

COUNCIL

Monday 20 February 2012

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Benjamin (Lord Mayor), Armitage (Deputy Lord Mayor), Fooks (Sheriff), Abbasi, Altaf-Khan, Bance, Baxter, Brett, Brown, Brundin, Campbell, Clarkson, Cook, Coulter, Darke, Goddard, Gotch, Hazell, Humberstone, Jones, Keen, Khan, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Lygo, Malik, McCready, McManners, Mills, Morton, Pressel, Price, Pyle, Rowley, Royce, Rundle, Sanders, Seamons, Sinclair, Smith, Tanner, Timbs, Turner, Van Nooijen, Wilkinson, Williams, Wolff and Young.

80. CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Lord Mayor asked Council if it would agree to the order of business being changed and to adopt the procedure for dealing with the budget debate:

- To deal with agenda items 1-8 in the order shown on the agenda
- To take addresses and questions from the public on the Budget items ONLY
- To debate the budget items
- To take addresses and questions from the public on non-budget items
- That Council then proceed with the business from agenda item 16 onwards in the order shown on the agenda

Council resolved to:

- (a) Adopt the procedure for dealing with the Budget;
- (b) Take agenda item 23 (Council Tax 2012/13) after agenda item 15 (Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan Draft for consultation and to take agenda item 20 (Petitions – “Don’t Cut Services in East Oxford”) immediately following the Budget.

81. MINUTES

Council resolved to approve the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 19th December 2011 which had been adjourned and reconvened on 16th January 2012.

82. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors declared interests as follows:

- (a) Councillor Sajjid Malik declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade, held a street trading license and owned a business in Oxford. (Minute 92 refers).

- (b) Councillor Mohammed Niaz Abbasi declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade. (Minute 92 refers).
- (c) Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade. (Minute 92 refers).
- (d) Councillor Shah Jahan Khan declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade. (Minute 92 refers).
- (e) Councillor Rae Humberstone declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as he was a City Council appointed representative on the Agnes Smith Advice Centre and employed by the Oxfordshire County Council with regard to the Dial-a-Ride Service. (Minute 92 refers).
- (f) Councillor Beverley Hazell declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as she was involved with the capital management of the Oxford Night Shelter. (Minute 92 refers).
- (g) Councillor Nuala Young declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16) as she was involved in the tourist tour guide trade. (Minute 92 refers).
- (h) Councillor Mark Mills declared a personal interest in agenda item 16(a) (City Executive Board Decisions (Minutes) and Single Executive Member Decisions (Minutes) – City Executive Board held on 8th February 2012) as he sat on the Advisory Board of the Oxford Hub. (Minute 97 refers).

83. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Stuart Craft.

84. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

None.

85. LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

86. SHERIFF'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

87. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER

None.

88. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER AND THE MONITORING OFFICER

The Chief Executive informed Council that the City Council had achieved the Equalities Standard.

89. ADDRESSES BY THE PUBLIC

Council received and took four addresses to Council (text of the addresses are appended to these minutes) (along with an Officer response to the address from Nigel Gibson) from the following:

- (1) Mr M Hugh Jones – Dial-a-Ride Minibuses in Oxford City.
- (2) Nigel Gibson – Decisions concerning leisure in East Oxford.
- (3) William Clark – Blackbird Leys Park Town Green application.
- (4) Anna Thornhill – Oxford Safer Masts Group.

90. QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

One question was submitted by a member of the public as follows:

- (1) **Question to the Board Member, Leisure Services (Councillor Van Coulter) from Nigel Gibson**

Contract for Blackbird Leys Pool

I understand that the Council intends entering into a contract imminently for the construction of a new swimming pool at Blackbird Leys, and that this will then bind the Council into a contractual relationship with certain conditions in connection with a decision that is subject to the application for Judicial Review concerning the lack of consultation in relation to the closure of Temple Cowley Leisure Centre. Can you please confirm whether you intend entering into this relationship before the outcome of the Judicial Review application is known (and if so, when), and if so how much the Council would have to pay the contractor to get out of the contract should the Judicial Review succeed?

Response: The Council intends to sign as soon as possible, and before the outcome of the judicial review application is known, a contract and should the judicial review application succeeded this would not cost the Council anything.

