

COUNCIL

Monday 3 February 2014

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Sinclair (Lord Mayor), Abbasi (Sheriff), Brett (Deputy Lord Mayor), Altaf-Khan, Baxter, Benjamin, Brown, Campbell, Canning, Clack, Clarkson, Cook, Coulter, Curran, Darke, Fooks, Fry, Goddard, Gotch, Haines, Hollick, Humberstone, Jones, Kennedy, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Lygo, McCready, Mills, O'Hara, Pressel, Price, Rowley, Rundle, Sanders, Seamons, Simmons, Tanner, Turner, Upton, Van Nooijen, Wilkinson, Williams and Wolff.

75. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Shah Jahan Khan, Sajjid Malik, Michele Paule, Gwynneth Royce and Val Smith.

Council wished to send its best wishes to Val Smith for a speedy recovery from her current illness.

76. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None declared.

77. MINUTES

Council agreed to approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting of Council held on 25th November 2013.

78. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

No appointments to Committees were made.

79. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Lord Mayor, Councillor Dee Sinclair made the following announcements:

- (1) Death of Bill Baker who had been a Labour Councillor for the South and then Iffley Fields Ward on the City Council between May 1986 and May 2006, when he retired from the Council. He had also been the Leader of the Council from 1993 to 1996, Deputy Leader between 2002 and 2004 and held each Civic Office, namely Sheriff, Deputy Lord Mayor and Lord Mayor. He had worked in the car factory and was a trades unionist.

The Council's flag will be flown at half-mast on Monday 10th February 2014, the day of his funeral.

Councillors Bob Price, Elise Benjamin and Jim Campbell spoke of Bill Baker's time on the City Council and his support for the City, his constituents and community.

Council stood for a minutes silence in memory of Bill Baker.

- (2) Death of Tony Stockford who had been a Labour Councillor for the former Blackbird Leys Ward on the City Council between May 1992 and 2001. He had also been an Oxfordshire County Councillor from November 1988 to May 2001 for the former Blackbird Leys Division. He had retired from both Councils in July 2001.

Councillors Steven Curran, Elise Benjamin and Jean Fooks spoke of Tony Stockford's time on the City, County and Parish Councils and his support for Oxford and especially his work for young people.

Council stood for a minutes silence in memory of Tony Stockford.

- (3) The following honours were awarded to residents of Oxford in the New Year Honours list:

MBE – Karen Hewlett. Tutor of the Department for Continuing Education, University of Oxford. For services to building academic and cultural understanding between the UK and Russia and for her work in establishing the friendship links with PERM.

CBE – Peter Bennett Jones – For services to the entertainment industry and to charity, particularly through Comic Relief where he was Chair for 25 years.

OBE – Martin Peter Knopps – For services to Oxfam, where he was a former counsellor.

MBE – David Attlee Norman – Chair of the Governing Executive, Ruskin College – Services to adult education.

MBE – Marios Papadopoulos – Founder of Oxford Philomusica.

BME – Michele Clare Crawford – For services to young people and to charity in Oxford.

- (4) Thanked the following for their work and support during the recent floods in Oxford:

Oxford City Council
Environment Agency
Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
County Council Emergency Planning, Highways and Social Services
Thames Valley Police
Volunteers, friends and neighbours

Thames Water had also commented that the partnership working in Oxford between the different bodies was the best in the country.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bob Price made the following announcements:

- (1) Nominations for the Civic Post Holders for 2014/15:

Lord Mayor – Councillor Mohammed Niaz Abbasi
Deputy Lord Mayor – Councillor Craig Simmons
Sheriff – Councillor Rae Humberstone

- (2) The City Deal agreement between local partners and national government was signed last week. A key element of the deal was a growth strategy for the next 5 years. The funding will boost innovation with the creation of Innovation Centres, accelerate the housing programme, provide support for new businesses, improve transport infrastructure and support apprenticeships and job creation. A report on the Strategic Economic Plan would be presented to the City Executive Board, Scrutiny and to all Members in due course.

Councillor Fooks welcomed the City Deal and congratulated Councillor Price and David Edwards for their work. Councillor Simmons echoed Councillor Fooks.

80. PUBLIC ADDRESSES AND QUESTIONS THAT RELATE TO MATTERS FOR DECISION AT THIS MEETING

Paula Maddison, Corporate Relationship Co-ordinator for Oxfordshire Mind, addressed Council. The full text of her address is appended to these minutes.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 11.10(g) the address was considered with agenda item 14(1) Motions on Notice – City Council Champion of Mental Health Issues (minutes 88 refers).

81. ELECTIONS STAFF FEES AND THE OXFORD LIVING WAGE

The Returning Officer submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which sought an amendment to the delegated authority for the Returning Officer to approve the scale of fees for elections held in the City.

Council agreed to amend the delegated power of the Returning Officer to agree elections fees to allow him to alter those fees where any payment to an individual would fall below the prevailing Oxford Living Wage.

82. CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

Council had before it minutes of the City Executive Board as follows:

- (a) 11th December 2013
(b) 22nd January 2014

City Executive Board – 11th December 2013

- (a) Minute 106(3) – Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/15 to 2017/18 and 2014/15 Budget – Councillor Sam Hollick asked how the Administration could justify raising the average rent by 5.42%.

In response Councillor Bob Price said that the Councils policy was to follow the Rent Equivalent Scheme and this had been built into the Housing Revenue Account Forward Plan which had been approved by Council.

- (b) Minute 108 – Air Quality Action Plan – Consultation outcome and adoption – Councillor Jean Fooks asked if a system of compliancy had been devised.

In response Councillor John Tanner confirmed that a system was in place.

- (c) Minute 108 – Air Quality Action Plan – Consultation outcome and adoption – Councillor John Goddard raised concerns on the pollution figures around Cutteslowe and Wolvercote.

In response Councillor John Tanner said that some of the figures were not good and the County Council was aware of this. With regard to the area around Wolvercote, he said that checks were made for NOX pollution from time to time and these figures were published on the website. He agreed to ask Officers to provide Councillor Goddard with details.

- (d) Minutes 110 – Community Engagement Plan 2014-17 – Draft for consultation – Councillor Craig Simmons said that this consultation had taken place over the Christmas and New Year period and asked if there was an update on the number of responses available.

In response Councillor Bob Price said he would speak with Officers and forward the information to Councillor Simmons.

City Executive Board – 22nd January 2014

- (e) Minute 121 – Northern Gateway Area Action Plan (AAP) – Options document – Councillor Jean Fooks asked for clarification on the work place parking proposals. She added that the Northern Gateway was a large site and not enough time had been given to developing this plan. A great deal of consultation was required as there were many implications for the local people and surrounding area and as such the AAP needed to do its job fully.

In response Councillor Colin Cook said that he would provide a response following the meeting which would be circulated to all Members. He further added that the AAP had a programme timetable of 18 months and that only a Councillor of Councillor Fooks length of service, with experience of the occasionally glacial rate of progress of local government, would consider an 18 month timetable as; "rushed". Councillor Cook said he considered 18 months as a reasonable length of time for the work involved.

The following response was provided after the meeting:

The current version of the Northern Gateway AAP Options Document sets out the following car parking options:

Operation of car parking:

(Note: these options are not necessarily mutually exclusive; the final choice of management approach may take the form of a combination of these options).

Option 1: Provide workplace parking in shared communal facilities for efficiency

Option 2: Encourage workplace charging across the site

Option 3: Introduce a Controlled Parking Zone within the site and in neighbouring areas

83. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

(1) Question to the Board Member, City Development (Councillor Colin Cook) from Councillor Ruth Wilkinson

External wall insulation planning permission

Residents have asked whether planning permission is required for external wall insulation and under what conditions, as they wish to reduce energy and save money in their solid wall houses, but feel the responses they have been given by the City Council have been inconsistent. Please can Councillor Cook supply the number of applications that have been made for each of the last four years and indicate how many have been given permission?

Response: Where a property is already rendered (or partially so), the replacement of the existing render with external insulation will NOT normally require planning permission, being “permitted development” afforded by Class A Part 1 Schedule 2 of the GPDO.

Where a property is not already rendered, planning permission WILL BE required in view of condition A.3(a) of Class A which requires that “*the materials used in any exterior work (other than materials used in the construction of a conservatory) shall be of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the exterior of the existing dwellinghouse*”.

Dwelling houses located within a Conservation Area are also covered by the restriction in A.2(a) which states that development is NOT permitted by Class A if it consists of or includes “*the cladding of any part of the exterior of the dwelling house with stone, artificial stone, pebble dash, render, timber, plastic or tiles*”

Although, again, if such a property’s exterior is already rendered planning permission for its replacement, provided that the new render’s appearance was similar to that being replaced, would not be required.

