

To: Council
Date: 03 October 2022
Report of: Head of Law and Governance
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 Wednesday 21 September, 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.

Motions will be taken in turn from the Green, Labour and Liberal Democrat groups in that order.

Introduction

- a) Declaring an ecological emergency (proposed by Cllr Pegg, seconded by Cllr Kerr) [amendment proposed by Cllr Hunt]
- b) Tackling and Preventing Child Poverty (proposed by Cllr Djafari-Marbini) [amendment proposed by Cllr Smowton]
- c) Providing funding for 'Warm Spaces' in the winter (proposed by Cllr Sandelson, seconded by Cllr Goddard) [amendment proposed by Cllr Brown]
- d) Fixing Oxford's water (proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Muddiman)
- e) To Bring Back Water into Public Ownership (proposed by Cllr Hunt, seconded by Cllr Bely-Summers)
- f) Campsfield House (proposed by Cllr Gant)

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

a) Declaring an ecological emergency (proposed by Cllr Pegg, seconded by Cllr Kerr) [amendment proposed by Cllr Hunt]

Green Group member motion

Globally and in the UK we are in the midst of an ecological emergency. Nature is declining faster than at any time in our history - 41% of UK species have seen populations decrease since 1970, with 15% of British species currently at risk of extinction¹. These changes are being exacerbated by climate change, which is hindering nature's ability to mitigate due to warming temperatures and increasingly volatile weather. We must take action, right now, if we are to save our wildlife and protect the planet.

This council resolves to:

1. Declare that we are experiencing an ecological emergency, recognising that:
 - a. Nature is declining faster than at any previous time and urgent action must be taken to reverse this trend
 - b. A thriving natural environment underpins a healthy, prosperous society
 - c. The nature and climate crises are intrinsically linked, and we cannot tackle one without taking action on the other
2. Call on Cabinet to ensure nature's recovery is embedded at the heart of all strategic plans, policy areas and decision-making processes
3. Request that the Head of Corporate Strategy submits a report to Cabinet setting out options to develop and agree on an evidence-based strategy and action plan to tackle the ecological emergency and report on the progress made, to sit alongside and connect to the Zero Carbon Oxford Action Plan, the previous Biodiversity Action Plan, and the Urban Forest Strategy, as well as linking to Oxfordshire-level plans like the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
 - a. The action plan must include ambitious targets and strategic goals to restore nature in Oxford, such as:
 - i. Committing to protect 30% of land owned or managed by the City Council for nature by 2030, in line with national and international commitments to biodiversity².
 - ii. Promoting, expanding and maintaining a Nature Recovery Network in Oxford.
 - iii. Ensuring everyone living in Oxford has doorstep access to nature

¹UK State of Nature report, 2019

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-commits-to-protect-30-of-uk-land-in-boost-for-biodiversity>

- iv. Commit to tackling the climate and ecological emergencies together by investing in local nature-based solutions to climate change.
 - v. A commitment to annually report on progress on the action plan to Scrutiny Committee
4. Work with local communities and organisations to achieve nature’s recovery, particularly engaging with disadvantaged and underrepresented groups in Oxford.
-

Amendment proposed by Cllr Hunt

Add the words in bold italics and delete words struck through.

[No changes to first part]

This Council notes that the establishment of an Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network was a key policy objective of the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan.

This council resolves to:

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biodiversity of land owned or managed by the City Council through conserving habitats for nature across our parks and nature reserves, ensuring that community green spaces are safeguarded for future generations and adopting a tree-first policy.

- ii. Promoting, expanding and maintaining a Nature Recovery Network in Oxford ***as part of a broader Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire.***
 - iii. Ensuring everyone living in Oxford has doorstep access to nature
 - iv. Commit to tackling the climate and ecological emergencies together by investing in local nature-based solutions to climate change.
 - v. A commitment to annually report on progress on the action plan to Scrutiny Committee
4. Work with local communities and organisations to achieve nature's recovery, particularly engaging with disadvantaged and underrepresented groups in Oxford.
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If the amendment is agreed the motion would read:

Globally and in the UK we are in the midst of an ecological emergency. Nature is declining faster than at any time in our history - 41% of UK species have seen populations decrease since 1970, with 15% of British species currently at risk of extinction⁴. These changes are being exacerbated by climate change, which is hindering nature's ability to mitigate due to warming temperatures and increasingly volatile weather. We must take action, right now, if we are to save our wildlife and protect the planet.

