

Agenda

Cabinet

Local Plan Adoption @this meeting will be held by Zoom and streamed to the Council's YouTube channel when the meeting starts, <https://www.youtube.com/oxfordcitycouncil>

This meeting will be held on:

Date: **Monday 8 June 2020**

Time: **12.00 pm**

Place: **Zoom - Remote meeting**

For further information please contact:

John Mitchell, Committee and Member Services Officer, Committee Services Officer

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Members of the public can attend to observe this meeting and.

- may submit a question about any item for decision at the meeting in accordance with the [Cabinet's rules](#)
- may record all or part of the meeting in accordance with the Council's [protocol](#)

Details of how City Councillors and members of the public may engage with this meeting are set out later in the agenda. Information about recording is set out later in the agenda and on the [website](#)

Please contact the Committee Services Officer to submit a question; to discuss recording the meeting; or with any other queries.

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[All public papers are available from the calendar link to this meeting once published](#)

Cabinet Membership

Leader/ Chair

Councillor Susan Brown (Chair)	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Partnerships
Cabinet Members Councillor Ed Turner (Deputy Leader)	Deputy Leader (Statutory), Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management
Councillor Tom Hayes (Deputy Leader)	Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Green Transport and Zero Carbon Oxford
Councillor Nigel Chapman	Cabinet Member for Customer Focused Services
Councillor Mary Clarkson	Cabinet Member for City Centre, Covered Market and Culture
Councillor Alex Hollingsworth	Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery
Councillor Mike Rowley	Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing
Councillor Linda Smith	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parks
Councillor Marie Tidball	Cabinet Member for Supporting Local Communities
Councillor Louise Upton	Cabinet Member for a Safer, Healthier Oxford

Apologies received before the publication are shown under *Apologies for absence* in the agenda. Those sent after publication will be reported at the meeting.

Decisions come into effect after the latest of the expiry of the post-meeting councillor call in period; reconsideration of a called-in decision; or Council's agreement of recommendations.

Agenda

Future items to be discussed by the Cabinet can be found on the Forward Plan which is available on the Council's [website](#)

	Pages
1	
Apologies for Absence	
2	
Declarations of Interest	
3	
Addresses and Questions by Members of the Public	
4	
Councillor Addresses on any item for decision on the Board's agenda	
5	
Councillor Addresses on Neighbourhood Issues	
6	
Items raised by Board Members	
7	
Scrutiny Committee Reports	
<p>Scrutiny Committee meets on 02 June. Any recommendations to Cabinet from that meeting will be published as a supplement to this agenda.</p>	
8	9 - 20
Adoption of Oxford Local Plan 2036	
Lead Member: Planning and Housing Delivery	
<p>That Cabinet resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Recommend that Council agrees to adopt the Oxford Local Plan 2036 and associated updates to the policies map; and recommend <p>That Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Adopt the Oxford Local Plan 2036 (set out at Appendix 1 to this report), which incorporates the Inspectors' Main Modifications (set out at Appendix 3 to this report) and the City Council's Additional Modifications (set out at Appendix 4 to this report) as part of the statutory development plan for the area as listed in Appendix 6;Adopt the updates to the Oxford City Adopted Policies Map in line with the Oxford Local Plan 2036 set out at Appendix 5 to this report; and	

Decisions come into effect after the latest of the expiry of the post-meeting councillor call in period; reconsideration of a called-in decision; or Council's agreement of recommendations.

3. **Authorise** the Head of Planning Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery, to finalise the necessary documents to support adoption including the Adoption Statement (draft as Appendix 7) and Sustainability Statement (draft as Appendix 8) and to make such minor editorial corrections to the adopted Local Plan (Appendix 1) and Policies Map (Appendix 5) as deemed necessary ahead of publication. This will include a final desktop published version of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 and adopted policies map.

Please note that because of size of the appendices for this report they have been split into three parts

Part 1: Appendices 1-4

Part 2: Appendix 5

Part 3: Appendices 6-10

Which will be published as separate supplements.

9 Addendum to the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 21 - 52

Lead Member: Planning and Housing Delivery

The Head of Planning Services has submitted a report to seek Cabinet's approval of an addendum to the Oxford City Council Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015 in relation to the Coronavirus disease pandemic.

Recommendation: That Cabinet resolves to:

Approve the Addendum to the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015 (set out at Appendix 1 to the report)

10 Minutes 53 - 60

Recommendation: That Cabinet resolves to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2020 as a true and accurate record.

Decisions come into effect after the latest of the expiry of the post-meeting councillor call in period; reconsideration of a called-in decision; or Council's agreement of recommendations.

11 **Dates of Future Meetings**

Meetings are scheduled for the following dates:

- 24 June
- 15 July
- 12 August
- 09 September
- 14 October
- 11 November
- 09 December

All meetings start at 6pm unless otherwise notified.

Decisions come into effect after the latest of the expiry of the post-meeting councillor call in period; reconsideration of a called-in decision; or Council's agreement of recommendations.

Oxford City Council, Town Hall, St Aldate's Oxford OX1 1BX

Information for those attending

Recording and reporting on meetings held in public

Members of public and press can record, or report in other ways, the parts of the meeting open to the public. You are not required to indicate in advance but it helps if you notify the Committee Services Officer prior to the meeting so that they can inform the Chair and direct you to the best place to record.

The Council asks those recording the meeting:

- To follow the protocol which can be found on the Council's [website](#)
- Not to disturb or disrupt the meeting
- Not to edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes not editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule or show a lack of respect towards those being recorded.
- To avoid recording members of the public present, even inadvertently, unless they are addressing the meeting.

Please be aware that you may be recorded during your speech and any follow-up. If you are attending please be aware that recording may take place and that you may be inadvertently included in these.

The Chair of the meeting has absolute discretion to suspend or terminate any activities that in his or her opinion are disruptive.

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". The matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

How Oxford City Councillors and members of the public can engage at Cabinet

Addresses and questions by members of the public (15 minutes in total)

Members of the public can submit questions in writing about any item for decision at the meeting. Questions, stating the relevant agenda item, must be received by the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am two clear working day before the meeting (eg for a Tuesday meeting, the deadline would be 9.30am on the Friday before). Questions can be submitted either by letter or by email (to cabinet@oxford.gov.uk).

Answers to the questions will be provided in writing at the meeting; supplementary questions will not be allowed. If it is not possible to provide an answer at the meeting it will be included in the minutes that are published on the Council's website within 2 working days of the meeting.

The Chair has discretion in exceptional circumstances to agree that a submitted question or related statement (dealing with matters that appear on the agenda) can be asked verbally at the meeting. In these cases, the question and/or address is limited to 3 minutes, and will be answered verbally by the Chair or another Cabinet member or an officer of the Council. The text of any proposed address must be submitted within the same timescale as questions.

For this agenda item the Chair's decision is final.

Councillors speaking at meetings

Oxford City councillors may, when the chair agrees, address the Cabinet on an item for decision on the agenda (other than on the minutes). The member seeking to make an address must notify the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am at least one clear working day before the meeting, stating the relevant agenda items. An address may last for no more than three minutes. If an address is made, the Cabinet member who has political responsibility for the item for decision may respond or the Cabinet will have regard to the points raised in reaching its decision.

Councillors speaking on Neighbourhood issues (10 minutes in total)

Any City Councillor can raise local issues on behalf of communities directly with the Cabinet. The member seeking to make an address must notify the Head of Law and Governance by 9.30am at least one clear working day before the meeting, giving outline details of the issue. Priority will be given to those members who have not already addressed the Cabinet within the year and in the order received. Issues can only be raised once unless otherwise agreed by the Cabinet. The Cabinet's responsibility will be to hear the issue and respond at the meeting, if possible, or arrange a written response within 10 working days.

Items raised by Cabinet members

Such items must be submitted within the same timescale as questions and will be for discussion only and not for a Cabinet decision. Any item which requires a decision of the Cabinet will be the subject of a report to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

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To: Cabinet
Council

Date: 8 June 2020

Report of: Head of Planning Services

Title of Report: Adoption of the Oxford Local Plan 2036

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	Council is requested to agree to adopt the Oxford Local Plan 2036
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery.
Corporate Priority:	A Vibrant and Sustainable Economy; Meeting Housing Needs; Strong and Active Communities; A Clean and Green Oxford.
Policy Framework:	Development Plan Document.
Recommendations:	
That Cabinet resolves to:	
1. Recommend that Council agrees to adopt the Oxford Local Plan 2036 and associated updates to the policies map; and	
That Council resolves to:	
1. Adopt the Oxford Local Plan 2036 (set out at Appendix 1 to this report), which incorporates the Inspectors' Main Modifications (set out at Appendix 3 to this report) and the City Council's Additional Modifications (set out at Appendix 4 to this report) as part of the statutory development plan for the area as listed in Appendix 6;	
2. Adopt the updates to the Oxford City Adopted Policies Map in line with the Oxford Local Plan 2036 set out at Appendix 5 to this report; and	
3. Authorise the Head of Planning Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery, to finalise the necessary documents to support adoption including the Adoption Statement (draft as Appendix 7) and Sustainability Statement (draft as Appendix 8) and to make such minor editorial corrections to the adopted Local Plan (Appendix 1) and Policies Map (Appendix 5) as deemed necessary ahead of publication. This will include a final desktop published version of the Oxford Local Plan 2036	

and adopted policies map.

