

To: Council
Date: 17 July 2023
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 5 July 2023, 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, Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green, groups in that order.

Introduction

- a) Support Oxford's Sudanese community – create safe pathways for Sudanese families with ties to Britain and Oxford to be granted the right to join their loved ones here. (Proposed by Cllr Shaista Aziz, seconded by Councillor Hosnieh Djafari Marbini)
- b) Use car parking sites for Solar Farms (proposed by Cllr Laurence Fouweather, seconded by Cllr Katherine Miles). [Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Alex Hollingsworth]
- c) Extending the Smoke Control Area (proposed by Cllr Emily Kerr, seconded by Cllr Lucy Pegg). [Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Louise Upton]
- d) Supporting a Community Right to Grow (proposed by Cllr Alex Hollingsworth, seconded by Councillor Mark Lygo)
- e) Housing Management System problems and resultant accounts issues at Oxford City Council and ODS (proposed by Cllr Christopher Smowton, seconded by Cllr

Laurence Fouweather) [Amendment Proposed by Cllr Nigel Chapman, seconded by Cllr Susan Brown]

a) Support Oxford's Sudanese community – create safe pathways for Sudanese families with ties to Britain and Oxford to be granted the right to join their loved ones here. (Proposed by Cllr Shaista Aziz, seconded by Councillor Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini)

Labour member motion

The war in Sudan is leading to the loss of life, displacement of hundreds and thousands of people inside and outside the country's borders, a hunger and health crisis, and reports of rape and sexual violence against women and girls.

This Council stands in solidarity with Oxford's Sudanese communities and calls for an immediate end to the conflict and violence, urging all parties to engage in negotiations to find a peaceful and lasting solution to the crisis.

Sudanese families in our city have witnessed family members turned away from British Government run evacuation schemes, separating families and further traumatising desperate and vulnerable people.

We call on the government to urgently create safe pathways for all Sudanese families with ties to Britain and Oxford to be granted the right to join their loved ones here.

This Council pledges to:

- Work with Oxford's Sudanese community and asylum support organisations to identify and support new arrivals;
- Advocate for support for those arriving with physical and psychological trauma;
- Ensure frontline Council staff can sign post people to appropriate services.

This Council therefore resolves to ask the Leader:

1. As a Council seeking to become a City of Sanctuary, we resolve to work with partner organisations across the city and our MPs to lobby the government to:
 - Expand safe, legal routes for extended family of British citizens and Sudanese asylum seekers;
 - Waive existing barriers to support
 - Establish a formal programme mirroring the Ukrainian settlement scheme to provide clarity and security for Sudanese nationals seeking sanctuary.

b) Use car parking sites for Solar Farms (proposed by Cllr Laurence Fouweather, seconded by Cllr Katherine Miles). [Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Alex Hollingsworth]

Liberal Democrat member motion

Oxford City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. The Council has made progress with the decarbonisation of Council owned social housing and leisure centres. The rise in costs of fossil fuel generated electricity over the past 12 months shows the need to push ahead with renewable energy projects.

This proposal is that the case for installing solar panels over the car parks in the city is examined.

The French government has announced plans to mandate that all car parks over 80 spaces in France must have solar farms installed. The Bentley Car Company recently announced the installation of a solar farm at their plant in Crewe which will cover 1378 car spaces and generate 2.7 MW of power. Leicester City Council has recently completed a similar but smaller scheme.

The benefit of this proposal is that it could make better use of otherwise non-productive land and further demonstrates that the City Council is fully behind the push for Green Energy and Net Zero. It could contribute to the targets for increased PV generation across the County as defined in the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy.

Two of the City owned P+R sites together total 2801 car spaces. This could generate at least 4.2 MW of power — enough for 600–800 average sized houses. If the other P+R sites are included then this rises to over 9MW which is nearly 10% of the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy target.

There are other Council owned car parks which could be utilised in this way including those at leisure centres and public parks. Even a small car park could be a useful local source of PV energy and may be able to be implemented over a shorter timescale.

There would also be opportunities to extend the existing EV charging in sites using the power generated locally. The space for physical equipment needed for connection to the local electricity grid will need consideration and planning permission as would other potential uses such as power storage.

Therefore this Council requests that the Head of Corporate Strategy submits a written report to Cabinet by the end of March 2024 which:-

- Examines this proposal to assess the feasibility of installing solar panels in various Council owned car parking sites around Oxford including extending those in existing Park and Rides.
- Considers what alternative uses of existing sites will need consideration when assessing sites for use as a solar farm.
- Explores all possibilities for funding the installation costs.
- Considers the feasibility of the Council being the operator of the solar farm(s) and thus selling the electricity generated to energy companies.
- Assesses the potential income stream to the Council from the solar farms once installed.
- Reports on discussions with the relevant County Council officers about their P+R sites being included in this scheme.
- Reports on discussions with SSE about the capacity of the local electricity grid to accept a scheme of this size.

Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Alex Hollingsworth

Oxford City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. The Council has made progress with the decarbonisation of Council owned social housing and leisure centres. The rise in costs of fossil fuel generated electricity over the past 12 months shows the need to push ahead with renewable energy projects. This proposal is that the case for installing solar panels over the car parks in the city is examined.

The French government has announced plans to mandate that all car parks over 80 spaces in France must have solar farms installed. The Bentley Car Company recently announced the installation of a solar farm at their plant in Crewe which will cover 1378 car spaces and generate 2.7 MW of power. Leicester City Council has recently completed a similar but smaller scheme. The benefit of this proposal is that it could make better use of otherwise ~~non-productive~~ **available** land and **could** further demonstrates that the City Council is fully behind the push for Green Energy and Net Zero. It could contribute to the targets for increased PV generation across the County as defined in the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy. Two of the City owned P+R sites together total 2801 car spaces.

This could generate at least 4.2 MW of power — enough for 600–800 average sized houses, **but at a cost of £1800-2800 per space (£900-£1400/kWp)¹³, compared to £450/kWp for field solar**. If the other P+R sites are included then this rises to over 9MW which is nearly 10% of the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy target. **The strategy identifies a need for installed PV capacity in Oxfordshire to increase from 300MW to 1900MW. This Council therefore is supportive of exploring all possible opportunities for increasing that installed capacity, whether it is large strategic scale installations including Botley West Solar Farm, or smaller and more tactical projects like the existing installation at Redbridge Park and Ride and Leys Pool and Leisure Centre.**

There are other Council owned car parks which could be utilised in this way including those at leisure centres and public parks. Even a small car park could be a useful local source of PV energy and may be able to be implemented over a shorter timescale. There would also be opportunities to extend the existing EV charging in sites using the power generated locally. The space for physical equipment needed for connection to the local electricity grid will need consideration and planning permission as would other potential uses such as power storage.

Therefore this Council requests that the Head of Corporate Strategy ~~submits a written report to Cabinet by the end of March 2024 which:-~~ **continues to investigate the feasibility of extending solar installations on spaces in Oxford including Park and Rides, and that the Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice provide a verbal update at a Council meeting before the end of 2023.**

- ~~Examines this proposal to assess the feasibility of installing solar panels in various Council owned car parking sites around Oxford including extending those in existing Park and Rides.~~
- ~~Considers what alternative uses of existing sites will need consideration when assessing sites for use as a solar farm.~~
- ~~Explores all possibilities for funding the installation costs.~~
- ~~Considers the feasibility of the Council being the operator of the solar farm(s) and thus selling the electricity generated to energy companies.~~
- ~~Assesses the potential income stream to the Council from the solar farms once installed.~~
- ~~Reports on discussions with the relevant County Council officers about their P+R sites being included in this scheme.~~
- ~~Reports on discussions with SSE about the capacity of the local electricity grid to accept a scheme of this size.~~

If the amendment is agreed the motion would read:

Oxford City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. The Council has made progress with the decarbonisation of Council owned social housing and leisure centres. The rise in costs of fossil fuel generated electricity over the past 12 months shows the need to push ahead with renewable energy projects. This proposal is that the case for installing solar panels over the car parks in the city is examined.

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There are other Council owned car parks which could be utilised in this way including those at leisure centres and public parks. Even a small car park could be a useful local source of PV energy and may be able to be implemented over a shorter timescale. There would also be opportunities to extend the existing EV charging in sites using the power generated locally. The space for physical equipment needed for connection to the local electricity grid will need consideration and planning permission as would other potential uses such as power storage.

Therefore this Council requests that the Head of Corporate Strategy continues to investigate the feasibility of extending solar installations on spaces in Oxford including Park and Rides, and that the Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice provide a verbal update at a Council meeting before the end of 2023.

c) Extending the Smoke Control Area (proposed by Cllr Emily Kerr, seconded by Cllr Lucy Pegg). [Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Louise Upton]

Green member motion

This Council notes that

1. Wood-burning takes place in just 8% of UK homes, and yet is the second highest cause of particle pollution in the UK. It has grown by 35% in the last 10 years as more people install wood-burning stoves.

2. The chief medical officer, Chris Whitty, wrote his last report on air pollution.¹ He states that we need to focus on areas where people live – i.e. cities such as Oxford. The report highlights wood burning is dangerous at any level: DEFRA approved stoves produce more than 300 times as much PM 2.5 as gas fires; open fires ten times as much again. Particles accrue in the top of the home, often where people sleep and are exposed for a long time. This is especially an issue for children, who are more sensitive to wood burning.
3. National figures from a DEFRA survey² of 46,000 people show over 70% of people who use wood burners do so for purely aesthetic reasons. We also know people who use wood burners are twice as likely to be AB social grade than those who do not, and much more likely to own their own homes. The 8% of people who rely entirely or primarily on burning as a fuel source overwhelmingly live in rural areas.
4. Oxford has led the way on reducing air pollution resulting from traffic through restricting and electrifying motor traffic, with an 8.3% reduction across the city, or 24% reduction vs pre-pandemic levels.
5. The 2021-2025 AQAP mentions a focus on ‘reducing emissions from domestic heating’ and ‘reviewing smoke control zones’. This has focused on awareness raising campaigns such as last year’s ‘do you fuel good’. Pilot projects such as the ability for canal boats to charge on solar are useful, but the vast majority of burning is not linked to people who live on canal boats.
6. Current Smoke Control Areas (SCAs) or Smoke Control Zones (SCZs) cover some of the city, but miss out key areas such as North Oxford, which have higher home ownership rates and more ABC1 residents – the demographics more likely to be burners.

Council believes:

1. We should continue to take steps to improve air quality, given the devastating and unevenly distributed effects of pollution.
2. The Council has played a significant role in recent years by electrifying and restricting polluting motor traffic. Reducing emissions from domestic heating should continue to be a core area of focus.

This Council asks the Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice:

1. To look at expanding our SCAs across the entire of Oxford City, giving us a standardised city-wide approach which does not exclude the most affluent parts of the city.
2. To build on last year’s awareness campaign and deliver a best-in-class example which leverages new data from the CMO’s report and shares an honest picture of the dangers of wood burning, including the implications for indoor air quality.

¹

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1124738/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-air-pollution-dec-2022.pdf

²

<https://randd.defra.gov.uk/ProjectDetails?ProjectID=20159&FromSearch=Y&Publisher=1&SearchText=AQ1017&SortString=ProjectCode&SortOrder=Asc&Paging=10#Description>

Amendment proposed by Cllr Anna Railton, seconded by Cllr Louise Upton

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³

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⁴

<https://randd.defra.gov.uk/ProjectDetails?ProjectID=20159&FromSearch=Y&Publisher=1&SearchText=AQ1017&SortString=ProjectCode&SortOrder=Asc&Paging=10#Description>

1. ~~To look at expanding our SCAs across the entire of Oxford City, giving us a standardised city-wide approach which does not exclude the most affluent parts of the city~~ **We welcome the 13th July announcement to expand the existing SCA across the entire city of Oxford.**
2. To build on last year's awareness campaign and deliver a best-in-class example which leverages new data from the CMO's report and shares an honest picture of the dangers of wood burning, including the implications for indoor air quality.

If the amendment is agreed the motion would read:

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⁶

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This Council asks the Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice:

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2. To build on last year's awareness campaign and deliver a best-in-class example which leverages new data from the CMO's report and shares an honest picture of the dangers of wood burning, including the implications for indoor air quality.

d) Supporting a Community Right to Grow (proposed by Cllr Alex Hollingsworth, seconded by Councillor Mark Lygo)

Labour member motion

This Council notes:

- The importance of locally produced food to provide affordable and healthy options for local people
- The physical and mental health benefits of gardening, especially communally, backed by the RHS's gardening for health and well-being campaign
- The success of inclusive local community gardening groups like Greening Jericho, winners of the 2021 Oxford Preservation Trust's award for landscape and public realm
- The ongoing experience of the Edible Streets project in establishing food growing spaces in Barton
- The Community Right to Grow campaign launched by Incredible Edible, and the supported by a 10-Minute Rule Bill proposed by Mike Kane MP and proposed amendments to the Levelling Up Bill in the House of Lords
- The Oxfordshire Food Strategy, endorsed by the City Council in 2022, and the work of Good Food Oxfordshire

This Council believes that the benefits from public spaces which are cared for by local people and can be used to produce food, flowers or both are self evident, in terms of the positive impact on the well-being of local communities, the individuals that tend and use them and the broader environment and biodiversity of Oxford and beyond.

