

To: Council
Date: 23 April 2018
Title of Report: **Motions and amendments received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.17**

Councillors are asked to debate and reach conclusions on the motions and amendment listed below in accordance with the Council's rules for debate.

The Constitution permits an hour for debate of these motions.

Introduction

This document sets out motions received by the Head of Law and Governance in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.17 by the deadline of 1.00pm on 11 April 2018, as amended by the proposers.

All substantive amendments sent by councillors to the Head of Law and Governance by publication of the briefing note are also included below.

Motions will be taken in turn from the Labour, and Liberal Democrat, Green groups in that order.

1. Addressing the housing crisis (proposed by Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Rowley)

Labour member motion

Council believes that Oxford is in the midst of a housing crisis, affecting all sections of our city, from people who grew up here but cannot afford to live here any more, families spanning several generations forced to live in one house because grown-up children cannot afford to move out, through to those who need to move on from hostel provision but can find nowhere to move to, and those who end up sleeping on the streets.

Council believes that a wide variety of factors are responsible for this housing crisis, including decades of under-investment in social housing, and in particular a reckless disregard by central government for the potential that council housing could play in solving the housing crisis.

Council further believes that, notwithstanding the city's determination to free up land for development, there is no ability to build enough dwellings to meet our housing needs within the city's boundaries, and therefore sustainable urban extensions, with

a good proportion of genuinely affordable housing and nomination rights for the City Council are a necessary part of the solution.

Consideration should be given to taking further land out of Oxfordshire's Green belt to facilitate this as has happened elsewhere. The emerging National Planning Policy Framework recognises that in exceptional circumstances this can be a sustainable way to plan to meet housing needs, including allocating new land as Green belt by way of compensation.

Council resolves to ask the City Executive Board to continue to make appropriate representations to our neighbouring councils on this matter, to feed such views into emerging sub-regional planning arrangements, and for the Leader to write to both local MPs asking for their views on this matter and their support.

Amendment proposed by Councillor Gant

To add to the end of the motion

Council further asks the Leader and/or its representative on the Growth Board to take the following factors fully into account in all discussions with partners and strategic planning:

- that target housing numbers are under review, and current numbers are regarded as being in excess of need by many, including the government's own housing minister;
- that housing need alone does not constitute "exceptional circumstances";
- that more use of employment land for housing and innovative planning can significantly increase the number of homes which could be built within the city;
- that any proposal to build in the Green Belt must be accompanied by a review of the entire Green Belt, and not proceed in a piecemeal fashion

2. Disabled access to the Westgate Centre (Proposed by Councillor Goddard, seconded by Councillor Goff)

Liberal Democrat member motion

Council believes that disabled people should have the same life opportunities as all. In that context, Council notes concerns about aspects of access to the Westgate centre for disabled people. In particular, Council notes:

- 1) Difficulties of access to the centre's car parks for specially adapted vehicles for disabled people due to low headroom at car park entrances;
- 2) unhelpful placement of notices about the low headroom meaning that difficult manoeuvres are needed to reverse from the car park entrance;
- 3) the limited disabled parking available near the Westgate centre;
- 4) wider concerns about the placement of usable taxi ranks in the vicinity of the Westgate centre and about the size of some of the lifts within it.

Council resolves to mandate the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council to contact the Westgate Alliance to instigate discussions over how to further improve access for disabled people to the Westgate centre, and to ensure that such concerns are fully factored into the Alliance's plans for the Castle Quarter

3. Phasing out unnecessary single-use plastics (proposed by Councillor Brandt, seconded by Councillor Simmons)

Green member motion

This Council commits to working to bring an end to the use of unnecessary Single Use Plastics (SUP) in Oxford.

This Council resolves to:

Request the Executive Director for Sustainable City brings a report to CEB on the options for bringing an end to the use of unnecessary Single Use Plastics (SUP) in Oxford, to:

- a) enable Oxford City Council to become a full signatory of the 'Plastic Free Pledge', by phasing out the use of unnecessary SUPs in all City Council buildings, and working with commissioning partners to end the purchase and procurement of SUPs through the Council's supply chain;
- b) encourage the city's businesses, organisations and residents to go 'plastic free,' working with best practice partners in the city to explore the creation of a 'plastic free network,' that could provide business support, practical guidelines and advice to help local businesses transition from SUPs to sustainable alternatives;
- c) provide feasible options to incentivise traders on Council land to sell re-usable containers and invite customers to bring their own, with the aim of phasing out SUPs; including investigating the possibility of requiring food and drink vendors to avoid SUPs as a condition of their event permission, strengthening the existing conditions and guidance circulated to exhibitors and traders.

4. Short-term Lets (proposed by Councillor Price, seconded by Councillor Chapman)

Labour member motion

This Council notes the expansion of short-term lets in Oxford as in many other cities, and welcomes the options that this provides for visitors to our city to find somewhere to stay.

However the Council is concerned with the growing reports of problems in this sector, and in particular notes that the very serious issues that have been reported in other cities are now starting to be reported here.

There have been documented instances of pop-up brothels and evidence of both single properties and groups of properties being used as de facto guest houses, without any need to comply with the same regulations as standard guest houses do when it comes to fire risk, environmental health or safeguarding against child sexual exploitation.

Other cities have seen houses in residential areas advertised for pay parties – where a house is effectively used as a commercial nightclub without the knowledge or consent of the landlord, with no safety or noise regulations in place, and with no consideration for neighbours.

This Council believes that it is essential that the short-term let sector is regulated, both to protect neighbours and also to prevent unfair competition undermining

landlords, hotels and guest-houses that do comply with regulations that set safe standards for their properties.