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Oxford Local Plan 2036 incorporating Main Modifications and Additional Modifications
Appendix 2	Inspectors' Report
Appendix 3	Schedule of Main Modifications
Appendix 4	Schedule of Additional Modifications
Appendix 5	Updated Policies Map
Appendix 6	List of Documents that will form the Development Plan on adoption of the Local Plan 2036 and also the documents which are superseded
Appendix 7	Draft Adoption Statement
Appendix 8	Draft Sustainability Appraisal Statement
Appendix 9	Risk Assessment
Appendix 10	Equalities Impact Assessment

Introduction and background

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the adoption of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 (the Plan, Appendix 1).
2. The Local Plan is a vital document that sets out the shape of our city, and how it will look and feel in years to come. It will guide and shape new developments, so that they respect the past and present of Oxford, while improving its future by supporting our city's people and their environment. The Oxford Local Plan 2036 will determine the homes, jobs, community facilities, and infrastructure for the next twenty years, striking the right balance between the different pressures that Oxford and its people face. It also sets out our priorities as a city. It makes a priority of providing affordable housing and good quality jobs. It focuses growth and development on district centres - not just on the city centre - to make sure that facilities and services are close to home and convenient for local residents. It encourages and prioritises walking, cycling, and public transport to help tackle congestion and pollution and make our city healthier. A local plan needs to respect the city of previous generations while shaping the city of the generations to come. That is what the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036 aims to achieve.
3. Once adopted, the Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036 will replace the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016, the Core Strategy 2026, the Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026. The adopted Local Plan will be accompanied by an updated Policies Map setting out the spatial policy designations that flow from the Plan's policies (Appendix 5). The Plan will form part of the statutory development plan for the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Appendix 6 lists all of the documents that will form the development plan, which will include the Local Plan

2036. Appendix 6 also lists those documents that are superseded by the Oxford Local Plan 2036. On adoption, the new Local Plan will have full weight in determining planning applications.

4. Following the submission of the Oxford Local Plan in March 2019, the Plan has since been examined by two government appointed independent Inspectors who have concluded in their report (Appendix 2) that the Plan is sound (as amended by the Main Modifications, see Appendix 3). Following this conclusion, the Plan is now ready to be adopted. The Plan has been through a number of key stages to reach adoption. Adoption is the final stage of putting a Local Plan in place.

Summary of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 process to date

Initial consultation exercises

5. The First Steps consultation kicked-off the Local Plan process. This early consultation was not statutorily required but was a very important way of getting wide-ranging input to the initial scoping of the Local Plan, identifying people's aspirations for the Local Plan and what it might achieve.
6. The first statutory stage of consultation was the Preferred Options stage (formally called the Regulation 18 stage), following analysis of the First Steps consultation and collection of significant amounts of other information. At this stage of consultation, sets of options for potential policies were put forward and people could comment at a range of different levels and in a variety of ways on their preferred options for policy approaches. The responses to this consultation shaped the drafting of the Plan.

Regulation 19

7. Prior to submission of the Plan for examination by the Secretary of State, consultation on the proposed submission draft of the Plan took place (formally called the Regulation 19 stage). The aim of this consultation was to ask for views on whether the Plan met the tests of soundness set out in paragraph 35 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (the NPPF). The consultation commenced on 1st November 2018, and representations were invited initially over a six week period, but this was extended to a total of eight weeks until 28th December 2018.
8. A total of 1761 comments were received from 319 respondents. The responses were subsequently summarised by officers, and a response was provided to each comment received. As a result of the comments, a number of minor modifications were made to the Plan. Minor amendments are small typographical corrections, clarifications and factual updates that would not affect how a policy would be applied. Following these amendments, the Plan was ready to be submitted for examination.

Examination

9. On 22nd March 2019 the Regulation 19 consultation representations were submitted to the Secretary of State alongside the Local Plan, to be considered by Planning Inspectors as part of an independent examination into the soundness of the Local Plan.
10. Shortly after submission of the Plan, the Council was assigned two Inspectors by the Planning Inspectorate, Mr Jonathan Bore and Mr Nick Fagan. The Inspectors' task was to consider the soundness of the submitted Plan, based on the criteria set

out in paragraph 35 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (the NPPF). The relevant soundness criteria are whether the Plan is:

Positively prepared (providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development);

Justified (an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence);

Effective (deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground); and

Consistent with national policy (enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in *the NPPF*).

11. The first stage of this examination included an initial assessment of the Plan by the Inspectors. Following this initial assessment, a number of questions were asked of the Council relating to the soundness of the Plan's policies. Answers were provided in response to these questions, and a number of follow up questions and responses were later given.
12. Following their initial assessment of the Plan, the Inspectors then identified a number of principal matters that were discussed during public hearing sessions chaired by the Inspectors. These Hearing Sessions took place from 3rd to 19th December 2019 at the King's Centre, Oxford.
13. As a result of both the initial questions and hearing sessions, the Inspectors identified various amendments that they considered necessary to ensure the Plan is 'sound' and legally compliant. A schedule of changes deemed necessary by the Inspectors was put together by officers and agreed by the Inspectors. These changes are known as 'Main Modifications'.

Main Modifications

14. The last stage of the Local Plan examination process focused on the Main Modifications recommended by the Inspectors. A schedule of the proposed Main Modifications considered necessary for the Plan to be found sound was prepared (Appendix 3) and agreed by the Inspectors. A Sustainability Appraisal was also undertaken of the Main Modifications. These two documents were consulted upon during a 6 week consultation period from 14th February to 27th March 2020.
15. Following this consultation, the Inspectors considered all the comments received and consequently presented their final conclusions in a report (Appendix 2). The report concluded that the Local Plan meets the criteria for soundness in the NPPF and satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, subject to the Main Modifications identified as needed to meet legal and statutory requirements and for soundness. In addition officers proposed a number of Minor Modifications (Appendix 4) such as factual updates and typographical changes. The Inspectors were satisfied these did not go to the heart of the soundness of the Plan. These are available on the City Council's website www.oxford.gov.uk/mainmods.

16. Notable Main Modifications have included (please note Appendix 3 for full schedule of Main Modifications):

- i. The Inspectors deemed that Policy E3: New academic floorspace for private colleges/language schools was unnecessary because it made distinctions on the basis of the nature of the applicant, as it allowed the expansion of the two universities and Ruskin College, but only allowed new or additional academic or administrative floor space for private colleges in certain circumstances. Additionally, there are strong policies in place elsewhere in the Plan to prevent the loss of residential and employment space, so E3 was not deemed necessary. Instead, the needs of educational establishments other than the two universities is addressed by MM4 which makes additions to Policy E2, although with less restrictions than in Policy E3. Policy E3 is deleted.
- ii. Policy E4: Securing opportunities for local employment, was recommended for deletion by the Inspectors as they considered it not to be in accordance with the NPPF as they believe its criteria imposed restrictions on the operation of businesses, and also did not concern planning matters. The Council argued that the principle of the policy was sound, as it helped to address the income disparities and skills shortages that exist locally using planning policy. Although Policy E4 was ultimately deleted, the initiatives Policy E4 set out were allowed to remain in the supporting text of the Plan (MM5). A technical advice note is currently being drafted in order to provide guidance on the value of preparing Employment and Skills Plans (ESPs), which could help to deliver the initiatives set out in Policy E4 despite the deletion of the policy.
- iii. On submission of the Plan the City Council wrote to the Planning Inspectorate to say that recent guidance meant that an update would need to be made to the Council's assessment of housing capacity. This was done following submission of the Plan and further refined as part of the examination process. A number of changes in guidance affected the calculation of housing capacity, in particular that calculation of windfall rates no longer excluded garden development and that a national ratio to convert the number of student bedrooms to the number of homes equivalent was introduced and changed for Oxford from 5 to 2.5. These changes to the way housing capacity is calculated resulted in an increased capacity in Oxford from 8,620 to 10,884. A stepped trajectory has also been introduced that reflects the likely delivery timescales. These changes are shown in MM6.
- iv. The Inspectors recommended the removal of the requirement to make affordable housing contributions on sites of less than 10 homes due to its departure from national policy. The Council argued that the departure was justified due to local circumstances, for example the scale of affordable housing need in Oxford, and also the number of sites within the trajectory that would not deliver 50% on site affordable housing due to their size if this element of the policy was removed. Despite this, the Inspectors remained opposed to requiring affordable housing contributions on sites of less than 10 homes and this has now been removed from the Plan (Policy H2) by MM7.
- v. For consistency MM7 also changes the threshold at which student accommodation is liable for affordable housing contributions. In addition some exemptions for student accommodation are also introduced. The

Inspectors required these exemptions because of the requirement in Policy H9 that the Universities provide sufficient student accommodation. The exemptions are student campus sites or redevelopment of existing university student accommodation. These exemptions are lesser than those existing currently in the Sites and Housing Plan. Policy H9 that sets out the thresholds for students living outside of university-provided accommodation has been caveated by MM12 to ensure that the thresholds are achievable by the universities. However, the list of suitable locations for student accommodation in Policy H8, which unlike the Sites and Housing Plan does not list arterial roads as suitable locations, has not been amended.

