

# Agenda

# Council

www.oxford.gov.uk



## Summons

A meeting of the City Council will be held to transact the business set out below on

Date: **Monday 15 July 2024**

Time: **5.00 pm**

Place: **Council Chamber - Oxford Town Hall**

**Proper Officer**

**Members of the public can attend to observe this meeting and:**

- may register in advance to speak to the meeting in accordance with the [public speaking rules](#)
- may record all or part of the meeting in accordance with the Council's [protocol](#)

Information about speaking and recording is set out in the agenda and on the [website](#)

Please contact the Committee Services Officer to register to speak; to discuss recording the meeting; or with any other queries.

This meeting can be viewed live or afterwards on the council's [YouTube channel](#).

**For further information** please contact:

Jonathan Malton, Committee and Member Services Manager, Committee and Member Services Officer

📞 01865 529117

✉️ [democraticservices@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@oxford.gov.uk)

*View or subscribe to updates for agendas, reports and minutes at [mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk](http://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk).*

*All public papers are available from the calendar link to this meeting once published*

## Membership of Council

Councillors: Membership 48: Quorum 12.

**Lord Mayor** Councillor Mike Rowley

**Deputy Lord Mayor** Councillor Tiago Corais

**Sheriff** Councillor James Fry

<b>Members</b>	Councillor Asima Qayyum	Councillor Emily Kerr
	Councillor Mohammed Azad	Councillor Dr Amar Latif
	Councillor Theodore Jupp	Councillor Mark Lygo
	Councillor Dr Max Morris	Councillor Sajjad Malik
	Councillor Dianne Regisford	Councillor Katherine Miles
	Councillor Anne Stares	Councillor Lois Muddiman
	Councillor Ian Yeatman	Councillor Edward Mundy
	Councillor Judith Harley	Councillor Chewe Munkonge
	Councillor David Henwood	Councillor Susanna Pressel
	Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan	Councillor Anna Railton
	Councillor Lubna Arshad	Councillor Rosie Rawle
	Councillor Susan Brown	Councillor Ajaz Rehman
	Councillor Nigel Chapman	Councillor Jo Sandelson
	Councillor Mary Clarkson	Councillor Linda Smith
	Councillor Barbara Coyne	Councillor Roz Smith
	Councillor Lizzy Diggins	Councillor Dr Christopher Smowton
	Councillor Dr Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini	Councillor Ed Turner
	Councillor Laurence Fouweather	Councillor Louise Upton
	Councillor Andrew Gant	Councillor Naomi Waite
	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth	Councillor Stephen Goddard
	Councillor Jemima Hunt	Councillor Simon Ottino
	Councillor Chris Jarvis	Councillor Alex Powell

Apologies will be reported at the meeting.

# Agenda

The business to be transacted is set out below

	Pages
<b>Minute's silence and tributes</b>	
To hear tributes and observe a minute's silence in memory of two former Councillors:	
Former Councillor Mike Gotch	
Former Councillor Mark Whittaker	
<b>PART 1 - PUBLIC BUSINESS</b>	
<b>1 Apologies for absence</b>	
<b>2 Declarations of interest</b>	
<b>3 Minutes</b>	21 - 48
Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Council held on the 18 <sup>th</sup> of March 2024 and of the annual meeting of Council held on the 16 <sup>th</sup> of May 2024.	
<b>Council is asked to approve the minutes as a correct record.</b>	
<b>4 Announcements</b>	
Announcements by:	
1. The Lord Mayor	
2. The Sheriff	
3. The Leader of the Council (who may with the permission of the Lord Mayor invite other councillors to make announcements)	
4. The Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer	
<b>5 Public addresses and questions that relate to matters for decision at this meeting</b>	
Public addresses and questions to the Leader or other Cabinet member	

received in accordance with Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution relating to matters for decision in Part 1 of this agenda.

Up to five minutes is available for each public address and up to three minutes for each question. Questions must be less than 200 words.

**The request to speak accompanied by the full text of the address or question must be received by the [Head of Law and Governance](#) by 5.00 pm on Tuesday, 9 July 2024.**

The briefing note will contain the text of addresses and questions submitted by the deadline, and written responses where available.

