



To: Council
Date: 26 July 2021
Title of Report: **Motions and amendments received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.18**

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 11.18 by the deadline of 1.00pm on **14 July 2021** 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.

Unfamiliar terms are explained in the glossary or in footnotes.

Cross party motions are taken first. Motions will then be taken in turn from the Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green, and Independent groups in that order.

Introduction

- a) DSS Discrimination (Cross party motion: proposer Cllr Thomas, seconder Cllr Jarvis)
- b) Short term lets (proposer Cllr Diggins, seconder Cllr Hunt)
- c) Trees for Life (Proposer: Cllr Landell-Mills, Seconder: Cllr Goddard) [amendment proposed by Cllr Hayes]
- d) East Oxford Low Traffic Neighbourhood (proposer Cllr Wolff, seconder Cllr Miles) [amendment proposed by Cllr Hayes]
- e) EU Nationals deserves to be treated with respect (proposer Cllr Corais, seconder Cllr Bely-Summers)
- f) Opposition to the Health and Care Bill (proposer Cllr Jarvis, seconder Cllr Pegg)
- g) Oxford Stadium (proposer Cllr Pegg, seconder Cllr Jarvis) [amendment proposed by Cllr Turner]

a) DSS Discrimination (Cross party motion: proposer Cllr Thomas, seconder Cllr Jarvis)

Cross-Party Motion agreed to be taken as such by the four group leaders

This Council notes that:

- The private rented sector (PRS) in Oxford has grown to 49.3% (2020) of homes in the city, one of the largest PRS populations of any housing authority in England;
- Private renters face a host of challenges, including disrepair and lack of affordable rent;
- Tenants in receipt of housing benefit or universal credit also face the prospect of 'DSS discrimination' ;
- 'No DSS' policies have been found to be unlawful and discriminatory under the Equality Act but are still widespread.
- This Council observes that:
- Some landlords and letting agents overtly practice DSS discrimination, e.g. by listing properties as 'no DSS' on websites;
- More often, landlords and letting agents covertly discriminate against benefits claimants, e.g. by using affordability or referencing checks that automatically fail benefit recipients, by systematically favouring non-benefit claimants when assessing tenancy applications, by demanding guarantors when a prospective tenant's income (be it from benefits or employment) is sufficient, etc.;
- Despite alleviating measures such as the council tax reduction scheme, people are struggling financially. More people rely on benefits due to the pandemic, so the effects of DSS discrimination are now particularly widespread.

This Council defends the right to decent housing, and will work to eliminate DSS discrimination from Oxford by asking Cabinet to take the following steps where possible:

- Revise the OCLAS code adding the following wording: 'you must not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, language, sexuality or any other factor that might place an individual at a disadvantage. This includes indirect discrimination such as 'no DSS' or related practices, namely refusing to let prospective tenants on housing benefit or universal credit view affordable properties and requiring guarantors in cases where a prospective tenant's income is sufficient';
- Advertise and ensure that the Welfare Reform Team will look out for and follow up on reported cases of discrimination;
- Ensure that duty housing officers are informed about the issue and refer cases to the Welfare Reform Team and independent advice centres;
- Establish a permanent "tenants' forum", which should:
 - Be composed of community groups and stakeholders representing tenants, both in private and council housing;

- Be invited to consult directly with the Housing and Homelessness Panel bi-annually at least and whenever decisions significantly impacting the rental sector come before Council;
- Use official communication and media activities to improve awareness, as well as denouncing discrimination against benefits claimants clearly on the Council website, with a dedicated page detailing ways to recognise DSS discrimination and what actions to take in response

This Council asks that the Housing and Homelessness Panel consider this issue, monitor actions taken to address it, and make recommendations accordingly.

Council recognises that DSS discrimination is one obstacle among many for those on benefits accessing housing.

Council asks that the Leader write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, calling for benefit levels to be raised and uprated in line with rents so they are realistic for places like Oxford, and for the household benefit cap to be removed.

b) Short term lets (proposer Cllr Diggins, seconder Cllr Hunt)

Labour Group Member Motion

This Council notes that an ever increasing number of homes in Oxford are being lost to local families as owners rent the out as short term lets. While numbers are difficult to quantify, we estimate that there are nearly 900 homes in Oxford entirely rented out on short lets for all or most of the year and that these numbers are increasing. This is very worrying in a city that is so reliant on the private rented sector to house its population. About 50% of our local residents live in private rented homes – the highest number in the country.