- vi. The Inspectors required the deletion of Policy G7 in order to make the Plan sound (MM23). Policy G7 set out some criteria for the consideration of development on green spaces not protected by any of the green space policies of the Plan, such as for biodiversity or as playing pitches. The Inspectors said that there is no provision for this kind of policy in the NPPF. Instead they required the alteration of G5 (MM22), which had applied only to outdoor sports, to apply all open spaces. This allows for the loss of open spaces if they are surplus to requirements or can be replaced elsewhere (with the local area). This does not alter the level of protection of these green spaces. Most are protected by the Plan. Those not protected are of more limited value, and may sometimes represent a good development opportunity. Policy G7 merely tried to ensure this potential development opportunity had the most positive outcomes.
 - vii. The Inspectors required some amendments to Policy M3: Motor vehicle parking and the associated Appendix 7.3 MM32). A number of associated modifications to site allocation policies relating to large employment sites were also made. The changes are largely to ensure consistency and clarity. The Inspectors also considered it was not sound to require a reduction of parking at some employment sites. However, the following additional text to Policy M3, set out in MM32, says: 'In the case of the redevelopment of an existing or previously cleared site, there should be no net increase in parking on the site from the previous level and the Council will seek a reduction where there is good accessibility to a range of facilities.'
 - viii. MM37 alters Policy V4 in relation to the shopping frontage thresholds for the Cowley Road to ensure that the thresholds are achievable. Changes to this Policy are also proposed to make it clear that a diverse range of uses is encouraged and will be accepted on upper floors, particularly housing and student accommodation. This is to promote provision of housing in all suitable locations across the city and to ensure efficient use of land.
 - ix. An additional policy, Policy V9, has been added by MM41. This policy sets out requirements for digital infrastructure and ensures consistency with the NPPF.
 - x. Two site allocations have been deleted from the Plan as development has commenced on site. These sites are SP64 Wolvercote Paper Mill and SP7 276 Banbury Road.
17. The examination process, including the hearing sessions, raised a number of changes required to the Plan in order for it to be found sound. These Main Modifications were consulted upon from Friday 14th February to Friday 27th March 2020. A number of additional (minor) modifications have been made to the Plan

since the Regulation 19 consultation, as minor typographical errors were noticed, where clarification was needed to explanatory text or appendices and where updating was required. The Inspectors have checked these and confirmed they do not consider them to be addressing matters of soundness so they can therefore be considered additional (or minor) modifications. The Plan attached as Appendix 1 is shown in strikethrough format to help people follow the changes made through main and additional modifications. The version that will be published following adoption will not show the changes in strikethrough.

Adoption

18. The Inspectors' report concludes that the Plan is found sound dependent on the main modifications set out in the report being made. The receipt of the final Inspectors' report closes the examination process. The Council now has two options; either the Plan with the main modifications recommended by the Inspectors can be adopted, or the Council can choose not to adopt the Plan. All the modifications must be accepted; it is not possible to choose only some of them or to reject them. Furthermore, no further main modifications can be made to the Plan. If the Plan is adopted it will become part of the Development Plan and have full weight in the determination of planning applications.
19. Appendix 6 lists the documents that will form part of the Development Plan on adoption and those that will be superseded. Any future made Neighbourhood Plans will also become part of the development plan. The neighbourhood planning referendum for the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) had to be delayed to 2021 due to the current pandemic in line with Government advice. Therefore it does not currently form part of the Development Plan listed in Appendix 6. However, as we had already issued a decision statement detailing the intention to send the Wolvercote NDP to referendum, that plan can be given significant weight in decision-making. If when the referendum takes place the majority of those who vote on it are in favour the council will then consider a report to make the plan. It is at that point it would become part of the development plan.
20. Adopting the Local Plan brings into effect the policies that have been developed over the last 4 years with the intention of responding to the needs of the city and protecting its special qualities. It would create an environment of planning certainty ensuring that development can come forward to meet need in a planned manner. It ensures that the Housing Delivery test would use the capacity-based housing target of the Plan as the measure, rather than the standard method, which cannot be achieved. This has benefits in terms of decision-making relating to planning applications.
21. If the Plan is not adopted then the Core Strategy 2011-2026, the Sites and Housing Plan 2011-2026, and the saved policies of the Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 will not be superseded. However, many policies of these plans would be considered out of date, which has consequences in terms of decision making (also discussed in the risk assessment section below). In particular there is a greater risk of government intervention because of being unable to meet the Housing Delivery Test and because of not having an up-to-date Local Plan.

Financial implications

22. The costs associated with the production of the Oxford Local Plan 2036 have been met through the current resources of the Planning Policy team budget. The adoption process itself does not carry significant costs.
23. A decision not to adopt the Local Plan would mean the resources used to prepare this plan would have been ineffectual. It is a statutory requirement to maintain an up to date development plan and therefore not to adopt the plan would leave the council exposed to risk, which could have financial implications including planning appeals and the costs associated with having to expedite a wholly new plan. In addition, the Oxfordshire Growth Deal Delivery Plan and associated infrastructure funding had requirements that required the Oxfordshire authorities to put in place up to date development plans.

Legal issues

24. On adoption of the Oxford Local Plan 2036, any person aggrieved may make an application to the High Court to legally challenge the Plan. This application must be made during the six week period starting with the date of adoption. The High Court may quash the Plan wholly, or in part. Aggrieved person(s) who are unhappy with the adopted Local Plan may decide to exercise their right to apply for a judicial review. In order for a legal challenge to be successful, the High Court would have to be satisfied that the Plan is to any extent outside the appropriate power, and/or that the interests of the applicant have been substantially prejudiced by a failure to comply with a procedural requirement. If successful the High Court could rule that the Local Plan be quashed, wholly or in part, or that a stage would need to be repeated.
25. Officers consider that the relevant statutory procedures have been met during the preparation of the Local Plan 2036. The examination was conducted by two experienced planning inspectors and the report has carefully considered the soundness of the plan in detail to reach their conclusions. We therefore think the risk of a successful legal challenge is low.
26. The only area of the statutory procedures that cannot be wholly fulfilled relate to the deposition of hard copies of the plan upon receipt of the Inspectors report and adoption because of Covid-19 and the associated social distancing measures. The Regulations require deposit of hard copies of the Inspectors' report in the City Council's principal office and other deposit locations (libraries within the city), all of which are currently closed to the public. The same requirement (Regulation 35) applies on adoption of the Local Plan as applies to receipt of the Inspectors' report; that is deposit in the Council's principal office and other deposit locations is required.
27. Steps have been taken to minimise this risk from not following statutory procedures on receipt of the Inspector's report and in terms of the actions required on adoption of the Plan. A note explaining the additional steps the Council was intending to take to advertise receipt of the Inspectors' report and the adoption was added to the website prior to receipt of the Inspectors' report. An addendum to the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (SCI) has also been produced, for Cabinet to consider as a separate agenda item on 8th June 2020. It is considered that the measures taken represent reasonable and practical steps that should effectively limit the prospect of any prejudice arising as a result of not being able to deposit hard copies.

28. Government published an update to national guidance on 13th May¹ that included further temporary measures to make it easier to operate the planning system. Within this it explains that where any of the policies in the Statement of Community Involvement cannot be complied with due to current guidance to help combat the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), the local planning authority is encouraged to undertake an immediate review and update the policies where necessary so that plan-making can continue. It goes on to explain that the local planning authority should then make any temporary amendments necessary to allow plan-making to progress, and that continue to promote effective community engagement by means which are reasonably practicable and strongly encourages the use of online methods. The measures we have introduced reflect this guidance.

Level of risk

29. On adoption of the Plan, it is likely to be the case that the requirements of the Regulations for depositing the Plan cannot be met in full because of the Covid-19 situation. The Regulations require that the Plan is published on the website and deposited in hard copy at the Council's principal office and other appropriate locations (usually we use the libraries in the city). The depositing of the Plan in hard copy for inspection is unlikely to be possible. As such, the council has considered all reasonable and practical steps possible to limit the prospect of any prejudice arising from not being able to deposit hard copies. The measures that will be taken include advertising the adoption of the plan on posters at the usual deposit locations, to advertise the adoption in the Oxford Mail/Oxford Times and to use all the usual publicity channels such as social media, in addition to direct notifications to all those on the Planning Policy database. All notifications will give a named officer and contact details if a person requires hard copies of the documents because they cannot access digital copies. These measures were also followed on receipt of the Inspectors' report; that stage is subject to the same Regulation regarding deposit.
30. As explained above the measures being taken by the Council are considered to be in line with the latest Government advice published on 13th May.
31. If a challenge was to be made to the High Court on the basis that hard copies were not available in the deposit locations, the person aggrieved would need to show that they had been substantially prejudiced by the failure to comply with the relevant procedural requirement. It is considered that, given the wide ranging measures being taken to minimise the impact of not complying with this procedural requirement, the risk of a successful challenge on this ground is low, particularly in the context of the clear steer within the latest Government guidance.
32. If a challenge in the High Court was successful on this basis (which is considered to be a low risk), the outcome would likely be that the relevant procedural requirement would need to be carried out before the Local Plan could be considered again for adoption. A challenge under these circumstances would not relate to the content of the Inspectors' report, which would be expected to continue to carry significant weight for decision making. It is considered that given the level of risk, it is appropriate to continue with the adoption of the Local Plan when taking into account the benefits having an up to date development plan in place brings.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-making#covid19>

33. There is a risk associated with choosing not to adopt the Plan. If the Plan was not adopted this would put at the risk the delivery of key policies and developments contained within it. The previous capacity-based housing target in the Core Strategy is no longer considered up-to-date for the purposes of the Housing Delivery Test so our housing delivery is assessed against the standard method until adoption of the Plan. This results in a requirement much higher than the capacity of the city. This could mean that the statutory development plan could be overridden in planning decisions in favour of national planning policies in the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
34. A risk register is attached as Appendix 9. All risks have been mitigated to an acceptable level.

Equalities impact

35. The Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix 10) was carried out on the proposed submission version of the Plan, consulted on alongside the Plan and submitted to the Secretary of State as part of the Examination library. It concluded that the Plan will provide improved standards of quality and access to services and have a positive impact on both the physical fabric and diverse communities of Oxford. There is no evidence that there will be a significant negative impact on any area; however monitoring arrangements will ensure this is kept under regular review. The Equalities Impact Assessment has been considered in light of the main modifications. No changes are required and the previous Equalities Impact Assessment is still relevant (Appendix 10).
36. Ensuring that the Council minimises the equalities impacts of the current pandemic is a key focus of the additional measures proposed in the SCI addendum relating to publicising the adoption of the Plan. As set out in the body of the report, we consider that these measures would ensure that our Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 is appropriately discharged as the measures being put in place will ensure that persons with protected characteristics continue to be able to participate in this planning process.

