

Supplement for

Cabinet

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Wednesday 12 August 2020

6.00 pm

**Housing & Homelessness Panel Report
and
Decisions taken under Part 9.3 (b) of the constitution**

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To: Cabinet
Date: 12 August 2020
Report of: Housing and Homelessness Panel
Title of Report: Housing Delivery Plan

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To present Housing and Homelessness Panel recommendations concerning the Housing Delivery Plan
Key decision:	Yes
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Councillor Nadine Bely-Summers, Chair of the Housing and Homelessness Panel
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery
Corporate Priority:	Meeting Housing Needs
Policy Framework:	Oxford Local Plan 2036
Recommendation: That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendation in the body of this report.	

Appendices
None

Introduction and overview

1. At its meeting on 03 August 2020, the Housing and Homelessness Panel considered the report to Cabinet regarding the Housing Delivery Plan, detailing the Council's plans as to how it would encourage delivery of its planned housing requirement.
2. The Panel would like to thank Councillor Alex Hollingsworth for attending the meeting and presenting the report, Caroline Ploszynski, Planning Policy and Place Manager, for authoring the report and supporting the meeting, and Tom Rice, Principal Planner for co-authoring the report.

Summary and recommendation

3. Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery, introduced the report. A Housing Delivery Plan was a government requirement for councils whose housing completions were below 95% of their housing requirement over the past three years. It was unclear whether the Council fell into this category because central government to date had been unable to clarify which historical measures the Council should be measured against. Regardless of whether it was mandated by central government or not, the Council had decided to develop one. Doing so had proven a particularly useful exercise in making clear the importance of ensuring the sites identified for development in the Local Plan are indeed completed; to meet its housing requirement (not including the unmet need met by neighbouring councils) Oxford would have to see 100% of its sites developed each year to 2036. The main housing sources arose from the Council, Oxford University, colleges within the University, and private developers, and the plan sought to identify and defuse any barriers to delivery before they could result in a shortfall in housing delivery.
4. The Panel raised questions regarding the actions being taken to support the delivery of specific sites, the reasons behind the significant disparity between the Council's delivery on different measures, levels of response to the Council's outreach activity, and the impact of possible future changes to the planning system.
5. In response to the report presented the Committee wished it to be formally expressed that it was impressed by the detail and effort that was being taken to ensure planned houses were completed, and that it commends the report.
6. The Panel makes one recommendation, requesting additional detail over timelines for activity.

Timelines for Activity

7. The Panel recognised that Covid-19 had caused widespread disruption and significant uncertainty. That disruption manifested itself in delays to the delivery of, and a reduction in the specificity of the Council's plans as referenced in Table 2 of the report: Programme of engagement and progress to date. The Panel was informed Covid impacts had necessitated a prioritisation within the programme of engagement, focusing primarily on individual meetings with developers. Whilst prioritisation measures were an appropriate and indeed correct course of action, it was suggested by Panel members that remote working had had time to become normalised and that it would be beneficial to all stakeholders were the Council to indicate the dates by which paused activity would be recommenced. The Panel recommends that this is done.

Recommendation 1: That the Council updates its programme of engagement and progress to date to include dates for recommencement of paused activities.

Further Consideration

8. It is not anticipated that the Panel will seek further consideration of this item.

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Cabinet response to recommendations of the Housing and Homelessness Panel made on 03/08/2020 concerning the Housing Delivery Plan

Provided by the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery, Councillor Alex Hollingsworth

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That the Council updates its programme of engagement and progress to date to include dates for recommencement of paused activities	Yes	Previously paused workstreams are restarting over the next few weeks, and the updated information on these will be added to the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan before submitting to MHCLG

Agenda Item 12

Annex to report on item 12: Report on decisions taken under Part 9.3(b) of the Constitution.

The following decisions were taken by the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) using the emergency powers set out in the Council's Constitution.