Specifically, this regulation could include:

- A definition of a property used permanently or regularly as a short-term let as a separate planning class, leading to a requirement to obtain planning permission, and allowing neighbours to object;
- Licensing or registration of premises, in line with HMOs or hotels and guesthouses;
- Treating such premises as commercial rather than residential, with a requirement to make use of commercial refuse and waste services.

This Council therefore asks that:

- The City Executive Board, and the Board Member with responsibility for this area, works alongside other local authorities, the Local Government Association and other appropriate bodies to make a coordinated and ongoing request to Government for powers to implement a scheme to make properties on short-term lets subject to the same regulation as equivalent properties
- The Board Member with responsibility for this area writes to our two local MPs to ask them to support such a scheme, providing them with evidence and information to allow them to ask questions of Ministers and introduce or support any Private Members Bill or amendment to other legislation to introduce a scheme to regulate short-term lets.

5. The Crisis in Legal Aid and the Immediate Need for Action (Proposed by Councillor Wade, seconded by Councillor Altaf Khan)

Liberal Democrat member motion

Council notes that Legal Aid was created as part of the post-war Welfare State of which liberals such as Beveridge and Keynes were key architects.

Legal Aid funds legal advice and representation to the general public, in particular to those who cannot afford to pay for it. It is a vital ingredient of a democratic society.

In a criminal context, those without legal aid, and who could not pay privately, would have to fend for themselves against all the resources of the state. Access to justice would depend on wealth.

Oxford City Council believes that the fundamental right to justice should be available to everybody in our society regardless of their means.

Nature of the problem

There will be a £600m reduction in an already meagre and overstretched budget for the Ministry of Justice by 2019/20. Meanwhile many of the poor and vulnerable are being denied access to justice. The faith of the public in the jury system is being undermined by the chaos in the courts.

The further cut now proposed will amount to a 40% cut in real terms since 1997.

Council therefore calls on the Government to:

1. Recognise the concerns of members of the legal profession at all levels
2. Instigate an open review of the cumulative effect of legal aid reductions on the provision of access to legal advice and assistance, taking evidence from professionals, from agencies e.g. CABs, Law Centres, and from people who are themselves affected by little or no legal aid support.
3. Consider how the reduction in legal aid provision is affecting the Government's ability to comply with United Nations, European Union and National Policy and Legislative measures.
4. Require the Ministry of Justice to provide a fully-costed review of the Legal Aid scheme within 12 months against 2016/17 figures to ascertain whether the scheme achieves its aim of cost neutrality or whether it is underfunded and, if so, by how much.

Council accordingly resolves to ask the Leader of the Council:

- to ask the Oxford MPs Layla Moran and Anneliese Dodds to write to the Prime Minister to communicate the resolution of Council as expressed above.
- to ask Oxfordshire County Council to join us in this request to the Prime Minister

6. Call on Government to introduce a new Clean Air Act and other measures to tackle air pollution (proposed by Councillor Thomas, seconded by Councillor Wolff)

Green member motion

This Council is committed to improving air quality within the city, which currently breaches EU limits in some areas (the annual mean Air Quality Strategy objective for NO₂ was breached at two out of three of the continuously monitored sites and 24% of the diffusion tube sites

[Source: Oxford City Council 2016 Air Quality Annual Status Report; July 2017])

It recognises the need to take more local action but acknowledges that this can more easily take place within a more supportive, national policy and legal framework.

This Council therefore calls upon the UK Government to:

1. Publish a new Clean Air Act, fit for the 21st Century, which improves on and strengthens existing legislation, establishing clean air as a human right in law¹. Polling shows that 65% of British public support a new Clean Air Act².
2. Spend at least £30 per person annually on walking and cycling. This is an increase from the Government's current spend of £6.50 per person per year³. Money could be redirected from the huge £30 billion allocated to new roads between 2015/16 till 2020/21⁴.
3. Bring forward the phase out of petrol and diesel car sales from 2040 to 2030 at the latest.

4. Implement an expanded national network of Clean Air Zones by the end of 2018⁵, mandated and funded by central Government, to end all illegal air pollution levels as soon as possible within the next two years.
5. Create and fund a targeted diesel scrappage scheme⁶ that trades cars for public transport tokens, low emissions car club memberships, cargo bike and electric bike discounts, and subsidies for public transport and clean vehicle infrastructure, including subsidies specifically targeted at lower income drivers and small businesses.
6. Increase the Vehicle Excise Duty for new diesel cars announced in the Autumn Budget 2017 - by at least £800 - so as to reflect the additional cost to society of dirty diesel engines. This would generate £500 million a year, which should be directed at helping fund a targeted diesel scrappage scheme, and not road building or car-dependent development.

and asks the Leader to write to senior ministers and local MPs to inform them of this.

Amendment proposed by Councillor Tanner

to delete point 4 and replace with:

“Implement an expanded national network **of Zero Emission Zones, mandated and funded by central Government,** to end illegal air pollution levels as soon as possible **and no later than 2025.**”

References

- 1 <https://cleanair.london/legal/clean-air-is-a-human-right/>
- 2 <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/feb/14/65-percent-british-public-want-clean-air-act-pollution-harmful-uk-survey>
- 3 <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/bike-blog/2017/apr/26/the-government-just-announced-a-gamechanger-for-cycling-in-england>
- 4 <http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/blog/roads/231114-road-spending-30-billion>
- 5 <https://cdn.friendsoftheearth.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/Too%20little%20too%20late%20-%20a%20critique%20of%20the%20Air%20Quality%20Plan%20FINAL%2017102017%20UPDATED.pdf>
- 6 <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/proposal-national-vehicle-scrappage-fund.pdf>