Conclusion

Officers strongly recommend the Council adopts the Oxford Local Plan 2036. It is the product of several years' work and a robust evidence base. The Inspectors considered the strategy and policies in detail and found the Plan to be soundly based. The Plan has been developed on the basis of significant input from consultation and a thorough evidence base. It has a positive strategy for the city, attempting to help overcome issues such as inequality, and to require sustainable development, with stringent carbon efficiency policies, requirements for biodiversity enhancements, policies to ensure high quality design, delivery of much needed affordable housing, and promotion of sustainable travel.

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Background Papers: None

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To: Cabinet
Date: 8 June 2020
Report of: Head of Planning Services
Title of Report: Addendum to Oxford City Council Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015 in relation to the Coronavirus pandemic

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	Cabinet is requested to approve an addendum to the Oxford City Council Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015 in relation to the Coronavirus disease pandemic.
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery.
Corporate Priority:	A Vibrant and Sustainable Economy; Meeting Housing Needs; Strong and Active Communities; A Clean and Green Oxford.
Policy Framework:	Statements of Community Involvement are part of the legislative framework within which local plan documents are prepared. In addition, the aims and commitments in the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (SCI) are consistent with the Council's Public Engagement Policy Statement.
Recommendation: That Cabinet resolves to:	
1. Approve the Addendum to the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015 (set out at Appendix 1 to this report)	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Addendum to Oxford City Council Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015
Appendix 2	Risk Assessment
Appendix 3	Equalities Impact Assessment

Introduction and background

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to make an addendum to the Oxford City Council Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015 (Appendix 1) in relation to the Coronavirus pandemic.
2. The Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (SCI) is a vital document which sets out the City Council's approach to involving the community and stakeholders in the production of planning policy documents and planning control decisions in the city. The SCI sets out how the City Council will involve the community when preparing planning policy documents and deciding on planning applications. In summary, it is about how the Council informs, involves and consults local people in its planning decisions.
3. Coronavirus (Covid-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. In order to control the spread of the virus and the pandemic in the UK, the government introduced several restrictions from March 2020 including social distancing measures.
4. As a result of Covid-19 and the restrictions implemented by the UK government, a number of public places have been closed and are not open to the public.

Publication Requirements set out under the current Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015

5. Paragraph 3.11 of the current Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015 (SCI) states "*Throughout the process of preparing development plan documents and supplementary planning documents, from the earliest stages through to adoption, we will keep the community and stakeholders informed of progress in the following ways:*
 - *The latest version of any formally published consultation documents will be available on the City Council website and at relevant deposit points⁶ throughout the city;[and]*
 - *The final, adopted versions of documents will be published on the City Council website and at relevant deposit points throughout the city;”*
6. Paragraph 4.3 of the current SCI states "*There are then certain stages where the City Council is required to carry out formal consultation in accordance with the Regulations⁹ as follows:*
 - e). *Publicity/submission consultation - Once the neighbourhood planning group has submitted their Neighbourhood Plan to the City Council, the City Council will publish the plan and supporting documents in accordance with the regulatory requirements¹⁰ on the City Council website. Copies of these documents will also be available at the main council offices (St Aldate's Chambers).*
 - f). *Decision on a Neighbourhood Plan - The City Council will send a copy of the Neighbourhood Plan, the supporting documents and comments received at the submission stage to an appointed examiner for independent examination. Hearing sessions, if required (at the discretion of the Examiner), will be open to the public to attend but only those invited by the Examiner may participate in discussions. The*

City Council will then publish the Examiner's report and decision statement on the City Council website, and make it available to view at the City Council's main offices (St Aldate's Chambers), before proceeding to arrange (subject to a favourable Examiner's report) the referendum.

g). Referendum - At least 28 days before the referendum takes place, the City Council will publish the following documents on its website (hard copies will also be made available at the main City Council offices, St Aldate's Chambers): the draft Neighbourhood Plan; the Examiner's report; a summary of the representations submitted to the Examiner; a statement that the City Council is satisfied that the plan meets the basic conditions; general information on town and country planning to ensure voters have sufficient knowledge to make an informed decision; and an information statement that provides detailed information on the referendum arrangements.

7. Paragraph 5.7 of the current SCI states "*The City Council will make information available about planning applications using the following methods:*

- *Availability of plans – plans and documents submitted as part of a planning application are available to view online at the main City Council offices (St Aldate's Chambers) during office hours. Paper copies of documents for major planning applications are available in reception, or for other types of planning application are available to view by making an appointment with the relevant case officer in advance.*

8. Paragraph 5.13 of the current SCI states:

- *Reports for applications being determined at committee are available for public inspection at the City Council's main offices (St Aldate's Chambers) and on the City Council website usually one week before the committee meeting.'*

Implications of Covid-19 to the Publication Requirements set out under the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015

9. Due to the restrictions imposed by the UK government in relation to COVID-19, there are a number of current methods of publication requirements stated in the current SCI which are not currently possible to adhere to:

- The council is not able to publish the latest version of any formally published consultation documents and/or the final, adopted versions of documents at relevant deposit points throughout the city as they are closed to the public;
- Plans and documents submitted as part of a planning application are not available to view online at the main City Council offices (St Aldate's Chambers) as it is closed to the public;
- The council is not able to make paper copies of documents for major planning applications available in its reception as it is closed to the public; and
- Other types of planning applications are not available to view in the Council's reception by making an appointment with the relevant case officer in advance, as it is closed to the public.

Proposed Addendum to the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015

10. There are a number of requirements set out in the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015, which are not currently possible to adhere to due to the restrictions imposed by the UK government in relation to COVID-19. As a result of this, there are a number of paragraphs in the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015 that need to be temporarily amended as they relate to the publication and deposition of hard copies of documentation as well as undertaking site visits. These amendments are set out in the proposed SCI addendum at Appendix 1.
11. The paragraphs which need to be temporarily amended are 3.11, 4.3 (stages e), f) and g)), 5.7 and 5.13. These amendments only apply until the UK government removes social distancing measures and/or advises that the City Council offices and deposit points can be opened to visitors again.
12. The addendum includes measures that the City Council will implement during the period of time in which social distancing measures are in force and public venues remain closed.

Temporary measures relating to Planning applications covered by paragraph 5.7 and 5.13 of the Statement of Community Involvement

13. The Council's Planning service is still determining planning applications during the coronavirus pandemic. There is a robust system to determine applications remotely. The Council has the technology to be able to do this. The following temporary changes to some of the working practices around site visits and hard copy documents are proposed, these relate to paragraph 5.7 and 5.13 of the SCI and are set out below. The SCI also encourages effective pre-application engagement and the Council would encourage applicants to discuss with their case officer the approach to pre-application consultation at the current time to ensure it is effective at informing proposals.

Hard Copy Documents

14. The Council is currently unable to make available hard copies of planning application documents in either the Council offices or local libraries as these offices are closed to the public. In certain circumstances, the Council has a statutory duty to make hard copy documents available for inspection at the Council offices and at other locations. In the current circumstances, these documents will be available on the Council website. The public will still be advised of relevant applications by site notices and/or press notices. In addition every planning application has an appointed case officer that the public can contact should residents encounter any issues in accessing these documents.

Site Visits

15. As part of the current government advice on social distancing, officers are minimising site visits to properties.
16. However officers are currently reviewing what information they have available to them to make a decision, whether this be by doing site visits from the public realm, reviewing planning histories, and contacting applicants to undertake virtual site visits by requesting photographs with guidance from the officers. This is not the case for all applications but applicants may be asked to provide photographs. Any

site visits that officers do carry out and where access onto site is essential will be governed by social distancing requirements and the applicant will be asked a series of triage questions in advance of the visit being arranged.

Temporary measures relating to Planning Policy documents covered by paragraph 3.11 of the Statement of Community Involvement

17. The following measures will be utilised in the absence of being able to deposit hard copies of planning policy documents where set out in paragraph 3.11 of the SCI. These seek to ensure that local people are still able to participate in planning processes and minimise the impact of not being able to make hard copies of planning policy documents available for inspection.

- Make documents and associated information available online - The City Council will make the relevant documents available online via the Council's website (<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/planning>).
- Notification to all individuals, businesses and organisations on the existing Local Plan database of any formally published documents – The Council will inform all persons and organisations on the Local Plan database of formally published policy documents including consultations documents, submission of development plan documents Inspector reports, and final adopted versions of documents. This will indicate how and where the relevant documents can be viewed on the Council's website. Included within this correspondence will be the contact details of a named officer including phone number and email address which can be used to discuss any problems they may have in accessing documents via the website. Notifications will be sent by email and also by letter posted to anyone who has not provided an email address previously.
- Public notices at normal deposit points and the Town Hall - A public notice will be posted at the Council's main office (St. Aldates Chambers), the Oxford Town Hall and all public libraries listed in the published Statement of Community Involvement as deposit locations. The notices will be posted in a position that can be seen and read from the public highway or other publically accessible vantage point. The notice will inform the reader of the relevant document or consultation and how and where documents can be viewed on the Council's website. The notice will also give a name, phone number and email address for an officer who can be contacted by any person who is encountering difficulty in accessing the documents online.
- Public notice in local newspapers - A similar public notice will also be published in the two main local newspapers – the Oxford Mail and the Oxford Times. The notice will inform the reader where the relevant documents are on the Council's website. The notice will also give a name, phone number and email address for an officer who can be contacted by any person who is encountering difficulty in accessing the documents online.
- Press releases - A press release will also be published and sent to local media outlets to raise awareness through local news. This will include where relevant documents can be found on the Council's website. The press

release will also give a name, phone number and email address for an officer who can be contacted by any person who is encountering difficulty in accessing the documents online.

