

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Cabinet

held on Friday 8 April 2022 at 10.30 am
in the 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, OX14 4SB

Open to the public, including the press

Present in the meeting room:

Cabinet members: Councillors Emily Smith (Chair), Bethia Thomas (Vice-Chair), Helen Pighills and Catherine Webber
Officers: Steve Culliford (Democratic Services Team Leader) and Mark Stone (Chief Executive)

Remote attendance:

Cabinet members: Councillors Andy Crawford and Debby Hallett
Officers: Patrick Arran (Head of Legal and Democratic), Harry Barrington-Mountford (Head of Policy and Programmes), Simon Hewings (Head of Finance), Andrew Lane (Planning Policy Team Leader), Jeremy Lloyd (Broadcasting Officer), and Shona Ware (Communications and Engagement Manager)
Guests: Councillor David Grant (Chair of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee)

100. Apologies for absence

Councillors Neil Fawcett and Judy Roberts had sent their apologies for absence.

101. Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 8 March 2022 as a correct record and agree that the Chair signs them as such.

102. Declarations of interest

None

103. Urgent business and chair's announcements

The Chair made two announcements:

1. Regarding the council's response to assist refugees from Ukraine, the chair announced that the data systems between the government, the county council and this council were working well. The council had transferred some staff to support the homes for Ukraine scheme. These staff from several services were working long hours and were thanked for this. The staff team would be making calls and visits to support over 90 host families in the Vale of White Horse over the next fortnight. These hosts would be accommodating over 125 guests from Ukraine. These numbers were expected to increase. Colleagues in the health sector, other

councils, the voluntary community sector, and the business sector were all working with the council to achieve the best outcomes. The council stood with the community to support these guests in their hour of need. The chair referred those in need of assistance to contact the council's community support telephone helpline.

2. The Covid-19 pandemic was not over. The chair reported that the local cases were high, and this was impacting on capacity at local health services. The chair urged everyone to remain cautious. The council's community support team was still available to those in need.

104. Public participation

Steven Sensecall made a statement in support of the Dalton Barracks supplementary planning document. He was speaking on behalf of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation and was supported by Stephen Harness from the same organisation. Mr Sensecall thanked the council for working with the landowner and for making modifications to the draft document, which he urged Cabinet to approve.

105. Recommendations and updates from other committees

Cabinet received a summary of updates from the Scrutiny Committee, the Joint Audit and Governance Committee, and the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee. The chair of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee attended the meeting and updated Cabinet also.

Cabinet noted that there were no recommendations for it to consider on this occasion.

106. Joint communications and engagement strategy

Cabinet considered the head of policy and programmes' report, which proposed the approval of a communications and engagement strategy. This would be a joint strategy with South Oxfordshire District Council.

Cabinet noted that the Scrutiny Committee had considered the draft strategy and had welcomed it. The committee had made some suggestions for improvements, which had been included in the draft before Cabinet for approval.

The Cabinet member for community engagement reported that this was a new strategy, providing a framework, standards and toolkit for the council's communications and engagement activities. It included the key principles from the council's public engagement charter, which would be replaced by the strategy. The strategy also highlighted several areas that would be strengthened, including:

- improving customer satisfaction by raising awareness of the council's services and the work the council was doing to make the Vale a thriving place;
- encouraging more engagement to ensure ample opportunities for the public to give their views; and
- improving the council's reputation by demonstrating that it informed and listened to its communities.

Cabinet welcomed the strategy. It set out the communications and engagement responsibilities, which would bring greater consistency. All staff and councillors had a role to play in the strategy's success. Cabinet agreed that the strategy should be approved.

RESOLVED: to

- (a) approve the Joint Communications and Engagement Strategy, attached as Appendix 1 to the 8 April 2022 Cabinet report of the deputy chief executive – transformation and operations; and
- (b) authorise the head of corporate services, in consultation with the Cabinet member for community engagement (Vale) and the Cabinet member for corporate services (South Oxfordshire District Council), to approve annual action plans that will underpin the strategy.

107. Dalton Barracks Supplementary Planning Document

Cabinet considered the head of policy and programmes' report on a draft supplementary planning document for Dalton Barracks, a strategic housing allocation in the adopted local plan.

