

OXFORD CITY FULL COUNCIL MEETING 13 APRIL 2015

AGENDA ITEM 20: MOTIONS ON NOTICE –motions from Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green, groups in turn.

Motions received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.16.

Substantive amendments received by the Head of Law and Governance before publication of this document are included.

1. Using your Vote (proposed by Cllr Tanner, seconded by Cllr Clack) Labour member motion

Original motion proposed

This City Council urges every resident who can to use their vote in the General Election on May 7th. We call on each of the candidates in the Oxford East and Oxford West & Abingdon constituencies:

- a) to speak up for local government
- b) to pledge to build the homes Oxford desperately needs
- c) to support our schools and universities
- d) to back a vibrant low carbon economy
- e) to commit to a Living Wage and
- f) to promote an international, safe and tolerant city.

We expect those elected to represent Oxford in the House of Commons to fight for a fairer, greener and even more beautiful city for all.

Amendments proposed by Councillor Hollick, seconded Councillor Benjamin

Amend 1b) to read *'to pledge to build the affordable homes that are desperately needed in Oxford and the surrounding area'*
and 1e) to read *'to commit to a national Living Wage and the Oxford Living Wage'*

Amendments proposed by Councillor Fooks

Replace (a) with

- (a) *To stand up for local government, campaigning for proper funding and devolution of both powers and budgets to a local level*

And to insert 'colleges' in line (c), so that it reads

- (c) to support our schools, *colleges* and universities.

Motion as amended including both amendments

This City Council urges every resident who can to use their vote in the General Election on May 7th. We call on each of the candidates in the Oxford East and Oxford West & Abingdon constituencies:

- a) *To stand up for local government, campaigning for proper funding and devolution of both powers and budgets to a local level*
- b) *to pledge to build the affordable homes that are desperately needed in Oxford and the surrounding area*
- c) to support our schools, *colleges* and universities
- d) to back a vibrant low carbon economy
- e) *to commit to a national Living Wage and the Oxford Living Wage*
- f) to promote an international, safe and tolerant city.

We expect those elected to represent Oxford in the House of Commons to fight for a fairer, greener and even more beautiful city for all.

2. Housing (proposed by Cllr Fooks, seconded by Cllr Wade)

Liberal Democrats member motion

Council notes the increasing disparity in housing costs between the social housing sector and the private sector. This risks Oxford becoming a city of only the very well-off and the not-at-all well-off, with no housing within reach of middle income households. Key workers such as teachers and nurses can no longer afford to live in Oxford, and communities become unbalanced.

Council asks the Executive Board to ask officers to investigate new models of housing provision which would include starter homes, key worker housing and self-build in any new developments. This is likely to require the setting up of a separate housing company.

Council recognises the concerns of neighbouring districts over proposals to build on green belt land outside the City and asks the Oxfordshire Growth Board to ensure that the current Green Belt Review is thorough, transparent and involves proper public consultation.

Dialogue with the county and the districts must continue.

Council recognises that the current jobs/homes imbalance – 46,000 people commuting in every day – will get worse with the thousands of new jobs expected in the City. Council asks the Administration to work with the County Council as the Highway Authority to ensure that the provision of excellent public transport links is fully recognised in LTP4.

Amended motion proposed by Councillor Seamons (amendments in italics)

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Council asks the Executive Board to ask officers to investigate new models of housing provision which would include starter homes, key worker housing and self-build in any new developments.

[delete remaining text in the original motion and replace with]

Oxford also believes that more social housing has a substantial role to play in meeting this housing need, and rejects the Governments movement to unaffordable 'affordable rent'.

Council repeats its call for an urgent Green Belt review which represents Oxford's only realistic way of meeting its housing needs. Of course council recognises the concerns of neighbouring authorities and the need to continue open dialogue but the results of the abandonment of regional planning through the former LEAs has been the halting of an urban extension desperately needed for Oxford's extreme housing need. The Council implores an incoming government to return to strategic regional planning and to abandon the failed 'duty to co-operate'.

Council is delighted by the thousands of new jobs expected in the City including those as a consequence of the City Deal, the coming new Westgate Centre and proposed Northern Gateway development. However the Council recognises the current jobs/homes imbalance – 46,000 people commuting in every day and the twin demands this makes for more homes, and the encouragement of sustainable transport. Council asks the Administration to work with the County Council as the Highway Authority to ensure that the provision of excellent public transport links is fully recognised in LTP4.

3. Controlling the Housing Investment Market (proposed by Cllr Hollick, seconded by Cllr Brandt) Green member motion

This Council notes that housing rents in Oxford are some of the highest in the Country. That increasing numbers of new and converted properties are being purchased by buy-to-let landlords and overseas investors who are being attracted to Oxford because of the high returns. With high housing demand, this is leading to a spiral of rent increases as these property owners seek to maximise returns. In addition, the rising number of investment properties is increasing the price, and reducing the number, of properties for private sale.

This Council therefore calls on the incoming Government to act decisively and quickly to better control the housing investment market for example, through reductions in the tax relief given to buy-to-let landlords, the introduction of local rent controls and more flexibility on how Council Tax is levied.

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[delete remaining text in the original motion and replace with]

It is not only high rents that lead to dissatisfaction with the rental market but the instability felt by Oxford's private renting citizens, many of whom are families. Short-assured tenancies of 6 or 12 months mean tenants unable to put down roots, decorate their homes or have stability in school or work. There is also a need to raise standards across the private rented sector, where because of high demand poor quality housing has been let for too long. In addition, the rising number of investment properties is increasing the price, and reducing the number, of properties for private sale.

