

Minutes of a meeting of COUNCIL on Monday 5 December 2016

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Committee members:

Councillor Altaf-Khan (Lord Mayor)	Councillor Brown (Sheriff)
Councillor Cook	Councillor Abbasi
Councillor Anwar	Councillor Azad
Councillor Brandt	Councillor Chapman
Councillor Clarkson	Councillor Coulter
Councillor Curran	Councillor Fooks
Councillor Fry	Councillor Gant
Councillor Goddard	Councillor Goff
Councillor Haines	Councillor Hayes
Councillor Henwood	Councillor Hollingsworth
Councillor Iley-Williamson	Councillor Kennedy
Councillor Landell Mills	Councillor Lloyd-Shogbesan
Councillor Munkonge	Councillor Paule
Councillor Pegg	Councillor Pressel
Councillor Price	Councillor Rowley
Councillor Sanders	Councillor Simm
Councillor Simmons	Councillor Sinclair
Councillor Smith	Councillor Tanner
Councillor Tarver	Councillor Taylor
Councillor Thomas	Councillor Tidball
Councillor Turner	Councillor Upton
Councillor Wade	Councillor Wilkinson
Councillor Wolff	

Apologies:

Councillor(s) Humberstone, Lygo and Malik sent apologies.

Minute's silence for former Lord Mayor Queenie Hamilton

Council stood for a minute's silence in memory of former councillor and Lord Mayor Queenie Hamilton who had died the previous week at the age of 98.

48. Apologies for absence

Cllrs Gant and Turner apologised for lateness.
Cllr Haines apologised for leaving at the break.

49. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

50. Minutes

Council agreed to **approve** the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 29 September 2016 as a true and correct record and that the Lord Mayor should sign these as such.

51. Appointment to Committees

Council **agreed** the following change:

West Area Planning Committee: Councillor Tidball to stand down and Councillor Curran to replace her.

52. Announcements

The Lord Mayor:

- thanked staff and those involved in organising the well-attended Remembrance Day ceremonies;
- reminded councillors of the Lord Mayor's reception on 12 December and the Lord Mayor's carol service on 18 December;
- congratulated Councillor Tidball on being awarded her DPhil from Oxford University.

The Sheriff informed councillors of the Freeman of Oxford ceremony and reception and the induction of new Freeman (or in this case, Freewomen).

The Leader announced:

- Civic office holders for 2017/18 would be
Lord Mayor: Councillor Fooks
Deputy Lord Mayor: Councillor Simm
Sheriff: Councillor Altaf- Khan
- The register of electors for December, with 102,000 electors, had been published and that this was due, in large part, to the commitment of Martin John and the Elections team in working with the University, Brookes and other colleges to increase student registration.

53. Public addresses and questions that relate to matters for decision at this meeting

There were no addresses or questions.

54. External Audit contract from 2018/19

Council considered a report from the Head of Financial Services asking for authorisation to opt in to the national scheme for external auditor appointments in accordance with the recommendation from Audit and Governance Committee.

Council resolved:

to authorise the Head of Financial Services to opt in to the national scheme for auditor appointments for the provision of external audit services starting with the audit of the 2018/19 accounts.

55. Council and Committee meeting programme May 2017 to May 2019

Council considered a report proposing the programme of Council and committee meetings for the 2017/18 council year (May 2017 to May 2018 inclusive) and for the 2018/19 council year (May 2018 to May 2019 inclusive).

Council resolved to:

1. approve the programme of Council, Committee and other meetings attached at Appendix 1 for the council year 2017/18; and
2. approve the programme of Council, Committee and other meetings attached at Appendix 1 for the council year 2018/19, subject to amendment at Council in December 2017; and
3. delegate the setting of dates for the Standards Committee, the Growth Board, and training and briefing sessions for members to the Interim Head of Law and Governance.

56. City Executive Board Minutes

a) Minutes of meeting Thursday 13 October 2016 of City Executive Board

Council had before it the minutes of the City Executive Board meeting of 13 October 2016.

On minute 75, Councillor Fooks said that the Oxford half-marathon was a joint County/City Council event

On minute 75, Councillor Wade asked if there was sufficient insurance to cover the event in view of the legal and financial status of the event organiser.

Councillor Simm, Board member for Culture and Communities said that the Oxford half-marathon was a County Council event in so far as it took place on the highway and required permission from the County Council as the highways authority. She said that she had recently learnt of the change of status of the event organiser and that she would pursue the question of insurance cover.

On minute 77a, Councillor Wilkinson asked if the City Executive Board would consider joint working on educational attainment. Councillor Kennedy, Board member for Young People, Schools and Skills said that she spoke regularly to the County Council on educational attainment.

