

Minutes of a meeting of the COUNCIL on Monday 24 April 2017

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Committee members:

Councillor Altaf-Khan (Lord Mayor)	Councillor Humberstone (Deputy Lord Mayor)
Councillor Brown (Sheriff)	Councillor Cook
Councillor Anwar	Councillor Azad
Councillor Brandt	Councillor Chapman
Councillor Clarkson	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 Lygo	Councillor Munkonge
Councillor Paule	Councillor Pegg
Councillor Pressel	Councillor Price
Councillor Rowley	Councillor Sanders
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) Abbasi, Malik and Simm sent apologies

Minute's silence in memory of Councillor Van Coulter

Council stood for a minute's silence in memory of Councillor Van Coulter who had died suddenly on 13 March 2017.

90. Apologies for lateness

Councillors Fry and Tanner sent apologies for their late arrival.

Councillor Goddard apologised for leaving the meeting early.

91. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest.

Matters which may give rise to public perceptions of bias were drawn to Council's attention:

- Minute 102: Councillor Sanders informed Council that she was related to Jo Sanders, who was speaking about a secure dog area
- Minute 106c: Councillor Humberstone informed Council he was now a trustee of Trax which is a social enterprise.

92. Minutes

Council agreed to **approve** the minutes of 6 February 2017 and 20 February 2017 as a true and correct record of these meetings and that the Lord Mayor should sign these as such.

93. Appointment to Committees

At the meeting, Councillor Price proposed and Council agreed that Councillor Lygo be appointed to the vacancy on East Area Planning Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

94. Announcements

The Lord Mayor announced:

- He had held the annual charity dinner on Saturday 23 April: an excellent evening attended by about 100 people.
- Highlights of his recent visit to Kashmir.

He noted that the Rt Hon Andrew Smith, MP was standing down and thanked him for his 30 years of service to his constituency as the Member of Parliament for Oxford East.

He thanked the Chief Executive for his help and support over his year as Lord Mayor.

There were no other announcements.

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

There were no public speakers in this section.

96. Arrangements for the appointment of an Interim Chief Executive

As Chair of the Appointments Committee, Councillor Price proposed revised recommendations tabled at the meeting.

He explained that the Appointments Committee were interviewing candidates for the post of Interim Chief Executive. In order to allow a proper handover before the current Chief Executive left it was not considered practicable to wait until Full Council could be convened to confirm an appointment. Council must have an appointed Head of Paid Service as required in law.

Council resolved:

1. to delegate responsibility to and authorise the Appointments Committee to make an appointment to the position of Interim Chief Executive to replace Peter Sloman; and
2. that the Appointments Committee has authority to agree the start date and initial period of appointment and other terms of employment of the Interim Chief Executive as the committee considers reasonable; and
3. that the person appointed as Interim Chief Executive will, as set out in the Constitution, be designated as Head of Paid Service as required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, Section 4(1), from the first day of their formal employment in that role with Oxford City Council after the current Head of Paid Service ceases to be employed in the post of Chief Executive.

97. Constitution Review 2017

Council considered a report of the Acting Head of Law and Governance setting out proposed changes to the Council's Constitution.

Council resolved to approve, with immediate effect, the amendments to the Constitution outlined in the report and detailed in appendices 1 to 4:

Appendix 1 – Petitions Scheme

Appendix 2 – Contract Procedure Rules

Appendix 3 - Miscellaneous proposed changes

Appendix 4 – Annex to Whistleblowing Policy

98. Annual Pay Policy Statement 2017

Council considered a report of the Head of Business Improvement setting out the Annual Pay Policy Statement in accordance with legislative requirements.

Council resolved to approve the Annual Pay Policy Statement 2017 as attached at Appendix 1 to the covering report.

99. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

Council considered a report of the Acting Head of Law and Governance.

Council resolved to note the Council's use of its powers under the Regulation of Investigative Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

100. City Executive Board Minutes

a) Minutes of meeting Thursday 9 February 2017 of City Executive Board

Questions asked of the Board Members on these minutes and their responses are listed below.

- Minute 127

Councillor Gant asked what had happened with the proposal to tender to provide cleaning services for the new Westgate Centre.

Councillor Price undertook to provide a response.