This Council therefore calls on the incoming Government to act decisively in introducing and normalising longer term tenancies of 3 years, with restricted rent rises in that term. The council also backs plans to ban expensive letting agent fees which limit access to the rented sector. The council also calls on an incoming government to do more to support council's looking to set up local licensing schemes to drive up standards, such as the HMO licensing scheme in Oxford. Councils are capable of enforcing improved standards in the sector but are held back from introducing schemes by unnecessary bureaucratic barriers. The incoming Government should also carefully consider further measures, including the tax relief given to buy-to-let landlords and the introduction of rent controls, weighing up the pressures of increasing rents and prices, while supporting those who are vulnerable or in most acute housing need.

To improve access to home ownership for local people, the council's planning officers have been directed to seek agreement with developers to market properties solely to local people/organisations for the first few months of a sale. Finally, the Council backs plans for a Mansion Tax so that those who benefit most from housing wealth pay a greater share in society, but an incoming government could go further in this regard by giving local authorities more flexibility on how council tax is levied.

4. Encouraging collaboration for action on cancer (proposed by Cllr Coulter, seconded by Cllr Lygo)

Labour member motion

Oxford City Council congratulates each of the organisations meeting together at Oxford Town Hall on 4 February to Mark "World Cancer Day". Council thanks each of those organisations for providing advocacy, for highlighting the suffering caused by cancer, and for providing hope through the development of innovative treatments and supportive care - all of which is centred on improving outcomes for patients, their families and their carers.

Each year, 8.2 million die worldwide from cancer. Four million die prematurely. And, one out of every two of us will experience painful illness through cancer.

Oxford has a significant role in medical science and in cancer research, with 450 post-doctoral researchers working on cancer related investigations - bringing £22 million to our local economy and with the likelihood such work will expand, for example, with the Churchill Hospital's recognition as a lead centre for targeted cancer therapy.

Oxford City Council resolves to support "World Cancer Day" as an annual event and will seek to find cost effective ways to work with the charitable, voluntary and academic communities and organisations for improved outcomes for cancer sufferers, their families and their carers.

5. Trident (proposed by Cllr Wolff seconded by Cllr Thomas) Green member motion

Council notes that the current government is in favour of replacing Trident at a cost of around £100 billion. According to estimates by CND, this money would be enough to fully fund A&E services for 40 years, employ 150,000 new nurses, build 1.5 million affordable homes, build 30,000 new primary schools, or cover tuition fees for 4 million students.

Council also notes that the Defence Review in 2016 will provide the incoming Government with an historic opportunity to re-consider the UK's nuclear weapons programme.

Particularly at time when funding for the NHS, Council Housing and Education is subject to austerity cuts, this Council believes that the Trident and Trident nuclear replacement programme funding could be much better utilised for the benefit of all and therefore the programme should be scrapped.

Council therefore agrees to ask the leader to write to all the City and County MPs after the election asking them to back the scrapping of Trident and any replacement.

6. Oxfordshire Transport Strategy (proposed by Cllr Tanner) Labour member motion

The City Council welcomes the County Council's new transport strategy for Oxford as far as it goes but believes a number of key improvements are needed. We endorse the submission from the City Council about the OTS. In particular we believe that:

1) Tunnelling under the centre of Oxford is a costly nonsense which will damage the beautiful heart of Oxford and destroy archaeology.

2) The County are right about the increase in journeys in future but the Rapid Transit Buses (RTB) they propose will not provide the number of extra buses and seats that are needed.

3) The new Oxford Transport Strategy (OTS) does not make it clear which modes of transport should have most priority. We want to give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and buses especially during rush hours.

4) The City Council wants a speedy end to the effective moratorium on urgently needed improvements for cyclists on Oxford's roads.

5) The City Council supports the same balanced transport policy for the Headington hospitals and the Cowley business park, that has operated successfully for the city centre for many years. At present very many people who work in the eastern arc have little choice but to drive.

6) The County's latest OTS has failed to indicate sensible routes for the RTBs. Using crowded roads Like the Cowley Road and London Road, or driving a bus lane across a golf course in Lye Valley, are unworkable.

7) The City Council will continue to keep open its Park & Rides (P & R) in the city. Indeed we want to expand Seacourt P & R. But we also support more Park & Rides beyond Oxford in addition.

8) We support some ideas in the OTS such as more electric vehicles, cleaner air, a passenger rail link to Cowley and consulting about a work-place parking levy. We are opposed to road pricing as an unworkable burden on car drivers and businesses.

Amendments proposed by Councillor Wolff seconded by Councillor Thomas

Add to the end of point 2) *“Furthermore, the existing roads on the proposed RTB routes will probably have to be completely rebuilt to cope with them. Council believes that, instead of RTB, the practical feasibility of trams should be given serious consideration.”*

Amend 8) to delete final sentence and replace with *“We believe that an inner city congestion charge should be consulted upon if the proposed zero emission zone fails to materialise or proves insufficient to address Citywide air quality issues.”*

Add additional point 9) *“We are also concerned that the OTS does not properly consider carbon dioxide emissions which will increase under the proposed future transport scenarios.”*

Supporting Note to point 9). This is due to the increased number of commuter journeys and the unambitious aim of the OTS to stabilise rather than reduce the number of journeys by car.

Motion as amended

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8) We support some ideas in the OTS such as more electric vehicles, cleaner air, a passenger rail link to Cowley and consulting about a work-place parking levy. *We believe that an inner city congestion charge should be consulted upon if the proposed zero emission zone fails to materialise or proves insufficient to address Citywide air quality issues.*

9) *We are also concerned that the OTS does not properly consider carbon dioxide emissions which will increase under the proposed future transport scenarios.*

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