Committee, to more accurately reflect the ward locations of committee members.

RESOLVED: to change the name of the Abingdon Area Committee to the Abingdon and Northeast Area Committee, to more accurately reflect the ward locations of committee members.

- (2) Councillor Debby Hallett moved and Councillor Catherine Webber seconded the following motion:

Council reconfirms its commitment to Localism principles as laid out by Government in general, and to Neighbourhood Planning in particular, and will continue to both help communities create and adopt Neighbourhood Plans and support their plans once adopted.

RESOLVED: that Council reconfirm its commitment to Localism principles as laid out by Government in general, and to Neighbourhood Planning in particular, and will continue to both help communities create and adopt Neighbourhood Plans and support their plans once adopted.

The meeting closed at 8:30pm
Chairman