Number of applications received:

2013: 8 applications (one refused). Insulation of 36 properties approved (27 Council owned, 4 Housing Association owned).

2012: 3 applications (one to vary a condition to allow external insulation). All approved (5 properties including 3 x flats).

2011: No applications.

2010: 1 application (approved). 1 property.

Additionally, there were several "Permitted Development checks" submitted over this 4 year period, some of which led to applications for planning permission being submitted. The advice given in these has been consistent.

(2) Question to the Board Member, Cleaner, Greener Oxford (Councillor John Tanner) from Councillor Graham Jones

Freight Consolidation Scheme

Would the Board Member please brief Council on progress towards a Freight Consolidation?

Response: The City Council is jointly progressing the commissioning of a freight consolidation study with the County Council to ensure the most appropriate option for consolidation is developed for Oxford.

The brief for this study is currently being finalised and subject to approval by the County and City Council prior to release. Additional work streams to address freight related emissions are being progressed through work on Air Quality, in line with the recently adopted Air Quality Action Plan.

Councillor Graham Jones in a supplementary question asked if it was desirable for the scheme to be open in time for the new Westgate. In response Councillor John Tanner agreed that it would be desirable to have the scheme open as soon as possible and essential that the Council worked with both small and large retailers. However the City Council was not in charge of the timetable.

(3) Question to the Board Member, City Development (Councillor Colin Cook) from Councillor Graham Jones

Renewables in new buildings

Is the Board Member content with the current minimum requirement for renewables in new buildings in Oxford?

Response: The adopted Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 first introduced the Natural Resource Impact Analysis (NRIA) in November 2005. This was introduced to push forward development standards in terms of energy efficiency, water use, and the use of recycled materials, given that building regulations, at that stage, were not very challenging. Given that Oxford does not have the land available for large scale renewable energy schemes such as wind farms, the City Council also placed a requirement on small scale developments to generate an element of on-site renewable

energy.

This holistic approach to the use of natural resources was quite ground breaking at the time, and the requirement for 20% renewable energy, both of the regulated and unregulated variety, is still the highest in the UK.

The adopted NRIA Supplementary Planning Document provides more guidance on the implementation of these policies.

The requirements of the Local Plan in relation to the NRIA were reviewed and brought forward into the Oxford Core Strategy 2026 adopted by Council in March 2011.

The City Council has committed to reviewing the implementation of these policies, as it does to all of our Development Plan policies, to see if they are still fit for purpose and delivering the desired outcomes.

In relation to residential development, the NRIA was reviewed in the Sites and Housing Plan, adopted in February 2013. As part of this review we considered how the various government standards were affecting the need for the NRIA. With the move to zero carbon, and improving building control standards, we concluded the key element to take forward was the renewable energy element. The policy sets out transitional arrangements until zero carbon homes are introduced. The Plan also requires energy statements to be submitted for small residential developments which had not previously been caught by the NRIA.

The ambition nationally is that by 2016 all new residential developments will be zero carbon and all new non-domestic buildings will be zero carbon by 2019.

Officers are conscious that there are wider aspects to sustainability than those covered by the NRIA and that there may be a case for a review of that document, particularly in relation to non-residential development. However, the position has been complicated by the Government's intention to deregulate various environmental standards, (announced by the Prime Minister in a speech on January 27th this year). There has been some suggestion that the Government intends to relax planning targets and/or Building Regulation controls in relation to renewable energy, but at the current time there has been no official confirmation of what the Government proposes.

That having been said, Oxford remains at the forefront of local authority practice in relation to the requirement for renewables in new buildings. Regrettably, it is unlikely that the Government will countenance any increase in these minimum requirements at the current time.

Councillor Graham Jones in a supplementary question asked if 20% was the height of the Board Members ambition. In response Councillor Colin Cook said that the NRIA will only be able to work within the existing policy.

(4) Question to the Board Member, Cleaner, Greener Oxford (Councillor John Tanner) from Councillor Graham Jones

Recovery of recyclates from landfill

Would the Board Member say why he did not support the Scrutiny Committee recommendation to appraise the recovery of recyclates from landfill?

Response: We have considered the option of sorting residual waste to recover recyclables prior to disposal in landfill in principle, but have not explored it further because current working arrangements would make this extremely expensive for the Council. It would require the following major items of expenditure:-

Land and buildings to allow tipping of the waste, sorting and then reloading to take to the appropriate disposal sites. Additional labour to undertake the sorting and reloading. Plant and vehicles to cope with the additional operation (i.e. sorting).

In view of the fact that these costs are going to be very large, this option has not been pursued further.

The most economic option would be a pre-sort before incineration at the new County Council plant. We have asked the County Council if this will be possible and have been advised that there is no such facility at the new plant. Equally, the County Council advised that they are not aware of pre-sort arrangements operating at any of the incinerating plants operating in this country.

For these reasons, I have decided not to undertake a more detailed appraisal of this operation.

Councillor Graham Jones in a supplementary question asked if the Board Member would accept the Scrutiny Committee recommendation within the agreed costs and that the recycling rates were flat-lining.

In response Councillor John Tanner would not accept that the recycling rates were flat-lining and added that flats would soon be included in the recycling scheme in Oxford. He added that waste sorting was not a good use of resources and that while more could still be done to increase recycling, this was not the right approach.

(5) Question to the Board Member, Cleaner, Greener Oxford (Councillor John Tanner) from Councillor Graham Jones

Urban Community Energy Fund

Does the Board Member welcome the Climate Change Secretary's announcement of an Urban Community Energy Fund?

Response: DECC has launched a £10m Urban Community Energy Fund. This is a small pot which sits alongside a similar £10m fund launched last year for rural energy projects. It is an element of the Community Energy Strategy announced recently. This is a useful first step.

Councillors will be aware of the £1.2 million European funded project 'OxFutures' which the City Council leads with the aim of leveraging investment into community renewable projects. So I welcome a government initiative that is catching up with what Oxford City Council has pioneered.

Councillor Graham Jones in a supplementary question asked which schemes would be championed. In response Councillor John Tanner said that applications would be made and that he was happy to consider any suggestions for schemes.

(6) Question to the Board Member, Finance, efficiency and Strategic Asset Management (Councillor Ed Turner) from Councillor Graham Jones

Investment in renewables

Can the Board Member tell us what is the Council's current investment in renewables?

Response: Renewable energy is generally defined as energy that comes from resources which are naturally replenished on a human timescale such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides, waves and geothermal heat. Renewable energy replaces conventional fuels in a number of distinct areas: electricity generation, hot water/space heating and motor fuels.

Over the last few years the Council has undertaken a number of key projects around renewables including:

Existing Installations

1. Photo Voltaic Panels (PV) – 2 Leisure Centres: (cost £288k)
2. PV - large systems on Cardinal, Headley and Knights Houses sheltered blocks: (cost £376k)
3. PV tiles – large system on Northbrook House
4. PV- small systems on 38 individual Local Authority houses mainly in Lambourne Road:
5. Air source heat pumps: 30 individual LA houses in Lambourne Rd
6. Solar thermal on Birch Ct sheltered accommodation
7. Solar thermal: approximately 20 small systems on individual Local Authority homes installed several years ago.
8. Solar thermal: small demonstration system on shower at Hinksey Pools
9. Biomass boilers in Cardinal House and Albert Place housing blocks

The Council has also enabled community PV: on Barton NC, on West Oxford Community Centre and on West Oxford Community Primary School.

Council Planning Policy calls for 20% of energy use to be met by on-site renewable energy technology for larger developments and consequently this has resulted in continued and growing investment in renewables across the city. Regrettably this requirement may be challenged by the government's Technical Housing Standards Review.

Council has initiated “Low Carbon Oxford” to deliver progress against corporate 40% carbon reduction target – this initiative helps community groups and businesses invest in renewables (such as Osney micro hydro, Oxford Bus company solar PV roof, with more coming on stream)

There are several renewable installations planned or under investigation by the Council.

1. Biomass for Competition Pool:
2. Biomass for Town Hall
3. PV for BBL Leisure Centre
4. PV for new Rose Hill Community Centre
5. PV pilot on 5 LA houses – to inform a wider rollout - will be carried out this financial year.

Councillor Graham Jones in a supplementary question asked if the Board Member was aware that 8% could be earned in this sector. In response Councillor Ed Turner said that this was something that could be looked into, however it would have to be compared to other non-specified investments, but would be happy to look at this as part of the next refresh of the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the Council.

