

Minutes of a meeting of Council on Monday 29 November 2021

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Council members present:

Councillor Lygo (Lord Mayor)

Councillor Wolff (Sheriff)

Councillor Arshad

Councillor Brown

Councillor Clarkson

Councillor Corais

Councillor Diggins

Councillor Fouweather

Councillor Gant

Councillor Hollingsworth

Councillor Mundy

Councillor Nala-Hartley

Councillor Pressel

Councillor Rowley

Councillor Roz Smith

Councillor Tidball

Councillor Upton

Councillor Waite

Councillor Goddard (Deputy Lord Mayor)

Councillor Abrishami

Councillor Blackings

Councillor Chapman

Councillor Cook

Councillor Coyne

Councillor Dunne

Councillor Fry

Councillor Hayes

Councillor Jarvis

Councillor Munkonge

Councillor Pegg

Councillor Rehman

Councillor Linda Smith

Councillor Thomas

Councillor Turner

Councillor Wade

Also present for all or part of the meeting:

Caroline Green, Chief Executive

Tom Bridgman, Executive Director (Development)

Stephen Gabriel, Executive Director for Communities and People

Mish Tullar, Head of Corporate Strategy

Nigel Kennedy, Head of Financial Services

Susan Sale, Monitoring Officer and Head of Law & Governance

Andrew Brown, Committee and Member Services Manager

Apologies:

Councillor(s) Altaf-Khan, Aziz, Haines, Hall, Humberstone, Malik and Miles sent apologies.

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

55. Declarations of interest

Item 7: East Oxford Community Centre

Cllr Jarvis: stated that he was a Council appointed representative on the East Oxford Community Association; he made the declaration for reasons of transparency; it was not a pecuniary interest.

Cllr Nala Hartley: stated that she was a trustee of East Oxford Community Association; she made the declaration for reasons of transparency; it was not a pecuniary interest.

Questions on Notice – supplementary question (AH2)

Cllr Latif: stated that he was an employee of the Clinical Commissioning Group; he made the declaration for reasons of transparency; it was not a pecuniary interest at this time.

Item 22a) Motion: Becoming a trans inclusive Council

Cllr Gant: stated that he was a trustee of Ark T; he made the declaration for reasons of transparency; it was not a pecuniary interest.

The Lord Mayor: stated that Ark T was one of his chosen charities; he made the declaration for reasons of transparency; it was not a pecuniary interest.

Cllr Dunne: stated that Ark T was based in her ward (Cowley); she made the declaration for reasons of transparency; it was not a pecuniary interest.

Cllr Rowley: stated that he was a member of Oxford Pride; he made the declaration for reasons of transparency; it was not a pecuniary interest.

56. Minutes

Council agreed to approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 4 October 2021 as a true and correct record.

57. Appointment to Committees

There was no discussion under this item.

58. Announcements

The Deputy Lord Mayor advised the Council that the Lord Mayor had been in post for one year and during that time he had attended 124 separate events.

The Deputy Lord Mayor reminded Council that the Lord Mayor's Carol Concert would take place on 19 December.

At the invitation of the Lord Mayor, the City Rector Rev Buckley spoke to the meeting and thanked the City Council for its support and work for the homeless of Oxford.

The Deputy Lord Mayor reported on his recent engagements which included tree planting in St Ebbs and the unveiling of a literary cake in the Covered Market.

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

Council heard an address from Ciaran Walsh, Chairperson of East Oxford Community Association (EOCA).

Cllr Blackings, Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing, Housing Security and Housing the Homeless read the written response.

The address and response are set out in full in the minutes pack.

60. East Oxford Community Centre and Housing Development

Council considered the report from the Executive Director Communities and People seeking project approval and delegations to award the construction contract for the refurbishment of the East Oxford Community Centre building and extension of it with a new and highly efficient building.

Cllr Blackings, Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing, Housing Security and Housing the Homeless introduced the report, proposed the recommendations; Cllr Blackings and Cllr Turner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management answered questions.