91. REPORT OF THE COUNCIL'S CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER ON THE ROBUSTNESS OF THE BUDGET

The Corporate Director, Finance and Efficiency submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003. The Act required the Section 151 Officer to report to Council on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations of the budget, and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

The Corporate Director, Finance and Efficiency in response to questions informed Council that there was no requirement for her to provide a response on the opposition budget amendments. However she confirmed that she had seen the proposed amendments and that there were no issues with the Liberal Democrat Group amendments, nor the Green Group amendments except for a proposal to take out £500k from the redundancy fund, which would leave insufficient funds in 2013/14.

Council resolved to note the report when setting the budget for 2012/13 and the indicative budgets for 2013/14-2015/16.

92. BUDGET 2012/13 - 2015/16

Council had before it the following (previously circulated, now appended):

- (1) Minute extract and recommendation from the City Executive Board held on 8th February 2012;
- (2) Report of the Head of Finance;
- (3) Liberal Democrat Group budget amendments;
- (4) Green Group budget amendments.

Councillors declared interests as follows:

- (a) Councillor Sajjid Malik declared a personal interest as he was as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade, held a street trading License and owned a business in Oxford.
- (b) Councillor Mohammed Niaz Abbasi declared a personal interest as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade.
- (c) Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan declared a personal interest as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade.
- (d) Councillor Shah Jahan Khan declared a personal interest as he was involved in the hackney carriage and private hire Licensing trade.
- (e) Councillor Rae Humberstone declared a personal interest as he was a City Council appointed representative on the Agnes Smith Advice Centre and employed by the Oxfordshire County Council with regard to the Dial-a-Ride Service. .
- (f) Councillor Beverley Hazell declared a personal interest as she was involved with the Capital Management of the Oxford Night Shelter.

- (g) Councillor Nuala Young declared a personal interest as she was involved in the Tourist Tour Guide trade.

Councillor Ed Turner, seconded by Councillor Bob Price, moved and spoke to the Administration's budget.

Councillor Mark Mills, seconded by Councillor Stephen Brown, moved and spoke to the Liberal Democrat Group's proposed General Fund Budget and Capital Budget amendments to the City Executive Board's recommendation.

Following a debate, Council voted on the Liberal Democrat Group's amendments but these were not carried.

Councillor David Williams, seconded by Councillor Matt Morton, moved and spoke to the Green Group's proposed General Fund and Capital Budgets amendments to the City Executive Board's recommendation.

Following a debate, Council voted on the Green Group's amendments but these were not carried.

Council voted upon the substantive City Executive Board's recommendation and these were carried.

The full decision of Council on the Council's Budget for 2012/13 – 2015/16 is set out below:

- (a) With regard to the Budget 2012/13 – 2015/16 to:
- (1) Approve the General Fund budget requirement for 2012/13 of £24.113 million as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report of the Head of Finance and in so doing to agree a Council Tax freeze for 2012/13, thereby resulting in an average Band D Council Tax of £262.96;
 - (2) Approve the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2012/13 as set out in Appendix 4 to the report of the Head of Finance and an average dwelling rent increase of 7.83% and service charge increases of 6.1%
 - (3) Approve the Capital Programme for 2012/13 - 2015-16 as set out in Appendix 6 to the report of the Head of Finance subject to the inclusion of £300,000 in the 2011/12 Capital Programme in respect of the installation of photo voltaic works to General Fund Leisure properties to be funded by capital receipts and the inclusion of £400,000 for Council house properties in the HRA for similar works to be financed from underspends within the HRA capital programme; and
 - (4) Approve Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix 7 to the report of the Head of Finance;
- (b) With regard to the Periodic Report – Budget 2011/12 (Papers attached to the agreed copy of the minutes) to:

- (1) Agree the inclusion of £400k feed-in-tariff solar panel capital works to the 2011/12 HRA capital programme and the approval of the use of Capital Programme underspends to fund this project;
- (2) Agree to the inclusion of £300k feed-in-tariff solar panel capital works within the 2011/12 General Fund Capital Programme in the absence of any underspend on the Programme and the approval of such funding as appropriate;
- (3) On the basis of Council agreeing the additional funding in regard to the fitting of solar photovoltaic panels, to grant project approval for the fitting of such solar photovoltaic panels to appropriate Council-owned sheltered housing accommodation blocks and leisure centres; to waive the Council's procurement rules in regard to selecting an appropriate contractor or contractors for this work, on the basis that following such rules would not help to achieve overall best value; and to delegate the authority to award such contract or contracts to the Chief Executive;
- (4) Agree that £50k of capital expenditure be brought forward from 2013-14 to 2011-12 to fund feasibility work associated with the £2m Depot Relocation Project planned for 2013/14.