*A total of 45 minutes is available for both public speaking items. Responses are included in this time.*

## CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6 Leisure Investment Program

49 - 72

The Executive Director (Communities and People) and the Head of Financial Services have submitted a report to Cabinet on 10 July 2024 which seeks approval for a programme of improvements at the City Council's leisure facilities.

The Cabinet Minutes are available at item 10c.

Councillor Chewe Munkonge, Cabinet Member for A Healthy Oxford and Councillor Ed Turner, Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Finance and Asset Management, will present the report and present the Cabinet's recommendations.

**Recommendation:** Cabinet recommends that Cabinet resolves to:

1. **Grant project approval** for the Leisure Investment Programme at Appendix 1;
2. **Recommend to Council** the approval of an additional capital budget of £1.04 million, above the £2million already agreed in the capital programme necessary to deliver the Leisure Investment Programme;
3. **Delegate authority** to the Executive Director (Communities and People) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for A Healthy Oxford; the Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Finance and Asset Management; the Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer and the Head of Law and Governance to agree the terms of the legal agreement with Serco Leisure ("More Leisure) to govern payment of the monies for the Leisure Investment Programme; and
4. **Delegate authority** to the Executive Director (Communities and

People) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for A Healthy Oxford; the Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Finance and Asset Management and the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer to determine any additional opportunities to reinvest the funds if any monies remain following delivery of the Leisure Investment Programme, whilst ensuring no detrimental impact to the Council's return on investment.

## 7 **Contract for Rebuild Cost Assessments**

73 - 80

The Head of Corporate Property has submitted a report to Cabinet on 12 June 2024 which seeks approval to enter into a contract for Rebuild Cost Assessments of the Council's property assets to assist with placing the property insurance policy.

The Cabinet Minutes are available at item 10b.

Councillor Ed Turner, Deputy Leader – Finance and Asset Management and Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities will present the report and present Cabinet's recommendations.

**Recommendations:** The Cabinet recommends that Council resolves to:

1. **Recommend to Council** the provision of a revenue budget in the General Fund for the sum of £128,000 per annum for the next 3 years and in the HRA for the sum of £55,000 per annum;
2. **Give project approval** to tender a contract to undertake the rebuild cost assessments across all assets in both the General Fund and the HRA;
3. **Delegate authority** to the Head of Corporate Property to finalise the tender documents; and
4. **Delegate authority** to the Head of Corporate Property, in consultation with the Head of Law and Governance; the Head of Financial Services; and the Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Finance and Asset Management to agree the cost and final terms of, and enter into and make any necessary amendments to, a contract with the preferred supplier.

## 8 **Oxford City Council Corporate Strategy 2024/2028**

81 - 152

The Head of Corporate Strategy has submitted a report to Cabinet on 10 July 2024 which provides feedback from the public and stakeholder consultation on the Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 and seeks approval for the draft strategy

The Cabinet Minutes are available in item 10c.

Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of the Council, will present the report

and present Cabinet's recommendations.

**Recommendations:** Cabinet recommends that Council resolves to:

1. **Note** the public and stakeholder consultation on the draft Council Strategy 2024 to 2028;
2. **Agree** the revisions made to the draft Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 in response to the consultation;
3. **Delegate authority** to the Head of Corporate Strategy in consultation with the Council Leader to make further minor amendments before adoption by Council; and
4. Recommend to Council to:
  - a. **Adopt** the Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 as attached as Appendix 1 to the report; and
  - b. **Delegate authority** to the Head of Corporate Strategy in consultation with the Council Leader to make any further amendments to the Council Strategy 2024 to 2028 before implementation and publication, provided that such amendments do not materially affect the substance of the Council Strategy 2024 to 2028

## OFFICER REPORTS

### 9 Update of Byelaws for Parks and Open Spaces

153 -  
248

The Head of Corporate Property has submitted a report which seeks an approval to progress the submission of the proposed byelaws for parks and open spaces to the Secretary of State for approval following public consultation.