The recommendations were agreed on being seconded and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

agree the appropriation of the land being developed for housing at Princes Street and at Collins Street from the General Fund into the Housing Revenue Account at the equivalent loan debt value of £1.491m.

61. Redevelopment of Standingford House Enterprise Centre and site at Cave Street to provide managed workspace

Council considered a report from the Executive Director (Development) seeking approval to fund and enter into a construction contract for the redevelopment of Standingford House and site at Cave Street, to provide affordable managed workspace. The increase to the proposed capital allocation in 21/22 consultation budget and the rationale for this increased investment was set out in the confidential Appendix to the report.

Cllr Brown, Leader of the Council and Cllr Turner the Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management, introduced the report, proposed the recommendations and answered questions. Cllr Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery responded to questions relating to planning matters.

The recommendations were agreed on being seconded and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

approve a capital budget of £9.70m to deliver the project and including the use of £1.13m of funds awarded to the Council from OxLEP's Local Growth Fund. This is an increase to the proposed capital allocation in 21/22 consultation budget and the rationale for this increased investment is set out in the exempt Appendix 1 – Not for Publication (item 24a).

62. Use of Retained Right to Buy Receipts to increase the provision of more affordable housing

Council considered a report from the Head of Housing Services seeking authorisation to purchase and develop accommodation for the purpose of delivering more affordable housing in Oxford.

Cllr Blackings, Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing, Housing Security, and Housing the Homeless introduced the report, proposed the recommendations and answered questions.

The recommendations were agreed on being seconded and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

1. **approve** a capital budget in the General Fund for £1,650,000 of expenditure in 2021/22, subsidised using £660,000 of Retained Right to Buy Receipts, to enable the acquisition and refurbishment of Roken House;
2. **approve** a capital budget in the Housing Revenue Account for £2m expenditure in 2021/22, subsidised using £800,000 of Retained Right to Buy Receipts, to enable further property acquisition activity in the last two quarters of 2021/22.

63. Council Telephony Contracts Replacement

Council considered a report of the Head of Business Improvement seeking approval to proceed with the procurement and subsequent contract award(s) for a five year replacement to the existing BT OnePhone telephony contracts (fixed line and mobile) at a cost of less than and no more than the existing contract value.

Cllr Rowley, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services, introduced the report, proposed the recommendations and answered questions.

The recommendations were agreed on being seconded and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

approve the addition of £50k into the capital programme as set out in paragraph 2 of the report.

64. Restructure of OXWed JV

Council considered a report from the Head of Financial Services seeking authorisation for the restructure of the OxWED Joint Venture.

Cllr Turner, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management introduced the report, proposed the recommendations and answered questions.

The recommendations were agreed on being seconded and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

1. **agree** the sale of shares in OxWED for up to £360,000 along with the purchase of shares in the Limited Liability Partnership and allocate a budget of up to £360,000;
2. **agree** the novation of the existing loan agreements in the sum of £15.850 million from OxWED to the Limited Liability Partnership on the same terms; and
3. **agree** that a capital budget of up to £700,000 is established for the tax charge resulting from this transaction

65. Loan to Low Carbon Hub in relation to Ray Valley Solar Farm

Council considered the report of the Head of Financial Services seeking approval of the loan to Low Carbon Hub to support investment in the Ray Valley Solar Project.

Cllr Turner, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management, introduced the report, proposed the recommendations and answered questions.

The recommendations were agreed on being seconded and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

approve a loan facility agreement with Low Carbon Hub of £2,000,000 together with the associated capital budget for a loan in respect of the Ray Valley Solar (RVS) local renewable energy project, whilst noting the reduction in the separate and already approved Salix grant-backed loan awarded under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. The investment will be funded from Council capital resources.

66. Appointment of External Auditors 2023/24 to 2027/28

Council considered the report of the Head of Financial Services setting out proposals for appointing the external auditor to the Council for the five-year period from 2023/24 and seeking authority for the Head of Financial Services to opt in to the national scheme for auditor appointments on behalf of the Council in accordance with the recommendation from Audit and Governance Committee.

The Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee Cllr Fry, introduced the report, proposed the recommendations and answered questions.

The recommendations were agreed on being seconded and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

1. **accept** Public Sector Audit Appointments' invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors to principal local government and police bodies for five financial years from 1 April 2023;
2. **authorise** the Head of Financial Services to opt in to the national scheme for auditor appointments for the provision of external audit services starting with the audit of the 2023/24 accounts.

67. Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy 2022

Council considered a report from the Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety seeking agreement of the Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy following consultation.

The Chair of the Licensing & Gambling Acts Committee Cllr Cook, introduced the report and proposed the recommendations. He apologised to Council explaining that at the meeting on 3 November 2021 the Licensing & Gambling Acts Committee had agreed to recommend the retention of a 'No Casino' Resolution but that the papers before them had not been updated to reflect that.

The recommendations, including the retention of a "No Casino" resolution, were agreed on being seconded and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

approve the final draft of Gambling Licensing Policy 2022.

68. Questions on Notice from Members of Council

28 written questions were asked of the Cabinet Members and the 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 minutes pack.

69. Appointment of a Parish Council representative as a non-voting member of the Standards Committee

Council considered a report from the Head of Law and Governance detailing the proposal for Parish Council representation on the Standards Committee following the retirement of the previous representative.

The Chair of the Standards Committee Cllr Pressel, introduced the report and proposed the recommendations.

The recommendations were agreed on being seconded and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

appoint Councillor Peter Nowland of Blackbird Leys Parish Council as the co-opted, non-voting member of the Standards Committee representing the four Parish Councils in Oxford until the end of his current term of office in May 2022.

70. Council and Committee meetings programme for May 2022 to May 2024

Council considered a report from the Head of Law and Governance setting out a programme of Council, committee and other meetings for the whole of the 2022/2023 and 2023/24 council years.

The Leader of the Council Cllr Brown, introduced the report and proposed the recommendations.

The recommendations were agreed on being seconded and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

- 1. Approve** the programme of Council, committee and other meetings from 1 May 2022 to 31 May 2024 attached at Appendix 1;
- 2. Delegate** authority to the Head of Law and Governance, in consultation with Group Leaders, to make changes to this programme in the event that there is any decision

by Council to change the committee structure or committee remits which impacts on the programme of meetings; and

3. **Delegate** authority to the Head of Law and Governance to set dates for additional training and briefing sessions for Members.

71. Scrutiny Committee update report

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

Councillor Wade introduced the report and answered questions.

Council noted the report.

72. Questions on Cabinet minutes

a) Minutes of meeting Wednesday 13 October 2021 of Cabinet

Minute 53: Development of land at South Oxford Science Village (Land South of Grenoble Road)

Cllr Gant asked how the City Council, as land owner, will ensure the best solutions, in terms of the final number of affordable housing units and sustainable transport infrastructure, are achieved for Oxford and future residents given that the South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) policies which would apply to the site were not as far reaching as those adopted by the City Council.

Cllr Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery replied that there were significant benefits to working in partnership to develop this scheme. However, there were some limitations as a result of partnership working as evidenced by the partners working to the SODC policy requirements but not committing to the City Council's desire to go further. The site would be accessible to the proposed Cowley Branch line and this may lead to a future revision of the car based elements of the proposal.

73. Draft minutes of meeting on Wednesday 10 November 2021 of Cabinet

Minute 64: Anti-social Behaviour Policy

Cllr Smowton, on behalf of Cllr Miles, asked how the new policy would assist to local residents in regard to the problems, resulting from the behaviour of Oxford Brookes students.

Cllr Upton, Cabinet Member for a Safer, Healthier Oxford replied that this was a perennial problem but that in response to the recent reports of problems the Out of Hours Team had undertaken night patrols on several successive Wednesday nights. They reported that there had not been much activity recently and so she was hopeful that the situation had calmed down. There were regular meetings with the Oxford Brookes security services and local police to work together to manage the situation.

Minute 66: Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Policy

Cllr Smowton asked how many families have had the DHP payment reduced or withdrawn and who decides on the criteria.

Written response to follow from Cllr Aziz, Cabinet Member for Inclusive Communities.

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

Council heard three addresses and Cabinet Members read or summarised their written responses.

Both addresses and responses are set out in full in the minutes pack.

1. Address by Hannah Massie – in support of Motion: Becoming a trans inclusive Council
2. Address by insert Bethia Thomas – speaking against the reopening of Oxford Greyhound Stadium
3. Address by Kaddy Beck - The Save Bertie Park Campaign

The Lord Mayor thanked all the speakers for their contributions.

75. Outside organisation/Committee Chair reports and questions

a) OxLEP and Skills Board

Council had before it a report on the work of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) and the skills board.

The Leader of the Council Cllr Brown answered questions and moved the report.

Council resolved to note the report.

b) OSP - Oxford Strategic Partnership

Council had before it a report on the work of the on the work of the Oxford Strategic Partnership (OSP) including the Economic Growth, Low Carbon Oxford, and Stronger Communities Steering Groups.

The Leader of the Council Cllr Brown moved the report.

Council resolved to note the report.

76. Motions on notice 29 November 2021

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

Motions agreed as set out below:

- a) Becoming a trans inclusive council (proposer Cllr Pegg, seconder Cllr Jarvis)
- b) Violence Against Women and Girls (proposer Cllr Abrishami, seconder Cllr Upton)

Motions debated but not agreed:

- c) Noise Nuisance from Licensed Premises (proposer Cllr Gant on behalf of Cllr Miles, seconder Cllr Landell Mills)

Motions not taken as the time allocated for debate had finished:

- d) Oxford Stadium (proposer Cllr Pegg, seconder Cllr Dunne) [amendment, proposer Cllr Turner]
 - e) End Fire and Rehire (proposer Cllr Mundy, seconder Cllr Dunne)
 - f) Speeding Enforcement (proposer Cllr Smowton) [amendment, proposer Cllr Hayes, seconder Cllr Brown]
 - g) Endorsing The Green Norrington Table and calls for Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation (proposer Cllr Hayes, seconder Cllr Hollingsworth) [amendment, proposer Cllr Hayes]
 - h) EU Nationals deserves to be treated with Respect (proposer Cllr Bely-Summers)
 - i) Plant based eating and sustainable farming (proposer Cllr Dunne)
- a) Becoming a trans inclusive Council (proposer Cllr Pegg, seconder Cllr Jarvis)**

Cllr Pegg, seconded by Cllr Jarvis, proposed the 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 states that:

Trans women are women. Trans men are men. Non-binary people are non-binary. We believe in the dignity of all people, and their right to respect and equality of opportunity. We value the strength that comes with difference and the positive contribution diversity brings to our community. Our aspiration is for Oxford to be a safe, welcoming and inclusive city for everyone, no matter their gender identity.

The Council notes:

1. The concerning rise in transphobia in the UK, from individuals, politicians and the media, as well as the increasing severity of the threats faced by the trans community.
2. That transgender and non-binary people may require specific support to access services without facing discrimination. All council services must be equipped to provide appropriate service and good customer care to suit transgender and non-binary people.
3. That there are transgender and non-binary people in Oxford of all ages, and that the need for better understanding and acceptance of what it means to be transgender or non-binary is an intergenerational issue.
4. The vital work done by groups in Oxford to support local trans and non-binary people, as well as the wider LGBTQIA+ community. These groups include ArkT, Oxford Pride, TransOxford and Topaz.
5. That despite many positive initiatives there is always more to do to ensure we are a genuinely supportive, inclusive and welcoming city. The council will seek to better support transgender and non-binary people to live happy, healthy and fulfilling lives.

6. That transgender and non-binary people may face intersecting struggles due to factors like their race, religion, socio-economic background, gender or sexuality.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. State publicly that trans rights are human rights and affirm the legal rights of all protected groups under the 2010 equality act.
2. Work with LGBTQIA+ groups and people to strongly encourage training for councillors and council staff to raise awareness of the difficulties transgender and non-binary people face and the support they can offer to this community.
3. Request that the Cabinet agrees to fly the transgender flag on International Trans Day of Visibility (March 31st), in addition to Trans Day of Remembrance (November 20th)
4. Request a review of all forms and documents created by the Council with a view to ensuring they are trans and non-binary inclusive where possible.
5. To encourage council staff and councillors to make small gestures that make it clear transgender and non-binary people are welcome. This could include adding pronouns to email signatures and providing gender neutral toilets in Council buildings.
6. To work with partner organisations to ensure transgender and non-binary people are not discriminated against whilst accessing homelessness services.
7. To work with healthcare providers and Oxfordshire County Council to remove barriers transgender and non-binary people face when accessing medical care.

To review with a view to improving signposting to support services for transgender and non-binary people within Council communications, including a dedicated page on the Council's website.

b) Motions on notice 29 November 2021: Violence Against Women and Girls (proposed by Cllr Abrishami, seconded by Councillor Upton)

Cllr Abrishami, seconded by Cllr Upton, proposed the 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:

Misogyny, harassment and violence towards women and girls (VAWG) is endemic in the UK.

A 2021 YouGov/ UN Women UK survey found that of women aged 18-24, 97% said they had been sexually harassed.

80% of women of all ages said they had experienced sexual harassment in public spaces. It is inevitable that many women and girls across our city are suffering harassment and abuse.

In 2020, the ONS reported that 618,000 women were victims of a sexual assault or an attempted sexual assault by a man.

In the year to March 2020, 1.4% of rape cases recorded by police resulted in a suspect being charged (or receiving a summons).

Studies show the intersectional nature of discrimination means women with protected characteristics, such as those from Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority, disabled or LGBT+ Communities, and specially trans women, are even more likely to experience harassment, discrimination and abuse. Women with insecure immigration status and refugee women are also additionally vulnerable.

The Council resolves:

- **To ensure Oxford City Council continues to do everything in its power to build a city free from misogyny and VAWG.**
- **To create a VAWG Taskforce. It is vital that women's and girl's voices are heard. The Council will create a process that proactively listens to women's voices across the city. This task force will be open to include and involve all women and self identifying women Councillors.**

To become a White Ribbon Accredited Organisation.

c) Noise Nuisance from Licensed Premises (proposed by Cllr Miles, seconded by Cllr Landell Mills)

Cllr Gant on behalf of Cllr Miles, seconded by Cllr Landell Mills, proposed the submitted motion as set out in the agenda and briefing note.

After debate and on being put to the vote the motion was not agreed.

d) Oxford Stadium (proposer Cllr Pegg, seconder Cllr Dunne)

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

e) End Fire and Rehire (proposer Cllr Mundy, seconder Cllr Dunne)

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

f) Speeding Enforcement (proposer Cllr Snowton)

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

g) Endorsing The Green Norrington Table and calls for Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation (proposer Cllr Hayes, seconder Cllr Hollingsworth)

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

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

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

i) Plant based eating and sustainable farming (proposed by Cllr Dunne)

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

77. MATTERS EXEMPT from publication and exclusion of the public

a) Exempt Appendix for item 8: Redevelopment of Standingford House Enterprise Centre and site at Cave Street

Council noted the exempt appendix.

b) Exempt appendix for item 12: Restructure of OxWED JV

Council noted the exempt appendix.

The meeting started at 5.15 pm and ended at 9.15 pm

Lord Mayor

Date: Monday 31 January 2022

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.