

Minutes of a meeting of the **COUNCIL** on Monday 23 April 2018

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Committee members:

Councillor Fooks (Lord Mayor)	Councillor Simm (Deputy Lord Mayor)
Councillor Altaf-Khan (Sheriff)	Councillor Abbasi
Councillor Anwar	Councillor Azad
Councillor Brandt	Councillor Brown
Councillor Chapman	Councillor Clarkson
Councillor Cook	Councillor Curran
Councillor Gant	Councillor Goddard
Councillor Haines	Councillor Hayes
Councillor Henwood	Councillor Humberstone
Councillor Iley-Williamson	Councillor Kennedy
Councillor Ladbrooke	Councillor Landell Mills
Councillor Lloyd-Shogbesan	Councillor Lygo
Councillor Malik	Councillor Paule
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) Fry, Goff, Hollingsworth and Munkonge sent apologies.

Minute's silence and tributes

Council heard tributes and stood for a minute's silence in memory of former Lord Mayor Pat Stannard who died in late March.

103. Apologies for absence

Apologies are noted in the attendance.

Councillors Goddard, Iley-Williamson and Turner sent apologies for lateness.

104. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations.

105. Minutes

Council agreed to approve the minutes of the ordinary meetings held on

- 29 January 2018
- 14 February 2018
- 19 February 2018

as a true and correct record,

subject to a minor change in Minute 73 to correct Councillor Price's term to 10 years as Leader of the Council.

106. Announcements

The Lord Mayor thanked those councillors standing down at the election for their service to the Council and to their communities.

She announced the upcoming Lord Mayor's Charity dinner on 27 April and memorial services on 4 May.

She reported on her attendance at events including a remembrance ceremony on the 24th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide.

The Sheriff reported that new honorary Freemen and a number of apprentices had been admitted.

The Leader of the Council reported she had been honoured to attend the local synagogue for a Holocaust Memorial ceremony.

She also thanked those standing down for their services, and paid tribute to the three long-standing councillors (Councillors Fooks, Price, Sanders) who were stepping down.

107. Appointment to Committees

There were no appointments.

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

There were no addresses or questions.

109. Highway Maintenance Agreement

Council considered a report of the Executive Director Sustainable City, submitted to the City Executive Board on 20 March 2018, seeking authority to enter into an Agency Agreement with Oxfordshire County Council to provide highway maintenance services on the classified road network in the City, in addition to the works already undertaken on minor roads under section 42 of The Highways Act 1980.

Councillor Brown, Leader of the Council, presented the report and moved the recommendations which were adopted on being seconded and put to the vote

Council noted that the confidential information would be released when appropriate; under the agency agreement the Council did not have complete control over the scheduling of repairs; and the contract would be signed at a future date. Council noted concerns over the allocation and amount of funding for road repairs in the city, the reactive nature of repairs, and the poor quality of some repairs made by utility companies.

Council resolved to:

approve the inclusion of a gross expenditure and gross income budget of £1.56 million for the year 2018-19 i.e. nil cost to the Council.

110. Pay Policy Statement 2018/19

Council agreed to grant a dispensation to officers (all of whom were affected by the policy) allowing them to remain in the meeting for this item.

Council considered a report of the Head of Business Improvement seeking approval of the Annual Pay Policy Statement, and also setting out the annual gender gap report.

Councillor Price, Board Member for Corporate Strategy and Economic Development, presented the report and moved the recommendations which were adopted on being seconded and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

approve the Annual Pay Policy Statement 2018/19 attached at Appendix 1 of the officer's report.

111. Scheme for the enrolment of Honorary Aldermen and Honorary Alderwomen of Oxford City Council

Councillor Goddard arrived at the start of this item.

Council considered a report of the Head of Law and Governance asking for approval of the scheme for the enrolment of Honorary Aldermen and Honorary Alderwomen.

Councillor Brown, Leader of the Council, presented the report and moved the recommendations which were adopted on being seconded and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

adopt the scheme for the enrolment of Honorary Aldermen and Honorary Alderwomen of Oxford City Council, attached at Appendix 1 of the officer's report.

112. City Executive Board Minutes

a) Minutes of meeting Tuesday 13 February 2018 of City Executive Board

Minute 155 Grant Allocations to Community and Voluntary Organisations 2018/19

Councillor Gant asked about the timing of the implementation of the decision: in particular was there a delay in issuing the funds; the effect on organisations waiting for their grants; and were all grants now paid.

Councillor Brown replied that those with one-off grants were not generally reliant on these and those with on-going grants had been notified of the award. Those grants not disbursed before the election purdah period started would be paid after the election.

b) Minutes of meeting Tuesday 20 March 2018 of City Executive Board

There were no questions.

c) Minutes of the meeting Tuesday 17 April 2018 of City Executive Board

There were no questions.

