

96. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Council had before it nine Motions on Notice and reached decisions on them as follows:-

(a) Payment of a Living Wage

Councillor McManners seconded by Councillor Turner moved the following Motion on Notice:-

“This Council believes:-

The minimum wage was an important development to ensure a basic level of income for the lowest paid. However, the cost of living in Oxford is higher than in most of the rest of Britain, and the minimum wage is not enough for an individual or family to avoid living in poverty with all the ill effects that has. A living wage is considered the minimum wage needed to provide 'adequate income' to ensure social inclusion for an individual and their family.

Paying a living wage also helps an organisation or business as it has been shown to reduce staff turnover, reduce sick leave and improve productivity.

The Welsh Assembly recently agreed a living wage of £6.70 per hour for its employees, and employers in London including KPMG and the London Assembly agreed a living wage of £7.20 per hour. It is suggested that we use £7 per hour as a rate for Oxford, along with the right to at least 20 days holiday per year, and 10 days full sick pay, as well as free access to a trade union.

To promote the economic and social well-being of people living and working in Oxford, we believe that everyone working in the City should be paid a living wage. As one of the City's biggest employers, the City Council can help make sure that this happens by becoming a “living wage employer”, and by working with other employers in the City to persuade them to follow our lead.

This Council resolves:-

- a) That Oxford City Council should commit to achieving Living Wage Employer status by April 2009, paying at least £7 per hour to all staff (permanent and temporary, including sub-contracted employers);
- b) That the City Council should work with living wage campaigners, low paid workers, trade unions and employers to make Oxford a 'Living Wage City' in which every worker earns a living wage;
- c) That the Chief Executive should designate an officer to prepare a report to the Executive Board setting out the financial commitment needed to achieve Living Wage Employer status, to consult with the Council's employees, and to work with other employers to get them to commit to becoming Living Wage Employers.”

Councillor Craft seconded by Councillor Kent moved an amendment to the Motion as follows:-

To reletter paragraphs (b) and (c) as paragraphs (c) and (d) and insert a new (b) as follows:-

- “(b) that the City Council, recognising that with a national minimum wage of £5.52 for workers aged 22 or over, it would be unacceptable to ask City residents on low wages to pay for a guaranteed living wage for Council employees.

Council should ensure that to fulfil any pledge to bring in £7 for Council employees, there will be no increase in Council Tax; and no cuts in services and that therefore the City Council should commit to a redistribution of salaries and allowances within the Council, including:-

- (i) a review of Chief Executive and Director remuneration
- (ii) a review of Councillors’ allowances
- (iii) a review of Portfolio Holder, Board Member and Scrutiny Chair allowances;
- (iv) the removal of the Leader, Deputy Leader, Leader of Opposition Group allowances;
- (v) the removal of meal and travel expenses (but not care expenses).”

Councillor Sellwood seconded by Councillor Simmons moved an amendment to the Motion as follows:-

To add a new sentence at the end of paragraph (c) as follows:-

“This report should explore all possible funding options, including redistribution of current salary levels within the Council structure”.

The mover of the original Motion, with the agreement of his seconder and Council indicated that he would accept Councillors Sellwood’s amendment but that he could not accept Councillor Craft’s amendment.

Council voted upon the amendment in the name of Councillor Craft but this was not carried, more members voting against the amendment than voting in favour.

Council then voted upon the amended substantive Motion, as follows, and this was carried, more members voting in favour of the Motion than voting against:-

“This Council believes:-

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poverty with all the ill effects that has. A living wage is considered the minimum wage needed to provide 'adequate income' to ensure social inclusion for an individual and their family.

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This Council resolves:-

- a) That Oxford City Council should commit to achieving Living Wage Employer status by April 2009, paying at least £7 per hour to all staff (permanent and temporary, including sub-contracted employers);**
- b) That the City Council should work with living wage campaigners, low paid workers, trade unions and employers to make Oxford a 'Living Wage City' in which every worker earns a living wage;**
- c) That the Chief Executive should designate an officer to prepare a report to the Executive Board setting out the financial commitment needed to achieve Living Wage Employer status, to consult with the Council's employees, and to work with other employers to get them to commit to becoming Living Wage Employers. This report should explore all possible funding options, including redistribution of current salary levels within the Council structure".**

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