

**Amended Foreword to Climate Change Review
Group Report
and
Blackbird Leys Development Confidential Legal Advice
for
Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday 3 March 2020**

8. **Reports for Approval** (Pages 3 - 6)

13. **Blackbird Leys Development Project Detailed Design - confidential appendices** (Pages 7 - 12)

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Proposed Amended Foreword by the Chair (amended version to read as follows)



The risk climate change poses to life as we know it has been clear to the scientific community for decades. However, following the publication of the IPCC report in 2018 there has been a palpable increase in public concern. An estimated 10,000 people joined the Climate Strikes in this city alone. As councillors we should be proud to represent a place where people are prepared to take action on an issue so crucial to our shared future.

In 2008, the Government set an ambitious target to reduce carbon emissions by 80%. This was strengthened further in 2019 when a target of net zero emissions by 2050 was adopted. The science suggests that even more urgent action is necessary.

Although national government, and historically the EU, is the primary driver of regulations concerning building design and energy efficiency, we recognise that local government has an important role to play.

Recognising this, in January 2019 this Council passed a motion to declare a Climate Emergency and initiated the setting up of the UK's first Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change. The assembly saw a demographically representative group of residents hear evidence from leading climate experts on the consequences and trade-offs involved in different future scenarios. Once informed of the facts, the majority of these residents supported the Council going further and faster than national government's 2050 zero carbon target. The Council's initial response to the Assembly's report has now been published.¹

This cross-party Review Group was set up by the Council's Scrutiny Committee in recognition of the urgency and importance of tackling this issue and the need to challenge and independently scrutinise the wider work of the Council. The Review has focused mainly on the leading cause of emissions in Oxford, buildings, and has made 56 recommendations to the Cabinet on ways to respond to the challenge of reducing emissions from the buildings in our City and addressing the wider Climate Emergency.

I would like to thank the members of the Review Group Councillors Nadine Bely-Summers, Mike Gotch, Tom Landell Mills, Craig Simmons and John Tanner, all Council

¹ The report is available online at <http://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/s52089/Cabinet%20Report%20-%20Citizen%20Assembly%20Report%20-%20Dec%20Cab%20-%20121219%20v17%20CLEAN.pdf>

officers who supported the Review Group and, on behalf of the Group, those from outside the Council who freely gave up their time to speak to us. A particular highlight for me was our visit to a zero-carbon development being built by Greencore construction in Southmoor near Abingdon. This beautifully designed site contained social housing mixed with privately owned homes built to Passivehaus standards. Fundamentally, the company have been able to build these homes at a lower cost than traditional houses using off-site prefabrication. The technology is moving apace in the right direction – public demand for action is rising - our task is to use what levers we have to support this potential. I commend this report's recommendations to Cabinet.

Councillor Richard Howlett, Chair of the Climate Emergency Review Group

Proposed Amendment: Foreword by the Chair (tracked changes)



The risk climate change poses to life as we know it has been clear for decades. However, following the publication of the IPCC report in 2018 there has been a palpable increase in public concern. An estimated 10,000 people joined the Climate Strikes in this city alone. As councillors we should be proud to represent a place where people are prepared to take action on an issue so crucial to our shared future.

~~Whilst there has been positive action from central government, such as the gradual decarbonisation of the national grid, the overall response has failed to match the timeframe the science demands. We must recognise that national government sets the context within which local government can act. It determines the rules within which we work and much of the resource we have available. However, the limitations of national action should fuel our urgency in doing what we are able to locally. In 2008, the Government set an ambitious target to reduce carbon emissions by 80%. This was strengthened further in 2019 when a target of net zero emissions by 2050 was adopted. The science suggests that even more urgent action is necessary.~~

~~Oxford City Council has shown leadership on this issue for many years, for example by delivering loans to the Low Carbon Hub, insulating and fitting solar panels on council homes and through promoting cycling in the city. In January 2019 we went further, passing a motion to declare a Climate Emergency and initiating the UK's first Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change. Although national government, and historically the EU, is~~

the primary driver of regulations concerning building design and energy efficiency, we recognise that local government has an important role to play.

Recognising this, in January 2019 this Council passed a motion to declare a Climate Emergency and initiated the setting up of the UK's first Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change. The assembly saw a demographically representative group of residents hear evidence from leading climate experts on the consequences and trade-offs involved in different future scenarios. Once informed of the facts, the majority of these residents supported the Council going further and faster than national government's 2050 zero carbon target. ~~The Council's initial response to the Assembly's report has now been published and serious, far-reaching work continues under Cllr Tom Hayes, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford.~~ The Council's initial response to the Assembly's report has now been published.²

This cross-party Review Group was set up by the Council's Scrutiny Committee in recognition of the urgency and importance of tackling this issue and the need to challenge and independently scrutinise the wider work of the Council. The Review has focused mainly on the leading cause of emissions in Oxford, buildings, and has made 56 recommendations to the Cabinet on ways to respond to the challenge of reducing emissions in our City and addressing the wider Climate Emergency. ~~As with all areas of tackling climate change the co-benefits in improving the sustainability of our buildings are immense. Energy bills drop dramatically in the far better insulated homes this crisis demands.~~

I would like to thank the members of the Review Group, Councillors Nadine Bely-Summers, Mike Gotch, Tom Landell Mills, Craig Simmons and John Tanner, all Council officers who supported the Review Group and, on behalf of the Review Group, all those who gave their time to speak to us from council officers to architects to community organisers. I would also like to thank all of the members of the group, in particular Vice-Chair, Cllr Craig Simmons, who has been a tremendous resource to us all with his knowledge of this area, and Tom Hudson, Scrutiny Officer, for his hard work and support throughout.

A particular highlight for me was our visit to a zero-carbon development being built by Greencore construction in Southmoor near Abingdon. This beautifully designed site contained rented 'affordable housing' mixed with privately-owned homes built to Passivehaus standards. Fundamentally, ~~the company have been able to build these homes, using off-site prefabrication, at a lower cost than equivalent, traditional houses.~~ the company have been able to build these homes at a lower cost than traditional houses using off-site prefabrication The technology is ~~available~~ moving apace in the

² The report is available online at <http://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/s52089/Cabinet%20Report%20-%20Citizen%20Assembly%20Report%20-%20Dec%20Cab%20-%20121219%20v17%20CLEAN.pdf>

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Councillor Richard Howlett, Chair of the Climate Emergency Review Group

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