

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet



held on Friday 28 May 2021 at 10.30 am
at 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB

Open to the public, including the press

Present in the meeting room:

Cabinet Members: Councillors Emily Smith (Chair), Helen Pighills, Judy Roberts and Bethia Thomas

Officers: Steve Culliford and Simon Hewings

Remote attendance:

Cabinet members: Councillors Andy Crawford, Neil Fawcett, Debby Hallett and Catherine Webber

Other councillors (non-Cabinet members): Councillors Ron Batstone, Eric Batts, David Grant, and Elaine Ware

Officers: Harry Barrington-Mountford, James Carpenter, Pat Connell, Jeremy Lloyd, Suzanne Malcolm, Steve May, Adrianna Partridge, Chris Traill, and Shona Ware

Number of members of the public: Nil

Ca.1 Apologies for absence

None

Ca.2 Minutes

RESOLVED: to adopt as correct records the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 5 February, 17 March and 9 April 2021 and agree that the Chair signs them as such.

Ca.3 Declarations of interest

Councillor Andy Crawford declared a pecuniary interest in the item on affordable housing and the Oxfordshire Growth Deal, as he had a financial interest in a company associated with Heylo Housing.

Ca.4 Urgent business and chair's announcements

The Chair announced that this was the first Cabinet meeting held 'in-person' since February 2020 due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The government had required councils to hold their meetings in public and in person since 7 May 2021. Four Cabinet members were present in the meeting room; therefore the meeting was quorate and could proceed. Two officers were also present in the meeting room.

The Chair reported that on 27 May 2021 the chief executive had taken a decision, under his emergency powers, to allow the public to attend and participate in council meetings either remotely, in person, or by written submission. No members of the public had expressed a wish to address Cabinet at this meeting.

The Chair had allowed some members of the Cabinet to join the meeting remotely but reminded the meeting that only those Cabinet members present in the meeting room were allowed to vote. Non-Cabinet members and officers were also permitted to join the meeting and participate remotely.

For those in the meeting room, the Chair announced the emergency evacuation arrangements.

Ca.5 Public participation

None

Ca.6 Recommendations and updates from other committees

(1) Climate Emergency Advisory Committee

Cabinet received recommendations from the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee meeting held on 19 April 2021. The committee's Chair, Councillor David Grant, addressed Cabinet, outlining the main points from the recommendations. This covered the role of the committee in monitoring progress against the climate emergency actions in the corporate plan, the use of task and finish groups to assist with the committee's workload, the need for regular communication with Cabinet, the development of the 2021/22 climate action and biodiversity work programmes, a proposed methodology/development process for the climate action plan, and the establishment of joint South and Vale member and officer Biodiversity Working Group to assist the council in scoping corporate plan 2020-24 biodiversity projects.

Cabinet thanked Councillor Grant and the committee. Cabinet welcomed the recommendations, noting that they were a continuation of the committee's work and could be achieved within budget, unless new projects came forward. Cabinet supported the committee's recommendations.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee plays a formal role in the monitoring of the Corporate Plan 2020-24 and reviews the quarterly performance reports that are part of the council's performance management framework;
- (b) that task and finish groups are established to work alongside officers on the corporate plan, communications and engagement, zero carbon definition, and relevant consultations;
- (c) that the Chair of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee be invited to attend the Cabinet meeting after each committee meeting to provide an update to ensure there is an effective and open dialogue between the two meetings;

- (d) to approve the 2021/22 climate action and biodiversity work programmes;
- (e) to adopt the proposed methodology/development process for the Climate Action Plan; and
- (f) to establish a joint South and Vale member and officer biodiversity working group to assist the council in scoping corporate plan 2020-24 biodiversity projects to tackle the climate emergency, which are currently subject to future discretionary growth.

(2) Suggestions from an informal meeting of the Scrutiny Committee members

Rather than hold a formal 'in-person' meeting at which no formal decisions were required, the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee had called an informal meeting of committee members on 27 May 2021, which was held virtually.