113. Questions on Notice from Members of Council

50 written questions on notice were submitted. These, written responses, and summaries of the 21 supplementary questions and responses are set out in the supplement to these minutes.

114. Outside organisation/Committee Chair reports and questions

This item was taken before the public addresses.

Council had before it the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership's Annual Review report.

The Board Member, Councillor Hayes spoke to his report and thanked the Council's partner organisations.

Council discussed and noted the report, the work of the partnership on tackling drug-dealing and the ensuing anti-social behaviour, and the impact of cuts in funding on the budget and capacity of the police force.

Council resolved to note the report.

115. Scrutiny Committee update report

This item was taken before the public addresses.

Council had before it the report of the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair thanked all those involved with the work of the committee and panels over the year and in particular the officers directly supporting the committee's work. He noted the changes to the committee's work to allow it to play a full part, in particular on scrutiny of the Council's companies; and the changes needed to allow scrutiny of the Oxfordshire Growth Board.

Council resolved to note the report.

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

Councillor Iley-Williamson arrived for the start of this item.

There were four addresses to Council and two questions to Board Members.

1. Amanda Mackenzie Stuart addressed Council asking for action to secure proper access to the Westgate car park for high Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles, as the current height restrictions prohibited this and there was no advance warning of the restriction.
2. Judith Harley addressed Council inviting the City Council to work with the Oxford African History Celebration (OAHC) organisation to commemorate events three key days: Windrush Day (22 June 2018) August 23 - Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its abolition (23 August 2018) and Abolition of Slavery (2 December 2018).

3. Judith Harley addressed Council outlining problems with car and bike parking at Temple Cowley Library caused by the ongoing construction work and asking that the spaces are provided as shown in the planning permission.
4. Artwell addressed Council about his view that inflated house prices were being aggravated by prices in the Barton Park development.
5. Nigel Gibson asked a question about the pricing structure and price increases at the Council's leisure centres as in his view these resulted in Oxford City Council discriminating against disabled people.
6. Judith Harley asked questions about the new Oxford Direct Services Company.

The full text of these speeches and question where these were read as submitted; 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.

117. Motions on notice

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

Council resolved to adopt the following motions as set out in these minutes:

- a. Addressing the housing crisis
- b. Disabled access to the Westgate Centre
- c. Phasing out unnecessary single-use plastics
- d. Short-term Lets

The following were not taken because the time for discussing motions had elapsed.

- e. The Crisis in Legal Aid and the Immediate Need for Action
- f. Call on Government to introduce a new Clean Air Act and other measures to tackle air pollution

a) Addressing the housing crisis

Councillor Turner arrived during the debate on this item.

Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Rowley, proposed her submitted motion as set out in the agenda and briefing note.

Councillor Gant, seconded by Councillor Landell Mills, proposed his submitted amendment as set out in the briefing note.

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

After debate and on being put to the vote, the original motion was agreed.

Council resolved to adopt the following 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.

b) Disabled access to the Westgate Centre

Councillor Goddard, seconded by Councillor Wilkinson, proposed his submitted motion as set out in the agenda and briefing note.

In the debate Council requested that checks on compliance with standards and that height restricting barriers met the requirements for accessibility for large WAVs were carried out for its own car parks, and noted that the County Council would be asked to take steps to improve advance notice of the height restrictions in the Westgate car park.

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

Council resolved to adopt the following 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.

c) Phasing out unnecessary single-use plastics

Councillor Brandt, seconded by Councillor Simmons, proposed her submitted motion as set out in the agenda and briefing note.

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

Council resolved to adopt the following 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 that the Executive Director for Sustainable City brings a report to City Executive Board on the options for bringing an end to the use of unnecessary Single Use Plastics (SUP) in Oxford, to:

- 1) 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;
- 2) 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;
- 3) 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.

d) Short-term lets

Councillor Price, seconded by Councillor Chapman, proposed his submitted motion as set out in the agenda and briefing note.

Council noted in debate that this proposal was not intended to penalise those providing short-term lets, but expansion and diversification of the sector meant that regulation was necessary to prevent lettings which were dangerous, sub-standard or caused nuisance.

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

Council resolved to adopt the following 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:

- 1. 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.**
- 2. 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.**

e) The Crisis in Legal Aid and the Immediate Need for Action

This motion was not taken because the time for discussing motions had elapsed.

f) Call on Government to introduce a new Clean Air act and other measures to tackle air pollution

This motion was not taken because the time for discussing motions had elapsed.

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 8.25 pm

Chair

Date: Monday 23 July 2018