- Minute 129 (a) - Councillor Simmons asked for an update on the recycling incentive scheme.

Councillor Price said there was funding for the scheme for 3 years, but it was being reviewed as it was not providing good value for money in its current form.

- Minute 129 (b) - Councillor Gant asked if there were there any responses from MPs or from Westminster to the request for a debate on safeguarding language schools students.

Councillor Sinclair said the request for a parliamentary debate would be resubmitted after the General Election. She would follow up or complete the other requests in the minutes.

- Minute 130 - Councillor Thomas asked about the relationship between the right to buy and Oxford City Housing Limited.

Councillor Rowley said he hoped the position would be clarified by the new DGLC team after the General Election.

- Minute 131 - Councillor Wade asked how long a delay would be caused by changing the current boundary of the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area.

Councillor Hollingsworth said he would provide a response.

- Minute 133 (a) - Councillor Gant asked and Councillor Price agreed that partners in joint initiatives should receive appropriate credit and the oversight in the corporate plan should not be repeated.

b) Minutes of meeting Thursday 9 March 2017 of City Executive Board

Questions asked of the Board Members on these minutes and their responses are listed below.

- Minute 149 – Councillor Thomas asked whether this degree of power should be vested an interim post-holder.

Councillor Turner reassured councillors that while authority was vested in one officer, decisions would be taken more collectively.

- Minute 151 – Councillor Thomas asked if the scoping exercise for the proposed lottery would consider where the money would be coming from as well as what it would fund.

Councillor Price said the report would look at the source of income, and also the impact on other lotteries in the city to avoid competition and duplication.

c) Minutes of meeting Thursday 6 April 2017 of City Executive Board

Questions asked of the Board Members on these minutes and their responses are listed below.

- Minute 159 (d) – Councillor Fooks asked whether the City Council’s views on the workplace levy had changed given the County Council’s comments.

Councillor Hollingsworth said it had not.

101. Questions on Notice from Members of Council

35 written questions on notice were submitted. These, written responses, and 20 supplementary questions and responses are set out in the supplement to these minutes.

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

Councillors Azad, Fry, and Tanner arrived and Councillor Goddard left before the start of this item.

Four speakers addressed Council and one speaker asked a question.

The full text of these speeches and question; responses from the Board Members in writing before the meeting; and summaries of verbal responses given at the meeting are in the supplement to these minutes.

1. Artwell addressed Council about the provision of football pitches in Barton.
2. Nigel Gibson addressed Council about meeting the needs of ordinary people (replacing health and fitness facilities in Cowley)
3. Joanna Sanders addressed Council asking for provision of a secure area for exercising dogs off-lead in East Oxford, preferably in Florence Park
4. Laura Coyle addressed Council about the petition on this agenda
5. Sarah Lasenby asked about the proposed salary of any interim Chief Executive and asked the Council to exercise restraint.

103. Petition - Help re-open Lucy Faithfull House Homeless accommodation

Council considered a petition meeting the criteria for debate under the Council's petitions scheme in line with the procedure for large petitions.

Council heard an address from Neo, the head petitioner. He spoke about the problems of the (by his estimate) nearly 130 homeless people in the city who needed a home and a safe place to go. Lucy Faithfull House would get people off the streets. Half of the people housed by the Iffley Open House project were in work but had no home - if they stayed on the streets they would lose their jobs. More and more people were forced out of their homes. He had seen at least 20 new people on the city streets coming here from across the county. These were massive failures by government. To solve the issues there needed to be collective responsibility: everyone needed to work together. There was a desperate need for the facilities Lucy Faithfull House could provide.

Council considered two motions submitted in response to the petition, circulated before the meeting.

Councillor Rowley proposed his motion, seconded by Councillor Turner.

Councillor Thomas proposed his motion, seconded by Councillor Gant.

After debate and on being put to the vote:

- Councillor Rowley's motion was declared carried
- Councillor Thomas' motion was declared lost.

Council resolved to approve the following motion in response to the petition, as proposed by Cllr Rowley:

Council notes the petition, and welcomes the support from the signatories for sustainable solutions to single-person homelessness in Oxford.

As elsewhere in the country, the rise in single-person homelessness is as a consequence of the government's attack on Social Security, its cuts in mental health provision, and its failure to increase the number of affordable and social homes over the last seven years in government.