(7) Question to the Board Member, Finance, efficiency and Strategic Asset Management (Councillor Ed Turner) from Councillor Jean Fooks

Carbon Accounting

The Council agreed to move to carbon accounting some years ago. Progress seems to have stalled. When will the Council live up to its policy and why has it not yet happened?

Response: Carbon accounting refers generally to processes undertaken to "measure" amounts of carbon dioxide equivalents emitted by an entity

We measure our consumption of utilities, and like other Local Authorities we are obliged to report to the Department of Energy and Climate Change on our greenhouse gas emissions (Co2 plus the basket of greenhouse gases). This is derived from meter readings from across the majority estate gas, electricity and vehicle fuel. This is submitted annually by the end of July.

As per the Corporate Measure linked to the Carbon Management Plan adopted by the city Executive Board and led by Environmental Development, carbon reduction targets are based on estimated emissions from implemented measures, this is the same as The Carbon Trust Carbon Management Standard. This enables the Council to identify opportunities for energy saving measures (insulation etc.) or renewable energy (solar PV).

It is fair to say that the organisations’ move towards its own internal carbon monitoring system has not progressed as quickly as we would have liked although in mitigation this is not a process which is truly embedded in many local authorities. We have asked our internal auditors

to report back to us on suggested ways forward based on good practice from other sectors, whilst also exploring alternative ways to engage across the organisation to meet carbon targets. We obviously report annually on our carbon usage and purchase of CRC, and also provide updates through the Carbon Natural Resources Board on the usage and spend on utilities.

Councillor Jean Fooks in a supplementary question asked if the Board Member was satisfied that enough resources were being put into carbon accounting. In response Councillor Ed Turner said that while we were in a time when there were tremendous pressures on the services provided, he was happy to look at this again.

(8) Question to the Board Member, Finance, efficiency and Strategic Asset Management (Councillor Ed Turner) from Councillor Jim Campbell

Consultation Budget - Responses

In last year's Consultation Budget (2013-14) could you tell us how many comments (individual and group) were received, and could you also let us know what changes were made to the final budget in response to these comments, and to those from *Talk Back*?

Response: There was general agreement from respondents to the Budget Consultation last year on the proposals put forward and some of these were mentioned in the budget report that was presented to Council on 18th February 2013 with summary details shown below.

Table 6 Results of consultation on council tax increase

	Percentage In Favour %
Freeze council tax and make cuts elsewhere	39
Increase council tax by 2%	61

Table 7 Budget Consultation – New Investment

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	%	%	%	%	%
Dial a ride	43	24	18	10	5
Older peoples support grant	44	34	14	5	3
Apprenticeships	42	38	13	4	3
Grants	39	26	18	9	8
Free bulky collection	39	27	13	14	7

The Council also sought views on technical changes to council tax discounts and exemptions and there was an average of 90% agreement to the changes proposed. We have subsequently received some

feedback on the operation of these and have therefore amended arrangements this year (supported in the consultation).

Given the constrained nature of the Council's finances, as well as the fact that consultation on our main priorities occurs through means of local elections, we seek to put clearly-defined propositions to the public in the budget consultation.

Councillor Jim Campbell in a supplementary question asked if the Board Member would agree that the budget document was very long and difficult for the general public to understand, but that the shortened version while more interesting only asked for simple agree/disagree answers to questions. Would he consider at an earlier stage in the budget process reviving the practice of a citizens jury just before the figures had been decided. This would give snapshot of what ordinary people in the city saw as their priorities rather than at the end when the decisions were difficult to overturn.

In response Councillor Ed Turner said that a balance had to be struck on consultation. Consultation had tended to be focussed and used to drive the political priorities. He had looked at the results of the Citizen Jury up to 2010 and this approach could be looked at again. However he added that the more is gleaned from the other Citizens Jury, namely the election. He further added that it was not just about what went into the formal budget process.

(9) Question to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Bob Price) from Councillor Jim Campbell

Area Forums and Community Meetings

Could you let us know how many Area Forums and other Council supported Community Meetings took place during 2013, and how many members of the public attended each one?

Response: The Communities and Neighbourhoods team work with Councillors to set up meetings in areas where they wish to hold an Area Forum. The East Area Forum is running and details of meetings are on the website. North Area Councillors have decided that individual wards might consider holding a Forum if a suitable topic arose. None have yet been requested. In the other areas dates are being canvassed and Officers will help members to set up these Forums. Publicity for any Area Forums is via website, social media, production of standard posters, emailing residents on database. Records of public attendance may be kept by the members but are not recorded by Communities and Neighbourhoods.

The Community Partnerships are supported by Communities and Neighbourhoods (CAN) Officers in the regeneration areas. The 7 areas have a range of public attendance/involvement depending on how long the partnerships and local community engagement, have been supported. For example, at Barton, 169 residents took part last year (range from 4-8 at each partnership meeting, sub-group meetings) while in Littlemore or Cutteslowe Partnership meeting, very small numbers attended. Barton

has had a CAN Officer dedicated resource for a number of years whereas other areas have not.

Councillor Jim Campbell in a supplementary question said that the Area Forums were part of the community Engagement Strategy and the consultation process. At a recent Members Briefing the Head of Policy, Culture and Communication said that the City Council was a national leader in its consultation practices and procedures. Could the Board Member go on record with evidence supporting that supports this statement or endorse it.

In response Councillor Bob Price said that he would speak to the Head of Policy, Culture and Communications to provide the necessary evidence.

(10) Question to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Bob Price) from Councillor Graham Jones

Universal Suffrage

Can the Leader of the Council tell us on what grounds does he support or not support the principle of universal suffrage in local elections, regardless of nationality?

Response: Under current British law, any British, Irish, EU and Commonwealth citizen can vote in local elections. I am reliably informed that this is the widest restricted franchise in the world. No country in the world allows all residents to vote in all elections. The nearest to that are Uruguay (which requires 15 years' residence), New Zealand (which requires permanent resident status) and Malawi (which requires seven years residence).

My personal view is that the franchise should be linked to citizenship rather than residence. Hence, I would support extending voting rights to EU citizens in national and European elections, but no further.

Councillor Graham Jones in a supplementary question said that the UK was only one of three countries that denied votes to all residents in local elections and did he consider it fair that 10,000 people in Oxford were denied this vote. In response Councillor Bob Price said he would look into this further.

84. PUBLIC ADDRESSES AND QUESTIONS THAT DO NOT RELATE TO MATTERS FOR DECISION AT THIS COUNCIL MEETING

Addresses

(1) Chaka Artwell – Oxford Voice

(2) Alasdair de Voil – Concerning abuse/conflict of interest: Visit Oxfordshire

Councillor Colin Cook, Board Member, City Development responded to the address by stating that he understood that Mr de Voil had already

raised these and similar matters in correspondence both directly with the City Council and through his Member of Parliament. A written response will be sent to Mr de Voil on these matters in the near future.

(3) Nigel Gibson – Why Oxford City Council could and should deliver the services the people of Oxford want and need

Councillor Mike Rowley, Board Member, Leisure Services provided the following response prior to the meeting:

The Council's website contains detailed answers to these points which have already been provided to Mr Gibson.

<http://www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decLP/ConsultationonLeisureFacilities.htm>

To assist members I have summarised a few key points:

The new pool costs are just over £9 million, not the stated £13 million. The £9 million figure is made up of the professional fees and constructions costs.

Temple Cowley Pools costs the council in excess of £500,000 per year. The table shown in Mr Gibson's address to council shows the estimated management fee but excludes utilities and repair and maintenance costs. Both these costs are very high at the two centres that are being replaced by the new pool at Blackbird Leys.

The management fee paid to Fusion Lifestyles is the combined net fee for all the centres. The ice rink and Ferry Centre generate a surplus which is then offset against the cost of the other centres, of which temple Cowley is by far the most costly.

Whilst Fusion are responsible for maintenance at the newer centres, the council continues to be responsible for the maintenance costs at the older sites with higher risk of failure (Temple Cowley, Blackbird Leys Pool, the Ice Rink and Hinksey outdoor pool). This is because the cost of transferring that risk to Fusion Lifestyles is prohibitively high.

The £150,000 management fee for the new pool is inclusive of all utilities and maintenance costs.

The business case and feasibility study were developed with the support of Mace. Mace are an highly respected international consultancy and construction firm who have stood by their advice throughout intense scrutiny over recent years.

Questions

(1) Question to the Board Member, City Development (Councillor Colin Cook) from Sietske Boeles

Oxford University Old Road Campus buildings

Recently Oxford University occupied two new bio medical research buildings at the Oxford University Old Road Campus. These are the Kennedy Institute for Rheumatology, and Research Facilities building for the Nuffield Orthopaedic Department.

