

## **Remote meeting**

### **Minutes of a meeting of Council on Monday 20 July 2020**

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#### **Council members present:**

Councillor Simmons (Lord Mayor)

Councillor Goddard (Sheriff)

Councillor Azad

Councillor Bely-Summers

Councillor Chapman

Councillor Cook

Councillor Curran

Councillor Fry

Councillor Garden

Councillor Haines

Councillor Hayes

Councillor Hollingsworth

Councillor Iley-Williamson

Councillor Landell Mills

Councillor Lygo

Councillor McManners

Councillor Pressel

Councillor Rush

Councillor Linda Smith

Councillor Tanner

Councillor Taylor

Councillor Turner

Councillor Wade

Councillor Altaf-Khan (Deputy Lord Mayor)

Councillor Arshad

Councillor Aziz

Councillor Brown

Councillor Clarkson

Councillor Corais

Councillor Donnelly

Councillor Gant

Councillor Gotch

Councillor Harris

Councillor Henwood

Councillor Howlett

Councillor Kennedy

Councillor Lloyd-Shogbesan

Councillor Malik

Councillor Munkonge

Councillor Rowley

Councillor Simm

Councillor Roz Smith

Councillor Tarver

Councillor Tidball

Councillor Upton

Councillor Wolff

#### **Apologies:**

Councillors Djafari-Marbini and Humberstone sent apologies.

The minutes show when Councillors who were absent for part of the meeting arrived and left.

## **14. Declarations of interest**

Cllr Roz Smith declared an interest in the motion at 14f (fossil fuel divestment) as she had a decision making role as a member of the Oxfordshire County Council Pension Fund Committee.

## **15. Minutes of previous meetings**

Council agreed to approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 27 January 2020; 13 February 2020 (subject to checking the accuracy of the recorded vote at Minute 89d); 24 February 2020; 20 May 2020; and 8 June 2020 as true and correct records of those meetings.

The Lord Mayor shall sign these at a suitable time.

## **16. Appointment to Committees**

Council agreed to make changes with immediate effect to:

West Area Planning Committee

- Cllr Wade to replace Cllr Harris
- Cllr Tarver to replace Cllr Tidball

## **17. Announcements**

The Lord Mayor reported on his civic appointments:

While there were far fewer engagements, he had taken part in online engagements and making videos including

- Taking part with Perm, Oxford's twin town, on Perm Day;
- Remembering and commemorating Srebrenica Memorial day on 11 July 2020;
- Taking part in a global Eid event;
- Meeting the new High Sheriff of Oxfordshire Mrs Amanda Ponsonby;
- Taking part in online multi-faith meetings.

The Sheriff reported on his civic appointments including a virtual Freeman's admission ceremony.

He recorded his thanks to the council's countryside team for their extraordinary work in keeping Port Meadow useable and wildlife friendly in the current very challenging circumstances of greatly increased use and huge volumes of litter left.

The Leader of the Council reported the re-appointments and new appointments of Champions for specific parts of the Council's work, and thanked them for their work in their roles:

Cllr Shaista Aziz - Race and equalities

Cllr Colin Cook - Heritage

Cllr Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini - Migrants

Cllr Richard Howlett - Co-operatives

Cllr Pat Kennedy - Older People  
Cllr Mark Lygo - Sports  
Cllr Chewe Munkonge - Small Business  
Cllr Martyn Rush - Living Wage

## **18. Public addresses and questions that relate to matters for decision at this meeting**

There were no addresses or questions.

## **19. Polling Places Review - Effects of Covid-19 and the postponement of the ward boundaries**

Council considered the report of the Head of Law and Governance seeking approval of a draft schedule of polling districts and polling for the administrative area of the City Council in order to enable any by-elections to take place before May 2021 on the old ward boundaries.

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

### **Council resolved to:**

1. **approve** the draft schedule of polling places and polling districts as detailed in Appendix 1 to this report;
2. **agree** that the changes should not be formally published unless required;
3. **agree** that the scheme approved by Council on 13 February 2020 will apply again from 1 December 2020.

## **20. Decisions taken under Parts 9.3(b) and (c) of the Constitution**

Council considered the report of the Head of Law and Governance setting out the decisions taken by the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) using the urgency and emergency powers delegated in Parts 9.3(b) and (c) of the Constitution.

The Leader of the Council, Cllr Brown, presented the report and she and other Cabinet members answered questions:

- Expenditure on ICT covered the costs of introducing remote working for the majority of staff to allow the council to continue to deliver services (hardware, software, licences, remote meetings, and peripheral devices). This was separate from the previously planned replacement programme. There were no immediate plans to return to office based working or to recoup any investment.
- Topping up furlough payments to all furloughed staff accorded with good employment practices and the council's commitment to paying the Oxford Living Wage.
- Decisions were taken with Cabinet's input and knowledge and after informing opposition group leaders.