On minute 78, Councillor Wolff asked if the Board member was aware of particular problems relating to the implementation of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. He said he was aware of four households that had received strongly worded letters from the Council challenging their right to a single person discount. This had caused considerable distress particularly in one case where the occupant had been recently bereaved. Councillor Brown, Board member for Customer and Corporate Services said that she was aware of these cases and that the offending letter had been revised. She said that she would discuss the particular issues around bereavement with officers. However, it was important to note that the letters were issued after multiple checks and that it was necessary to serve letters as part of the due legal process.

On minute 79, Councillor Fooks noted that it would be sensible to add a reference to air pollution in the Tree Management Policy.

b) Minutes of meeting Thursday 17 November 2016 of City Executive Board

Council had before it the minutes of the City Executive Board meeting of 17 November 2016.

On minute 90, Councillor Simmons observed that there was some ambiguity in the recommendations and said that it was his understanding that the City Council would only contribute to the scheme on the basis that it was for the complete and total pedestrianisation of Queen Street.

57. Questions on Notice from Members of Council

Member of Council submitted 35 written questions to members of the City Executive Board. The questions, written answers, and summaries of supplementary questions and answers are in the supplement to these minutes.

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

Council heard addresses and questions to members of the City Executive Board from members of the public submitted in accordance with the Council's procedure rules.

Addresses were heard from:

1. Colin Aldridge, East Oxford Community Centre Association
2. Simon Collings, on behalf of Oxford Flood Alliance
3. Artwell
4. Larry Sanders – relating to Motion 1 on the agenda
5. Michael Drolet
6. Sarah Lasenby
7. Stefan Piechnik

Questions were heard from:

1. Judith Harley – proposed funding for Cowley Marsh Recreation Ground
2. Guilhem Poussot – Network Rail and Oxford – Marylebone line
3. Michael Drolet– Network Rail and Oxford – Marylebone line
4. Lady Jackie Grey – Network Rail and Oxford – Marylebone line
5. Liz Sawyer – extension to Seacourt Park and Ride

Board members responded to these addresses and questions.

The Lord Mayor thanked those speaking.

The supplement to the minutes contains the full text and addresses and questions delivered broadly as submitted; summaries where these were not delivered as submitted; and written and summarised verbal responses from the Board Members.

59. Outside organisation/Committee Chair reports: Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Council had before it a report from the Economic Development Manager (submitted on behalf of Councillor Price) giving an update on the work of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

Councillor Price presented the report and said that:

- The LEP had relocated to the College of Further Education
- Jeremy Long had been appointed as Board Chair in March 2016
- Phil Southall, Managing Director of the Oxford Bus Company, and Penny Rinta-Suksi, Partner at Blake Morgan were new Oxford based members of the Board

Council noted the report.

60. Scrutiny Committee update report

Council had before it a report from the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee detailing the activities of scrutiny and other non-executive Councillors and the implementation of recommendations since the last meeting of Council.

Councillor Gant, Chair of Scrutiny, presented the report and thanked all members and officers who had attended meetings or contributed to the work of the Scrutiny Committee.

Council noted the report on the work of the Scrutiny Committee.

61. Motions on notice

Council had before it six motions on notice and amendments submitted in accordance with Council procedure rules and reached decisions as set out below.

Council resolved to adopt the following motions:

- a) NHS Sustainability and Transformation Plans - motion including both amendments
- b) Universal Credit - original motion
- c) Prioritise initiatives to provide permanently affordable private homes – motion including amendment
- d) Oxford's future within the EU - motion including amendment
- e) Support measures to increase vital early years childcare provision – original motion

This motion was not taken due to lack of time:

Support the Paris Climate Change Agreement

The full minute and text of each adopted motion is below.

a) NHS Sustainability and Transformation Plans - motion including both amendments

Councillor Simmons proposed his submitted motion, agreeing to amend this to also incorporate the motions submitted by Councillor Turner and Councillor Wade (Motion 1 on the agenda). Councillor Wade corrected her amendment as follows:

Change:

b) Establishes any basis

To read b) Does not establish any basis

After debate and on being put to the vote, the amended motion was declared carried.

Council resolved to adopt the motion as set out below:

This Council notes that the government is dividing the NHS in England into 44 areas or 'footprints', each of which has a 'Sustainability and Transformation Plan' (STP).

Government requires these STPs to collectively deliver cuts of at least £2.5bn nationally this year, and £22bn within the next five years, to wipe out the NHS' so-called 'financial deficit' by implementing 'new models of care'.