Oxford University was permitted to move into the buildings despite **not** meeting the requirements of the Core Strategy Policy CS 25

“That no increase in academic floor space is allowed if there are more than 3,000 students outside of accommodation provided by the relevant University ”. (1)

Every year the Universities are required to submit figures where their students live to the Council. These figures are then recorded in Oxford Annual Monitoring (AMR)

Attached are the figures for Oxford University since 2011:

Number of Oxford University students living in private accommodation whilst only 3000 students are permitted in private accommodation:

AMR 2011 (page 21/22): 3251*

AMR 2012 (page 23/24): 3401*

AMR 2013 (page 30/31): 3508**

The Question is:

Given the above figures why was Oxford University permitted to move into the new buildings on the Old Road Campus when it has not met the requirement of the CS 25, and given the above figures, will Oxford City Council enforce CS Policy 25 by not permitting Oxford University to occupy newly completed academic buildings like for example the Mathematical Institute until it has met the Policy requirements ?

* Please note that Oxford University states that it will meet its requirements the following year whilst it has not. .

** The Council cannot rely on the argument that the University say that it will reach the 3000 target the following year as the University has said this on previous occasions and this undertaking was subsequently not met.

It was accepted by Oxford University that research facilities are regarded as academic floor space (letter by Colin George to oxford City Council, 8th July 2011)

Response: Ms Boeles quotes from the October 2013 Annual Monitoring Report April 2012 - March 2013 which says that as at 31st March 2013 the University exceeded the 3,000 threshold by 508 students.

The Annual Monitoring Report is a snapshot and is based on information for the 2012-13 academic year provided to the City Council by the University in a letter received in August 2013, and from which the 2012-13 Annual Monitoring Report was compiled.

The Annual Monitoring Report itself went on to explain that although the target to have fewer than 3,000 students outside of university-provided accommodation was not met in the monitoring period, the University was expected to meet this requirement in the next monitoring period as a

result of the additional units of accommodation under construction.

Through a footnote to her question to Council Ms Boeles casts doubt on the University's ability to reach the 3,000 threshold because on previous occasions such an undertaking was subsequently not met.

However, in August last year the University anticipated completion of an extra 540 units by the start of Michaelmas Term 2013. Indeed this has been achieved now and is made up of 45 units for Corpus Christi College, 25 for Kellogg College, 11 for Linacre College, 37 for Lincoln College, 54 for St Anthony's College, 59 for St Hilda's College, and 312 for the University itself at Roger Dudman Way.

The current assessment is that there are fewer than 3,000 students living outside University of Oxford provided accommodation.

(2) Question to the Board Member, City Development (Councillor Colin Cook) from Sarah Wild

Planning consultation methods

One of the recommendations following the investigation into what happened over Roger Dudman Way is that consultation methods between the council and members of the public should be improved. This would mean that the public had optimal access to planning documents.

So why have the public been denied access to hard copy planning application documents, except for major developments, when the on-line version is unclear?

Response: Approximately 80% of all planning applications to the City Council are now submitted electronically. The City Council no longer holds a paper copy of all planning applications in the reception area at St Aldate's Chambers ready to be viewed by the public. It is Council policy to encourage customers to access Council information via its website as far as possible.

However, the City Council does not deny access to hard copies of planning application documents. It has been, and remains, willing to make a hard copy of a planning application available on request in reception if a customer makes an appointment to come and view a particular application because the on-line copy is unavailable or unclear.

Furthermore, the City Council will be reviewing its post-application guidance on planning processes in response to one of the recommendations in the Independent Report on Roger Dudman Way.

Under Procedure Rule 11.11(f), Councillor Craig Simmons, seconded by Councillor Dick Wolff requested that the question be referred to the East Area Planning Committee for further consideration. Council voted and agreed to refer the question to the West Area Planning Committee.

(3) Question to the Board Member, City Development (Councillor Colin Cook) from Alasdair De Voil

Visit Oxfordshire

Since the city council has agreed to let Visit Oxfordshire Ltd deliver tourism information services on its behalf, can you please report back on what documentation exists to demonstrate Visit Oxfordshire's remit and obligations to ensure that it delivers these services in a way which benefits local businesses and which is impartial. Please can you also report what steps exist to supervise this arrangement and to take action against Visit Oxfordshire Ltd, where it is not found to be delivering its remit appropriately?

Response: The City Council and Visit Oxfordshire Ltd entered into a co-operation agreement, with a commencement date of 1st April 2011, under which the Tourist Information service, previously provided by the City Council, was combined with a tourist information service for the remainder of Oxfordshire. Both elements of the combined service, from the commencement of the agreement, were placed under the single management control of Visit Oxfordshire Ltd. The agreement has a term of 12 years. As would be expected in an arrangement of this nature, the contract's primary aim is to seek to ensure that the combined service is delivered in an efficient and effective way, which best meets the requirements of visitors to Oxford and Oxfordshire and other customers. A number of key performance indicators were specified. Governance arrangements created by the contract ensure that the City Council is able to monitor the performance of Visit Oxfordshire Ltd. In the event that Visit Oxfordshire Ltd were to be in breach of contract, the City Council would have the right to seek appropriate contractual redress.

The Council has no legal obligation to provide a tourist information service. I understand that previously the City Council, and now Visit Oxfordshire, derive some income from providing a booking facility for the Blue Badge Tours. There is no legal obligation on Visit Oxfordshire to advertise the services of competing tours in the same way there is no legal requirement on the City Council to advertise the services of other local suppliers of the discretionary services we provide, e.g. pest control and commercial waste collection etc. If Mr de Voil thinks that he is not getting a good deal from his membership of Visit Oxfordshire, then the remedy is entirely in his own hands.

85. PETITIONS

No petitions had been previously submitted for consideration at this meeting.

86. OUTSIDE ORGANISATION/COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS AND QUESTIONS

(a) The Oxford Safer Communities Partnership

The Head of Environmental Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) on behalf of the Board Member for Education, Crime and Community Safety, Councillor Pat Kennedy. The report

informed Council of the work of the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership.

Councillor Pat Kennedy introduced the report.

Councillors Graham Jones thanked Councillor Kennedy for her involvement in saving the Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGS) in the City. Councillor Craig Simmons asked though what was happening with the NAGS in other parts of the City and also the Student Warden Scheme.

In response Councillor Kennedy said that the Student Warden Scheme had been expanded to include the University of Oxford with eight Wardens. She added that people had welcomed the initiative and had commented how things had improved. She acknowledged that more could be done, and wished to thank Oxford Brookes University for their work in establishing the scheme. With regard to the NAGS she said that there had been difficulty in appointing an Officer in Thames Valley Police to be responsible for the NAGS, but this had now been resolved with a new appointment.

Councillor Sam Hollick commented that there were a large number of priorities, but was there a root cause that was preventing the reduction of inequality. In response Councillor Kennedy said that it was not the role for the Safer Communities Board to cover inequality in the broader sense.

Councillor John Goddard asked if the funding was adequate and secure and what influence had the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) have on this. In response Councillor Kennedy said that the PCC had reduced the grant by 11% as part of the generally reduction in funding. He had visited the City and was keen to work in partnership. She added that the PCC had set a budget with an increase of 1.99% and that if this was to be reduced by central Government to 1.5% as reported, then the shortfall would be taken from reserves.

In response to further questions concerning Community Response Teams and CCTV, Councillor Kennedy said that the Community Response Teams worked closely with the Police especially on mental health issues. Regarding CCTV, each scheme was funded differently, however discussions continued on how they were funded.

(b) Statement from Councillor Oscar Van Nooijen – Chair – West Area Planning Committee

Councillor Van Nooijen said that the West Area Planning Committee had requested that he update Council on the current position if the Roger Dudman Way issue. He said that since the last time he had reported, the independent review had taken place and reported back. He thanked Councillors John Goddard and Elise Benjamin for their work and support on the cross party group that had been set up for the review purpose. Many recommendations had been made and all had been endorsed by the West Area Planning Committee and a report on their implementation would follow.

Councillor Elise Benjamin said that good progress had been made and that the review report was thorough. However there were still a number of outstanding issues which had been raised by the representative from the Save Port Meadow Group.

Councillor John Goddard said that there was still more work, discussion and action to be taken, especially on the visual impact of the building, as well as the environmental impact assessment. He asked what more could be done to speed up the resolution of these issues.