The recommendation, moved and seconded, was put to the vote.

**Council resolved to note the decisions taken as set out in the report.**

## **21. Questions on Cabinet minutes**

Questions asked on:

12 February - Minute 137 Scrutiny Committee Reports - plans for the Zero Emissions Zone

Cllr Gant asked a question and Cllr Hayes answered

15 July - Minute 31 Oxfordshire Growth Board Terms of Reference and Memorandum of Understanding

Cllr Gant asked a question and Cllr Brown answered.

### **a) Minutes of meeting Wednesday 12 February 2020 of Cabinet**

**Minute 137** Scrutiny Committee Reports - plans for the Zero Emissions Zone

Cllr Gant asked if the proposal was going ahead for two or three handheld APNR (automatic number plate recognition cameras) to enforce the planned Zero Emission Zone.

Cllr Hayes answered that this was still the case but both the final consultation on and introduction of the Zero Emission Zone had been postponed due to the impact of the Covid19 pandemic.

### **b) Minutes of meeting Wednesday 11 March 2020 of Cabinet**

There were no questions.

### **c) Minutes of meeting Monday 8 June 2020 of Cabinet**

There were no questions.

### **d) Minutes of meeting Wednesday 24 June 2020 of Cabinet**

There were no questions.

### **e) Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 15 July of Cabinet (to follow)**

**Minute 31** - Oxfordshire Growth Board Terms of Reference and Memorandum of Understanding

Cllr Gant noted the changes were in the context of wider changes in regional structures to promote growth, and asked the Leader to comment on the process for agreement whereby all councils had to agree identical documents in a short time, severely restricting the opportunity to change these.

Cllr Brown replied that the converse was also true: it was not possible to impose a decision on councils without their individual agreement. Documents were discussed and then broadly agreed by all six Leaders in advance so that each council should be able to sign up to the final decision.

## **22. Questions on Notice from Members of Council**

23 written questions were asked of the Cabinet members and Leader, and these and written responses were published before the meeting.

These along with summaries of the 15 supplementary questions and responses asked and given at the meeting are set out in the printed pack of these minutes.

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

*The Lord Mayor proposed and Council did not dissent that this item be taken at around 6.00pm instead of the 7.00pm set out in the Council meeting procedures.*

There were five addresses to Council:

1. Colin Aldridge asked the Council to consider introducing drug consumption rooms
2. Peter Thompson, Director Oxford School of English, asked the Council to
3. Tanagra Jabu Nala-Hartley asked the Council to Oxford Living Wage
4. Hsin-Yung Yen gave a speech in support of the motion on twinning with a Taiwanese city
5. David Madden gave a speech setting out his concerns at the accumulating impact of development in the north of the city.

The full text of these speeches as submitted and summaries of verbal responses from the Cabinet members given at the meeting are set out in the printed pack of these minutes.

### **24. Outside organisation/Committee Chair reports and questions**

Council had before it the report on behalf of the Leader of the Council on the work of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP).

Councillor Brown introduced the report and drew Council's attention to the work relating specifically to the areas in the city; to the local industrial strategy; continuing to set out the council's ambitions to create an inclusive and sustainable economy; and to the addendum setting out the current work to help the local economy recover from the impact of the Covid19 pandemic restrictions and prepare for a contraction in the economy.

Councillor Wolff asked if careers guidance looked ahead to estimate what would be needed in the future: for example to address skills shortages in the building industry; digitisation of the economy; and the climate emergency?

Councillor Brown responded that work on improving skills locally is constrained by the lack of ability to do this effectively at a local level. She had lobbied government ministers, and OxLEP was seeking means to develop tools to work with local businesses and people so that the right skills training was available.

Councillor Gant asked:

- In relation to funding provided from European funds which generated match funding locally, whether this showed the damage the Brexit project was already doing to our local economy.
- The factsheet stated the last two board meetings were held in public but there is no opportunity for members of the public to address or engage with the board. Could such opportunities be created?
- Was there a workstream to look at improvements to digital infrastructure and broadband provision across the county?

Councillor Brown responded that it was not open to the Board to make opportunities for direct engagement available, but the council leaders could raise relevant issues in their

capacity as members of the Board. OxLEP, having local council leaders on the Board, could be more responsive than a more remote body. This council's key issues around sustainability and inclusivity were taken into account in OxLEP's work: she would ask for these to be stated more clearly on the factsheet.