This Council notes that tourism makes a vital contribution to our local economy and there is no doubt that short lets will have an important part to play as this sector recovers from the effects of the pandemic. However, this loss of valuable family homes puts upward pressure on rents that are already among the most unaffordable in England. This council has deliberately encouraged the development of hotels and guest houses through our planning policies to support tourism and resist the loss of family housing.

This Council welcomes the recent [letter from the Leader of the Council](#) to the Housing Minister on this subject and joins her call to ask the government to legislate to

- designate homes used predominantly as short term lets as a separate planning class, allowing local authorities to introduce policies to restrict their numbers and location if appropriate for their local circumstances, and allow enforceable conditions to be applied if necessary;
- allow local authorities to introduce local licensing schemes for short term let properties and landlords, as appropriate, matching local and national HMO and/or PRS schemes;
- ensure that short term lets are subject to the same environmental health, food and fire safety regimes as hotels and guest houses, for consumer protection and to create a level playing field for those businesses;

- allow local authorities to charge short term let properties as commercial businesses for waste collection and so forth (rather than having those services provided for free via domestic waste collection services, when these properties pay no or reduced council tax or business rates).

This Council calls on the Leader to work with other councils and the Local Government Association to campaign to get these aims as part of the government's next Housing Bill and to write to the two local MPs asking for their support.

**c) Trees for Life (Proposer: Cllr Landell-Mills, Seconder: Cllr Goddard)
[amendment proposed by Cllr Hayes]**

Liberal Democrat Member motion, amended by proposer after agenda publication

To celebrate the birth of Oxford children and as part of the development of Oxford Urban Forest Strategy it is proposed that the City Council offers, free of charge, to supply and plant a tree as a celebration of the child's arrival in location that is visible to the public in the parents' garden, and for parents without a garden to plant a tree in a public park or public space - as long as public space is available.

~~This policy would potentially increase the area of planting beyond the City Council's own lands and would also create more connectivity and meaning with the new trees being planted.~~

By accessing private land by voluntary agreement this proposal would increase the area of tree cover within the city in a cost effective manner, with good aftercare and maintenance ensuring a higher survival rate for newly planted trees.

Though the birth rate varies each year, and uptake would be less than a 100%, an initial estimate of around 1000 new trees per year should be planted under this scheme, which would over time add significantly to the Oxford's urban forest and all our well-being.

Council resolves to recommend that this approach is further explored and given full consideration as part of the Urban Tree Strategy and by subsequent working groups.

Amendment proposed by Cllr Hayes (now amending the motion above)

Delete the words struck-through and insert the words in italic

In 2019 Oxford City Council unanimously declared a climate emergency and provided for a Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change, the first by a UK city. Assembly Members explored biodiversity as a theme and were positive about creating enhancing our urban forest, which is made up of the trees and woody vegetation in our city and provides us with benefits such as clean air, carbon storage, spaces for recreation and homes for wildlife.

In response to the Citizens' Assembly, the City Council committed to development of an Urban Forest Strategy, and consultation on it is underway, asking citizens for their views as we seek to protect and expand our urban forest to help tackle the climate and ecological emergencies that we face.

This strategy follows the science-based principle of "right tree, right place" and will ensure quality of planting in order to maximise benefits for nature and for people.

This Council recommits to the climate emergency declaration agreed as amended on 28 January 2020 and broadens it out to declare a climate and ecological emergency.

This Council commits to:

- *The requirement for any tree planting to be expert-led and consistent with the urban forest strategy when it comes forward, following ongoing consultation.*
- ~~To Celebrate the birth and adoption of Oxford children and as part of the development of Oxford's Urban Forest Strategy it is proposed that the City Council offers, free of charge, to supply and plant the right tree in the right place as a celebration of the child's arrival and for parents without a garden to plant a tree in a public park or public space – as long as space is available. This policy would potentially increase the area of planting beyond the City Council's own lands and would also create more connectivity and meaning with the new trees being planted.~~
- ~~*By accessing private land by voluntary agreement this proposal would increase the area of tree cover within the city in a cost effective manner, with good aftercare and maintenance ensuring a higher survival rate for newly planted trees.~~
- *Implement programmes only when the financial costs can be known and met in the longer-term. As such, the City Council will support the planting of a tree for every baby born or adopted in Oxford from 1 January 2023 if it can meet the costs of planting from external grant-funding and the County Council agrees to meet the cost of watering for the first three years, and commits to longer-term funding (from 2023-2028). The date 2023 is set to allow for the conclusion of financial arrangements and discussions.*
- *Develop the scheme in line with the Welsh Government's Plant! scheme, which uses a dataset from the Office for National Statistics whereby the address given by the parent or guardian at the time of birth is the baby's registered address. If this is not in Oxford, the baby would unfortunately not receive a tree or certificate.*
- *Focus the planting of trees in areas of deprivation as our Urban Forest Strategy acts on data showing a correlation between low canopy cover and areas of deprivation in the city.*