- Social Media – The Council will also disseminate information via other usual social media channels about relevant planning documents and/or consultations. This will include where the relevant documents can be found on the Council’s website and a name, phone number and email address for an officer who can be contacted by any person who is encountering difficulty in accessing the documents online.

18. The Council also acknowledges that future consultations on development plan documents and supplementary planning documents that take place during this period of restrictions may not be able to include physical meetings, events etc. which are listed as possible consultation methods in Table 1 and 2 of the SCI. As set out at paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10 in the SCI an appropriate consultation programme for each document is required and this should consider appropriate measures for the individual document being prepared.

Neighbourhood Planning

19. For Neighbourhood Planning, deposit of documents within the neighbourhood area will also need to take account of government guidance. The Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government has published a new section to the online planning guidance relating to neighbourhood planning specifically about the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic and neighbourhood plans. This will concern those parish councils and neighbourhood forums preparing neighbourhood plans who may be at a stage close to carrying out a public consultation or submitting their plan to the Council. The guidance indicates however that no referendums can be carried out now until May 2021.

20. When the relevant qualifying body’s office or other appropriate publicly accessible venues are not available, measures should be put in place by the relevant qualifying body (e.g. a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum) to ensure access to assistance, with notices including an email address and phone number, so that anyone having problems viewing the documents can discuss the consultation and seek assistance to view them.

21. Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan’s referendum is now postponed until 6th May 2021 due to the regulations linked to the Coronavirus Act 2020. The Government is committed to keeping these regulations under review, so they may be amended or revoked in response to changing circumstances. In response to these delays, this neighbourhood plan can be given significant weight in decision-making, so far as the plan is material to the application. This is due to the fact that the council has issued a decision statement detailing its intention to send the neighbourhood plan to referendum. This was approved at Cabinet in October 2019. If when the referendum takes place the majority of those who vote on it are in favour the council will then consider a report to make the plan. It is at that point it would become part of the development plan.

Financial implications

22. The cost implications of taking these temporary measures are anticipated to be minimal/neutral to the normal requirements of the Statement of Community Involvement.

Legal issues

23. An addendum to a Statement of Community Involvement can be made without consultation. This is confirmed in the National Planning Policy Guidance under paragraph 035 (Reference ID: 61-035-20190723, revision date: 23 07 2019).

24. Some of the requirements of the Statement of Community Involvement to deposit hard copies of documents for public access reflect procedural regulatory requirements for major applications and planning policy documents. It is therefore possible for people to legally challenge the process in the High Court on the basis that the relevant regulations that require hard copies to be made available at appropriate points in the respective processes have not been complied with. Any individual challenging the planning process under these procedural requirements would need to demonstrate that they had been substantially prejudiced as a result. The Council considers the measures taken represent reasonable and practical steps that should effectively limit the prospect of any prejudice arising as a result of not being able to deposit hard copies.

Level of risk

25. If a challenge was to be made to the High Court on the basis that hard copies were not available in the deposit locations, the person aggrieved would need to show that they had been substantially prejudiced by the failure to comply with the relevant procedural requirement. It is considered that, given the temporary measures being taken to minimise the impact of not complying with the relevant procedural requirements, the risk of a successful challenge on this ground is low.

26. In addition, Government published an update to guidance on 13th May¹ that included further temporary measures to make it easier to operate the planning system. Within this it explains that where any of the policies in the Statement of Community Involvement cannot be complied with due to current guidance to help combat the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), the local planning authority is encouraged to undertake an immediate review and update the policies where necessary so that plan-making can continue. It goes on to explain that the local planning authority should then make any temporary amendments necessary to allow plan-making to progress, and that continue to promote effective community engagement by means which are reasonably practicable and strongly encourages the use of online methods.

27. The steps taken in regard to progressing this addendum and the temporary measures contained within it reflect this guidance.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-making#covid19>

Equalities impact

28. The Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix 3) concludes that there is no evidence that there will be a significant negative impact on any area; however monitoring arrangements will ensure this is kept under review.
29. Ensuring that the Council minimises the equalities impacts of the current pandemic is a key focus of the additional measures proposed in the SCI addendum. As set out in the body of the report, it is considered that these measures would ensure that the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 is appropriately discharged as the measures being put in place will ensure that persons with protected characteristics continue to be able to participate in this planning process.

Conclusion

30. Officers recommend the Cabinet authorises the addendum proposed to the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015.

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Background Papers: None

Statement of Community Involvement in planning - Addendum

May 2020



Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (SCI) – Addendum May 2020

Amended Practice in Response to Covid-19 Pandemic

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Oxford City Council is committed to keeping essential services running through the developing Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. It is important that the planning process continues to move forward as planning has an important role to play in supporting our communities and economy. Our Planning service is adapting its approach to planning decisions and plan making in a number of ways in light of COVID-19 restrictions.
- 1.2. The Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015 (SCI) sets out how we will involve the community in the planning process. This document provides an addendum to the SCI, and sets out the measures the Council will be taking in the Planning Service whilst Covid-19 related restrictions are in force. It sets temporary measures that are being put in place to minimise the impacts of the restrictions on people engaging with the planning process.
- 1.3. This addendum and the temporary measures contained within it will only apply until the UK government removes social distancing measures and/or advises that the City Council offices and deposit points can be opened to visitors again. It should be read alongside the original document, available to view at:
https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/1474/statement_of_community_involvement
More information on the SCI can also be found on our website at:
https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20007/communities/816/community_involvement_in_planning
- 1.4. For more general information and guidance about the impact of COVID-19 on Oxford City Council's services, please visit: <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/coronavirus> .

2. Involving the Community at the Planning Application Stage

Decision Making Process

- 1.1. Our Planning service is still determining planning applications during the coronavirus pandemic. We have a robust system to determine applications remotely. We have the technology to be able to do this. We have changed some of our working practices around site notices and site visits and these are set out below. The SCI also encourages effective pre-application engagement and we would encourage applicants to discuss with their case officer the approach to pre-application consultation at the current time to ensure it is effective at informing proposals.

Hard Copy Documents

- 2.1. We are currently unable to make available hard copies of planning application documents in either the Council or local libraries as these offices are closed to the public. In certain circumstances, the Council has a statutory duty to make hard copy documents available for inspection at the Council offices and at other locations. In the current circumstances, these documents will be available on the Council website. The public will still be advised of relevant applications by site notices and/or press notices. In addition every planning application has an appointed case officer that the public can contact should residents encounter any issues in accessing these documents.

Site Visits

- 2.2. As part of the current government advice on social distancing, officers are minimising site visits to properties.
- 2.3. However officers are currently reviewing what information they have available to them to make a decision, whether this be by doing site visits from the public realm, reviewing planning histories, and contacting applicants to undertake virtual site visits by requesting photographs with guidance from the officers. This is not the case for all applications but applicants may be asked to provide photographs. Any site visits that we do carry out and where access onto site is essential this will be governed by

social distancing requirements and you will be asked a series of triage questions in advance of the visit being arranged.

3. Involving the Community in Planning Policy

- 3.1. The Government is encouraging all local planning authorities to continue, as much as possible, to work proactively with their community and other stakeholders to progress plans. The Planning Advisory Service advise that, ‘This is an opportunity to think differently about how you consult and how you use the online and virtual tools you have access to promote your consultation and allow people to get involved.’
- 3.2. Some specific changes are needed to our current methods to reflect to government restrictions in place related to Covid-19. Although documents can be made available online, making plan documents available to view at the Council’s Office and other deposit locations is not possible while they are closed to visitors.
- 3.3. We also acknowledge that any public consultations on development plan documents and supplementary planning documents that take place during these restrictions may not be able to undertake physical meetings, events etc. which are listed as possible consultation methods in Table 1 and 2 of the SCI. As set out at paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10 in the SCI an appropriate consultation programme for each document is required and this should consider appropriate measures for the individual document being prepared.
- 3.4. The following measures will utilised in the absence of being able to deposit hard copies of planning policy documents where set out in paragraph 3.11 of the SCI. These seek to ensure that local people are still able to participate in planning processes and minimise the impact of not being able to make hard copies of planning policy documents in deposit locations. These measures address the consequences of this unavoidable situation and ensure local people continue to be made aware of the progress of the planning policy documents and have access to documents associated with them.

I - Making Documents and associated information available online

- 3.5. The City Council will make the relevant documents available online via the OCC’s website.

II - Notification to all individuals, businesses and organisations on our Local Plan databases

- 3.6. OCC will inform all persons and organisations on the Local Plan database of formally published policy documents including consultations documents, submission

of development plan documents Inspector reports, and final adopted versions of documents. This will indicate how and where the relevant documents can be viewed on OCC's website. Included within this correspondence will be the contact details of a named officer including phone number and email address which can be used to discuss any problems they may have in accessing documents via the website. Notifications will be sent by email and also by letter to anyone who has not provided an email address previously.

III - Public notices at normal deposit points and the Town Hall

3.7. A public notice will be posted at the OCC's main office (St. Aldates Chambers), the Oxford Town Hall and all public libraries listed in the published Statement of Community Involvement as deposit locations. The notices will be posted in a position that can be seen and read from the public highway or other publically accessible vantage point. The notice will inform the reader of the relevant document or consultation and how and where documents can be viewed on OCC's website. The notice will also give a name, phone number and email address for an officer who can be contacted by any person who is encountering difficulty in accessing the documents online.