The former head of NHS commissioning, Julia Simon, has denounced the STP process as 'shameful', 'mad', 'ridiculous' and the plans as full of lies [1].

Locally, the Council notes that the Chief Exec of Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (Oxon CCG) has said that without changes to local NHS provision there will be a cumulative funding gap of about £200 million by 2020-21 and that the STP will need to change service provision to eliminate it [2]. Council further notes that local NHS employers face particular challenges from the high cost of housing locally, the mitigation of which may require investment.

Council considers that the Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire Berkshire West (BOB) STP

- a) Does not contain adequate or indeed any information on which a decision can be made about the future of NHS provision in what the STP refers to as 'the BOB geography.' It presents aspirations couched in meaningless jargon and suggests, without any evidence, that the unspecified STP Plan will result in the transformation of a projected deficit of £479m to a surplus of £11m by the end of 20/21.
- b) Does not establish any basis for a consultation to be carried out with health professionals and members of the public. Indeed the timeline in the STP suggests no consultation is envisaged since 'agreement on the plan' is to be reached with NHS England in November/December, before any consultation is even planned.

Council believes it is possible that the STP for the area which includes Oxfordshire (BOB - Bucks, Oxon and Berks) contains measures which could seriously impact on the health and welfare of the local population, and that the insistence by NHS England upon restricting early publication is leading to harmful speculation.

Council notes that wider consultation on the STP has not yet started, and calls for the immediate publication of the STP, in full, with proper consultation to take place with patients, interested public, private and community bodies, and staff. Council notes the frustration recently expressed by senior CCG officials about NHS England's negative attitude to timely publication and consultation of the STP, and believes that, especially in difficult times for the NHS, early engagement of all stakeholders is vital, and exercises in secrecy prevent constructive engagement from public bodies and local communities, and foster an atmosphere of mistrust.

Council endorses the view recently expressed by the Oxfordshire Health Inequality Commission that significant investment in interventions to reduce health inequalities and prevent poor health and illness are very important, and believes that such services are at particular risk when pressures on the NHS are scheduled to rise faster than funding. It therefore asks the CCG to prioritise investments which will reduce health inequality and support services towards groups suffering from health inequalities.

Council rejects the suggestion that there is a safe way to reduce the current level of NHS provision by £200 million (the gap identified by the CCG) by 2020-21 and agrees to:

- Ask the Oxon CCG to fully disclose to the public what changes are being considered with NHS England lifting its bar on publication

- Provide what support it can to the STP consultation
- Ask the Oxon CCG to start a full consultation as soon as possible on all aspects of the proposed changes
- Encourage the public to make their views on the services reductions and changes known by promoting the consultation on the Council's website, social media and through wider media communications
- Invite the County & District Councils to work together with the City to oppose any changes which will harm patients
- Write to the relevant Government Ministers to express Oxford's grave concern about a plan which is being foisted upon NHS professionals and the public in this city without adequate or indeed any information about the change in the level of services which must be intended.
- Write to the City's MPs asking for their support

[1] <http://www.gponline.com/shameful-pace-stp-rollout-risks-financial-meltdown-warns-former-nhs-commissioning-chief/article/1410546> See also <http://www.nationalhealthexecutive.com/Health-Care-News/just-16-of-finance-directors-think-sustainable-stps-achievable-by-2021>

[2] <http://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s35312/17%20Nov%202016%20-%20presentation%20on%20STP%20BOB%20update.pdf>

b) Universal Credit

Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Rowley, proposed her submitted motion (Motion 2 on the agenda).

After debate and on being put to the vote, the motion was declared carried.

Council resolved to adopt the motion as set out below:

This council expresses its grave concerns over the impact of the new lowered benefit cap and its impact on families struggling with high rents in Oxford.

This council notes that nearly 1,000 children are likely to be affected by these cuts as families on a number of benefits including working tax credit and housing benefit have a cap put on their benefit to a maximum of £20,000 a year.

This council notes that yet again, a different rate applies in London and yet the cost of living in Oxford is comparable.

This council requests its officers to raise with local MPs and government ministers the urgent need to reflect the true cost of living in Oxford in welfare allowances, the living wage and government grants to public services.

c) Prioritise initiatives to provide permanently affordable private homes - motion including amendment

Councillor Gant proposed his submitted motion (Motion 3 on the agenda) agreeing to the first part of the amendment proposed by Councillor Simmons. Councillor Fooks seconded this. The amended motion then read:

Council notes

- *the increasing unaffordability of housing in the city*

- *that this is affecting the ability of the council as well as schools and hospitals to recruit and retain staff*

Council recognises that this poses a threat to the continuing economic growth of the city, and the welfare of its residents, and that a new approach is urgently needed.

