

Minutes of a meeting of Council on Monday 18 July 2022

www.oxford.gov.uk



Council members present:

Councillor Fry (Lord Mayor)	Councillor Lygo (Deputy Lord Mayor)
Councillor Rowley (Sheriff)	Councillor Altaf-Khan
Councillor Arshad	Councillor Aziz
Councillor Bely-Summers	Councillor Brown
Councillor Chapman	Councillor Clarkson
Councillor Corais	Councillor Coyne
Councillor Djafari-Marbini	Councillor Dunne
Councillor Fouweather	Councillor Gant
Councillor Goddard	Councillor Hall
Councillor Hollingsworth	Councillor Humberstone
Councillor Jarvis	Councillor Kerr
Councillor Landell Mills	Councillor Latif
Councillor Malik	Councillor Miles
Councillor Morris	Councillor Muddiman
Councillor Mundy	Councillor Munkonge
Councillor Nala-Hartley	Councillor Pegg
Councillor Pressel	Councillor Rawle
Councillor Rehman	Councillor Linda Smith
Councillor Roz Smith	Councillor Smowton
Councillor Thomas	Councillor Turner
Councillor Upton	Councillor Walcott

Also present for all or part of the meeting:

Caroline Green, Chief Executive
Tom Hook, Executive Director (Corporate Resources)
Tom Bridgman, Executive Director (Development)
Stephen Gabriel, Executive Director (Communities and People)
Alice Courtney, Committee and Member Services Manager (Interim Acting)

Lucy Tyrrell, Committee and Member Services Officer
Nigel Kennedy, Head of Financial Services
Marcia Ecclestone, Deputy Monitoring Officer and Legal Adviser

11. Apologies for absence

Councillor(s) Diggins, Hayes, Sandelson, Tidball and Waite sent apologies.

Apologies were also received from Rev Anthony Buckley.

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

12. Declarations of interest

Item 9: Additional loan finance to Oxford West End Development (OxWED) LLP

Cllr Gant: stated that he was a member of Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet, which was the accountable body for Growth Deal funding which had part-funded the Oxpens bridge. This was not a pecuniary interest; he made the declaration for reasons of transparency and indicated that he would not take part in the consideration of that item.

Cllr Lygo: stated that he was a member of Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet, which was the accountable body for Growth Deal funding which had part-funded the Oxpens bridge. This was not a pecuniary interest; he made the declaration for reasons of transparency and did not indicate that he would preclude himself from consideration of the item.

13. Minutes

Council agreed to approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 21 March 2022 and Annual Council meeting held on 18 May 2022 as a true and correct record.

14. Appointment to Committees

Council agreed to appoint with immediate effect:

- Standards Committee - Councillor Rehman to replace Councillor Diggins.
- Licensing Committees - Councillor Dunne to replace Councillor Thomas.
- Scrutiny Committee - Councillor Altaf-Khan to replace Councillor Roz Smith.

15. Announcements

Council held a minute's silence in memory of former Lord Mayor Alan Armitage.

The Lord Mayor advised Council of the successful exchange with Council's twinning City of Bonn. He encouraged Councillors to attend the subsequent visit to Bonn in August. He also encouraged Councillors to attend the 400 year anniversary of the Oxford Botanic Garden.

The Sheriff addressed Council on his visits to Risinghurst, Hinksey Lido, the annual Aunt Sally match with the Freeman of the City, and annual inspection of Port Meadow. Of the latter, he expressed his disappointment on the continued littering on this place of scientific interest, and advised that if continued, Council could consider restrictions on this land.

The Deputy Lord Mayor advised of his presence at the Bonn twinning events and the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Armed Forces briefing alongside the Chair of Oxfordshire County Council.

Cllrs Corais and Dunne joined the meeting.

The Leader advised that her intention had been to announce Council Champions at this meeting, but that the announcement had been delayed and was expected over the next couple of weeks.

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

There were no addresses or questions.