Though the birth and adoption rate varies each year, and uptake would be less than a 100%, an initial estimate of around 1000 new trees per year ~~could be planted should be explored~~ under this scheme, which would over time add significantly to the Oxford's urban forest and all our well-being.

~~***Council resolves to recommend that this approach is further explored and given full consideration as part of the Urban Tree Strategy and by subsequent working groups.**~~

~~*not in the original motion and not considered when drafting the amendment~~

If amendment is accepted, motion as amended would read:

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This Council recommits to the climate emergency declaration agreed as amended on 28 January 2020 and broadens it out to declare a climate and ecological emergency.

This Council commits to:

- *The requirement for any tree planting to be expert-led and consistent with the urban forest strategy when it comes forward, following ongoing consultation.*
- *Celebrate the birth and adoption of Oxford children and as part of the development of Oxford's Urban Forest Strategy, offer, free of charge, to plant the right tree in the right place as a celebration of the child's arrival. This policy would potentially increase the area of planting beyond the City Council's own lands and would also create more connectivity and meaning with the new trees being planted.*
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Though the birth and adoption rate varies each year, and uptake would be less than 100%, an initial estimate of around 1000 new trees per year should be explored under this scheme, which would over time add to Oxford's urban forest and all our well-being.

d) East Oxford Low Traffic Neighbourhood (proposer Cllr Wolff, seconder Cllr Miles) [amendment proposed by Cllr Hayes]

Green Group Member Motion (Liberal Democrat seconding)

Oxford City Council notes the reports of research in recent years which conclude:

- 28% of journeys in Oxford in 2015 were short car journeys by car within the city boundary, predicted to increase by 18% by 2031. A further 37% were cars driving into the city from the County, also predicted to increase by 18% by 2031
- In 2015, holding traffic volumes steady would have required a reduction in car driving of 10% by 2031. However, if additional capacity were to be found for more

pedestrians, cyclists and more reliable public transport an even more significant reduction would have been required.

- However, by 2023 the number of licensed vehicles on UK roads will have increased by 50% since 2007.
- In London, driving on minor urban residential streets doubled between 2009 and 2019. Since this pattern is repeated across the country it is likely that Oxford will have shared this expansion

Council notes that:

- In order to maintain timetables a third more buses are being deployed in Oxford than would be necessary if traffic flowed freely.
- Owing to virus anxiety total bus ridership is down 41% from pre-pandemic levels. If half of these former bus users are using a car instead, a further rise in car traffic within the city of 8% - 15% may have resulted.
- The Council's adopted Local Plan 2036 contains policies to promote the development of localised district centres.

Council accepts that there are people for whom the use of powered vehicles is necessary in the course of their employment, and some who for reasons of disability are unable to use public transport or cycle, but believes that owing to longer term trends in traffic congestion it would make their lives easier if those for whom driving cars was not essential adopted different modes of transport.

Council believes that this modal shift is unlikely to occur unless measures are taken to discourage car use for journeys of less than four miles and to make cycling and walking a safe and attractive option for all.

Council therefore welcomes the current and proposed trials of new Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) in the city as one strategy for achieving this aim, to complement the many existing LTNs in the city.

Council believes that the trial of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods cannot produce the learning outcomes necessary if the schemes in East Oxford, which are an integral part of it, are not implemented as soon as possible.

Council believes that the learning outcomes will also not be achieved unless thorough monitoring is carried out in order to determine not just traffic volumes on arterial roads but

- where vehicle journeys on those roads started and what their destination is.
- what proportion of vehicle occupants have chosen not to use public transport because of anxiety about the coronavirus

Council asks the Leader to write to the Leader of the County Council sharing these concerns and asking for the East Oxford LTN trial to proceed as swiftly as possible.