In noting the petition, Council also observes that re-use of Lucy Faithfull House would not be a sensible proposition, because no need has been demonstrated. All of the LFH beds have been replaced by beds in Oxford with support provided, and existing homelessness provision is not over-occupied. Council also noted, in rejecting the Budget amendment referred to, that there is no way to make LFH sustainable beyond the lifetime of the Budget.

Council notes that its current approach to homelessness funding has allowed us to shield vital services affected by County Council cuts and maintain funding for services across the City.

Council also notes that it is untrue that "luxury" accommodation is intended to be built on the Lucy Faithfull House site. The site has potential to contribute to the Council's affordable housing strategy, although this will require an agreement with the leaseholder.

104. Outside Organisations/ Committee Chair report: Oxfordshire Strategic Partnership

Council had before it a report from the OSP Manager and Principal Economic Development Officer (submitted on behalf of Councillor Price) giving an update on the work of the Oxfordshire Local Strategic Partnership. Councillor Price said that a report on the future of the partnership would be presented to their September meeting.

Councillor Fooks asked for an update on the TEFL work. Councillor Price said that funding was channelled through refugee support groups such as Asylum Welcome.

Councillor Gant asked how the review of the Economic Narrative linked to Council policies and the Local Plan. Councillor Price said that the two would inform each other within the context and scope of each one.

Council noted the report.

105. Scrutiny Committee update report

Councillor Gant presented his report and paid tribute to Councillor Coulter's contributions to the work of the committee.

He reminded Councillors that they were welcome to suggest items for the committee's work plan and that should Council resolve to ask the committee to consider any matter, this would be added to the agenda of the 14 June meeting.

Council noted the Scrutiny Committee would next meet on 2 May then 12 and 14 June, and noted the report.

106. Motions on notice

Council had before it six motions on notice and amendments submitted in accordance with Council procedure rule 11.17 and published with the agenda and briefing note, and reached decisions as set out below.

Council adopted motions:

- a. Power to impose a tourist tax in Oxford.
- b. Making vacant buildings within Oxford available for the use as temporary homeless shelters.
- c. Supporting social enterprise.
- d. Joint working to address the needs of the boating community.

Two motions were not taken as the time for debate had elapsed:

- e. Opposing the Better Oxfordshire Proposals.
- f. Addressing concerns about short term lets via websites.

a) Power to impose a tourist tax in Oxford

This motion was debated before Minute 102 as there was sufficient time before the scheduled start of the public speaking item.

Councillor Wilkinson proposed her submitted motion, seconded by Councillor Goff.

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

Council resolved to agree the following motion:

Council notes that a number of local authorities are currently lobbying for the power to impose tourist bed taxes or “hotel levies”. These include Camden, Westminster, Bath, Birmingham, Brighton, Edinburgh and Cornwall.

Council also notes the recent support by the Mayor of London for the introduction of such a levy following the publication for the London Finance Commission by the GLA of Working Paper 83 entitled Options for a tourism levy for London. This report gives details of tourist taxes levied across the world in cities that have a high proportion of tourists.

Council recognizes that the British Hospitality Association is strongly opposed to any imposition of a bed tax, and that the VAT rates in the UK on hotel accommodation are much higher than in other EU countries.

Oxford is the seventh most visited city in the UK by international visitors and is the tourism gateway to the rest of Oxfordshire. The opening of the new Westgate retail offer is expected to generate increased visits to Oxford. Council welcomes tourism in Oxford as this brings many benefits to the City, however this does bring with it an extra demand for infrastructure and environmental improvements, and cost to the Council of increased workload in some departments, for example Streetscene and Parks.

Council notes that there are uncertainties ahead post-Brexit with respect to Oxford’s economy, and that it may be wise to join other authorities in lobbying for the power to introduce and retain a tourism levy.

Council therefore asks the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council to work with other local authorities representing cities with high rates of tourism to lobby jointly for the devolution of the above power. It further requests that Council writes to Oxford’s two MPs to inform them of this Council’s motion and ask for their support.

b) Making vacant buildings within Oxford available for the use as temporary homeless shelters

Councillor Thomas proposed his submitted motion.