This Council therefore asks that:

- The Leader of the Council writes to the city's two MPs to ask them to show their support for the Community Right to Grow in Parliament and beyond
- The Council, learning the lessons from the Edible Streets and Greening Jericho projects, provides a clear register of unused public land that can be offered to community groups for cultivation and a robust but simple process for doing so.

e) Housing Management System problems and resultant accounts issues at Oxford City Council and ODS (proposed by Cllr Christopher Smowton, seconded by Cllr Laurence Fouweather) [Amendment Proposed by Cllr Nigel Chapman, seconded by Cllr Susan Brown]

Liberal Democrat member motion

Council notes that the report by external consultants into the tendering process, procurement and implementation of a new Housing Management System revealed serious issues in the delivery of that system.

Council notes that the budget for the project has had to be markedly increased to over £3 million.

Council also notes that two years after going live, the benefits of the system are still not fully realised.

Council further notes with concern that as a further consequence of these issues, Oxford Direct Services (ODS) has been unable to submit its accounts for financial year 2021/22 to Companies House, and that this also prevents the Council's auditors from approving the Council's own accounts for submission to Central Government.

Council notes that the more information about any adverse event relating to public procurement that can be published, the more third parties including other local authorities and public bodies can benefit from the lessons learned. Council resolves to:-

Ask the Leader of the Council, as a matter of priority, to:-

1. Request the publication of a minimally redacted version of the lessons learned report, in contrast to the brief summary published in June 2023.
2. Ensure that action is taken as soon as possible to ensure the new Housing Management System is properly implemented in the Council and that the benefits promised are realised.
3. Ensure that the deadline (October 2023) for reporting the certified Council accounts to Central Government is met.

Amendment proposed by Cllr Nigel Chapman, seconded by Cllr Susan Brown

Council notes that the report by external consultants into the tendering process, procurement and implementation of a new Housing Management System revealed serious issues in the delivery of that system.

Council notes that the budget for the project has had to be markedly increased to over £3 million.

Council also notes that two years after going live, **that whilst the** benefits of the system are still not fully realised, **there is an agreed and costed plan to do so. Officers and the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder are confident this plan can be successfully realised.**

Council further notes ~~with concern that as a further consequence of these issues that~~ **despite some delays attributable to the system implementation,** Oxford Direct Services (ODS) ~~has been unable~~ **will be in a position to** submit its accounts for financial year 2021/22 to Companies House in **early autumn** and that this also ~~prevents the Council's auditors from approving the Council's own accounts for submission to Central Government.~~ **The Council's auditors will also soon be in a**

position to approve Council's own accounts **for 21/22** for submission to Central Government.

Council notes that ~~the more information about any adverse event relating to public procurement that can be published, the more~~ **whilst the full lessons learned report must remain confidential, it has been reviewed by both the Audit and Governance and Scrutiny Committees with senior officers and the relevant Cabinet member. The summary document is in the public domain, and captures all the key lessons which might interest third parties including other local authorities and public bodies, and can be shared with them.**

Council resolves to:- Ask the Leader of the Council, as a matter of priority, to:-

1. ~~Request the publication of a minimally redacted version of the lessons learned report, in contrast to the brief summary published in June 2023.~~ **Make available the summary of the lessons learned review to interested parties.**
2. Ensure that action is taken as soon as possible to ensure the new Housing Management System is properly implemented in the Council and that the benefits promised are realised.
3. ~~Ensure that the deadline (October 2023)~~ **that the certified Council accounts for 22/23 are reported to Central Government as soon as is practicable.**

If the amendment is agreed the motion would read:

Council notes that the report by external consultants into the tendering process, procurement and implementation of a new Housing Management System revealed serious issues in the delivery of that system.

Council notes that the budget for the project has had to be markedly increased to over £3 million.

Council also notes that two years after going live, that whilst the benefits of the system are still not fully realised, there is an agreed and costed plan to do so. Officers and the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder are confident this plan can be successfully realised.

Council further notes that despite some delays attributable to the system implementation, Oxford Direct Services (ODS) will be in a position to submit its accounts for financial year 2021/22 to Companies House in early autumn. The Council's auditors will also soon be in a position to approve Council's own accounts for 21/22 for submission to Central Government.

Council notes that whilst the full lessons learned report must remain confidential, it has been reviewed by both the Audit and Governance and Scrutiny Committees with senior officers and the relevant Cabinet member. The summary document is in the public domain, and captures all the key lessons which might interest third parties including other local authorities and public bodies, and can be shared with them.

Council resolves to:- Ask the Leader of the Council, as a matter of priority, to:- 1. Make available the summary of the lessons learned review to interested parties.

2. Ensure that action is taken as soon as possible to ensure the new Housing Management System is properly implemented in the Council and that the benefits promised are realised.

3. Ensure that the certified Council accounts for 22/23 are reported to Central Government as soon as is practicable.