IV - Public Notice in Local Newspapers

3.8. A similar public notice will also be published in the two main local newspapers – the Oxford Mail and the Oxford Times. The notice will inform the reader where the relevant documents are on OCC's website. The notice will also give a name, phone number and email address for an officer who can be contacted by any person who is encountering difficulty in accessing the documents online.

V - Press Releases

3.9. A press release will also be published and sent to local media outlets to raise awareness through local news. This will include where relevant documents can be found on OCC's website. The press release will also give a name, phone number and email address for an officer who can be contacted by any person who is encountering difficulty in accessing the documents online.

VI - Social Media

3.10. OCC will also disseminate information via other usual social media channels about relevant planning documents and/or consultations. This will include where the relevant documents can be found on OCC's website and a name, phone number and email address for an officer who can be contacted by any person who is encountering difficulty in accessing the documents online.

4. Neighbourhood Planning

4.1 For Neighbourhood Planning, deposit of documents within the neighbourhood area will also need to take account of government guidance. Any relevant documents should be published online to view. When the relevant qualifying body's office or other appropriate publicly accessible venues are not available, measures should be put in place by the relevant qualifying body (e.g. a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum) to ensure access to assistance, with notices including an email address and phone number, so that anyone having problems viewing the documents can discuss the consultation and seek assistance to view them.

4.2 The Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government have published a new section to the online planning guidance relating to neighbourhood planning specifically about the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic and neighbourhood plans¹. This will concern those neighbourhood planning groups preparing neighbourhood plans who may be at a stage close to carrying out a public consultation or submitting their plan to the Councils. The guidance also indicates that no referendums can be carried out now until 6 May 2021.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#coronavirus>

5. Approaches in the Adopted SCI where a revised approach in response to COVID-19 Pandemic is now applied².

Page	Paragraph	Text in Adopted SCI	Revised Approach in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic
13	3.11	<p>'The latest version of any formally published consultation documents will be available on the City Council website and at relevant deposit points throughout the city;</p> <p>At examination stage (for local development plan documents), we will tell those who asked to be notified when the document has been submitted to the Secretary of State. We will also publish a consultation summary report on the City Council website and the representations from the pre-submission stage will be made available for public inspection;</p> <p>the final, adopted versions of documents will be published on the City Council website and at relevant deposit points throughout the city;'</p>	It is not possible for the Council to make hard copies at the deposit points throughout the city. The City Council will make the relevant documents available online via our website and take the additional temporary measures set out in section 3 of this addendum.
15	4.3 – e)	'Publicity/submission - consultation Once the neighbourhood planning group has submitted their Neighbourhood Plan to the City Council, the City Council will publish the plan and supporting documents in	It is not possible for neighbourhood planning groups to make their plan and supporting documents available to view at the main City Council offices (St

² The revised approach will only replace the adopted approach where COVID-19 pandemic restrictions deem these revised measures necessary. Once the government's advice on the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions changes to allow the adopted approach, those relevant paragraphs will be reinstated.

Statement of Community Involvement in Planning – Addendum

		<p>accordance with the regulatory requirements on the City Council website. Copies of these documents will also be available at the main council offices (St Aldate’s Chambers). The City Council will contact all those who we are advised have commented previously on the Neighbourhood Plan to invite final comments.’</p>	<p>Aldate’s Chambers). Instead, the neighbourhood planning group ensure access to assistance, with notices including an email address and phone number, so that anyone having problems viewing the documents can discuss the consultation and seek assistance to view them. Deposit of documents within the neighbourhood area will also need to take account of government guidance.</p>
15	4.3 – f)	<p>‘...The City Council will then publish the Examiner’s report and decision statement on the City Council website, and make it available to view at the City Council’s main offices (St Aldate’s Chambers), before proceeding to arrange (subject to a favourable Examiner’s report) the referendum.’</p>	<p>It is not possible for the Council to make Neighbourhood Plan Examiner’s reports and decision statements available to view at the City Council’s main offices (St Aldate’s Chambers). The City Council will make the relevant documents available online via our website and neighbourhood planning group should work to ensure access to assistance, with notices including an email address and phone number, so that anyone having</p>

Statement of Community Involvement in Planning – Addendum

			problems viewing the documents can discuss the consultation and seek assistance to view them. Deposit of documents within the neighbourhood area will also need to take account of government guidance.
15	4.3 – g)	‘At least 28 days before the referendum takes place, the City Council will publish the following documents on its website (hard copies will also be made available at the main City Council offices, St Aldate’s Chambers): the draft Neighbourhood Plan; the Examiner’s report; a summary of the representations submitted to the Examiner; a statement that the City Council is satisfied that the plan meets the basic conditions; general information on town and country planning to ensure voters have sufficient knowledge to make an informed decision; and an information statement that provides detailed information on the referendum arrangements. The City Council will also encourage the neighbourhood planning group to let local people know about the referendum and encourage a high participation rate so that it is representative’	Government guidance has stated that no referendums can take place until 6 May 2021 and is therefore unlikely to be affected by current restrictions.
17	5.7	‘Availability of plans – plans and documents	It is not possible for the Council to

Statement of Community Involvement in Planning – Addendum

		<p>submitted as part of a planning application are available to view online at the main City Council offices (St Aldate's Chambers) during office hours. Paper copies of documents for major planning applications are available in reception, or for other types of planning application are available to view by making an appointment with the relevant case officer in advance.'</p>	<p>make available plans and documents submitted as part of a planning application to view online at the main City Council offices (St Aldate's Chambers) or provide paper copies of documents for major planning applications. Instead, the City Council will make the relevant documents available online via our website. Every planning application has an appointed and named case officer that the public can contact should residents encounter any issues in accessing these documents. The public will still be advised of relevant applications by site notices and/or press notices.</p>
18	5.8	<p>'Before recommending a decision, the planning officer will make a full site inspection and take account of any comments received from neighbours, interested bodies, and statutory consultees'</p>	<p>As part of the current government advice on social distancing, officers are not making site visits to properties.</p> <p>However, officers are currently reviewing what information they have available to them to make a decision, whether this be by doing</p>

Statement of Community Involvement in Planning – Addendum

			<p>site visits from the public realm, reviewing planning histories, and contacting applicants to undertake virtual site visits by requesting photographs with guidance from the officers. This is not the case for all applications but applicants may be asked to provide photographs.</p>
19	5.13	<p>'Reports for applications being determined at committee are available for public inspection at the City Council's main offices (St Aldate's Chambers) and on the City Council website usually one week before the committee meeting.'</p>	<p>Reports for applications being determined at committee are not currently available for public inspection at the City Council's main offices (St Aldate's Chambers).</p> <p>Instead, these reports are available online to view via our website. Every planning application has an appointed and named case officer that the public can contact should residents encounter any issues in accessing these documents.</p>

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Appendix 2

Appendix 2: Risk Register

Title	Risk description	Opp/ threat	Cause	Consequence	Date Raised	Owner	Gross		Current		Residual		Comments	Controls				
							I	P	I	P	I	P		Control description	Due date	Status	Progress %	Action Owner
Publication requirements temporarily breaching SCI	The publication requirements set out under the council's SCI 2015 are temporarily not being met due to Covid-19, and therefore the council are not fulfilling their consultation and communication requirements under planning legislation and regulations. A potential impact of this is that the adoption of a policy document or decision of a planning decision may be affected as it would not comply with the SCI and potentially some	T	As a result of Covid-19 and the restrictions implemented by the UK government, a number of public places have been closed and are not open to the public. Due to these restrictions, there are a number of current methods of publication requirements stated in the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015 which are not currently possible to adhere to. These include policy documents and planning application documents not being available at deposit points in the city.	Publication requirement methods may not fully comply with current legislation or regulations, potentially causing difficulties at adoption of policy documents.	12/05/20	Head of Services	3	3	3	4	2	2	Mitigation proposed is to make an addendum to the SCI which temporarily suspends some paragraphs in the document. The addendum would include measures taken by the council in response to the temporary breaches.	When the addendum is endorsed.				Head of Services

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Appendix 3



Form to be used for the Full Equalities Impact Assessment

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Service Area: Planning	Section: Planning Policy	Date of Initial assessment: 12/05/2020	Key Person responsible for assessment: Juliet Evans	Date assessment commenced: 15/05/20	
Name of Policy to be assessed:		Addendum to Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015 in relation to Covid-19			
1. In what area are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact		Race		Disability	
		Gender reassignment		Religion or Belief	
		Sex		Pregnancy and Maternity	
Other strategic/ equalities considerations		Safeguarding/ Welfare of Children and vulnerable adults		Mental Wellbeing/ Community Resilience	
2. Background: Give the background information to the policy and the perceived problems with the policy which are the reason for the Impact Assessment.		<p>The Statement of Community Involvement in Planning is a vital document which sets out the City Council's approach to involving the community and stakeholders in the production of planning policy documents and planning control decisions in the city. The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the City Council will involve the community when preparing planning policy documents and deciding on planning applications. In summary, it is about how the Council inform, involve and consult local people in our planning decisions.</p> <p>Coronavirus (Covid-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. In order</p>			