The Cabinet member for corporate services and transformation referred Cabinet to the consultation statement and proposed modifications to the Dalton Barracks draft supplementary planning document. The report asked Cabinet to consider the main issues arising from the consultation, to consider the proposed modifications, and to adopt the supplementary planning document.

Cabinet recalled that the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 was adopted in October 2019 and allocated land at Dalton Barracks for a mixed-use development of 1,200 homes, removing that land from the Green Belt. The local plan set out the council's intention to produce additional guidance to allow planning of the allocated site. The supplementary planning document contained that guidance.

The Cabinet member reported that the strategic site allocation in the local plan covered part of the wider Ministry of Defence base at Dalton Barracks. This was a result of a change the local plan Inspector had required to make the allocation smaller, so that it included only the land that would be needed for development in the plan period to 2031, and for which there was a well-developed evidence base. Although the whole Ministry of Defence site had been selected by the government to join the Garden Communities Programme as a Garden Village in 2019, the supplementary planning document was focused on the part of the base that was allocated for development in the local plan.

The supplementary planning document set out the design requirements and the information needed to support any planning applications for the site, to ensure that a high quality development was delivered. The design and delivery of the new village would follow garden village principles. The adopted supplementary planning document would be a material consideration in assessing future planning applications for the site. Supplementary planning documents did not require independent examination, but they were subject to public consultation, which had been carried out in October and November 2021. The Scrutiny Committee had considered the draft document in November 2021 and had supported it.

A report on the public consultation process, the main issues and the proposed modifications was appended to the report. There had been 218 responses, producing 863 categorised comments overall. During the consultation period, officers had met with two local parish councils, St Helen Without and Wootton, to support them with their queries and consultation responses. Since the close of the consultation period, further responses

had been submitted by Natural England and the CPRE, the countryside charity. The landowner of the site, the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, had also submitted an updated response. The Cabinet member reported that none of these late responses had raised new main issues that had not already been considered as part of the consultation process. The landowners of the site had stated that they expected to submit a planning application during the last quarter of 2022. Therefore, it was important that the council had a supplementary planning document in place as a material consideration to guide the form of that application.

Modifications had been proposed to the supplementary planning document to address points previously raised by Cabinet members, including decentralised renewable energy supply, air source heat pumps, battery storage, electric vehicle charging, and active travel options.

The Cabinet member recommended that Cabinet adopted the supplementary planning document with the proposed modifications.

Cabinet supported the adoption of the supplementary planning document. Cabinet could see that the document had taken into account the views of the two local parish councils, the landowner and the public. This had produced a document to guide a sustainable, green, exemplar garden village of high quality.

Cabinet noted that officers would create a final version of the supplementary planning document and publish it along with an adoption statement, in accordance with the regulations.

RESOLVED: to

- (a) adopt the Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation Supplementary Planning Document, subject to the modifications set out in the head of policy and programmes' report and appendices to Cabinet on 8 April 2022; and
- (b) authorise the head of policy and programmes, in consultation with the Cabinet member for corporate services and transformation, to make the changes set out in the report and its appendices, and any other minor amendments or typographical corrections to the supplementary planning document, prior to publication.

108. Corporate plan performance monitoring report Q3 2021/22

Cabinet considered the head of policy and programmes' report, being the corporate plan performance monitoring report for quarter 3, 2021/22. This covered the period 1 October to 31 December 2021.

The Cabinet member for corporate services and transformation reported that the monitoring report provided a strategic overview of performance, focusing on the activity to deliver the priorities in the corporate plan.

The report had been considered by the Scrutiny Committee. The committee had found the report helpful in understanding and monitoring the council's activity. The committee had asked the Cabinet member to consider improving the report's promotion to the public, and suggested a press release each quarter along with social media posts. The Cabinet member would be working with officers and the Cabinet member for community engagement on these suggestions during the next quarter.

The Climate Emergency Advisory Committee had considered and welcomed the report also.

Cabinet welcomed the performance monitoring report and thanked the Scrutiny Committee for its suggestions. Cabinet recognised that not all councils undertook this level of reporting; this illustrated the council's commitment to openness and accountability. Cabinet thanked officers for the large amount of work being undertaken to further the council's corporate objectives, particularly during the third quarter of 2021/22.

RESOLVED: to note the corporate plan performance monitoring report for quarter 3, 2021/22.

The meeting closed at 11.08 am

Chair:

Date: