

**To:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 12 June 2019  
**Report of:** Scrutiny Committee  
**Title of Report:** Scrutiny Committee recommendation concerning the Seacourt Park and Ride Extension

<b>Summary and recommendations</b>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To present a Scrutiny Committee recommendation for Cabinet consideration and decision.
<b>Key decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Scrutiny Lead Member:</b>	Councillor Andrew Gant, Scrutiny Committee Chair
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Planning and Sustainable Transport
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Vibrant and Sustainable Economy, Clean and Green Oxford
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Local Transport Plan 4, Oxford Local Plan 2036 (Submission Draft)
<b>Recommendation: That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendation in the body of this report.</b>	

## Introduction and overview

1. The Scrutiny Committee met on 4 June 2019 to consider a report concerning the Seacourt Park and Ride Extension, the appointment of a contractor and final project approval. The Committee would like to thank Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Sustainable Transport and Paul Walker, Interim Project Director, for producing the report and attending the meeting to answer questions.

## Summary and recommendation

2. The Committee noted that the report identified what were expressed to be minor changes to the scheme, which had a cumulative impact of reducing the number of planned additional parking spaces from 685 to 596. Councillors were of the view that when taken together, these changes amounted to a substantial change to the scheme. In response to questions, the Committee heard that this reduction in

numbers did not impact the overall viability of the scheme, and that the payback period was still considered to be within an acceptable range. The capital budget for the scheme was £5.156m.

3. The Committee heard from one member that the scheme did not represent value for money given in light of its low return on investment in comparison to other investment opportunities, increased cost, and reduced parking spaces. It was expressed that the new 1,000 space park and ride off the A40 would reduce demand for additional spaces at Seacourt. Further, that increasing the number of parking spaces did not align with the Council’s recent declaration of a climate emergency, as it would encourage additional car usage.
4. The Cabinet Member explained that the Seacourt Scheme was not progressing exclusively for a financial return, but also sought to reduce congestion in the City by encouraging the use of the park and ride facilities, in line with the Council’s environmental ambitions. The anticipated closure of Worcester Street Car Park would also increase demand for these facilities. The demand for the new 1,000 space facility was not forecast to have a significant impact on parking demand at Seacourt.
5. The Committee welcomed advice from the Interim Project Director that the Council would not be exposed to any increased risk by contracting with Oxford Direct Services Limited (ODSL), a wholly owned council company, as opposed to a private sector contractor. The Committee heard that despite ODSL having a “Teckal” procurement exemption, a robust tendering exercise had taken place prior to the selection of ODSL and the scheme would be delivered through a contract agreed by both the Council and ODSL. The risk of overspending was highlighted as a particular risk by councillors, but it was noted that poor weather conditions were identified as the most significant risk, for which contingency time had been built into the scheme.
6. Budget approval for the scheme had been passed by Full Council in February 2019. The report presented to the Committee will also request Cabinet on 12 June 2019 to grant final scheme approval to enable the scheme, as amended, to be delivered within the budget of £5,156,122. The Committee received a proposal that the final scheme approval should not be given, and to make a recommendation to Cabinet accordingly. The Committee voted in favour of the proposal, which was carried on a casting vote.

***Recommendation 1: That the Cabinet does not grant final project approval for the Seacourt Park and Ride Extension.***

<b>Report author</b>	Stefan Robinson
Job title	Scrutiny Officer
Service area or department	Law and Governance
Telephone	01865 252191
e-mail	<a href="mailto:Srobinson@oxford.gov.uk">Srobinson@oxford.gov.uk</a>