Councillor Chewe Munkonge will present the report and its recommendations.

**Recommendations:** This report recommends that Council resolves to:

1. **Approve** the proposed byelaws for parks and open spaces following public consultation.
2. **Recommend** submission of the application to the Secretary of State for approval of the proposed byelaws
3. Notes that upon the Secretary of State granting leave for the Council to make the proposed byelaws there will be a further period of consultation of not less than 28 days.
4. Notes that a further report will be presented to Members to allow them to make a final decision to make the proposed byelaws.

A Scrutiny Report has been included in the pack for this agenda point, alongside the Updates of Byelaws for Parks and Open Spaces Report.

## QUESTIONS

### 10 Questions on Cabinet minutes

*This item has a time limit of 15 minutes.*

Councillors may ask the Cabinet Members questions about matters in these minutes:

**10a Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 17th April 2024**

249 -  
254

**10b Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 12th June 2024**

255 -  
264

**10c Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 10th July 2024**

To follow with the briefing paper.

### 11 Questions on Notice from Members of Council

Questions on notice from councillors received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.11(b).

Questions on notice may be asked of the Lord Mayor, a Member of the Cabinet or a Chair of a Committee. One supplementary question may be asked at the meeting.

The full text of questions must have been received by the Head of Law and Governance by no later than 1.00pm on Wednesday 3 July 2024.

These, and written responses where available, will be published in the briefing note.

## PART 2 - PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND SCRUTINY

### 12 Public addresses and questions that do not relate to matters for decision at this Council meeting

*This item will be taken at or shortly after 7.00pm*

Public addresses and questions to the Leader or other Cabinet member received in accordance with Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution and not relating to matters for decision in Part 1 of this agenda.

Up to five minutes is available for each public address and up to three minutes for each question. Questions must be less than 200 words.

**The request to speak accompanied by the full text of the address or question must be received by the [Head of Law and Governance](#) by 5.00 pm on Tuesday 9 July 2024.**

The briefing note will contain the text of addresses and questions submitted by the deadline, and written responses where available.

*A total of 45 minutes is available for both public speaking items.  
Responses*

### **13 Outside organisation/Committee Chair reports and questions**

As set out in the Constitution at procedure rule 11.16, Members who are Council representatives on external bodies or Chairs of Council Committees who consider that a significant decision or event has taken place, may give notice to the Head of Law and Governance by 1.00 pm Wednesday 10 July 2024 that they will present a written or oral report on the event or the significant decision and how it may influence future events. Written reports will be circulated with the briefing note.

#### **13a Outside Organisation Report: Oxford Strategic Partnership**

The Head of Corporate Strategy has submitted a report to Council on 15 July 2024 which notes the annual update on the Oxford Strategic Partnership.

Councillor Brown, Leader and Cabinet Member for Partnership Working, will present the report.

**Recommendation:** That the Committee resolves to:

1. Note the annual update report on the work of the Oxford Strategic Partnership.

The full report on this matter will follow the publication of the agenda in the briefing note.

#### **13b Outside Organisation Report: Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing / Health Improvement Board**

The Head of Corporate Strategy has submitted a report to Council on 15 July 2024 which notes the annual update on the Oxfordshire



Health and Wellbeing / Health Improvement Board.

Councillor Brown, Leader and Cabinet Member for Partnership Working, will present the report.

**Recommendation:** That the Committee resolves to:

1. Note the annual update report on the work of the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing / Health Improvement Board

The full report on this matter will follow the publication of the agenda in the briefing note.

## **14 Annual Scrutiny Report 2023 - 24**

265 -  
274

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee 2023/2024 has submitted a report to Council on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2024. This report provides Council with a summary of Scrutiny activity during the 2023/2024 municipal year.

Councillor Katherine Miles, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, will present the report.

**Recommendation:** That Council resolves to note the update report.

### **14a Scrutiny Committee update report**

275 -  
284

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee has submitted a report which updates Council on the activities of scrutiny and the implementation of recommendations since the last meeting of Council.