ITEM 3	INTERIM SUPPORT TO FUSION LIFESTYLES DURING SHUTDOWN OF LEISURE FACILITIES DUE TO CORONA VIRUS REGULATIONS.
Decision:	
To agree a package of support to Fusion Lifestyles to maintain the contract during the period that leisure facilities are required to remain closed in line with that contract, and Government advice which defines the current situation as a "Change in Law" under that contract and to settle existing payments outstanding between the parties.	
Date decision made:	11 May 2020
Decision taker	Gordon Mitchell, Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) Decision taken in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parks, the Head of Financial Services and the Head of Law and Governance.
Was the decision taken under emergency or urgency rules?	Urgency powers delegated to the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) in Part 9.3(b) of the Constitution:
Is this a Key Decision?	Not key
Reasons for decision	To maintain the contract during the period that leisure facilities are required to remain closed in line with corona virus regulations.
Alternative options considered:	Consideration was given to the legal position in respect of the Corona Virus Regulations, the contract between the Council and Fusion Lifestyle (FL) and the extent to which FL had mitigated their costs.
Wards significantly affected	None
Declared conflict of interest:	None

ITEM 4	ADDITIONAL SUPPORT TO FUSION LIFESTYLES TO ENABLE THE START OF THE PHASED RE-OPENING OF LEISURE FACILITIES.
Decision:	
This additional support enables the first phase of the re-opening of facilities which will have reduced revenue due to additional social distancing rules and lower anticipated usage.	

Date decision made:	17 July 2020
Decision taker	Gordon Mitchell, Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) Decision taken in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parks, the Head of Financial Services and the Head of Law and Governance.
Was the decision taken under emergency or urgency rules?	Urgency powers delegated to the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) in Part 9.3(b) of the Constitution:
Is this a Key Decision?	Not key
Reasons for decision	This support enables Hinksey Outdoor Pool to open and Ferry Leisure centre dry side until October and then full opening of Ferry at that point.
Alternative options considered:	Officers considered various options for phased re-opening and compared with facilities remaining closed and the associated residual costs.
Wards significantly affected	None
Declared conflict of interest:	None

ITEM 5	FREE PARKING AT PARK AND RIDES
Decision: To provide free parking at Council-run park and ride sites (Redbridge, Seacourt and Peartree) for a limited period from August 2020. Oxfordshire County Council is making a matching offer for its two sites (Thornhill and Oxford Parkway). Guide revenue loss in discussion with Parking Management estimated at circa £30-35k, based on post-lockdown usage data, for the month of August.	
Date decision made:	28 July 2020
Decision taker	Gordon Mitchell, Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) Decision taken in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Finance and Asset Management and Green Transport and Zero Carbon Oxford, the Head of Financial Services and the Head of Law and Governance.
Was the decision taken under emergency or urgency rules?	Urgency powers delegated to the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) in Part 9.3(b) of the

	Constitution.
Is this a Key Decision?	Not key
Reasons for decision	The Council has worked in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council to provide free parking at all of Oxford's five park and ride sites to make it easier for people to visit the city centre, rediscover Oxford, spend money in the local economy, and so support business and protect jobs. It's a supportive initiative at a challenging time for all retail, hospitality and leisure businesses, with city centre footfall still heavily down on last year (circa 60%) and the number of vacant units rising. It is thus an intervention to support our tenant and business rate base (in and beyond the city centre, as the initiative could produce positive footfall benefits in local shopping areas e.g. Summertown and Headington, too), and a measure of support for Park & Ride services which have suffered from the guidance being to avoid them unless necessary (they're currently running at 15% of usual capacity), and so support a return to use of a vital transport mode into the city centre.
Alternative options considered:	The alternatives were to maintain parking charges, which would not help to boost the local economy, or to run a slightly different scheme to County (e.g. Mon-Weds only in line with the #EatOutToHelpOut scheme), which would be less supportive and create perverse incentives for motorists to drive further to seek out free parking.
Wards significantly affected	None
Declared conflict of interest:	None

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