17. Affordable Housing Delivery Programme

Council considered the report from Head of Housing Services seeking agreement for further projected approvals and delegations to enable the continued delivery of more affordable housing.

Cllr Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery, introduced the report, proposed the recommendation and answered questions.

The recommendation was agreed on being seconded by Cllr Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

Approve a revision to the general fund capital budget of £2,150,000 to fund the grant payable for the additional 43 affordable homes on the Gibbs Crescent scheme, all of which will be funded by capital grant income from Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal (OGD). This to be profiled as £1,935,000 (90%) in 2022/23 for the initial grant payment, and the balance of £215,000 in 2024/25.

18. Proposal for Public Realm Improvements on Council Owned Land in the City Centre

Council considered a report from the Executive Director (Development) seeking approval of this public realm improvement scheme on Council owned land in the city

centre including approval of planned work and required property and legal procedures to deliver the scheme.

Cllr Turner, Deputy Leader (Statutory) and Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management introduced the report, proposed the recommendation and answered questions.

The recommendation was agreed on being seconded by Cllr Brown, Leader and Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Partnerships and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

Approve a capital budget of £297K for delivery of this public realm improvement scheme.

19. Additional loan finance to Oxford West End Developments (OxWED LLP)

Cllr Gant had declared an interest in this item and left the meeting during its consideration.

Council considered a report from the Executive Director (Development) seeking approval for an in-year budget increase to allow Oxford City Council to lend Oxford West End Developments (OxWED LLP) up to £600,000 to support additional costs associated with the preparation and submission of an outline planning application and site acquisition and promotion works.

Cllr Hollingsworth, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Delivery presented the report, proposed the recommendation and answered questions.

The recommendation was agreed on being seconded by Cllr Turner, Deputy Leader (Statutory) and Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management and put to the vote.

Council resolved to:

Increase its capital budget by £600,000 to allow the City Council to loan Oxford West End Developments (OxWED) LLP these funds.

20. Parish Council representation on 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.

Cllr Pressel, Chair of the Standards Committee presented the report and proposed the recommendation.

The recommendations were agreed on being seconded by Cllr Humberstone 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 May 2026.

The meeting broke for 15 minutes.

21. Questions on Cabinet minutes

Cllr Djafari-Marbini arrived at the meeting.

a) Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 13 April 2022

There were no questions on the minutes of the 13 April 2022 Cabinet meeting.

b) Draft Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 15 June 2022

Minute 8 – Oxford City Centre Action Plan – Consultation Report and Recommendations

In response to a question from Cllr Gant, Cllr Thomas, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice advised that the Plan sought to bring together current work and proposals across the City into one document to ensure there was a cohesive vision for the City Centre setting out general priorities.

In response to a question from Cllr Fouweather, Cllr Thomas advised that there were actionable timelines within the plan which were engaging and easy to understand.

Minute 7 – Oxford’s Economic Strategy – Consultation Report and Recommendations

In response to a question from Cllr Jarvis, Cllr Brown, Leader and Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Partnerships advised that approval of the Strategy was not a decision reserved for Council.

Minute 12 – Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Grant and Project

In response to a question from Cllr Malik, Cllr Upton, Cabinet Member for Health and Transport advised that the plans for installing electric vehicle charging infrastructure fairly across the City were set out in the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy which was approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 13 July 2022.

c) Draft Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 13 July 2022

There were no questions on the draft minutes of the 13 July 2022 Cabinet meeting.

22. Questions on Notice from Members of Council

58 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 28 supplementary questions and responses asked and given at the meeting are set out in the minutes pack.

The meeting broke for 30min at Q32, and resumed at 7.00 p.m. to continue questions.

Cllrs Pressel and Malik left the meeting and did not return.

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

Council heard four addresses and two questions. Cabinet Members read or summarised their written responses.

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

1. Address by Rosanne Bostock, OxClean – Sustainable Street Trading
2. Julie Kleeman, Taste Tibet – Sustainable Street Trading
3. Address by Martin Hackett - Bertie Park
4. Address by Lilian Sherwood - Bertie Park

1. Question from Need Not Greed Oxfordshire (NNGO) – Oxfordshire Plan 2050
2. Denis Gregory – Greyhound Racing in Oxford

24. Petition submitted in accordance with Council procedure rules - No to Greyhound Racing in Oxford

Council considered a petition meeting the criteria for debate in accordance with the Council's petitions scheme stating:

We the undersigned petition the council to work cross-party and support the development of leisure facilities at Oxford Stadium in line with the Local Plan, but that do not involve greyhound racing or gambling.

Oxford City Council has designated Oxford Stadium for leisure activities in the latest Local Plan. The site is currently owned by a developer, and leased to someone who is planning to reopen the Stadium as a venue for greyhound racing.

Greyhound racing failed at Oxford Stadium in 2008 - there is no widespread support for this activity across the UK or for resuming it in our city; the cruelty involved in breeding and racing greyhounds is well documented, and should no longer be part of a city with Oxford's reputation.

The site can be put to much better use as a leisure facility that is inclusive, providing a range of activities for all ages and disabilities, centred around Oxford's renown as a cycling city through the development of a velodrome. This focus will enable a variety of biking activities as well as the attraction of an elite sport, offering a hub for additional activities including reuse of the existing building.

Nigel Gibson, the petition organiser, addressed Council.

Cllr Brown, Leader of the Council advised that the Council was due to debate a motion (17a) later in the meeting on 'No Greyhound Racing in Oxford' and that the issues raised in the petition organiser's address had been formally responded to at the previous Council meeting, as detailed in the report.

Council resolved to:

Note the petition.

Debate the issues raised in the petition as part of motion 17a on the agenda, which related to the same topic.

25. Outside organisation/Committee Chair reports and questions

Cllr Gant sought clarification on the absence of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership report; Cllr Brown advised that this had been missed for this meeting and will be brought to the next Council meeting.

a) OSP Oxford Safer Communities Partnership incl Safer Oxfordshire Partnership and Police Crime Panel

Council had before it the OSP Oxford Safer Communities Partnership incl Safer Oxfordshire Partnership and Police Crime Panel report.

Cllr Walcott moved the report.

Council noted the report.

b) Scrutiny Committee update report

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

Councillor Snowton, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, introduced the report.

Council noted the report.

26. Motions on notice 18 July 2022

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

Motions agreed as set out below:

a) No Greyhound Racing in Oxford City as amended (proposer Cllr Fouweather, seconder Cllr Pegg, amendment proposer Cllr Brown)

b) Council provision of period products as amended (proposer Cllr Rawle, seconder Cllr Pegg, amendment proposer Cllr Aziz)

c) BBC Oxford Cuts (proposer Cllr Brown, seconder Cllr Chapman)

Motions referred somewhere else:

d) Sustainable Street Trading (proposer Cllr Miles, seconder Cllr Muddiman, moved without notice as per Constitution 11.19(d) proposed by Cllr Linda Smith, seconded by Cllr Hollingsworth)

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

e) Tackling and Preventing Child Poverty (proposer Cllr Djafarbi-Marbini, seconder Cllr Dunne)

f) Street Homelessness and Severe Weather (proposer Cllr Linda Smith, seconder Cllr Dunne)

g) Plant-based Food and Sustainable Farming (proposer Cllr Paula Dunne, seconder Cllr Alex Hollingsworth)

a) No Greyhound Racing in Oxford City (proposed by Councillor Fouweather, seconded by Councillor Pegg) [amendment proposed by Cllr Brown, seconded by Cllr Linda Smith]

Cllr Fouweather, seconded by Cllr Pegg, proposed the submitted motion as set out in the agenda and briefing note.

Cllr Brown, seconded by Cllr Linda Smith, proposed the amendment as set out in the briefing note.

Council debated the motion and amendment. Following debate, and on being put to the vote, the amendment was agreed.

On being put to the vote the amended motion was then agreed.

Council resolved to adopt the following motion:

The reopening of the stadium in Sandy Lane is a welcome addition to Oxford's leisure activities. The stadium has had a chequered history since the mid-1970s and decreasing interest in greyhound racing directly contributed to its decline.

In 2005, Risk Capital Partners with Galliard Homes purchased the failing stadium. Plans for 150 houses and 75 flats were mooted but the Council's statement in favour of keeping the land for leisure use stalled the development. Greyhound racing and speedway continued until 2012 when the Greyhound Racing Association closed the stadium down.

After a decade of disuse, it was announced last year that a new owner planned to bring back greyhound racing to the Oxford Stadium.

This is a concern for the following reasons:

- **Animal welfare:** In 2019, the last full year of racing, the Greyhound Board of Great Britain recorded 4,970 injuries on registered tracks. Despite limited racing, in 2020 there were still 3,575 injuries. Dog welfare is poorly regulated on and off the track, with Parliament's Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee calling for stronger regulation of the industry. The Government has failed to back up the Welfare of Racing Greyhounds Regs 2010 with stronger legislation.
- **Gambling:** Inevitably greyhound-racing is focused on gambling. There has been considerable research about the effect of gambling on individuals and communities, recently by Dr N. Muggleton (Brasenose College): "gambling is associated with addiction and harmful outcomes for others."
- **Active leisure:** The continuation of greyhound racing at the stadium prevents it being used for more active leisure-based activities. Council notes there has been an informal assessment of the site by British Cycling who have stated it would be suitable as a velodrome, combined with a BMX and learn-to-ride facility, with ample space for other community uses.

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

This Council calls on the Leader to:

- Write to the UK Government calling for the introduction of legislation incorporating the recommendations of the 2016 Greyhound Welfare EFRA Report.

Cllr Hall left the meeting and did not return.

b) Council provision of period products (proposed by Councillor Rawle, seconded by Councillor Pegg) [amendment proposed by Cllr Aziz, seconded by Cllr Upton]

Cllr Rawle, seconded by Cllr Pegg, proposed the submitted motion as set out in the agenda and briefing note.

Cllr Aziz, seconded by Cllr Upton, proposed the amendment as set out in the briefing note.

Council debated the motion and amendment. On being put to the vote, the amendment was agreed.

On being put to the vote the amended motion was then agreed.

This Council notes that:

- The average menstruating person spends £4800 on period products in their lifetime (Bloody Good Period, 2019)
- 36% of girls aged 14-21 in the UK struggled to afford or access period products during the coronavirus pandemic, equivalent to over a million people (Plan International, 2021)
- Half of these girls could not afford period products at all and 73% said they had to use toilet paper instead of pads or tampons at some point
- Inability to buy period products leads to social exclusion, particularly from education (Global Citizen, 2018)
- Period poverty is a particular problem for refugees and those in the asylum system, who receive under £40 a week in state support (Bloody Good Period/Women for Refugee Women, 2019)
- Young Women's Music Project currently delivers a volunteer-run distribution network in Oxford to support people who menstruate or have young children and cannot access sanitary products or nappies
- Under the Period Products (Free Provision) Scotland Bill, the Scottish Government, sponsored by Labour MSP Monica Lennon, has set up Scotland-wide scheme to allow anyone who needs period products to get them free of charge, and gives the Scottish Government the power to make public bodies including schools, colleges and universities provide period products for free (Scottish Parliament, 2021)
- As part of the Welsh Labour Government's Period Dignity Strategic Action Plan, funding has been provided to local authorities and Further Education institutions to ensure that period products can be accessed free of charge by learners in schools, Further Education Institutions and to those in need in communities (Welsh Government, 2021)

This Council believes that:

- Everyone who requires period products should be able to access them for free
- A person's period should not prevent them from succeeding in life

This Council resolves to:

- Work with period poverty charities and organisations in the city to provide free period products including sustainable ones in public toilets and other public buildings including the Town Hall and community centres – in female, male, disabled and gender neutral facilities, including options to:
 - Explore whether any free disposable period products provided can be sustainably sourced
 - Provide sanitary waste bins in all toilets, not just female toilets
 - Publicise the provision of free period products including through council communication channels
- Call on the Cabinet Member for Health and Transport to:
 - Write to the County Council encouraging it to widen access to free period products across Oxfordshire, providing free period products in toilets of all public buildings including libraries, schools and colleges.
 - Write to the Minister for Women and Equalities, calling on the UK government to make period products free and available to all who need them across England, as has been done in Scotland and Wales

c) BBC Oxford Cuts (proposed by Cllr Brown, seconded by Councillor Chapman)

Cllr Brown, seconded by Cllr Chapman, proposed the submitted motion as set out in the agenda and briefing note.

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

Council resolved to adopt the following motion:

This Council condemns the BBC's proposal to end the transmission of its Oxford based television news bulletins from its headquarters in Summertown and urges it to drop this cost saving plan.

This Council acknowledges the Conservative Government has deliberately made the BBC's funding position very challenging by freezing the licence fee but this plan will minimise coverage of Oxfordshire issues and lead to an unacceptable reduced regional news service on television at peak viewing times.

The plan to present all the regional news programming from Southampton by creating a single edition of South Today with no segment committed to Oxford news serves no local resident well. With a much larger region to cover, all BBC South Today viewers will get less local coverage and Oxfordshire on the edge of the region is likely to miss out on a regular basis.

The move comes at a time when local journalism is under threat, with cash starved local newspapers and persistent BBC cuts already having hollowed out local radio and newspaper news coverage.

This is also a cut that disproportionately affects older people and those without access to digital services. There are still many people who choose to get their news through TV and newspapers and for them an increased online service is no substitute.

The BBC argument that audiences are relatively low to the Oxford segment of South Today is not the point. The value of regional television news services is about more than audience size – it is about an informed public able to hold decision makers to account. Local democracy will be worsened by this BBC Plan.

This Council recognises that councils across the affected areas are joining together to condemn these cuts.

This Council calls upon the Leader of the Council to:

- Write to the Chair of the BBC Trust and its Director General demanding the cuts be scrapped, and urging the BBC to boost coverage of local government across all its news media, and in particular re-instate its Local Democracy scheme reporter post based in Oxford;
- Write to Anneliese Dodds MP and Layla Moran MP, including a copy of the Council's letter to the Chair of the BBC Trust and its Director General, requesting that they also raise this issue;
- Request an urgent meeting with the BBC Nations Director Rhodri Talfan Davies to impress upon him the damage this proposal will do to local journalism;

Write a letter of support to the Trades Unions, including the NUJ and BECTU, who represent staff at BBC Oxford to fight the cuts and rule out any compulsory redundancies.

d) Sustainable Street Trading (proposed by Councillor Miles, seconded by Councillor Muddiman)

Cllr Linda Smith, seconded by Cllr Hollingsworth, proposed a motion without notice under 11.19(d) of Oxford City Council's Constitution to refer this matter to the General Purposes Licensing Committee to carry out its functions to review and recommend policies on licensing to Council (Constitution 5.7(b)).

e) Tackling and Preventing Child Poverty (proposed by Cllr Djafarbi-Marbini, seconded by Cllr Dunne)

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

f) Street Homelessness and Severe Weather (proposed by Cllr Linda Smith, seconded by Cllr Dunne)

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

g) Plant-based Food and Sustainable Farming (proposed by Cllr Dunne, seconded by Cllr Hollingsworth)

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

27. Exempt Appendices 1 and 2 for item 7: Affordable Housing Delivery Programme

There was no discussion under this item.

28. Exempt Appendices 1 and 2 for item 8: Proposal for public realm improvements on Council owned land in the city centre

There was no discussion under this item.

29. Exempt Appendices 1 and 2 for item 9: Additional Loan Finance to Oxford West End Developments (OxWED LLP)

There was no discussion under this item.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.50 pm

Lord Mayor

Date: Monday 3 October 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.