**Council is invited to comment on and note the report.**

## **PART 3 - MOTIONS REPRESENTING THE CITY**

### **15 Motions on notice July 2024**

**This item has a time limit of 60 minutes.**

Motions received by the Head of Law and Governance in accordance with the rules in Section 11 of the Constitution by the deadline of

1.00pm on Wednesday 3 July 2024 are listed below.

Cross party motions are taken first. Motions will then be taken in turn from the *Labour Group, Liberal Democrat Group, Green Group, Independent Oxford Alliance, Oxford Community Independent Group, Oxford Independent Group, Real Independent Group* in that order.

Substantive amendments to these motions must be sent by councillors to the Head of Law and Governance by no later than 10.00am on Friday, 12 July 2024 so that they may be circulated with the briefing note.

Minor technical or limited wording amendments may be submitted during the meeting but must be written down and circulated.

**Council is asked to consider the following motions:**

- a) Oxford United Stadium (Proposed by Cllr Mark Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Ed Turner)
- b) Motion of No Confidence in Thames Water and development of an Oxford city river action plan (proposed by Cllr Jo Sandelson, seconded by Cllr Katherine Miles)
- c) Making Oxford a Truly Walkable City (proposed by Cllr Max Morris, seconded by Cllr Emily Kerr)
- d) Scrap the Two-Child Benefit Cap (proposed by Cllr Theodore Jupp, seconded by Cllr Chris Smowton)
- e) Bus travel for asylum seekers in Oxford (proposed by Cllr Alex Powell, seconded by Cllr Dianne Regisford)

**15a Oxford United Stadium (Proposed by Cllr Mary Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Ed Turner)**

This Council expresses its support for Oxford United's proposals for a new stadium at Stratfield Brake.

**15b Motion of No Confidence in Thames Water and development of an Oxford city river action plan (proposed by Cllr Jo Sandelson, seconded by Cllr Katherine Miles)**

This council has no confidence in the water company Thames Water, which provides services to households in Oxford. For too long now water company bosses have been able to get away with paying themselves millions of pounds in bonuses while dumping millions of tonnes of raw sewage into the River Thames and under-investing in infrastructure. Despite increasing public scrutiny and despair, dividends continue to be paid out to investors that form part

of the company's complex corporate structure. At the same time, the company has been renegeing on its commitments to invest in infrastructure investments.<sup>1</sup>

The consequences are many. Wildlife is disappearing and rivers are unfit to swim in. For example, Oxford has a long tradition of wild swimming in the River Thames at Port Meadow. The city celebrated when Wolvercote Mill Stream received designated bathing water status in 2022.<sup>2</sup> But the level of pollution caused by sewage means the Bathing site is currently classified as Poor and bathing is not advised.<sup>3</sup>

Thames Water is on the brink of collapse and has a mountain of debt estimated at £18bn which it may pass on to taxpayers if the company were to be nationalised.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the current regulator Ofwat has demonstrated it is too weak to stand up to Thames Water.<sup>5</sup>

The Sewage Scandal must end to protect the River Thames. In response, this Council believes that water companies, including Thames Water, should be put into Special Administration and transformed into public benefit companies<sup>6</sup>; and Ofwat should be replaced with a tough new regulator with new powers to prevent sewage dumps.

At a local level in response to the river water emergency, the City Council can demonstrate its commitment to support the restoration of river health, by signing up to the Local Charter for Rivers.<sup>7</sup> This sets out steps that councils can take to use their powers to restore our rivers to health at a local level.<sup>8</sup>

**To this end the Council resolves:**

That it has no confidence in Thames Water.

That the Council requests the Leader:

- writes to the Secretary of State of His Majesty's Government

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/business/article/2024/jun/28/thames-water-board-150m-dividend-payout-funding-u-turn>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bathing-waters-list-of-designated-waters-in-england/list-of-current-bathing-waters>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/waterways/bathing-water> ;  
<https://environment.data.gov.uk/bwq/profiles/profile.html?site=ukj1402-11946>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/business/article/2024/jun/29/will-rising-debt-cause-thames-water-to-sink-under-a-labour-government>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/business/article/2024/jun/28/thames-water-board-150m-dividend-payout-funding-u-turn>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-66043763>

<sup>7</sup> <https://riveractionuk.com/local-charter-for-rivers/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hOKwnEXtzke2oO-MWrmXnXxFNHV5KZhV/view>

with responsibility for water companies to call to: replace Ofwat with a tough new regulator with new powers to prevent sewage dumps; and place Thames Water into Special Administration to ensure the company's debt does not fall on the Government.