Amendment proposed by Cllr Hayes

Delete the words struck-through and insert the words in italic

Following consultation on the introduction of East Oxford LTNs, this Council reaffirms the opening paragraph of a 5 October 2020 amended and agreed motion:

“This Council welcomes the public discussions which are taking place in this city about the value of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) in encouraging walking and cycling, preventing rat-running, and decreasing air pollution, while also having the positive effect of opening up residential and shopping streets for local communities, supporting local businesses and boosting community ties. This ongoing discussion is informed by successful LTNs in Waltham Forest, Groenigen in the Netherlands and Ghent in Belgium.”

This Council notes that Oxford’s congestion has long been impossible as our roads frequently came close to gridlock before the pandemic. As the city gradually unlocks, there are more people driving cars and avoiding buses, contributing to rising traffic in the city. In the short-term, the city needs people to return to pre-lockdown levels of bus use to reduce traffic levels, and in the longer-term, to implement Connecting Oxford after further development and significant consultation, to ensure that bus service providers no longer have to run a third more buses than they need to meet timetables because they spend so much time sitting in congestion.

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~~Council believes that this modal shift is unlikely to occur unless measures are taken to discourage car use for journeys of less than four miles and to make cycling and walking~~

a safe and attractive option for all, *and has stated this position most recently in the EV Strategy Cabinet Paper.*

Council asks the Leader to write to the Leader of the County Council sharing these concerns and asking for the East Oxford LTN trial to proceed as swiftly as possible *as part of a strategic plan and subject to the overriding need to undertake work to address issues raised at the last consultation and respond to them in the new consultation proposed by County Council officers on 22 July and then move on to complete that new consultation.*

This Council reiterates its commitment on 5 October 2020 to

- *encourage local residents' groups and elected members in their efforts to engage communities in discussion about LTNs, so that they may be designed to get the main benefits without imposing unreasonable, adverse consequences. Local people know their streets better than anyone else and must be able to shape their communities. Consultation should precede the introduction of LTNs.*
- *support further studies and consultation to develop LTNs as an evidence-based and democratic approach. The benefits of transportation changes should not be conferred upon one community at the expense of any other.*

~~Council therefore welcomes the current and proposed trials of new Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) in the city as one strategy for achieving this aim, to complement the many existing LTNs in the city.~~

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use to reduce traffic levels, and in the longer-term, to implement Connecting Oxford after further development and significant consultation, to ensure that bus service providers no longer have to run a third more buses than they need to meet timetables because they spend so much time sitting in congestion.

Council *recognises* that there are *citizens* for whom the use of powered vehicles is necessary in the course of their employment *and because of physical impairment*.

Council believes that this modal shift is unlikely to occur unless measures are taken to discourage car use and to make cycling and walking a safe and attractive option for all, *and has stated this position most recently in the EV Strategy Cabinet Paper*.

This Council notes that, under new leadership, the County Council has taken a new approach.

Council asks the Leader to write to the Leader of the County Council asking for the East Oxford LTN trial to proceed as swiftly as possible as part of a strategic plan and subject to the overriding need to undertake work to address issues raised at the last consultation and respond to them in the new consultation proposed by County Council officers on 22 July and then move on to complete that new consultation.

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- *support further studies and consultation to develop LTNs as an evidence-based and democratic approach. The benefits of transportation changes should not be conferred upon one community at the expense of any other.*

e) EU Nationals deserves to be treated with respect (proposer Cllr Corais, seconder Cllr Bely-Summers)

Labour Group Member Motion

Council notes:

- That following the UK's departure from the EU there are significant new entry restrictions for EU nationals seeking to come to the UK;
- That at the 2011 census, over 12,000 Oxford residents were born in an EU member state apart from Ireland and the UK;

Council believes:

- That nationals from EU member states are, along with many other migrant communities, an important part of Oxford's diverse and vibrant society;
- That EU nationals, their families, friends and visitors deserve to be treated with respect;

- That in law, EU nationals have the right to receive visitors, yet there is disturbing evidence of hostile treatment of such visitors at the UK border, and that this is causing great distress to those affected, and uncertainty amongst people in Oxford more widely;
- That this is further evidence of the government's discredited "hostile environment"¹ policy being continued.