93. CORPORATE PLAN 2012-2017

Council had before it the following (previously circulated, now appended):

- (a) Minute extract and recommendation from the City Executive Board held on 8th February 2012;
- (b) Report of the Head of Policy, Culture and Communications.

Councillor Bob Price (Leader of the Council) moved and spoke to the City Executive Board's recommendation.

Following a debate, Council resolved to adopt the Corporate Plan for 2012-17, but to defer to Scrutiny the part of the Corporate Plan that covered targets and to receive back to Council the comments from Scrutiny.

94. TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2011/12 STRATEGY UPDATE AND 2012/13 STRATEGY

Council had before it the following (previously circulated, now appended):

- (a) Minute extract and recommendation from the City Executive Board of 8th February 2012;
- (b) Report of the Corporate Director of Finance and Efficiency.

Council resolved:

- (a) To adopt and approve the revised Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators and limits for 2011/12, which had been amended to allow for Housing Revenue Account borrowing as set out in paragraphs 71-95 of the report;
- (b) To adopt and approve the Prudential Indicators and limits for 2012/13 to 2015/16 as set out in paragraphs 71-95 of the report;
- (c) To approve the Minimum Reserve Provision (MRP) statement detailed in paragraphs 15-19 of the report which set out the Council's policy on repayment of debt;
- (d) To approve the Treasury Management Strategy 2012/13 and the Treasury prudential indicators at paragraphs 20-48 of the report;
- (e) To approve the Investment Strategy for 2012/13 contained in the Treasury Management Strategy and detailed in the investment criteria as set out in paragraphs 49-70 and appendices 1 and 2 of the report.

95. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUSINESS PLAN - DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

Council had before it the following (previously circulated, now appended):

- (a) Minute extract and recommendation from the City Executive Board of 8th February 2012;
- (b) Report of the Executive Director for Housing and City Regeneration.

Resolved to adopt the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 Year Business Plan as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

96. COUNCIL TAX 2012/13

The Head of Finance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the Council Tax for Oxford City for 2012/13 which was required to be set by Council, in accordance with the Local Government Finance Acts, 1988 and 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011.

Council resolved:

- (a) To approve the City Council's precept and Council Tax requirement of £12,587,330 (inclusive of Parish Precepts). (Net of the Parish Precepts, the figure is £12,394,330);
- (b) To note the average Band D Council Tax figure (excluding Parishes) of £262.96. (This remains the same as in 2011/12, i.e. a zero percent increase. Including Parish Precepts the figure is £267.05, a minimal (0.41p) increase on the 2011/12 figure of £266.64 (paragraph 11 of the report));

- (c) To approve the contribution to the Parish of Old Marston of £10,000 in recognition of the additional expenditure that Parish incurs as a consequence of maintaining the cemetery (paragraph 17 of the report);
- (d) To agreed that the amount of £490,303 to be treated as Special Expenses (paragraph 18 of the report);
- (e) To agree the Band D Council Taxes for the various areas of the City (excluding the Police and County Council's additions) as follows:-

Littlemore	£284.50
Old Marston	£291.55
Risinghurst and Sandhills	£279.97
Blackbird Leys	£261.16
Unparished Area	£265.15

(These figures include the Parish Precepts and special expensing amounts as appropriate on top of the City-wide Council Tax of £252.56).

- (f) To note Oxfordshire County Council's precept and Band D Council Tax (paragraph 21 of the report);
- (g) Note the Thames Valley Police Authority's precept and Band D Council Tax (paragraph 22 of the report);
- (h) To note the overall average Band D equivalent Council Tax of £1,583.06 which included the Parish Precepts;
- (i) To note that Councillor Ed Turner had agreed to work with Officers on presenting a seminar for Members on Special Expenses.

97. CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISIONS (MINUTES) AND SINGLE EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISIONS (MINUTES)

City Executive Board decisions (minutes)

Councillor Mark Mills declared a personal interest as he sat on the Advisory Board of the Oxford Hub.