In response Councillor Van Nooijen said that a report to the West Area Planning Committee would outline what the University of Oxford was considering with regard to the buildings. He added that he had been assured everything possible was being done to resolve the issues as soon as possible.

(c) Statement from Councillor John Tanner – Oxford City Council representative on the Oxfordshire Waste and Environment Partnership

Councillor Tanner said that the City council collected the waste in the City but did not dispose of it. The Oxfordshire Waste Partnership (OWP) had managed to deal with this collection/disposal divide. However this was now under threat in 2015 due to the decision of the County Council to withdraw its funding. He felt that there was still a great deal more that could be achieved from the Partnership, and it would be a huge blow if the Partnership was to end. He felt it was a shorted sighted approach by the County Council and that it was always better to work together than not and the public expected this to happen.

Councillor Tanner said that it was right that everyone in the Partnership contributed, but some were just considering the cost rather than the policy. He further added that he would not want to see the District Council's not talking to each other as had been the case in the past.

Councillor David Williams stated that the City Council Green Group supported Councillor Tanner. He said that it was vital that the District and County Councils worked together. The OWP had been a real success and needed maintaining.

Councillor Bob Price said that there would still be a continuation of the Partnership as a set of meetings funded by the District Councils without the County Council.

87. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE BRIEFING

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which updated Council on the activities of Scrutiny and other non-Executive Councillors since the previous meeting of Council.

Councillor Mark Mills moved the report.

Council agreed to note the report.

88. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Council had before it eight Motions on Notice and reached decisions as follows:

(1) **City Council Champion of Mental Health Issues – (Proposed by Councillor Ed Turner)**

Labour Group Member - Motion on Notice

This Council supports the work of MIND and the Mental Health Foundation and asks the City Executive Board to consider appointing a member of council to be a champion of mental health issues in much the same way as we have an older people's champion.

Council acknowledges it is not directly responsible for healthcare provision but believes it nonetheless has an important role to play. Council requests the City Executive Board to play a full role in the Health and Well Being Board and other partnership forums to maximise support for mental health work, and also to ensure its work providing and funding advice services is accessible to people with mental health problems.

Council believes councillors can support the wellbeing of people in their areas through both casework and their strategic role within the council. Council welcomes the practical steps set out by Mind and the Mental Health Foundation, whose new report, *Building Resilient Communities*, that can be taken to promote wellbeing, build resilience and help to prevent mental health problems – including steps that can be taken by Councillors.

Councillor Ruth Wilkinson seconded by Councillor Jean Fooks moved the following amendment:

To add at the end of the Motion the following:

Furthermore, Council wishes to meet best employer practice regarding mental health, and to encourage a commitment from all front line contractors and existing and prospective employers to follow its lead. Council requests that the Chief Executive signs MIND's Charter for Employers who are Positive About Mental Health on behalf of Oxford City Council. It also requests that the Chief Executive writes to his counterparts at the County Council, Oxford Brookes University and the University of Oxford to invite their organisations to follow the City Council's lead as a Mindful Employer to sign up to the Charter too.

The mover of the substantive Motion (Councillor Ed Turner) accepted the amendment and following a debate, Council voted and the Motion as amended by Councillor Ruth Wilkinson was adopted as follows:

This Council supports the work of MIND and the Mental Health Foundation and asks the City Executive Board to consider appointing a member of Council to be a Champion of Mental Health Issues in much the same way as we have an Older People's Champion.

Council acknowledges it is not directly responsible for healthcare provision but believes it nonetheless has an important role to play. Council requests the City Executive Board to play a full role in the Health and Well Being Board and other partnership forums to maximise support for mental health work, and also to ensure its work providing and funding advice services is accessible to people with mental health problems.

Council believes councillors can support the wellbeing of people in their areas through both casework and their strategic role within the council. Council welcomes the practical steps set out by Mind and the Mental Health Foundation, whose new report, *Building Resilient Communities*, that can be taken to promote wellbeing, build resilience and help to prevent mental health problems – including steps that can be taken by Councillors.

Furthermore, Council wishes to meet best employer practice regarding mental health, and to encourage a commitment from all front line contractors and existing and prospective employers to follow its lead. Council requests that the Chief Executive signs MIND's *Charter for Employers who are Positive About Mental Health* on behalf of Oxford City Council. It also requests that the Chief Executive writes to his counterparts at the County Council, Oxford Brookes University and the University of Oxford to invite their organisations to follow the City Council's lead as a *Mindful Employer* to sign up to the *Charter* too.

(2) Saving Community Pubs – (Proposed by Councillor Tony Brett, seconded by Councillor Mary Clarkson)

Liberal Democrat Group Member - Motion on Notice

Oxford City Council notes the possibility of submitting the following proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act:

‘That the Secretary of State help protect community pubs in England by ensuring that planning permission and community consultation are required before community pubs are allowed to be converted to betting shops, supermarkets and pay-day loan stores or other uses, or are allowed to be demolished.’

This Council notes that if this power was acquired it would allow the council to determine if pubs should be demolished or converted into other uses and could save many valued community pubs.

This Council resolves to ask City Executive Board to consider and submit the proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act and to work together with Local Works and the Campaign for Real Ale to gain support for the proposal from other councils in the region and across the country.

Following a debate, Council voted and the Motion was adopted.

(3) Protecting Immigrants' Access to Housing – (Proposed by Councillor Dick Wolff, seconded by Councillor Sam Hollick)

Green Group Member - Motion on Notice

Noting the Immigration Bill currently proceeding through Parliamentary Scrutiny, Oxford City Council:

- is proud of our international heritage and welcomes all people who live in our city
- notes that the Bill proposes making it compulsory for landlords and letting agents to check the immigration status of tenants,
- believes that many people living lawfully in the UK do not possess passports or other documents required to prove that entitlement,
- believes that many thousands of people living without Home Office permission in the UK (and therefore unable to produce such documents) have nonetheless applied for permission to remain, but their cases are either lost or held up in Home Office legal systems, in some cases for many years,
- notes that legal aid for such people has been terminated, making it impossible for them to pursue their applications or appeals,
- believes that each case concerning an undocumented migrant is different, and an unknown number have lived and worked in the UK, raising families born here and living as part of our communities,

and therefore:

- condemns the attempt by the Home Office to force landlords and letting agencies into policing an unjust immigration policy,
- believes that the impact of the policy will be to drive already-vulnerable people 'underground' or into destitution, overloading our support services for the homeless and vulnerable, breaking up families and creating significant knock-on effects for a variety of local services,
- resolves not to include the additional landlords' responsibilities as created under this Bill in its own conditions for licensing and accreditation of the rented sector,
- instructs the leader to write to the relevant minister and the city's two MPs expressing the council's opposition to these new requirements on landlords.

Councillor Ed Turner seconded by Councillor Mark Mills moved the following amendment

To add a seventh bullet point in the first part of the Motion as follows:

- *Believes that the requirement upon landlords to check the immigration status of prospective tenants may place citizens of a black and minority ethnic background at a disadvantage in finding accommodation*

And amend the final bullet at the end of the Motion to include the following:

"And endorses the decision not to include the additional landlords' responsibilities as created under this Bill in its own conditions for licensing and accreditation of the rented sector".

The mover of the substantive Motion (Councillor Dick Wolff) accepted the amendment and following a debate, Council voted and the Motion as amended by Councillor Ed Turner was adopted as follows:

Noting the Immigration Bill currently proceeding through Parliamentary Scrutiny, Oxford City Council:

- is proud of our international heritage and welcomes all people who live in our city
- notes that the Bill proposes making it compulsory for landlord and letting agents to check the immigration status of tenants,
- believes that many people living lawfully in the UK do not possess passports or other documents required to prove that entitlement,
- believes that many thousands of people living without Home Office permission in the UK (and therefore unable to produce such documents) have nonetheless applied for permission to remain, but their cases are either lost or held up in Home Office legal systems, in some cases for many years,
- notes that legal aid for such people has been terminated, making it impossible for them to pursue their applications or appeals,
- believes that each case concerning an undocumented migrant is different, and an unknown number have lived and worked in the UK, raising families born here and living as part of our communities,
- Believes that the requirement upon landlords to check the immigration status of prospective tenants may place citizens of a black and minority ethnic background at a disadvantage in finding accommodation

and therefore:

- condemns the attempt by the Home Office to force landlords and letting agencies into policing an unjust immigration policy,
- believes that the impact of the policy will be to drive already-vulnerable people 'underground' or into destitution, overloading our

support services for the homeless and vulnerable, breaking up families and creating significant knock-on effects for a variety of local services,

- resolves not to include the additional landlords' responsibilities as created under this Bill in its own conditions for licensing and accreditation of the rented sector,
- instructs the leader to write to the relevant minister and the city's two MPs expressing the council's opposition to these new requirements on landlords and endorses the decision not to include the additional landlords' responsibilities as created under this Bill in its own conditions for licensing and accreditation of the rented sector

(4) Inadequate flooding prevention funding – (Proposed by Councillor John Tanner)

Labour Group Member - Motion on Notice

This Council is appalled by the inadequate measures taken by the Coalition Government to help tackle Oxford's increasing flooding problems.