Council therefore asks the Executive Board

- *to give due consideration, in the development of the Local Plan and other planning policy, to prioritise or make recommendations to Council which prioritise such initiatives as community land trusts and smart homes, which offer opportunities to provide permanently affordable private homes;*
- *to actively encourage neighbouring districts to do the same for land in their areas, as this is a problem affecting them too.*

Councillor Simmons, seconded by Councillor Wolff, then proposed the second part of his amendment to the motion:

Change: "to give due consideration, in the development of the Local Plan and other planning policy, to prioritise or make recommendations to Council which prioritise such initiatives as community land trusts and smart homes, which offer opportunities to provide permanently affordable private homes;"

to read:

"to give due consideration, in the development of the Local Plan and other planning policy, to make recommendations to Council which promote such initiatives as community land trusts, housing co-ops and smart homes, which offer opportunities to provide permanently affordable private homes whilst recognising that the Council's top priority remains the provision of genuinely affordable social housing;"

After debate and on being put to the vote, this amendment was declared carried.

On being put to the vote, the amended motion was declared carried.

Council resolved to adopt the motion as set out below:

Council notes

- the increasing unaffordability of housing in the city
- that this is affecting the ability of the council as well as schools and hospitals to recruit and retain staff

Council recognises that this poses a threat to the continuing economic growth of the city, and the welfare of its residents, and that a new approach is urgently needed.

Council therefore asks the Executive Board

- to give due consideration, in the development of the Local Plan and other planning policy, to make recommendations to Council which promote such initiatives as community land trusts housing co-ops and smart homes, which offer opportunities to provide permanently affordable private homes whilst recognising that the Council's top priority remains the provision of genuinely affordable social housing;
- to actively encourage neighbouring districts to do the same for land in their areas, as this is a problem affecting them too.

d) Oxford's future within the EU - motion including amendment

Councillor Simmons proposed his submitted motion, agreeing to accept the amendment submitted by Councillor Price (Motion 4 on the agenda). Councillor Wolff seconded this.

After debate and on being put to the vote, the amended motion was declared carried.

Council resolved to adopt the motion as set out below:

On 23rd June the people of Oxford expressed a strong preference for remaining within the EU. As a City Council, we believe it is right and proper that we do our utmost to represent the views of our electors to those ministers negotiating the UK's exit.

On the assumption that the UK Government are intending to push ahead with Brexit, we ask the Leader to write on behalf of the Council to the relevant ministers reminding them of the city's strong views on EU membership and asking them to seek to negotiate a revised Treaty relationship with the EU which would preserve the undoubted benefits that Oxford and our local economy have gained from the free movement of labour within Europe and from the common standards attaching to product certification and common environmental standards.

For example, a negotiated settlement could offer UK residents e-citizenship of the EU or EU or dual citizenship could be available to those who meet certain criteria (as is already permitted in several countries). It could allow certain companies who agreed to be bound by EU legislation preferential access to the single market.

The City Council will seek to adopt into its own practices and regulatory standards, those aspects of EU legislation which currently or in future provide better social and environmental protection to our citizens e.g. on air quality, pollution and family rights.

On the basis that we believe Brexit will have a negative impact on Oxford's economy, its environment and its people, and that the majority of the electorate voted to remain, we will also commit as a Council to do what we can to promote alternatives to Brexit.

Council urges our two MPs to support an amendment to any motion to trigger Article 50 that is submitted on behalf of the Government which will commit the Government to submit an eventual exit 'deal' to a vote in both Houses of Parliament, and a second referendum to approve or reject the terms that have been negotiated.

Council agrees to write to our MEPs asking them to support EU citizenship proposals (Amendment 882 being put to the EU's Constitutional Affairs Committee early in the new year) being put forward by Luxembourg MEP Charles Goerens.

e) Support measures to increase vital early years childcare provision

Councillor Tidball, seconded by Councillor Clarkson, proposed her motion (Motion 5 on the agenda).

After debate and on being put to the vote, the motion was declared carried.

Council resolved to adopt the motion as set out below:

The government's proposed 15% reduction in the Early Years Funding formula will impact directly on early years education provision in Oxford, particularly in the most deprived areas where it is most needed. It will threaten the future of nursery schools and will accentuate the damage that will be caused to child development and support by the closure of the Children's Centres. Since 2009, over 2000 childcare places have been lost in Oxfordshire, and there are 233 fewer childcare providers.

Council calls on the local MPs to oppose these reductions and to support measures to increase vital early years childcare provision.

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 8.35 pm

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