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	<p>to control the spread the control of the virus and the pandemic in UK, the UK government introduced several restrictions from March 2020 including social distancing measures. As a result of Covid-19 and the restrictions implemented by the UK government, a number of public places have been closed and are not open to the public. Due to the restrictions imposed by the UK government in relation to COVID-19, there are a number of current methods of publication requirements stated in the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015 which are not currently possible to adhere to. Oxford City Council therefore wishes to make an addendum to its Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015 in relation to the Coronavirus pandemic.</p>
<p>3. Methodology and Sources of Data:</p> <p>The methods used to collect data and what sources of data</p>	<p>The measures set out in the addendum have been chosen for implementation as a result of careful consideration into the best methods to engage with the public given the COVID-19 restrictions and also the result of formal legal advice. This seeks to ensure that the measures we have chosen seek to minimise the impact on the public as a result of the council not being able to make hard copies available in key deposit locations.</p>
<p>4. Consultation</p> <p>This section should outline all the consultation that has taken place on the EIA. It should include the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why you carried out the consultation. • Details about how you went about it. • A summary of the replies you received from people you consulted. • An assessment of your proposed policy (or policy 	<p>An addendum to a Statement of Community Involvement can be made without consultation. This is confirmed in the National Planning Policy Guidance under paragraph 035 (Reference ID: 61-035-20190723, revision date: 23 07 2019). Additionally, we will not be undertaking a consultation on the addendum to the SCI, as they need to be implemented urgently due to COVID-19 restrictions. Therefore there is not enough time to undertake a consultation. The restrictions associated with the Coronavirus pandemic provide only limited options as to how this can be achieved, and these have been set out in the measures. The City Council seeks to ensure that by implementing the measures set in the addendum, that we are taking all reasonably practical steps to limit the prospect of any prejudice arising if it remains unable to make hard copies of key planning documents and decisions available for inspection at its offices and at local libraries.</p>

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<p>options) in the light of the responses you received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A statement of what you plan to do next	
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5. Assessment of Impact:
Provide details of the assessment of the policy on the six primary equality strands. There may have been other groups or individuals that you considered. Please also consider whether the policy, strategy or spending decisions could have an impact on safeguarding and / or the welfare of children and vulnerable adults

Race	Disability	Age
Neutral	Positive	Positive
Gender reassignment	Religion or Belief	Sexual Orientation
Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Sex	Pregnancy and Maternity	Marriage & Civil Partnership
Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Race:
No equalities impact identified.

Disability:
Those with long term health conditions and certain disabilities may be at high or moderate risk of catching coronavirus. This may mean they are unable to leave the house due to self-isolating, or leave the house very infrequently for only essential trips. Therefore, by ensuring all relevant documentation is accessible on our website, and the public are kept informed of key planning matters and documents through the measures set out in the SCI addendum, those self-isolating and not leaving the house are still able to engage in planning.

Age:
Data from Age UK collected in 2016 stated that '4.2 million people aged 65+ have never used the internet'. The SCI addendum explains that the City Council will make any relevant planning documents available online. This will be difficult for those who do not have access to the internet, of

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which those over 65 are more likely to fall into that category.

The public are will still be advised of relevant planning applications and key planning matters by site notices, public notices, and press notices. The press notices are particularly helpful for those 70+ as they are classed as people who are at moderate risk (clinically vulnerable) from coronavirus, and thus less likely to leave the house to read a library noticeboard, but could access a newspaper. Where necessary a phone number of an officer will be provided, so that those who have difficulty having access to key documents can seek advice.

These measures will allow those who do not have access to the internet at home will have a method of being informed of key planning matters and documentation. Therefore, although there is potentially an impact on those who cannot access the internet (who statistically are more likely to be over 65), the measures are considered to adequately address this issue and help to ensure no person is prejudiced by physical copies of planning documents not being available.

Gender reassignment:

No equalities impact identified.

Religion or Belief:

No equalities impact identified.

Sexual orientation:

No equalities impacts identified.

Sex:

No equalities impacts identified.

Pregnancy and Maternity:

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	<p>Those who are pregnant have been classed as having a moderate risk of catching coronavirus. This may mean they are unable to leave the house due to self-isolating, or leave the house very infrequently for only essential trips. Therefore, by ensuring all relevant documentation is accessible on our website, and the public are kept informed of key planning matters and documents through the measures set out in the SCI addendum, those self-isolating and not leaving the house are still able to engage in planning</p> <p>Marriage and Civil Partnership:</p> <p>No equalities impacts identified.</p>
<p>6. Consideration of Measures:</p>	<p>The measures set out in the SCI are deemed to be the most appropriate, as confirmed through legal advice. Alternative options in these circumstances are very limited due to government restrictions,</p>

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<p>This section should explain in detail all the consideration of alternative approaches/mitigation of adverse impact of the policy</p>	<p>meaning it is not possible to provide physical copies of planning documentation at the locations set out in the SCI. The health and safety of officers and the public was the most important consideration when deciding which measures to implement, and thus the measures set out in the SCI addendum are considered to be the most appropriate to adopt, whilst still allowing the public to engage successfully in planning matters.</p>				
<p>6a. Monitoring Arrangements: Outline systems which will be put in place to monitor for adverse impact in the future and this should include all relevant timetables. In addition it could include a summary and assessment of your monitoring, making clear whether you found any evidence of discrimination.</p>	<p>Government advice regarding COVID-19 restrictions will be closely followed in order to ensure that if advice changes to allow the suspension any of the measures set out in the addendum and the reinstatement of the adopted SCI this will take place at the earliest convenience. This will ensure that the addendum is only adopted for as long as it is required, and no longer.</p>				
<p>7. Date reported and signed off by City Executive Board:</p>					
<p>8. Conclusions: What are your conclusions drawn from the results in terms of the policy impact</p>	<p>The SCI addendum should not have an adverse impact on the six primary equality strands. The addendum to the SCI sets out how the planning service will ensure that communities can still successfully engage in planning matters during the COVID-19 restrictions enforced by government.</p>				
<p>9. Are there implications for the Service Plans?</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p>10. Date the Service Plans will be updated</p>		<p>11. Date copy sent to Equalities Lead Officer</p>	

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.13. Date reported to Scrutiny and Executive Board:		14. Date reported to City Executive Board:		12. The date the report on EqlA will be published	
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Signed (completing officer)

Signed (Lead Officer)

Please list the team members and service areas that were involved in this process:

Equalities Lead Officer
Service Manager
Lindsey Cane, Legal Services Manager

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Minutes of a meeting of the CABINET on Wednesday 11 March 2020

www.oxford.gov.uk



Committee members:

Councillor Brown (Chair)	Councillor Linda Smith (Deputy Leader)
Councillor Turner	Councillor Chapman
Councillor Clarkson	Councillor Hayes
Councillor Hollingsworth	Councillor Rowley
Councillor Tidball	Councillor Upton

Also present:

Councillor Andrew Gant
Councillor Richard Howlett

Officers:

Gordon Mitchell, Chief Executive
Tom Bridgman, Executive Director (Development)
Caroline Green, Assistant Chief Executive
Tim Sadler, Transition Director
Anita Bradley, Monitoring Officer
Nigel Kennedy, Head of Financial Services
Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement
Ian Wright, Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety
Matthew Peachey, Economic Development Manager
Andrew Humpherson, Regeneration Manager
Becky Walker, Home Improvement Agency Team Manager
Tom Hudson, Scrutiny Officer
John Mitchell, Committee and Member Services Officer

Apologies:

No apologies were received

149. Declarations of Interest

None.

150. Addresses and Questions by Members of the Public

None.

151. Councillor Addresses on any item for decision on the Board's agenda

None.

152. Councillor Addresses on Neighbourhood Issues

None.

153. Items raised by Board Members

None.

154. Scrutiny Committee Reports

Cabinet had before it the Report of the Climate Emergency Group and the Committee's recommendations in relation to Blackbird Leys Development Project Detailed Design (Agenda item 8) and Agenda Pay Gap (Agenda item 9).

Blackbird Leys Development Project Detailed Design

Councillor Andrew Gant, speaking in his capacity as Chair of Scrutiny Committee, said he was grateful for the positive responses to the majority of the Committee's recommendations. The recommendation in relation to the desirability of securing adequate temporary provision for activities currently taking place at the Community Centre during the 'decant' phase was particularly important.

Councillor Mike Rowley, Cabinet Member for Housing, had been pleased to agree the majority of the Committee's recommendations but unable to support the recommendation in relation to a 'comfort payment system', not least because Catalyst, as the provider, did not have the financial systems to support such a system. In relation to the recommendation to require Passivhaus standards of insulation and air tightness, he noted that compliance with standards in the emerging Local Plan would be the starting point. Further work would however be done to look at how those standards could improved still further within the overall budget envelope.

Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Housing, said that Blackbird Leys was fortunate in having several other venues which could be used during the decant from the Community Centre.

Agenda Pay Gap

Councillor Andrew Gant noted that the Committee's discussion of this item had been wide ranging and extended beyond the strict remit of the report. He was pleased with the positive response to the one recommendation which had emerged.

Climate Emergency Report

Councillor Richard Howlett, speaking in his capacity as Chair of the Scrutiny Committee's Climate Emergency Review Group, said the review had benefited from input from a wide range of well informed experts. The decision to focus on buildings had been driven by the fact that they account for the majority of the City's emissions. It was noteworthy that the report's 56 recommendations were of relevance to all but one of the Cabinet's 10 portfolios. The Review Group's visit to a development in Southmoor had been revelatory, showing how it was possible to build properties to Passivhaus standards at a cost marginally lower than houses built simply to Building Regulation standards. He also drew attention to the Nottingham City Homes financing scheme which seeks to ensure that the money used by tenants on energy can be used to fund

improved and zero carbon homes. That such expertise was available locally provided a great opportunity for the Council to benefit from it.

The Chair thanked Cllr Howlett and members of the review group for an excellent report, the recommendations of which deserved a substantial and considered response in due course. The Oxfordshire Growth Board was also very engaged with these matters, having considered an item on Zero Carbon Housing earlier in the day. The Board was committed to becoming a leader in this area. The need to skill up the local workforce was emerging as a priority if the Council's and Board's ambitions were to be realised.