We call on Her Majesty's Government to allocate funding immediately for the Conveyance Channel so that floods bypass Oxford. We call on the Environment Agency and the County Council to work with the City Council to significantly improve protection for homes and to guarantee that main roads and the railway remain open even when there is flooding.

We congratulate the staff of the Environment Agency, the emergency services, and the County and City Councils, for their hard work in helping Oxford residents during the floods. We also congratulate Oxford residents for their positive outlook, co-operation and determination to keep going, during the latest floods.

Councillor Jean Fooks seconded by Councillor Graham Jones moved the following amendment:

- (1) *Replace the first paragraph with the following words:*

"This Council regrets the lack of investment in flood defences by successive governments. As climate change is leading to more frequent storm events, it is imperative that more is done to reduce the risk they pose to Oxford and its citizens."

- (2) *Replace the second paragraph with the following words:*

"We call on Her Majesty's Government to allocate funding immediately for the work to improve the flow of the River Thames at Sandford Lock. We ask that immediate attention be given to investigating what other measures will be most effective in reducing the flooding risk to Oxford citizens and properties, especially

whether major tree planting schemes upstream would reduce the flood risk as well as having great environmental advantages”

We call on the Environment Agency to work with the City and County Councils to minimise the risk of flooding to homes and to develop schemes whereby the risk of closure of main roads and railway lines is reduced as far as practically possible.’

- (3) *Retain the current third paragraph which becomes the fourth paragraph.*

The mover of the substantive Motion (Councillor John Tanner) did not accept the amendment by Councillor Jean Fooks and following a debate, Council voted and the amendment was not adopted.

Following a further debate, Council resolved under procedure Rule 11.19(d) to have a named vote. The result of the named vote was as follows:

For the Motion – Councillors Sinclair, Brett, Abbasi, Baxter, Benjamin, Brown, Canning, Clack, Clarkson, Cook, Coulter, Curran, Darke, Fry, Haines, Hollick, Humberstone, Kennedy, Shah Khan, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Lygo, Pressel, Price, Rowley, Rundle, Sanders, Seamons, Simmons, Tanner, Turner, Upton, Van Nooijen, Williams and Wolff.

Against the Motion – None.

Abstentions – Councillors Campbell, Fooks, Goddard, Gotch, McCreedy, Mills, and Wilkinson

Following the named vote the substantive Motion was adopted as follows:

This Council is appalled by the inadequate measures taken by the Coalition Government to help tackle Oxford's increasing flooding problems.

We call on Her Majesty's Government to allocate funding immediately for the Conveyance Channel so that floods bypass Oxford. We call on the Environment Agency and the County Council to work with the City Council to significantly improve protection for homes and to guarantee that main roads and the railway remain open even when there is flooding.

We congratulate the staff of the Environment Agency, the emergency services, and the County and City Councils, for their hard work in helping Oxford residents during the floods. We also congratulate Oxford residents for their positive outlook, co-operation and determination to keep going, during the latest floods.

- (5) **Control of residential lettings boards in the City – (Proposed by Councillor Ruth Wilkinson, seconded by Councillor Jim Campbell)**

Liberal Democrat Group Member - Motion on Notice

Council acknowledges that “To Let” and “Let by” signs are erected on some properties for months despite the properties being occupied. This creates visual clutter, community objection and planning enforcement complaints, highlights student-targeted areas, and police advice in other parts of the country has pointed to a strong correlation between crime levels and the properties displaying “To Let” boards.

Council notes that other authorities have tackled this issue by means of either a voluntary code or a mandatory code, and that mandatory codes have been introduced in Leeds, and also in Newcastle following a review of a previously agreed voluntary code. Council further notes the well-documented success of a mandatory code on the erection of residential lettings boards in Inner NW Leeds which led to a reduction in crime and antisocial behaviour, and improved the appearance of two predominantly student areas in the City.

Council also notes that the majority of agencies involved in letting residential properties do ensure that boards are taken down when reminded.

Council asks the City Executive Board:

- (a) To require officers to introduce a code on the erection of residential lettings boards in Oxford
- (b) To carry out a formal consultation process on whether this code should be voluntary or mandatory
- (c) To work with landlords, estate agencies which operate lettings, lettings agencies, boards agents, Oxford City Council officers and the Universities on the content of the code, taking into account the relevant regulations and ensuring that there is an agreed and clear definition of the start date of a tenancy which triggers the board erection process.

Councillor Ruth Wilkinson’s Motion on Notice was not considered as the time allowed for Motions on Notice by the Constitution had lapsed.

(6) Flood Insurance and Mitigation – (Proposed by Councillor Craig Simmons, seconded by Councillor David Williams)

Green Group Member - Motion on Notice

This Council notes that flooding incidents in Oxford are likely to increase as climate change worsens with serious effects on those whose homes and businesses are badly damaged and lives disrupted.

This Council also notes that the agreement between the UK Government and the insurance industry, the so-called ‘Statement of Principles’, which required members of the Association of British Insurers (ABI) to make insurance available for properties in areas at significant flood risk, expired last year. The outline of a new scheme, called ‘Flood Re’, has been agreed with the industry but this will not come into effect until at least 2015. Its terms, conditions and costs remain unclear.

In the interim, flood insurance is being provided on a voluntary basis with the risk that premiums and excesses will rise and new households where flooding is a risk will find getting a policy more and more difficult.

This Council therefore asks the relevant officer to write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs expressing its concern on behalf of those at risk of flooding in the City and asks for details of any interim measures that will guarantee cover until the new arrangement are in place.

This Council also agrees to revisit its own policy on climate change adaptation working with other agencies to ensure that the City, its people and economy, are better prepared for more extreme weather events.

Councillor Craig Simmons Motion on Notice was not considered as the time allowed for Motions on Notice by the Constitution had lapsed.

(7) Roger Dudman Way – (Proposed by Councillor Elise Benjamin, seconded by Councillor Dick Wolff)

Green Group Member - Motion on Notice

Oxford City Council accepts the findings of the Independent Report into the flaws, errors and limitations in the planning processes around the approval given to the damaging and highly controversial Roger Dudman Way Oxford University graduate buildings, and resolves to work together with all bodies to ensure that the impacts on Port Meadow and William Lucy Way are reversed, and the views of the Grade 1 listed St Barnabas Tower and other views restored, for the benefit of current and future generations of residents, visitors and students in Oxford City and elsewhere.

Councillor Elise Benjamin's Motion on Notice was not considered as the time allowed for Motions on Notice by the Constitution had lapsed.

(8) Improving Access to the Register of Gifts and Hospitality – (Proposed by Councillor David Williams seconded by Councillor Elise Benjamin)

Green Group Member - Motion on Notice

This Council believes that both Councillors and officers must act, and be seen to act, in an impartial and objective way if public faith in Council processes, are to be maintained and enhanced.

There is already a requirement under the Employee Code of Conduct for each Service Area to maintain a Register of Gifts and Hospitality, but members of the public are unable to easily access this information.

Council therefore resolves that, in the interest of openness and transparency:

- (1) All Service Area Registers of Gifts and Hospitality should be made readily available to Councillors and members of the public via a link on the Council website; and
- (2) Reports on planning applications, and other quasi-judicial documents, should include reference to any related disclosures.

Councillor David William's Motion on Notice was not considered as the time allowed for Motions on Notice by the Constitution had lapsed.

89. MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION

Not required.

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 8.55 pm

Address to Council by Paula Maddison

Oxfordshire Mind address to the council (by Paula Maddison, Corporate Relationship Co-ordinator for Oxfordshire Mind)

Linking into the motion by Cllr Turner regarding Mental health champions, I would like to address the council regarding the work that Oxfordshire Mind does. My name is Paula Maddison and my role within Mind is that of Corporate Relationship Co-ordinator. I am responsible for linking with employees around the support we can offer to both employers and employees.

At any time, 1 in 6 people will be experiencing some kind of mental health issue. Each year, £26 billion will be lost due to employees' poor mental health. £15.1 billion lost each year through poor productivity of employees who continue to work while experiencing poor mental health. 70 million working days are lost each year.