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4. Work with local communities and organisations to achieve nature’s recovery, particularly engaging with disadvantaged and underrepresented groups in Oxford.

**b) Tackling and Preventing Child Poverty (proposed by Cllr Djafari-Marbini)
[amendment proposed by Cllr Smowton]**

Labour Group member motion

Child poverty in Oxford is sadly persistent and has been through the decades. In 2019, 29% of children in Oxford lived below the poverty line, approximately 9 children in every class of 30, a horrendously high figure given the city and country’s prosperity. The majority (70% nationally) of these children live in working families where unaffordable housing and low wage poor quality jobs have now combined with the cost of living crisis to make life miserable. The data is even more stark amongst racialised minorities and families living with disabilities.

It is almost impossible to list exhaustively the negative consequences on children of growing up in poverty. Poorer health outcomes, lower educational attainment and earnings, and higher entrapment in the criminal justice system are pervasive themes which resonate into adulthood and cause life-long scarring and stigmatisation. The

stigma of poverty is one of many compelling reasons for universal and “cash first” approaches favoured by most local and national experts in the field.

The struggles which accompany not having sufficient resources to engage in society on the same basis as everybody else though are of concern right now, and require an immediate response. In the words of Baroness Lister of Burtersett, Honorary President of Child Poverty Action Group children should be valued and cared for as “beings” rather than “becomings”.

It is striking that in the discourse around poverty the voice of children and families living in poverty is often missing. There are some notable exceptions to this which reveal devastating testimony such as *“Poverty feels like a tangled web that you can never escape”* (ATD Fourth World - Oxford University) and: *“makes me feel sad when mum says we haven’t got much money but I’m OK with it and have to support my mum”* (Milton Keynes Child Poverty Commission).

Despite the national constraints, our Council has taken a number of positive steps over many years to tackle inequalities in the city without which the situation would have been much worse. These include an ambitious housing strategy, a comprehensive Council Tax Reduction scheme and Discretionary Housing Payments, sustained support for the city’s advice centres and work on the Oxford Living Wage.

Council resolves to:

1. Request that the Head of Corporate Strategy submit a report to Cabinet with options to:
 - a. Implement the Socio-economic Duty within all Council policies over the next eighteen months; and
 - b. Encourage partnership institutions, including Oxford University, to adopt the Socio-economic Duty.
2. Request that the Head of Communities submit a report to Cabinet with options to:
 - a. Develop a Child Poverty Strategy (noting the work done at the Scrutiny Committee) over the next eighteen months informed by the voices of young people affected.
 - b. Implement more immediate actions such as:
 - i. Donation of devices to Getting Oxfordshire Online
 - ii. Considering how parents and carers in or at risk of destitution (including those with no recourse to public funds) can access support via “food first” and “cash first” approaches.

Amendment proposed by Cllr Smowton

Add the words in bold italics and delete words struck through.

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 - c. Assess options to secure advice centre funding on, at minimum, an inflation-adjusted basis for the next four years.**
3. **Request that the Executive Director (Development) submit a report to Cabinet with recommendations to incorporate additional safeguards to parks and public space in future iterations of the Local Plan.**
-

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c) Providing funding for 'Warm Spaces' in the winter (proposed by Cllr Sandelson, seconded by Cllr Goddard) [amendment proposed by Cllr Brown]

Liberal Democrat Group member motion

This Council is proud of the financial and officer support it has given during the covid epidemic. However, rising energy and utility costs coupled with the highest inflation in years, means that many of our residents — the elderly, infirm or parents with children — may have to decide whether to 'Eat or Heat'.

On 14.07.22 Metro quotes Don't Pay UK: up to 6.3m households won't be able to afford their energy bills*.