Council resolves:

- **To ask the Council Leader to write to the Home Secretary urging a much more sensitive approach to those visiting the UK from EU countries at the UK border, and protesting at the poor treatment visitors have received since the start of 2021;**
- **To request this letter is shared with representative organisations in Oxford, relevant embassies, and through the Council's social media channels.**

f) Opposition to the Health and Care Bill (proposer Cllr Jarvis, seconder Cllr Pegg)

Green Group Member Motion

This Council notes the government has presented its Health and Care Bill to parliament to reform the delivery of NHS and public health services. This legislation would:

- Reorganise the NHS around "Integrated Care Systems" (ICS), new bodies within the health service with boards comprising organisations involved in service delivery – including for-profit private companies.
- Abolish the requirement for compulsory competitive tendering for NHS services, as set out in Section 75 of the 2012 Health and Social Care Act.

This Council believes that the move towards ICS is an unnecessary and unwanted reorganisation of the health service.

This Council believes that allowing private companies to sit on ICS boards – bodies with decision making powers over how NHS money is spent and the care patients receive – is an anathema to the principles of the NHS as a publicly provided, publicly funded and publicly run health service, representing a clear conflict of interest.

This Council believes that revoking Section 75 of the 2012 Health and Social Care Act without also ending private sector involvement in the health service will remove one of the few checks and balances on outsourcing and privatisation presently in operation, leading to contracts being given without competition or tender to private companies and without the ability for in-house bids.

This Council calls for the Leader of the Council to:

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/speech-by-home-secretary-on-second-reading-of-immigration-bill>
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/0/theresa-may-interview-going-give-illegal-migrants-really-hostile/>

- **Write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to demand the withdrawal of the proposed legislation and express opposition to the inclusion of private companies on ICS boards, as well as to the revocation of Section 75 of the 2012 Health and Social Care Act unless all private delivery of NHS services is also revoked.**
- **Write to Oxfordshire County Council’s Cabinet Member for Public Health and Equalities requesting a commitment from the County Council Cabinet to oppose the imposition of ICS and to advocate for the exclusion of any representatives of private companies on local ICS boards.**

g) Oxford Stadium (proposer Cllr Pegg, seconder Cllr Jarvis) [amendment proposed by Cllr Turner]

Green Group Member Motion

Council notes plans by Kevin Boothby (reported in the Oxford Mail: 17th June 2021) to bring greyhound racing back to Oxford Stadium following the acquisition of a 10-year lease from owners Galliard Homes.

Council notes that the last greyhound racing took place in the Stadium in December 2012.

Council notes that Galliard Homes have previously (2013 - application number 13/00302/FUL) submitted a planning application to re-develop the site for housing but that this was never approved by the Council.

Council notes that there has been an informal assessment of the site by British Cycling who have stated it would be suitable as velodrome combined with a BMX and learn-to-ride facility with ample space for other community uses.

Council also notes that greyhound racing has been heavily criticised by animal welfare organisations such as the League Against Cruel Sports, Alliance Against Greyhound Racing, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) who believe that dogs should not suffer or die for entertainment or for the profit of the dog racing industry.

The Greyhound Board of Great Britain’s (GBGB) own data confirms that in 2019 there were 4970 greyhound injuries & 710 deaths (14 per week).

Despite Legislation aimed at improving the welfare of greyhounds, including the Animal Welfare Act (2006), The Welfare of Racing Greyhounds Regulations 2010, there is still ample evidence of the dangers to greyhounds bred for racing (see [1, 2]). The latter Government report into the effectiveness of the 2010 Regulations cast doubt on many aspects of the sport, making several important recommendations which have NOT been made law.

The Council considers itself to be a caring Council which seeks the highest standards of welfare for all animals. It therefore:

- Agrees to publicly oppose the reintroduction of greyhound racing in Oxford.

- Ask the Executive Director (Development) to bring a report to Cabinet which explores alternative uses for the site (for example, housing, a velodrome or other community uses).
- Should the greyhound racing go ahead, the Council agrees to use its licensing powers to the full to ensure the welfare and safety of racing dogs and agrees to review its licensing policies on greyhound racing to see which of the EFRA Committee recommendations can be included.

[1] The State of greyhound racing in Great Britain: a mandate for change', League of Cruel Sports (2014)

[2] 'Greyhound Welfare'. Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFFRA) Committee (2016)

Amendment proposed by Cllr Turner:

Delete the second bullet point:

- ~~• Ask the Executive Director (Development) to bring a report to Cabinet which explores alternative uses for the site (for example, housing, a velodrome or other community uses).~~
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