- commissions a cabinet report with an analysis of current actions and gaps in line with the Local River Charter, and recommendations for developing an Oxford City River Action Plan.<sup>9</sup>

### **15c Making Oxford a Truly Walkable City (proposed by Cllr Max Morris, seconded by Cllr Emily Kerr)**

#### **Council notes**

1. Oxford was recently named as the UK's most walkable city, due to the small distances between key tourist attractions.<sup>10</sup>
2. The 2021 Census showed that 22% of Oxford residents walk to work, making walking the modal choice for more commuting residents than cycling at 17% or bus at 15%.<sup>11</sup>
3. Studies show walking significantly improves both physical and mental health outcomes, and promotes longer and higher quality lives.<sup>12</sup>
4. Research suggests lower income households - over-represented by 'female heads of house, children, young and older people, black and minority ethnic (BME) and disabled people' - rely on walking more often due to not owning a car.<sup>13</sup>
5. There are inexpensive walking-related initiatives across Oxfordshire which have been successful, such as Oxford's health walks and Bicester Blue Lines.<sup>14</sup>
6. Whilst some things which improve the pedestrian experience are County responsibilities there are others which the City Council has sole or joint responsibility for, such as new benches, water fountains, public toilets, and wayfinding.

---

<sup>9</sup> <https://riveractionuk.com/local-charter-for-rivers/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.timeout.com/uk/news/the-uks-10-most-walkable-cities-have-been-revealed-052724#:~:text=Named%20the%20UK's%20most%20walkable,them%20in%20just%2022%20minutes.>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/883/majority-of-oxford-residents-commute-using-active-travel-or-public-transport-new-census-data-shows>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/walking-for-health/>

<sup>13</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5c828f80ed915d07c9e363f7/future\\_of\\_mobility\\_access.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5c828f80ed915d07c9e363f7/future_of_mobility_access.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/downloads/download/1154/health-routes-in-bicester>

7. The City Council could require residential dropped kerbs to be “Dutch style” entry kerbs, which keeps pavements flat and easier for wheelchair users.
8. Mapping work in London has provided councils with excellent dynamic local maps, allowing residents and visitors to walk more easily.<sup>15</sup>
9. Pavement Parking is frequently named as one of the key issues facing pedestrians and wheelchair users. Government commissioned a report into this in 2020, and despite written questions and a debate, the results have not been published.<sup>16</sup>
10. Lambeth has pioneered an innovative “Kerbside Strategy” which prioritises walking, street trees, benches, and local businesses and will reallocate 25% of kerbside space to people.<sup>17</sup>

### **Council believes**

1. Despite Oxford being a relatively small city with strong walking potential, the experience of walking or wheeling around the city needs urgent improvement.
2. We could build on Oxford’s small size and strong reputation for walking to have a cohesive strategy to improve the pedestrian experience for everyone - and this would be relatively inexpensive to do with enormous health and wellness benefits.

### **Council resolves:**

1. To request the Cabinet Member for Healthy Oxford:
  - a. discuss with officers the designing of a plan for improving walking in Oxford, based on local knowledge and existing research.
  - b. Works with the Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon and the Cabinet Member for Culture and officers to create a walkable map of Oxford for tourists and locals alike.
  - c. Writes to the new Transport Minister on behalf of Oxford City Council, urging rapid release of the 2020 pavement parking consultation
  - d. Proposes the idea of a “Kerbside Strategy for Oxford” to the County Council.
2. To request the Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management reviews opportunities to invest in public infrastructure to improve the city’s walkability, such as

---

<sup>15</sup> <https://footways.london/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-13/debates/4479BB2C-49BD-47FD-9C76-5149A8A12DF7/PavementParking>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/streets-roads-transport/lambeth-kerbside-strategy>

benches, water fountains, public toilets, signage, lighting, and trees.