This Council

(a) Notes that many councils, charities and communities around the UK are addressing this rising concern: e.g.

(i) On 11.07.22 money-saving expert Martin Lewis tweeted: "I wonder if this winter we'll need 'warm banks' the equivalent of food banks where people who can't afford heating are invited to spend their days at no cost with heating (e.g. libraries, public buildings)?"

In reply, Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol, tweeted: "the sad reality is we have been actively organising a citywide network of warm places (we call them 'Welcoming Places') for Bristol. We plan to have them set up by Sept, ready to open in Oct."

(ii) In early 2022, Bungay Community Support, a Suffolk group, set up 'warm rooms' for people to use over the winter – to help those struggling to afford energy prices and to help combat loneliness in the community**.

(iii) On 25.08.22, Isobel Hunter, CEO of Libraries Connected, called for libraries to be warm refuges for those in fuel poverty, and sought a relatively small investment to boost support programmes such as holiday activity and food programmes, digital assistance and debt advice surgeries: "Over 80% of library

leaders expect an increase in people using libraries to keep warm this winter.”

(iv) In Aug 2022, Birmingham City Council confirmed they will map out potential buildings where people struggling with energy bills can go to keep warm ****

(b) Believes that our priority is to ensure that Oxford residents don't have to choose whether to 'Eat or Heat'. On 8.09.22 our website stated: "The council is looking at opportunities to work with community groups, public buildings and public event organisers to build a network of warm spaces and free activities across the city through this winter.'

(c) Resolves to:

- Request that the Executive Director (Communities and People) submits a report to Cabinet with options to consider:
 - How to encourage the provision of 'Warm Spaces' accessible to all by working with church, charity and community groups.
 - The provision of funding to heat and maintain these spaces including, where necessary, basic kitchen facilities for supply of hot soup, drinks and snacks.
- Request the Leader of the Council to write to the Rt Hon Simon Clarke MP, Secretary of State DLUHC:
 - With the Council's resolution; and
 - Calling on the UK Government to provide Councils with additional funding to meet energy costs, in particular for community 'warm spaces.'
- Acknowledge the statement that Oxfordshire County Council made on this issue***** and support the County Council rollout of the scheme they have announced within the city.

References:

*<https://metro.co.uk/2022/07/14/warm-banks-to-be-set-up-this-winter-but-what-are-they-16998804/>

**<https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/bungays-warm-rooms-tackles-loneliness-and-living-costs-8719452>
Eastern Daily Press 27.02.22

*** <https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/news/libraries-connected-responds-media-discussion-libraries-warm-refuges>

a national charity and a membership organisation for public libraries.

**** <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/cost-of-living/warm-banks-set-up-across-24862680>

***** <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help/>

Amendment proposed by Cllr Brown

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spring, which includes working with other public sector, religious communities and charitable organisations in the city to offer warm places where people can meet up and spend time this winter.

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***** <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help/>

d) Fixing Oxford's water (proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Muddiman)

Green Group member motion

Council notes

1. On August 24, Thames Water introduced a hosepipe ban following the driest July on record.
2. Across England and Wales, 3 billion litres of water are lost to leaks in the water system every single day

3. According to analysis by the GMB union, Thames Water's infrastructure allows 635 million litres of water to leak out of the system every single day - equivalent to leaving a hosepipe on for 73 years.⁵
 4. Failure to fix leaks has had a major impact on public infrastructure in Oxford - including the flooding of the Littlemore underpass for several weeks.
 5. There has been a long delay in replacing the water pipe occupying the east bound cycle lane on Osney Bridge, which has endangered cyclists using Botley Road.
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6. Between 2017 and 2021, Thames Water has accrued £32.4 million of fines over 11 separate incidents of water pollution - including a £4 million fine for sewage pumped into Oxford's waterways.⁶
 7. Since privatisation in 1989, shareholders of water companies have pocketed over £72bn in dividends.⁷ Thames Water paid out £392 million in profit to shareholders between 2013 and 2017.⁸

Council believes

1. Thames Water is currently failing to deliver an adequate public service, is failing to invest in infrastructure, and has caused extensive environmental damage - all while putting the burden of water saving onto residents.
2. Serious questions have been raised as to Thames Water's performance - questions to which the public need answers. More accountability for the company is therefore necessary.
3. Going forward, the country's illogical privatisation of water must be reversed. Water is a basic need, a natural monopoly and a vital public service. Privatisation provides all the wrong incentives for running a water supply, and it should be returned to public hands, with democratic oversight.