Oxfordshire Mind's 'mission' is to ensure that anyone with a mental health problem has someone to turn for advice and support. We want to create conversations in the workplace about mental health and to reduce the stigma around accessing help and support.

The Oxfordshire Mind Information Service provides information about mental health and mental health services across Oxfordshire and is open to anyone to access. I will be leaving some cards out for people to take with details of how to contact this service.

I would be very happy to meet with any of you to discuss the work that Oxfordshire Mind does and how we could support the role of mental health champions. We offer mental health first aid training, a nationally accredited course which teaches participants the knowledge and skills to recognise the early signs of mental ill-health and support someone to seek the right help. We also offer a number of short course around 'Coping Skills' including Self-esteem, Assertiveness and Mindful Way of Living as well as shorter, 'bite-size' information sessions around mental health and wellbeing. All of these could be used to start having the conversation about mental health, both at an organisational level, as part of a workplace wellbeing strategy or on a one to one base with employees around mental health issues.

Many thanks for listening and please get in touch to discuss what we are able to offer both you and your organisation.

Paula Maddison
January 2014

This page is intentionally left blank

Address to Council by Chaka Artwell (Oxford Voice)

London has welcomed people seeking sanctuary for many centuries: Jean-Jacque Rousseau, Karl Marx, & Marcus Garvey have all had need to seek sanctuary in London during times of personal persecution. London has been the City of choice for many peoples seeking sanctuary and this tradition is something the English peoples should cherish.

Today in 2014 there is a man whose Whistle Blowing activities have not only saved many people in places like Iraq and Afghanistan from unlawful military attack. But this man's activities is helping to established the rights of western people not to be arbitrarily put under surveillance by the covert intelligence societies of the United States.

As a result of Mr Julian Assange's Whistle Blowing activities the world has seen an Apache helicopter fatally attacking Rueter Journalist and then attacking the Ambulance who assisted the dead and wounded. In a world governed by secrecy there is a need for brave courageous people who will speak our for truth and justice in a world full of government led wrong doings.

Oxford Voice is calling on Oxford City Councillors to support a humanitarian Petition asking the Home Office to allow this brave man to leave the Ecuadorian Embassy in order to seek sanctuary in Ecuador.

I am sure Oxford City Councillors would welcome the chance to uphold the fine tradition of sanctuary for the oppressed. Your support in this matter is much needed as offering sanctuary is a fine and noble tradition. In support of the best tradition of English freedom, please sign this Petition to free Mr Assange from confinement in Ecuadorian Embassy in London. Thank you.

This page is intentionally left blank

Address to Council by Alasdair de Voil

Concerning abuse/conflict of interest: Visit Oxfordshire

Please note that I have been complaining for over 2 years about how Visit Oxfordshire Ltd., which runs Oxford visitor information centre on behalf of Oxford City & County Councils, sees fit to go out of their way to undermine and disadvantage local businesses like mine- the very tourism businesses which it is supposed to be introducing information about our services to the public. Essentially, Visit Oxfordshire does the opposite of its remit and when it comes to presenting information about guided tours of Oxford (the most relevant service it offers), it does little else than sell and market only one tour (its so-called 'Official Oxford walking tour') to the almost complete exclusion of every other tour. In other words, despite receiving public funding to provide a public service on behalf of Oxford City and County Council, it actually misuses its position to run a monopoly interest on selling its own tour. How it can even be appropriate for a supposedly impartial service provider to even run its own tour, is strange in itself and represents already a conflict of interest.

I can give many examples of how it abuses its position but the most obvious is if you visit their website, nearly every single page directs people to its official tour but you'd have to look very hard to find tours like mine listed there. The website has something like 5,000 % more advertising for the official tour than it does for any other tour- despite fact the that we pay them a minimum £390 annual partnership fee and the official tour pays absolutely no such fee to be advertised!

I have also already several times pointed out to the Highways department that every day, a sign is put outside Oxford Visitor Information Centre, which doesn't comply with highways guidelines as their guidelines state that a sign board may only be left outside a business unless 50% of the advertising on display is about the business it is located outside of. Yet the sign advertises now only the so-called 'Oxford Official Walking Tour', which is according to Oxford visitor info centre, an independently operated business from their own organisation's remit. Yet when people like MP Andrew Smith and the Local Government Ombudsman and the Oxford Times have asked questions about how can the visitor centre operate impartially (while being a publicly funded and supposedly impartial service), no one has been offered a reasonable explanation of why Visit Oxfordshire is advertising and selling only one Oxford walking tour to the almost complete exclusion of performing their remit to provide a public service about all tours available.

When everyone apart from the highways department asked what is the status of the relationship between the official tours and the visitor centre, each time they were advised that the Official Oxford tour is not the visitor centre's tour but that they simply see fit to sell (only it and no other Oxford tour). They always claimed the tour is in fact run by the blue badge guild of guides. However, when the highways department asked visitor centre about the sign outside the visitor centre (advertising only the official Oxford tour), they told them the tour is the visitor centre's own tour. In other words: 1) the visitor centre is running a monopoly interest if it is their own tour (as they claim to the Highways department) but 2) it is not their own tour, when anyone

else asks them why with a remit to be impartial, they only want to advertise and sell tickets for one tour

Truth be told, tour operators like myself, only really need signage in one location and only need our advertising to be found easily and without prejudice at one location and on the one most important website which nearly all visitors to Oxford will use. The periphery of other sites and advertising sources are very secondary in importance to our opportunity to attract customers. (in last 3 years)

However, sadly the visitor information centre is so far from being either impartial or functioning with a remit to benefit businesses like mine which pay it a significant partnership fee, this in spite of the fact that Visit Oxfordshire Ltd has received almost £1 million in the last 3 years from Oxford City and County Council, to deliver a publicly funded service. Instead, it continues to see fit to directly undermine local businesses like mine- which provide the services that it exists to promote information about to the public. I have been complaining about these circumstances for over 2 years to Oxford City Council because in effect, the Council is permitting a supplier to ruin our business opportunity and is doing all this with Council funding.

This is a serious matter as the public is not getting its money spent in the fair way it should be and local businesses are being damaged. Legal advisers recommended that as the City Council is the organisation finally responsible for this abuse of a public service, if we were to elect to sue for damages, it would be easier to sue the Council than Visit Oxfordshire Ltd. However, such a prospect is completely unnecessary anyway as the Council has a duty to ensure its services are being provided in an appropriate manner. Visit Oxfordshire Ltd. doesn't even provide its partners with a description of how they will provide a fair service- despite my asking for such a statement since the day I relented to pay them my annual £390 partnership fee. The value of sales which I have had as a result of my fee and partnership is nothing like a return on investment on the fee I paid them and I have heard so many other partnership members say the same thing that they find the service they get is appalling and not a R.O.I. We see this as being the case because it is so evidently clear that Visit Oxfordshire's agenda is to market and sell the Official Oxford tour wherever possible and only then offer an alternative if they can't do so.

As nearly all visitors gravitate towards the visitor centre and its website, funnily enough, what this means as a result is that nearly all the opportunity for customers goes to the visitor centre's monopoly Official Oxford tour. This is in spite of the fact that while we pay them a partnership fee, the blue badge guild of guides pays no partnership fee at all! That's because Visit Oxfordshire receives about 50% in commission from every individual ticket they sell for the official tour.

These completely unsatisfactory circumstances have been made known to Oxford City Council for over two years but absolutely no action has yet been taken to ensure a fair marketplace and to reprimand Visit Oxfordshire Ltd. which runs the visitor centre, nor has any action be taken to conduct a review of why the City Council permits such a gross conflict of interest to continue unchecked. The result is that it forces small businesses like mine to depend on claiming welfare benefits as we simply can't make a living when we are being exploited by the very organisation and

public service which has a duty to represent and promote our interests (instead of effectively stealing what could have been our customers).

Myself and other Oxford tour operators have lost patience with these circumstances and we suggest very strongly that the City and County Council take more responsibility for the damage caused to our businesses or we will have to review what alternative paths may have to be undertaken to see that we can make a viable living by having a fair marketplace. Surely the Council is supposed to be supporting small local businesses to thrive- especially ones which develop and promote Oxford's heritage and culture. Currently, the average £300,000 annual funding which the Council is paying Visit Oxfordshire Ltd, is being used to no better effect than to force tour operators like myself into losing money just trying to operate tours. We want to make a modest living but instead in my case, I am having to work several other jobs and depend ultimately on housing benefit and working tax credit, to be able to survive. Is this all that your Council has to offer entrepreneurs like me?