He said he would accept Councillor Rowley's submitted amendment provided Councillor Rowley agreed a further minor amendment (read out at the meeting as '*the Council requests the City Executive Board to commission a report from officer to be submitted to the Board no later than September 2017 on the process and procedures that could be used to make empty properties available for use as temporary homeless shelters*').

Councillor Rowley agreed to this change and Councillor Thomas then proposed his submitted motion as amended.

Councillor Simmons seconded the amended motion.

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

Council resolved to agree the following motion:

Recognising:

- the growing number of individuals sleeping on our streets;
- the dangers of sleeping rough;
- the significant number of long and short-term vacant buildings within the city;
- the potential to move on with their lives and off the street (into permanent accommodation and employment) that a period of stable and safe accommodation could offer many of those current sleeping rough;

The Council requests the City Executive Board to commission a report from officers to be submitted no later than September 2017 on the processes and procedures that could be used to make empty properties available for use as temporary homeless shelters.

c) Supporting Local Social Enterprise

Councillor Smith proposed her submitted motion, seconded by Councillor Hayes.

Councillor Gant proposed his submitted amendment, seconded by Councillor Wade.

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

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

Council resolved to agree the following motion:

Social enterprise is a business that trades for a social and/or environmental purpose. It will have a clear sense of its 'social mission': which means it will know what difference it is trying to make, who it aims to help, and how it plans to do it. It will

bring in most or all of its income through selling goods or services. And it will also have clear rules about what it does with its profits, reinvesting these to further the 'social mission'.

Since 2014 Oxfordshire has been designated a 'social enterprise place' by Social Enterprise UK: this designation recognises the variety of local social enterprises on our doorstep and makes it easier to stay informed about what local social enterprises have to offer.

As a council we already recognise that our procurement power is a mechanism for delivering and realising tangible benefits for local communities. Over 50% of the Council's spend is local to Oxfordshire with approximately 27% of this being paid to Small and Medium Enterprises. Social Value is also a key consideration when high value contracts are let.

This Council asks the City Executive Board:

to establish an officer group to identify any further actions to embed the Social Value Act and its principles across the council and encourage the use of local social enterprise suppliers; and to recommend to the Board Member any changes to the Procurement Strategy or rules to achieve this.

d) Joint working to address needs of the boating community

Councillor Wade proposed her submitted motion, accepting the submitted amendment proposed by Councillor Sinclair.

Councillor Landell Mills seconded the amended motion.

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

Council resolved to agree the following motion:

This Council welcomes the work done by the Board member and City Council officers in consulting with the boating community, riparian owners, the Canal and River Trust and others on the draft waterways PSPO. This Council notes that on 6 April the CEB approved the following recommendations which were supported by the Scrutiny Committee.

These were as follows:

1. Not to progress the proposal for a Public Spaces Protection Order for the generality of the waterways of Oxford;
2. Commission officers to develop localised solutions to public safety concerns for four identified priority areas;
3. Commission officers to further develop policy proposals that will address public safety and antisocial behaviour problems and improve public enjoyment of the city's waterways resources.

This Council will now continue to develop the solutions on the identified areas with local stakeholders and particularly welcomes the investment and

commitment to improving the city’s waterways. This Council now asks the Board member to request officers to continue working with the Canal and River Trust to explore a range of possible measures, which could, if practical, include the following:

- a) a sanitary facility on the Thames in Oxford - currently there is no disposal point for sewage between Abingdon and Eynsham (there is one on the canal at St Edward's but this is difficult to reach from the Thames). The disposal point could also include a waste disposal facility to save rubbish piling up.**
- b) a caretaker boater with a boat moored at a city site, to manage over-staying, inappropriate behaviour etc. The City Council would provide a free mooring in Oxford (worth perhaps £300 – £500 p.m.) with the boater performing caretaking duties in exchange, initially perhaps 12 hours p.w. This proposal would involve no cost to the Council beyond the use of a mooring.**

e) Motion on notice proposed by Councillor Simmons

This motion was not taken as the allowed time had elapsed.

f) Addressing concerns about short-term lets via websites

This motion was not taken as the allowed time had elapsed.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.25 pm

Chair

Date: Monday 15 May 2017

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