

# Minutes

of a meeting of the

## Cabinet

held at 2.00pm on Friday 9 March 2012  
at The Abbey House, Abingdon, OX14 3JE



**Open to the public, including the press**

### Present:

Members: Councillors Matthew Barber (Chairman), Roger Cox (Vice-Chair), Yvonne Constance, Reg Waite and Elaine Ware

Non-participating members: Councillors Jenny Hannaby and Jerry Patterson

Officers: David Buckle, Steve Culliford, Ian Price, Anna Robinson, Miles Thompson and Mark Williams

Number of members of the public: 9

### **Ca.55 Apologies for absence**

None

### **Ca.56 Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** To adopt the Cabinet minutes of 10 February 2012 and agree that the chairman signs them.

### **Ca.57 Declarations of interest**

None

### **Ca.58 Urgent business and chairman's announcements**

None

### **Ca.59 Statements, petitions, and questions relating to matters affecting the Cabinet**

Councillor Jenny Hannaby, a non-Cabinet member, made a statement on the core strategy. She agreed with most of the strategy presented as she had been involved in some of its preparation prior to the district council elections in May 2011, but was surprised at the time taken to bring it to Cabinet and questioned the consultation undertaken. As for the strategy itself, Councillor Hannaby was disappointed at the inclusion on the Monk's Farm site north of Grove as this had previously been rejected by some local people and

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**Ca.27**

she was surprised that the developer of the Crab Hill site north-east of Wantage was only proposing 400 homes. She believed that the Crab Hill development should not be piecemeal as this would not deliver the infrastructure funding to provide the Wantage relief road—the crucial element in reducing the traffic congestion in Wantage. The council should also consider development north of Stockham Park, Wantage as this could also bring an extended relief road to bypass eastern Wantage and East Challow.

Mr Tony Hughes, Chairman of the Keep Harwell Rural Campaign, had submitted a statement for Cabinet's consideration but was unable to attend the meeting. Cabinet read his statement before it considered the core strategy report (minute Ca.59 refers), Mr Hughes' statement requested Cabinet to reduce the number of homes to be built at Valley Park, to the west of Didcot and east of the A34, and relocate the development so that its southern boundary was at least 600 metres north of the B4493 (Didcot to Harwell road). This would give some protection to Harwell and the land to the south of the B4493.

## **Ca.60 Local development framework core strategy**

Cabinet considered report 78/11 of the head of planning. The Cabinet member with responsibility for planning reported that this concluded the internal review of the core strategy as part of the local development framework and looked beyond to the new planning policy framework. The core strategy broadly indicated how the council would meet the housing target for the district up to 2028/29. The report outlined the main possible components of future housing, including what appeared to be the strongest strategic housing sites. The draft strategy had been updated to focus development in the Science Vale UK area, the main settlements, and the larger villages. The draft strategy had been through a consultation phase with district councillors and other partners. He believed the timescale was realistic and the strategy could be robustly defended at a public inquiry.

Cabinet also considered the statement submitted by Mr Tony Hughes of the Keep Harwell Rural Campaign, as summarised in minute Ca.58.

Cabinet was asked to confirm these strategic housing sites for further consideration and public consultation. Turning to the proposals in paragraph 8 of the report, Cabinet supported the core strategy proposals to:

- Include as preferred option sites:
  - (i) Up to 2,150 homes at Valley Park (in Harwell parish, west of Didcot and the A34)
  - (ii) Up to 400 homes at Harwell Oxford Campus
  - (iii) Up to 400 homes at Faringdon, south of Park Road
  - (iv) Up to 1,500 homes at Crab Hill, north-east of Wantage
- Allocate an additional main settlement urban expansion on land north of Grove, including Monk's Farm, for up to 900 homes
- Allocate strategic sites to accommodate up to 850 homes in the larger villages, with first consideration going to options in Kingston Bagpuize, Shrivenham and Watchfield
- Allocate smaller sites for up to 1,400 homes in the later 'Managing Development' Development Plan Document
- Make no reliance on windfalls as a source of supply in the plan period

Cabinet stressed that although these figures totalled 7,600 homes, the core strategy plans to provide 6,300 homes. Whilst each identified source of housing supply would contribute, the council would not be seeking to secure the maximum number of potential homes indicated from every site. Some sites would be lower than the maximum indicated, but there would need to be sufficient development on any given site to deliver the necessary supporting infrastructure.

Cabinet asked the officers to carry out further technical work to establish where reductions can best be made. This is to include the testing of alternative levels of development for all the preferred housing locations, with an example suggested that officers test 500 homes less than the maximum at both the Crab Hill site at Wantage, and at Valley Park west of Didcot. Cabinet also expressed that care should be taken over adding additional development at the Harwell Oxford Campus.

Cabinet also noted that the 6,300 homes to plan for may be reduced further before the submission of the draft core strategy, because there will be further planning permissions and sites coming forward to which the interim housing supply policy would add, if approved.

Cabinet noted that the core strategy would be refreshed with the additional technical work and there would be a report to Cabinet later in 2012.

**RESOLVED:** To

- (a) update the 2009/10 draft core strategy preferred options document for further Regulation 25 public consultation incorporating:
  - (i) a continued strategic economic and housing growth focus on the Science Vale UK area, the Enterprise Zone, and the main settlements, whilst also supporting the future vitality of villages and rural areas, as set out in paragraphs 17 to 20 of report 78/11;
  - (ii) refinement and re-expression of the spatial strategy for development as 'building on our strengths', as set out in paragraphs 24 to 28 and Annex B of report 78/11;
  - (iii) a 23-year plan period of 2006/07 to 2028/29 inclusive;
- (b) meet the housing target from the strategic housing sites and other sources of housing supply identified at paragraph 8 of report 78/11, with specific housing allocation numbers and specific large village sites to be reported back to Cabinet after further assessment and consultation, noting that the officers will consider alternative levels of development and to identify where appropriate scope for lower numbers of homes on some sites; and
- (c) update the Local Development Scheme and authorise the head of planning in consultation with the Cabinet member for planning to approve the details.

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

None

The meeting closed at 2.20 pm

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