To request the Cabinet Member for Planning reviews mandating Dutch entry kerbs for residential drop kerb conversions planning conditions and considers this through the Equality Act 2010.

**15d Scrap the Two-Child Benefit Cap (proposed by Cllr Theodore Jupp, seconded by Cllr Chris Smowton)**

Council notes that:

The two-child limit, introduced by the Conservative Government in 2017, restricts support in Universal Credit and tax credits to two children in a family.

The Child Poverty Action Group identified 4.2 million children living in poverty in the UK in 2021–22, with the prevalence of poverty much higher among Black and minority ethnic groups.<sup>18</sup>

Research by the End Child Poverty Coalition shows that scrapping the two-child limit would lift 250,000 children out of poverty, and that the economic and societal effects of child poverty, including spending on public services, cost the UK £39 billion every year.<sup>19</sup>

A new report by the Commons Education Select Committee warns that cost-of-living pressures on families are driving missed education.<sup>20</sup>

In a country already struggling with fewer and fewer young people supporting an ageing population, it is not in any case in our interests to attempt to prevent or delay people from raising children through financial pressure.

Despite initially pledging to repeal the policy in 2020,<sup>21</sup> Sir Keir Starmer backtracked and pledged to keep the Tory policy,<sup>22</sup> before eventually adopting a noncommittal stance on the issue.<sup>23</sup>

Council resolves to request the Leader of the Council:

- Write to both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition expressing this council's strong support for a repeal of the two-child benefit cap.
- Write to Oxford's MPs requesting that they in turn pressure both Government and Opposition to abolish the cap.
- 

---

<sup>18</sup> <https://cpag.org.uk/child-poverty/child-poverty-facts-and-figures>

<sup>19</sup> [https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/two\\_child\\_limit/](https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/two_child_limit/)

<sup>20</sup> <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/41590/documents/205047/default/> particularly para.148

<sup>21</sup> [https://twitter.com/Keir\\_Starmer/status/1225465424092987393](https://twitter.com/Keir_Starmer/status/1225465424092987393)

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2023/jul/16/labour-keep-two-child-benefit-cap-says-keir-starmer>

<sup>23</sup> <https://news.sky.com/story/starmer-softens-stance-on-two-child-benefit-cap-amid-snp-attacks-ahead-of-by-election-12940684>

**15e Bus travel for asylum seekers in Oxford (proposed by Cllr Alex Powell, seconded by Cllr Dianne Regisford)**

**Council Notes:**

There are an increasing number of asylum seekers being accommodated within the city, particularly in a hotel near to the Kassam Stadium.<sup>24</sup>

Those asylum claimants who are in receipt of statutory support according to section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 receive average weekly financial support equating to just £8.86 per week for those in accommodation.<sup>25</sup>

Oxford City Council has signed up to the values of the City of Sanctuary scheme undertaking a commitment to ensure that Oxford is a safe and supportive environment for sanctuary seekers.<sup>26</sup>

Oxfordshire County Council has also signalled its intention to become a County of Sanctuary, showcasing its own commitment to creating a safe and supportive environment for people seeking sanctuary.<sup>27</sup>

Numerous charities and organisations have drawn attention to the harms that hotel accommodation poses for asylum seekers: such as isolation from communities and resources.<sup>28</sup> This makes it even more important that support is accessible.

That the financial costs of travel within Oxford City make it more difficult for asylum seekers to access and engage with available sources of support.

That asylum seekers have recently made representations regarding the need for free bus passes to Oxfordshire County Council.<sup>29</sup>

**Council Believes:**

That Local Authorities, at both District and County Council level, have a moral and ethical duty, to the extent to which the law allows, to advocate for and protect all residents residing within their territorial area regardless of immigration status.