**Council noted the report.**

## **25. Scrutiny Committee update report**

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

Councillor Gant introduced the report and gave an update on the work of the Scrutiny Committee.

**Council noted the report and the appendices.**

## **26. Motions on notice**

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

- a) Twinning with a locality on the island of Taiwan
- b) Adopting the C40 Mayors COVID-19 Recovery Task Force principles
- c) Disproportionate deaths from Covid-19 of Health and care workers from Black, Asian and ethnic minorities

The following motions were not taken as the time allocated for debate had finished:

- d) Celebrating Oxford's Diversity
- e) Against postponing County Council elections
- f) Fossil fuel divestment
- g) Against postponing County Council elections (2)
- h) Liveable Streets initiative

### **a) Twinning with a locality on the island of Taiwan**

*Due to other engagements Councillors Harris and Simm left the meeting at the start of this debate; and Councillor Aziz left the meeting before the vote was taken.*

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

Councillor Clarkson, seconded by Councillor Tanner proposed the amendment as set out in the report in the briefing note.

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

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

**Council resolved to adopt the following motion:**

**Council notes:**

1. That Oxford currently has twin towns and cities in Europe, the Middle East and the Americas. However, at present it has no such links with anywhere in East Asia.

2. That [no town or city in the UK is currently twinned with any town or city on the island of Taiwan](#).
3. That amongst the achievements of the inhabitants of Taiwan are:
  - A. Building what [Freedom House](#) describes as a “*vibrant and competitive democratic system has allowed three peaceful transfers of power between rival parties since 2000*” with “*generally robust protections*” for civil liberties. The organisation gives Taiwan a higher on their Global Freedom Index than the USA, France or Spain.
  - B. Creating an “[economic miracle](#)” by which real GDP per capita on the island has increased more than 30 times since 1950. This make it one of the five fastest growing economies in the whole world during that period.
  - C. Becoming the first jurisdiction in Asia to legalise same-sex marriage.
  - D. A World beating response to Coronavirus. At the time of writing, there have been just seven confirmed fatalities from COVID-19 on the island, despite it having a population of 24 million and being in close proximity to the initial outbreak in Wuhan.
  - E. In April 2020, donating [7 million face masks](#) to European countries, including the UK, dealing with a shortage due to COVID-19.
4. That [Taiwan is the UK’s second fastest growing export market](#) and that the UK government is undertaking [free trade talks](#) with the Taiwan authorities.
5. Cities in numerous countries which take the same diplomatic stance towards Taiwan have ‘sister cities’ on the island.

**Council believes that:**

1. It should reaffirm [the view](#) that: “*Twin city links give citizens the chance to engage with other cultures and ways of life, and make these experiences more accessible through established contacts and networks in the linked cities. They also bring benefit to cities through knowledge-sharing activities, where people can learn from how problems are tackled in other countries, exchange ideas and understand different viewpoints.*”
2. That it would be worthwhile for Oxford to explore the possibility of establishing friendship links with a locality in Taiwan with a view to expanding its international links to encompass East Asia in the long term.
3. That a municipality-to-municipality relationship is separate from the UK’s official diplomatic position of recognising the People’s Republic of China and avoiding dealing with the Taiwan authorities on a government to government basis. Oxford is grateful for the friendship of people from throughout the People’s Republic of China and the contribution its citizens make to the city as visitors, students and residents.

**Council resolves that Oxford City Council hereby encourages those interested to explore the possibility of establishing grassroots friendship links, in a similar way to those developed with Ramallah, with a longer term view of a twinning agreement with an appropriate municipality in Taiwan.**

## **b) Adopting the C40 Mayors COVID-19 Recovery Task Force principles**

Councillor Wolff, seconded by Councillor Howlett proposed the submitted motion as set out in the agenda and briefing note.

Councillor Howlett in his speech announced that the Leader of the Council has on behalf of the Council recently signed up to the principles set out in the motion. The Council will apply them internally; publically states that these are our principles; and is proud to be part of the global network of cities adopting these.

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

### **Council resolved to adopt the following motion:**

**This Council welcomes** the findings of the C40 Mayors COVID-19 Recovery Task Force that has published a set of principles aimed at rebuilding cities & economies in a way that 'improves public health, reduces inequality and addresses the climate crisis'.