Council resolves

1. To request that the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parks requests that Thames Water's CEO Sarah Bentley attend a meeting open to all Councillors to ask questions on the company's performance.
2. To request that the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parks writes to the water regulator - Ofwat - expressing the concerns laid out in this motion and requesting action be taken to redress it.

⁵ <https://www.gmb.org.uk/news/thames-waters-daily-waste-same-hosepipe-being-73-years>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thames-water-fined-4-million-after-30-hour-waterfall-of-sewage-discharge>

⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/aug/15/uk-water-boss-bonuses-reservoirs-built-leaks-fixed>

⁸ <https://weownit.org.uk/company/thames-water>

3. To request that the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parks writes to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Ranil Jayawardena, and the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Jacob Rees Mogg informing them of the Council's view that the country's water system should be taken into public ownership.
4. To lobby government ministers on an ongoing basis to tackle the issues raised in this motion, and for a publicly owned water system.

e) To Bring Back Water into Public Ownership (proposed by Cllr Hunt, seconded by Cllr Bely-Summers)

Labour Group member motion

This Council notes that:

This summer children from Oxford travelled to the seaside to swim in the sea. At the beach these children were greeted by notices telling them *not* to swim in the sea because of contaminated water. They came home and unpacked their bags. These seaside towns, like Oxford, rely on tourism for their income. These children had their holidays blighted by a decision made in 1989 to privatise our water.

When the Conservative Party privatised our water, they didn't just give private companies a right to operate, they sold off the water industry's assets and infrastructure. England is the only country in the world to have privatised its water. Scottish water is publicly owned. Welsh Water is a not for profit. Here in Oxford we have no choice but to use Thames Water. Thames Water is partly owned by investors from the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, China and Australia.

This summer has seen unprecedented volumes of sewage entering our rivers and seas. In the six years since the decision was made to leave the EU, sewage has been dumped into our waterways for an estimated 9.5 million hours. Instead of spending money on infrastructure to tackle sewage and leaks, the water companies, including Thames Water, prioritise their shareholders. Privatisation of water means shareholders receive £2 billion a year on average. Our bills have gone up by 40% in real terms since privatisation. Investment has gone down 15%. Water companies are leaking away 2.4 billion litres of water a day (up to a quarter of their supply) Only 14 percent of English rivers are considered to have good ecological status. We rely on Ofwat and the under-funded Environment Agency to regulate, but fines are not enough. Since 2017 Thames Water has been fined £32.4 million for 11 cases of water pollution. In comparison, publicly owned Scottish Water has spent £72 more per household per year (35% more) than the English water companies.

Water is a human right, and privatisation has failed. Labour voted to stop raw sewage being dumped into British rivers and coastal waters.

This Council resolves to support all efforts to bring back water into public ownership at the first opportunity. Only by bringing back water into public ownership can we guarantee the health and safety of Oxford's residents, of Oxford's cherished waterways, wildlife and the future of our water supplies.

The Council calls on the Leader of the Council to write to MPs Anneliese Dodds and Layla Moran requesting they see that executives from Thames Water are summoned before Parliament to account for their mismanagement of our water and their abrogation of responsibilities at a time when water is in increasingly short supply.

f) Campsfield House (proposed by Cllr Gant)

Liberal Democrat Group member motion

The Home Office announcement of its intention to reopen Campsfield House Immigration Detention Centre in Kidlington ignores local and national feeling on the treatment of refugees. It's also a cruel, ineffective, and costly backwards step for this government, for our country and for the people of Kidlington, Yarnton and Begbroke.