This page is intentionally left blank

Address to Council by Nigel Gibson

Why Oxford City Council Could and Should Deliver the Services the People of Oxford Want and Need

I am here this evening to hand over these seven petitions from the people of Oxford, who are clearly expressing their wish, yet again, that you keep Temple Cowley Pools and Fitness Centre open.

I realise that many of you regard the matter of closing Temple Cowley Pools as history, as something you've made a decision on years ago and so shouldn't have to consider again. But, the people, your voters, have a very different view, and express it plainly by choosing to sign the petition. They are extremely angry that you are wasting their money and ignoring what they want.

The people of Oxford want their services for health and exercise kept open, provided in a place where they want and need them, at Temple Cowley Pools and Fitness Centre. You must recognise just how strongly people feel about this issue. The first petition presented to you in 2010 was the largest in the history of Oxford at over 12,000 signatures. We only stopped collecting signatures because you chose to ignore the petition – so we started another petition, and another, and another... The strength of feeling remains the same – people are angry now that you continue ignoring them, just as you ignored them when you carried out your so-called 'consultation' process.

But it's not just about opinion; you would have us believe that this is a matter on which people can 'reasonably differ' in their views and that as you are in power your view must prevail. But the mantra of Labour has been for many years to follow 'evidence-based' policy making. And in this case it is not just opinion that is against you, but evidence. Councillors have claimed that you took "quite a lot of persuading" before deciding to close Temple Cowley Pools. Well, despite all the claims to be following an open and transparent process, at no point have we seen any evidence to justify closure that is either persuasive or even mildly convincing. We have repeatedly asked to see any evidence of what persuaded you; our requests have been met with patronising responses along the lines of 'we must trust the experts', even though it is clear that your 'experts', your hired hands, are only interested in delivering the message you want to hear.

We have demonstrated, either using information you have provided, or using information we have had to drag out of the council using Freedom of Information requests, how all this so-called 'evidence' of yours is a combination of misleading, inaccurate, incomplete and untrue. And that is unfortunate, because as a Campaign we would rather work with you than against you. And this evening, yet again, with yet another petition (now of course the largest number of petitions on one topic ever to have been presented to this council) you have the opportunity to do the right thing.

You have decided to continue to build a 25m, non-Olympic swimming pool at Blackbird Leys. The total cost of this exercise, not just the current build cost of £9.23m, will be over £13m by the time you have finished. This is the most expensive 25m swimming pool in the UK, and probably in Europe – that is over half a million pounds for each metre!

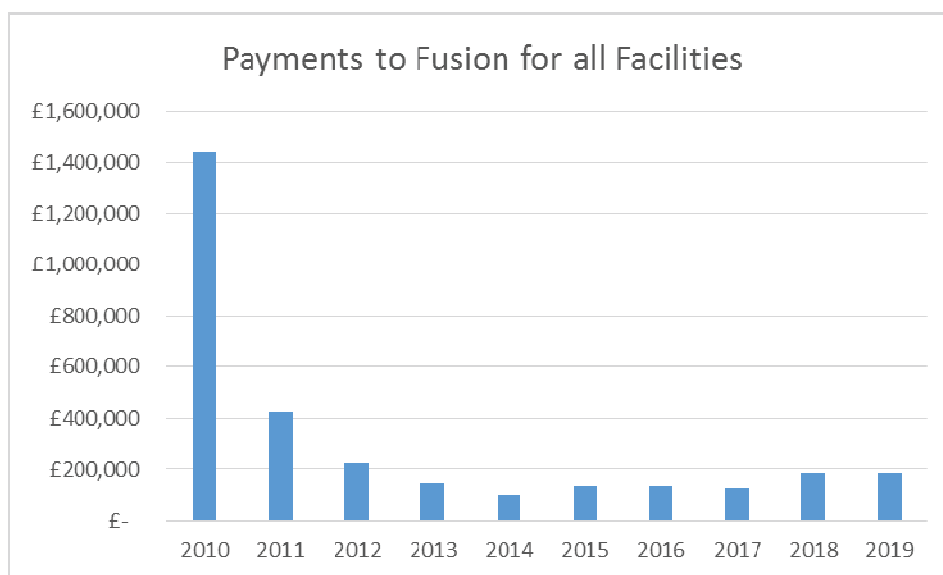
And you intend closing two sports centres in the process, despite your claims in an answer at the last City Executive Board that “there is no policy of reducing publicly funded leisure facilities” – really? I think it is clear that you are most definitely reducing facilities that people want and need, moving them away from where they want and need them. There is absolutely zero evidence of demand for a new swimming pool at Blackbird Leys – if people there really wanted more swimming, there would be a clamour for the existing pool to be open to the public much longer than the 9 hours it currently is each week.

If you had taken a different course, you could have protected all your front-line services from the swingeing cuts in your Central Government grant, and fully refurbished Temple Cowley Pools, and had done whatever you want – to keep facilities for health and fitness where they should be – in walking and cycling distance of most of the existing users. And you have chosen a different route, to proceed with your white elephant of a vanity project. But there is still time. Time to keep Temple Cowley Pools open, and do what the public wants.

I’m not going to revisit all the sound, robust and factual evidence for keeping Temple Cowley Pools open, as the Campaign has presented them to you many times before, and each time you’ve chosen to ignore them. Ignore what was the most popular leisure centre despite you actively trying to run it down, ignore that it was the most energy efficient leisure centre, ignore that it is sited in Oxford’s area of fastest population growth over the last ten years, ignore the independent conditions surveys that you commissioned and then hid because they told you there is nothing basically wrong with it.

At the heart of your desire to close Temple Cowley Pools is money, or rather, ‘you say’ saving it. We hear repeatedly that it costs us over £500,000 a year to operate the centre. You claim that the vast majority of that, £340,000 last year, is a contractual payment to the operators, Fusion, who also take all the admission money while operating a tax avoidance scam under the pretence of being a charity.

Well, you publish the annual payments from the Fusion contract on your website. Here they are, for the whole contract term:



Andyou claimedinananswerto a publicquestionat a CityExecutiveBoardmeetinglast yearthatnothing hadchanged,andthat youarenot payinganythingadditionalto Fusion. Youwillseequite clearlythat thepaymentslastyearwereunder£200,000forallourleisure centres,soclearlythere's someadding upgoingwrong inyourclaim fortheoperatingcosts ofTempleCowley.Orsomeoneislying?

Andyou cansee,quiteclearly,thattheannualpaymentstoFusionwillstaybelow £200,000 fortherestof thecontract.Andyetforthebrandnew25mnon-Olympicswimmingpool you aregoingtopayFusion£150,000ayear!Howon earthcanthisbe value for money?

Here'sasolution. Themaintenance cost of TempleCowley Poolsisunder£100,000ayear. Therealcontract'cost'toFusion foroperating thecentrecannot bemorethanabout £30,000ayear.You can bringthe divingpoolbackintousefor£60,000– the onlypublicly fundeddivingpoolinOxfordshire .Theonlymajorcostsinmaintenance,accordingtoyour own figures,aretheair handling unitsandtheroof–thesewill cost £300,000.Sohereisa realvalue-for-moneysolutionthattrumpsanythingelseyouaredoing anywhereelsein Oxford;cheapertoenactandcheapertorunthanthe newswimmingpool,offeringmore facilities that willenableandpreservethehealth,fitness,well-beingand qualityoflifeof thousandsofpeopleinOxfordandacrossthecounty.Nonemoresothantheelderly and infirm,whorelyonthishealthandfitnesscentrebeingwhereitisnowasconvenientfor themtoexerciseandmaintaintheirqualityof life,enablingthemtoremain independent andoutof thecostly clutchesof theNHS.

Andso,supportedby thesolutionIhave justdescribed,Iwouldliketopresentyou withthe seventhpetition fromthepeopleof Oxford:

"Wethe undersigned stronglyoppose Oxford CityCouncil's plan to demolish Temple CowleyPools and Fitness Centre in orderto sell publiclyowned land for housing.We believethis is a short-sighted,destructive policywhich will havedetrimental effects on health and well-being,particularlyofthe most vulnerable people,who usethe centre tomaintain their health and qualityof life,and independence from the NHSforas long as possible.We call upon OxfordCityCouncil to workimmediatelywiththe SaveTemple CowleyPools Campaign to find thebest wayto enhance and preserve the existingfacilities in Temple Cowley."

Nigel Gibson–February2014

CampaigntoSaveTempleCowley Pools &Fitness

Centresavetcp@gmail.com

www.savetemplecowleypools.webs.com

@savetcp

fb:savetcp

This page is intentionally left blank