Councillor Tom Hayes, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford, thanked Cllr Howlett and those who had contributed to it for an excellent report which would enrich the work of the Council. The report's recommendations would need to be integrated with the many other strands of related Council activity. It would be important, also, to engage the whole City with these important developments.

155. Update of Housing Assistance and Disabled Adaptation Policy

The Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety had submitted a report to recommend changes to allow clarification around discretionary grant and joint custody arrangements.

Councillor Mike Rowley, Cabinet Member for Housing, said the proposed amendments simply sought to clarify and incorporate in the policy two matters of common sense and good practice.

Ian Wright, Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety, said the amendments were driven by customer experience and the wish to provide the best possible service. Becky Walker, Home Improvement Agency Team Manager, noted that the Council was seen to provide an example of best practice in this area of work.

Councillor Rowley paid tribute to the work of the team which he knew to be exemplary.

Cabinet resolved to:

Approve the proposed changes to the current Housing Assistance and Disabled Adaptation Policy attached at Appendix 2 of the report.

156. Blackbird Leys Development Project Detailed design

The Executive Director (Development) had submitted a report to seek approval to proceed to the detailed design phase of the Blackbird Leys Estate Regeneration project and allocate funds associated with the detailed design and planning, as well as delivery.

Councillor Mike Rowley, Cabinet Member for Housing, said the report represented a key stage in this important development and sought, among other things, to secure the

necessary funding for the next phase. The scheme would provide an additional 275 new homes (50% of which will be available for social rent), a Community Centre and new retail units. The project had taken some time to get to this point because of its scale and complexity. There had been recent initial consultation events with the local community and more would follow.

Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Housing, emphasised the indicative nature of the plans at this stage. A formal planning application would not be made until the end of the year. She encouraged local residents to get involved via the consultation events.

Andrew Humpherson, Regeneration Manager, said the two recent consultation events had been well attended. Feedback from them had been broadly positive with few negative comments. The next round of consultation events would be local 'pop up' events to encourage more people to attend.

The Chair thanked all those involved in this significant piece of work. She further emphasised the importance of this consultative phase; the views of local people were central to achieving the best possible outcome for local residents.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Delegate** authority to the Executive Director Development to sign off the Pre-Planning Viability Condition and all other Stage One requirements of the Development Agreement detailed in this report, and confirm the project can move past Gateway One and into Stage Two (detailed design & planning submission) of the Development Agreement;
2. **Delegate** authority to the Executive Director of Development, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Leisure & Housing and the Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing, to approve moving through the remaining Gateways of the Development Agreement and subsequently entering into a lease for the land with Catalyst Housing Limited, subject to the approved budget;
3. **Note** that the Development Agreement sets out that if the scheme does not move forward to delivery, that the Council will incur 50% of the Stage 2 costs, an estimate of which is set out in the report. (paragraph 73);
4. **Approve** the use the CIL receipts generated to facilitate the delivery of the community and infrastructure works set out in the concept plan and to recommend to Full Council that this commitment is recognised in the Capital Programme in 2022/23 and beyond as a potential future earmarked CIL receipt (for investment in strategic infrastructure and community facilities at Blackbird Leys) and subject to planning;
5. **Recommend** to Council to allocate a budget of up to £21.528 million to deliver the scheme for new affordable and market housing, community and retail facilities and new and enhanced public space (paragraphs 11-19) and in line with the funding sources and viability assessment set out in this report. (paragraphs 57 – 62);
6. **Recommend** to Council to allocate the HRA and General Fund spend in accordance with the profile set out in the report.(paragraphs 63-64) and which will supersede any current budget held for this project; and
7. **Commit** to the fullest ongoing engagement with the local community as part of the detailed design and planning stage and prior to submission of the planning application.

157. Annual Report on Gender Pay Gap

The Head of Business Improvement had submitted a report to alert Cabinet to the Council's Gender Pay Gap reporting data for 2018/19.

Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Customer Focused Services, reminded Cabinet that this report fulfilled a statutory obligation and set out the position as it was one year ago. This report differed from the previous year's in one important respect; data about Oxford Direct Services employees was no longer included. The consequence of this was a significant gap which was previously absent. The pay gap was accounted for by the fact that higher paid jobs were more likely to be held by men and women were more likely to work part time. The gap for bonuses was based on the "Partnership Payment" which was paid on a pro rata basis during the period of the report but was not a feature of the current pay deal. The pay gap, while better than some comparable organisations, was still not good enough and needed to be addressed. The Scrutiny Committee's recommendation in relation to shared parental leave was very welcome in this regard. Helen Bishop, Head of Business Improvement, said a number of activities flowing from the Equalities Action Plan (to do with recruitment and opportunities for flexible working etc.) would contribute to narrowing the gap.

No analysis had yet been done of the intersectionality of gender and other protected characteristics. It was agreed that this could be valuable.

It was right to seek to reduce the gap to zero but to achieve this, it would be necessary for approximately 60% of the staff employed in the top quartile of pay grades to be female, reflecting the proportion of women in the workforce as a whole. It was noted however that changing the proportion of women in the top quartile would take time because the number of those staff was relatively small and the turnover low.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Note** the contents of the report and Gender Pay Gap table at Appendix 1; and
2. **Delegate** authority to the Head of Business Improvement to publish the table at Appendix 1 to this report before the deadline of 30 March 2020.

158. Allocation of Growth Deal funds to Oxford City Council

The Executive Director Development had submitted a report to accept capital infrastructure funds and delegate authority to officers to enter in contractual Funding Agreements with Oxfordshire County Council, in order to deliver two city infrastructure schemes set out within the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.

Councillor Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning & Sustainable Transport, said the two projects for which funding would be allocated were both high priorities for the Council.

Matt Peachey, Economic Development Manager said Heads of Terms had been agreed for the Osney Mead to Oxpens Bridge and the Cycling Improvement Schemes. Project Officers were in place to deliver both in a timely way.

Tom Bridgman, Executive Director, Development, said that while the capacity of the project team had been increased, these additional responsibilities might require the appointment of additional staff and or the re-phasing of other work . The bridge project was still at a feasibility stage. There were further stages to go through with opportunities to review viability and costs before finalising.

It was noted that recent cycling improvements over which the Council had little control had not always been successful. Given that the Council would be responsible for these new schemes, it was hoped that they would be of better quality. It was important to take account of local cycle/lobby groups in the design of the improvement schemes. It was also important to remember that the funding for the schemes was finite and should not be spent disproportionately on consultation.

Cabinet resolved to:

Recommend to Council to:

- i. **Accept** £7m in the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Funds from Oxfordshire County Council for the delivery of city-based infrastructure schemes;
- ii. **Approve** an initial £300,000 feasibility study allocation from the capital programme for 2020-21, for Osney Mead to Oxpens Bridge, financed by available external funds; and
- iii. **Approve** the £1m capital budget for city cycling schemes at Cuckoo Lane, Marsh Lane, Marston Road & Boundary Brook, Oxford, financed by Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Funding.

2.Delegate authority to the Executive Director Development, in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer, the Head of Law and Governance and Cabinet Member for Planning & Sustainable Transport, to agree and enter into grant funding arrangements and contractual terms with Oxfordshire County Council before the funds are transferred from Oxfordshire County Council to Oxford City Council to enable the City Council to deliver a £7m programme of infrastructure projects, financed through the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. This funding will include £6m towards the Osney Mead to Oxpens Bridge and £1M for defined city cycling schemes.

159. CIL Charging Schedule

The Head of Planning Services has submitted a report to consider withdrawal of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule Review from examination.

Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning & Sustainable Transport, reminded Cabinet that it had previously agreed to submit a new CIL charging schedule as part of the submission of the new Local Plan. In the meantime however new Regulations concerning CIL had been introduced and it was considered prudent to withdraw the proposed schedule from examination while the consequences of the new

Regulations were evaluated. In the meantime the current schedule would remain in place.

Cabinet resolved to:

1. **Withdraw** the CIL Charging Schedule review from examination; and
2. **Continue** to apply the existing CIL Charging Schedule whilst the process to review it is re-started in the context of the CIL Regulations as updated in September 2019.

160. Integrated Performance Report for Quarter 3 2019/20

The Head of Financial Services and Head of Business Improvement had submitted a report to update Cabinet on Finance, Risk and Corporate Performance matters as at 31 December 2019.

Councillor Ed Turner, Cabinet Member for Finance & Asset Management, said the overall position was positive and robust with a favourable variance in the General Fund and a budgeted surplus in the Housing Revenue Account. There were still issues about the late delivery of parts of the capital programme. Some elements of the programme provided useful learning for the future; the unanticipated length of lead in times for the delivery of electric vehicles for example. Delays in progress with some of the Council's Housing Company's schemes was regrettable. This was, perhaps, not surprising given its ambition to be a significant housing provider but one which was starting from scratch. The recent appointment of Non-Executive Directors to the company and appointment of a permanent Managing Director would all be helpful. The Chair noted that the Shareholder would wish to explore the relationship between the company and Oxford Direct Services at its meeting the following week.

Cabinet resolved to:

Note the projected financial outturn as well as the current position on risk and performance as at 31 December 2019.

161. Minutes

Cabinet resolved to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 12 February as a true and accurate record.

162. Dates of Future Meetings

Meetings are scheduled for the following dates:

- 15 April
- 10 June
- 15 July
- 12 August

All meetings start at 6pm.

163. Matters Exempt from Publication

Cabinet passed a resolution in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 to exclude the press and the public from the meeting during consideration of the following items which would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

164. Blackbird Leys Development Project - Confidential Appendices

There was brief discussion of this item in confidential session.

165. Annual Report on Gender Pay Gap - Confidential Appendices

There was no discussion of these appendices in confidential session.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.30 pm

Chair

Date: Wednesday 15 April 2020