In the years before its closure in 2018, Campsfield House was used to detain nearly 30,000 migrants. During that time there were weekly demonstrations, protests, hunger strikes, two suicides, escapes and scores of legal challenges. It was finally closed following a damning inquiry into conditions.

The UK is ranked 20th in terms of asylum applications processed, and 19th for applications accepted. Two thirds of UK asylum seekers' claims are turned down, the highest refusal rate in Europe, with 41% of those decisions overturned on appeal.

Instead of criminalising people fleeing war, oppression and persecution, who have already suffered at the hands of people traffickers, the government should focus on achieving its own targets to deal with asylum claims promptly and fairly.

This Council therefore condemns the re-opening of Campsfield House and asks the Leader to write to the Home Secretary calling for:

- The cancellation of the reopening of Campsfield House as a detention centre.
- The creation of safe havens and more legal routes to apply for asylum in the UK.
- The prioritisation of prompt and fair processing of asylum claims whilst introducing appropriate safeguards to allow asylum seekers to live and work in our communities in the meantime

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

Labour Group member motion

Council notes that:

- The global scientific consensus is that humans have heated the climate at a rate that is unprecedented, and we are heading towards mass extinction not just for ourselves but of entire eco systems if we do not change our actions today.¹
- Oxford City Council is committed to reducing its impact on the environment and to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.²
- We have a duty as leaders in the city to empower the local community to make changes that can mitigate climate catastrophe and help preserve the vitality of our planet for future generations.
- The UK's agriculture produces 10% of the country's greenhouse gas emissions and makes up 70% of land use. Modern agricultural practices are a central driver for habitat and biodiversity loss and the UK is one of the world's most nature-depleted countries.³
- In the UK we eat twice as much meat and dairy as the global average which is not sustainable as there is not enough land in the world to meet this demand without destroying our natural world.⁴

- Plant-based sources of protein have much smaller carbon footprints than animal-based ones, even when comparing locally raised meat to imported plant foods.
- Farm animals across Europe are producing more emissions than cars and vans combined.⁵
- Our relationship to food is still an overlooked factor to the climate crisis yet it is the quickest and cheapest step to help tackle the climate crisis if we reduce our meat intake.
- The necessary change to confront the climate crisis needs to tackle existing inequalities in society while acting urgently.
- One of the few ways of reducing emissions that potentially saves people money is by consuming less meat which can be done immediately.
- To protect and enrich jobs in Oxford, we should work closely with local farmers and plant-based food organisations to move to more sustainable farming methods and local produce that promotes plant-based food.

Council agrees to:

- Request that the Cabinet Member for Health and Transport:
 - Works with local farmers to support, promote, and encourage their move to create more sustainable plant-based produce.
 - Recognises the benefit of sourcing food locally from producers who follow sustainable principles.
- Request that the Executive Director (Communities and People) submits a report to Cabinet with options to form a plant-based localised free food service by funding community groups who are already doing this work to transform Oxford into a more environmentally sustainable economy which will also tackle food poverty.
- Follow Oxfordshire County Council's lead by ensuring that food provided for internal councillor events are entirely plant-based and food provided at all council catered events and meetings include plant-based options, preferably using ingredients sourced from local food surplus organisations.⁶
- Call on Cabinet to request that the Council's Climate Action Plan be updated to state that all catering provided at Council events and functions from November 2022 will have plant-based options.
- Call on the Shareholder group to work with all Council run companies to encourage moving to having plant-based catering options by December 2022.

1 https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/outreach/IPCC_AR6_WGI_Press_Conference_Slides.pdf

2 https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/1705/council_outlines_how_it_aims_to_become_a_zero_carbon_council_by_2030_at_the_latest

3 <https://www.rspb.org.uk/globalassets/downloads/documents/conservation-projects/state-of-nature/state-of-nature-uk-report-2016.pdf>

4 <https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/how-much-meat-should-i-be-eating/>

5 <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/sep/22/eu-farm-animals-produce-more-emissions-than-cars-and-vans-combined-greenpeace>

6 Oxford City Council stopped catering for council meetings a year ago so plant-based catering would be for the few remaining internal council events.

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