---

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/23116955.kassum-stadium-hotel-used-house-refugee-sparking-row/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1999/33/section/95>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/183/oxford-city-council-makes-commitment-to-city-of-sanctuary-status>

<sup>27</sup> <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshire-is-a-county-of-sanctuary/#:~:text=Migrants%2C%20including%20refugees%20and%20asylum,as%20a%20place%20of%20sanctuary>

<sup>28</sup> [https://helenbamber.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/Suffering%20and%20squalor\\_Final\\_June%202024.pdf](https://helenbamber.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/Suffering%20and%20squalor_Final_June%202024.pdf); <https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Hostile-Accommodation-Refugee-Action-report.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx77z1d57ydo>

That access to support services should be open to all asylum seekers and should not be prohibited by transport costs.

As a City of Sanctuary, Oxford City Council has a responsibility to act in a manner that promotes the safety, security and well-being of sanctuary seekers.

As an aspiring County of Sanctuary, Oxfordshire County Council has a responsibility to act in a manner that promotes the safety, security and well-being of sanctuary seekers.

**Council Resolves:**

To request that the Leader of Oxford City Council write to the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council asking for them to facilitate the use of all buses within the Oxford City area without cost for those seeking asylum.

To request that the Leader of Oxford City Council issue a public statement supporting the provision of free bus travel to all asylum seekers residing within the City limits.

To publicly record the Council's support for the provision of free bus travel to all asylum seekers within Oxford City for all asylum seekers residing within Oxford City.

To request that the Leader of Oxford City Council write to the Secretary of State for the Home Department and the Secretary of State for Transport for the United Kingdom requesting the provision of free bus passes be provided for all asylum seekers resident in England, noting that transport for other parts of the UK is a devolved matter.

## **16 Matters exempt from publication and exclusion of the public**

If Council wishes to exclude the press and the public from the meeting during consideration of any aspects of the preceding agenda items it will be necessary for Council to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 specifying the grounds on which their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act if and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

(The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Section 15 of the Council's Constitution – sets out the conditions under which the public can be excluded from meetings of the Council)

### **16a Exempt Appendix - Leisure Investment Programme**

285 -  
286



**Updates and additional information to supplement this agenda are published in the Council Briefing Note.**

Additional information, councillors' questions, public addresses and amendments to motions are published in a supplementary briefing note. The agenda and briefing note should be read together.

The Briefing Note is published as a supplement to the agenda. It is available on the Friday before the meeting and can be accessed along with the agenda on the council's website.

## **Information for those attending**

### **Recording and reporting on meetings held in public**

Members of public and press can record, or report in other ways, the parts of the meeting open to the public. You are not required to indicate in advance but it helps if you notify the Committee and Member Services Officer prior to the meeting so that they can inform the Chair and direct you to the best place to record.

The Council asks Councillors and members of the press and public recording the meeting:

- To follow the protocol which can be found on the Council's [website](#)
- Not to disturb or disrupt the meeting
- Not to edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes not editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule or show a lack of respect towards those being recorded.
- To avoid recording members of the public present, even inadvertently, unless they are addressing the meeting.

Please be aware that you may be recorded during your speech and any follow-up. If you are attending please be aware that recordings may take place and that you may be inadvertently included in these.

The Chair of the meeting has absolute discretion to suspend or terminate any activities that in his or her opinion are disruptive.

### **Councillors declaring interests**

#### **General duty**

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

#### **What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?**

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your\* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

#### **Declaring an interest**

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

#### **Members' Code of Conduct and public perception**

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". The matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

#### **Members Code – Other Registrable Interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing\*\* of one of your Other Registrable Interests\*\*\* then you must declare an

interest. You must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and you must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

### **Members Code – Non Registrable Interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***directly relates*** to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registrable Interests, then you must declare the interest.

You must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room, if you answer in the affirmative to this test:

“Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:

- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.”

Otherwise, you may stay in the room, take part in the discussion and vote.

\*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member’s spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

\*\* Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person’s quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing.

\*\*\* Other Registrable Interests: a) any unpaid directorships b) any Body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority c) any Body (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.