This Council notes the principles:

1. The recovery should not be a return to 'business as usual' - because that is a world on track for 3°C or more of over-heating;
2. The recovery, above all, must be guided by an adherence to public health and scientific expertise, in order to assure the safety of those who live in our cities;
3. Excellent public services, public investment and increased community resilience will form the most effective basis for the recovery;
4. The recovery must address issues of equity that have been laid bare by the impact of the crisis – for example, workers who are now recognised as essential should be celebrated and compensated accordingly and policies must support people living in informal settlements;
5. The recovery must improve the resilience of our city and communities. Therefore, investments should be made to protect against future threats – including the climate crisis – and to support those people impacted by climate and health risks;
6. Climate action can help accelerate economic recovery and enhance social equity, through the use of new technologies and the creation of new industries and new jobs. These will drive wider benefits for our residents, workers, students, businesses and visitors;
7. We commit to doing everything in our power to ensure that the recovery from COVID-19 is healthy, equitable and sustainable;
8. We commit to using our collective voices and individual actions to ensure that our national government supports both cities and the investments needed in cities, to deliver an economic recovery that is healthy, equitable and sustainable;
9. We commit to using our collective voices and individual actions to ensure that international and regional institutions invest directly in cities to support a healthy, equitable and sustainable recovery

**This Council agrees to monitor the on-going work of the Task Force and adopt the C40 Mayors principles in planning its own 'build back better' efforts.**

Source: <https://www.c40.org/other/covid-task-force>



**c) Disproportionate deaths from Covid-19 of Health and care workers from Black, Asian and ethnic minorities**

Councillor Bely Summers, seconded by Councillor Azad proposed the submitted motion as set out in the agenda and briefing note.

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

**Council resolved to adopt the following motion:**

People from Black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds are twice as likely to die of Covid-19 in the UK as white British people. This is the conclusion of the Public Health Report (PHE) Beyond the data: understanding the impact of Covid-19 on BAME groups.

44% of NHS doctors are from ethnic minority backgrounds but they accounted for 90% of the deaths of doctors. Black, Asians and ethnic minority nurses are 20% of the workforce but accounted for 75% of deaths.

Ethnic minority healthcare workers and care workers believe systemic racism and discrimination in the NHS and in the Social Care sector is one of the reasons many of their colleagues died.

The report highlights

- Lack of representation in senior roles
- Being less likely to seek care due to poorer experience with the NHS.
- Being less likely to speak up when they had concerns about PPE and risks
- A higher proportion of healthcare workers from ethnic minority working on Covid wards and care homes.

The Covid-19 pandemic has simply shone a light on a widespread entrenched problem. From the ongoing hostile environment and the Windrush scandal to the health surcharges for migrants. Local health unions have testimonies of ethnic minority healthcare workers and care workers not protected at work.

Some have left the profession, others have had to make life or death decisions. In modern Britain this is unacceptable.

The first PHE report commissioned by ministers explained why some populations groups are more affected than others but did not publish the recommendations which would have helped to reduce the disparities.

The chapter on community engagement was missing silencing again the voices of those who have been the most affected in spite of a very extensive consultation.

We have clapped for our NHS staff who have risked their lives to save us as well as our care workers. Far too many have made the ultimate sacrifice. Now it is time to address systemic racism, injustice and discriminations in our institutions and communities.

**Oxford City Council therefore**

1. **supports calls** for extensive research to be funded on the disproportionate number of deaths of ethnic minority workers and care workers with clear recommendations; **and**

2. **asks the Leader** to write to Matt Hancock, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, to request as a priority that PHE and the government implement in full and within a clear timeline all the seven recommendations set out in '*Beyond the data : understanding the impact of Covid-19 on BAME groups*':
- comprehensive and quality ethnicity data collection and recording
  - support community participatory research
  - improve access, experiences and outcomes of NHS
  - accelerate the development of culturally competent occupational risk assessment tools
  - culturally competent Covid-19 education and prevention campaign
  - target culturally competent health promotion and disease prevention programmes
  - reduce inequalities caused by the wider determinants of health.

**d) Celebrating Oxford's Diversity**

This motion was not taken as the time allocated for debate had finished.

**e) Against Postponing County Council Elections**

This motion was not taken as the time allocated for debate had finished.

**f) Fossil fuel divestment**

This motion was not taken as the time allocated for debate had finished.

**g) Against Postponing County Council Elections (2)**

This motion was not taken as the time allocated for debate had finished.

**h) Liveable Streets initiative**

This motion was not taken as the time allocated for debate had finished.

**The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 8.15 pm**

**Lord Mayor .....**  
**2020**

**Date: Monday 5 October**

*Decisions on items of business take effect immediately:  
Motions may be implemented immediately or may require further budget provision  
and/or reports to Cabinet before implementation.  
Details are in the Council's Constitution.*