- (1) Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 8th February 2012.
 - (a) Councillor Williams with regard to minute 81 – (Westgate Development), said that members of the Opposition needed to be included in the discussions on the new development as he felt there had been problems in the early stages of previous negotiations. In response Councillor Price said that parts of the Oxpens land were owned by the City Council and the BRAB, what was not clear at this stage was if any housing would be included in the Westgate planning application.
 - (b) Councillor Mills in regard to minute 85 – (Grant Allocations to Community and Voluntary Organisations 2012/2013) raised points on feedback to applicants. In response Councillor Bance said that

all groups whose applications had been successful received notification via a letter. Those that were unsuccessful could contact the Council for feedback on the reasons.

Single Executive Member decision (Minutes)

- (1) Minutes of the Single Executive Member Decision meeting (Board Member – Finance and Efficiency) held on 22nd December 2011.
- (2) Minutes of the Single Executive Member Decision meeting (Board Member – City Development) held on 2nd February 2012.
- (3) Minutes of the Single Executive Member Decision meeting (Board Member – Corporate Governance and Strategic Partnerships) held on 2nd February 2012.

98. RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

No recommendations from Scrutiny Committees were received.

Councillor Brown said that 24 recommendations had been made on the budget from the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Panel and all had been taken on board by the City Executive Board.

99. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

(a) Questions notified in time for written replies to be provided

1. Question to the Board Member, City Development (Councillor Colin Cook) from Councillor Nuala Young

Covered Market – Former Palms Delicatessen Unit

Could the Board Member list the 42 applicants for the lease on the store in the Covered Market that was previously Palms Delicatessen and what type of trade was offered by each one?

Answer: The information is confidential and not for publication under Part 1, Schedule 12A, Paragraphs 1 and 3 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The information has been provided to Councillor Young.

Councillor Young in a supplementary question asked if considering that the Council had agreed conditions of tenancy, could he explain why 19 of the 42 applicants were discounted.

In response Councillor Cook said that Officers had applied the strategy and that out of the 42 expressions of interest, only 2 had met the strategy. He did not know why the 19 unknowns did not provide follow through information with a bid

2. Question to the Board Member, Cleaner, Greener Oxford (Councillor John Tanner) from Councillor Jean Fooks

Disposal of light bulbs

“The City Council is rightly asking residents to observe the restrictions on what goes into their green wheelie bins. Light bulbs are hazardous waste but at present the Council does not provide any facilities for their safe disposal. For those who are able to do so, driving dead bulbs to Redbridge is an option – but hardly environmentally friendly to do so. Many people do not have a car and this is applauded as reducing carbon emissions.

When will the Council provide special containers at recycling sites and in district centres for the safe disposal of light bulbs?”

Answer: Normal light bulbs can be disposed of in your green wheelie bin. Fluorescent tubes, normal light bulbs and low energy light bulbs can be taken to [Redbridge Waste Recycling Centre](#). You can also visit the [Recolight website](#) to search for your nearest collection point for low energy light bulbs. We have no plans for other collection arrangements for light bulbs. I understand the Councillor’s concern and I will investigate to see if there is anything further the City Council can do.

Councillor Fooks in a supplementary question asked if Councillor Tanner would explain why the leaflets said that batteries and lightbulbs should not go in bins.

In response Councillor Tanner said that as well as the Redbridge Centre, lightbulbs could also be taken to Homebase, Robert Dyas and Sainsburys.

(b) Questions notified by the deadline in the Constitution (replies to be given orally at Council)

3. Question to the Board Member, Housing Needs (Councillor Joe McManners) from Councillor Tony Brett.

I’d like to know whether the following living arrangement is an HMO? A rented 3 bedroom house occupied by three unrelated people, two of whom are a couple in a long standing relationship (although not married or civil partnered but possibly engaged) who use one bedroom for sleeping and another as a study/work room, effectively living as one household. The third person has their own bedroom and could be argued to be a separate “household”. I’m using the Administration’s own language here.

Response: The example given is a HMO as it consisted of 3 people renting who form more than one household and who share facilities. The use of the “household” is not the language of the Administration, as it comes directly from the definitions contained in the Housing Act 2004 and its associated regulation.

Councillor Brett in a supplementary question asked if the Board Member justified indirect discrimination on the grounds of marital status. In response Councillor McManners re-iterated that HMO's were defined by law.