The meeting had discussed the Cabinet report of the performance management framework and the year 1 corporate delivery plan. The meeting had made the following suggestions to Cabinet:

- In Appendix 2 to the report—the corporate delivery plan year 1— for future reports quantitative measures should be shown where possible, rather than just a narrative
- If there was no progress on a particular project aim, future reports should say so and state if there have been any barriers to progress or state the expected timescale for action
- In future reports, please number the paragraphs in the interim performance report (Appendix 3)
- In future reports, please use graphical information, where appropriate, to explain a point
- Welcome further performance reports for scrutiny members' consideration

Cabinet welcomed the suggestions made. Where possible, these would be taken into account before publication. Other suggestions would be considered for future reports.

Ca.7 Performance management framework

Cabinet considered the report of the interim head of policy and programmes. This proposed a performance management framework and a year one corporate delivery plan.

The Cabinet member for corporate services and transformation reported that the performance management framework highlighted how Cabinet intended to measure performance against the council's priorities in the corporate plan, together with providing opportunities for regular scrutiny and challenge.

The framework provided the structure to monitor progress against priorities. There would be quarterly and annual strategic reviews. These would highlight where progress had been made, where there were challenges, areas where more emphasis was needed, and where priorities needed to change. The framework would improve how individuals and teams worked together towards shared goals. The Cabinet member recommended the approval of the framework and the delivery plan, as set out in the report. The Cabinet

member added a further recommendation to authorise the correction of any typographical and formatting errors, and non-material changes to improve the presentation.

Cabinet welcomed the suggestions made by the informal meeting of Scrutiny Committee members, recorded under minute Ca.6 (2), and concluded that where possible these suggestions could be taken into account before publishing the framework and delivery plan documents. Other suggestions could be considered for inclusion in future reports.

Cabinet supported the Cabinet member's recommendations, believing that this provided a strong framework, which could be kept under review and adjusted as necessary.

RESOLVED: to

- (a) approve the performance management framework;
- (b) approve the year 1 corporate delivery plan; and
- (c) authorise the interim head of policy and programmes, in consultation with the Cabinet member for corporate services and transformation, to make non-material changes, such as the correction of any spelling, grammatical, typographical or factual errors, together with any improvements from a presentational perspective, to the performance management framework and the year 1 corporate delivery plan.

Ca.8 Policy on the council publicly supporting social issues and campaigns

Cabinet considered the interim head of corporate services' report. This proposed a new policy on the council publicly supporting social issues and campaigns.

The Cabinet member for community engagement reported that the proposed policy would provide a sound and justifiable basis for the council to publicly support a wide range of events, religious festivals and social issues, in a way that was sensitive to its residents' beliefs and opinions, and in a way that was proportionate to the rest of the council's external communications. The policy would help to ensure the council was focusing its support on the events and issues most aligned to the council's adopted priorities. It would also help to explain why the council had chosen to promote one issue but not another.

Cabinet supported the proposed policy and the systematic approach to ensuring that the events the council supported were aligned with the council's corporate priorities.

RESOLVED: to

- (a) adopt the policy on the council's support for social issues and campaigns, as appended to the interim head of corporate services' report to Cabinet on 28 May 2021;
- (b) agree to incorporate dates relating to diversity and inclusion into a broader calendar of events to accompany this policy, as set out in option 3 in the interim head of corporate services' report; and

- (c) authorise the interim head of corporate services, in consultation with the Cabinet member for community engagement, to finalise the draft list of dates, subject to any final amendments, in consultation with other Cabinet members.

Ca.9 Exclusion of the public, including the press

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 paragraphs 1-7 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.

Ca.10 Minutes

RESOLVED: to adopt as a correct record the exempt minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 17 March 2021 and agree that the Chair signs them as such.

Ca.11 Affordable Housing and Oxfordshire Growth Deal - Heylo Housing

Cabinet supported an affordable housing scheme with Heylo Housing and recommended Council to approve the funding.