4. Question to the Board Member, Housing Needs (Councillor Joe McManners) from Councillor Tony Brett.

Your guidelines on what needs to be licensed as an HMO say that a house with resident landlord(s) requires a license if it has more than two lodgers. Can you let me know, in the case of a resident landlord couple and three or four lodgers whether that house would count according to your definitions as a large HMO or a small HMO and thus be liable for fees of £470 plus £172 annually or £362 plus £150 annually? Would this change if any of the lodgers were related and so formed fewer "households" than the number of lodgers?

Response: Wherever there is a resident landlord in a HMO they are included in the total number of occupiers in the property. This is nothing new and it has been the case since 2006 when mandatory licensing of HMO's was introduced across the UK.

If the lodgers were all related, for example it was 2 brothers and a cousin, there would still be 2 households sharing the property with 3 people renting so a licence would be required.

5. Question to the Board Member, Housing Needs (Councillor Joe McManners) from Councillor Tony Brett.

May I ask why, given the onerous requirements of the Administration's amenities and facilities guide, it seems to be quite willing to let much larger households (often quite vulnerable ones) live in far lower standards of accommodation? As an example I can think of several households that contains eight people – three adults and five children. They get by with one bathroom containing a bath and toilet with just one extra toilet in a separate room. The children most certainly all need the bathroom at the same time in the morning as they all go to school at the same time. You appear to have banned private rented unrelated tenants from living like this but seem to be continuing to allow it for vulnerable families. Do you consider that vulnerable families need a lower level of amenity provision? What are you going to do for all the unrelated tenants you are making homeless by pricing their landlords out of the market? Do you want them to leave Oxford and thus stop contributing to its vibrant economic and cultural life?

Response: Firstly can I say that the amenities and facilities guide which provides the standards for HMO accommodation in Oxford is not onerous. We have compared our requirements with those used in 14 similar cities and the standards being applied in Oxford are very similar. In a recent meeting to review progress with the HMO Licensing scheme, our officers were complimented by the

accredited letting agents and landlords on their pragmatic approach in applying the standards.

Whilst the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme can be used to assess family homes, we do not have the statutory powers to intervene in relation to homes let to families like we do with HMOs. However, families regularly share facilities in a way that unrelated individuals would not be prepared to and this has clearly been recognised by Parliament which is why the same powers do not apply. If families are particularly vulnerable it could be that we could use a disabled facilities grant to improve facilities.

The purpose of licensing HMOs and applying our facilities and amenities guide is not to ban tenants from living in a certain way, but to ensure that they live in a property that provides them with adequate facilities.

There is no evidence of any overall loss of HMO accommodation. Whilst we have reports of some landlords choosing to stop letting their houses to sharers, there are as many reports of new investors in HMO stock and HMO owners increasing occupancy levels having previously reduced them to avoid the need for licensing

6. Question to the Board Member, Housing Needs (Councillor Joe McManners) from Councillor Tony Brett.

I noticed on a poster on a bus stop on 10th February that the Administration is offering a £600 “finders fee” to those people fortunate enough to have a 2-bedroom house to let with “no fees and no obligation to accept any potential tenant” as well as “payment of reasonable agency fees”. May I ask if the portfolio holder how he justifies that position given that for a 3 bedroom property that might be let to 3 unrelated people his administration is charging £362 for registration as an HMO (with an additional £150 per year to keep the license) and will most probably demand a lot more expensive works given that thus far his officers have deemed 98% of licensable properties unfit to receive a license? A three bed roomed property will release more pressure on Oxford’s housing situation than a 2-bed so why has the administration made it almost £1000 more profitable to let a 2-bed than a 3-bed?

Response: Response: The finders fee is being offered by the Housing and Community service as there is a shortage of 2 bed properties for families who have presented to the Council as being in housing need. There is far less need for 3 bed properties which is why there is no finders fee being offered for them. The payment of the finders fee is an incentive for landlords who would otherwise be able to rent their property to a family not in housing need at the market rate or use it as an HMO and make even more money. If we are unable to find a suitable property the costs of providing emergency accommodation are exceedingly high and overall the scheme helps reduce the Council’s costs in complying with its housing duties.

The cost of complying with the HMO licensing scheme should be just the licensing fee if the landlord has been maintaining the property and complying with the law.

7. Question to the Board Member, Cleaner, Green Oxford (Councillor John Tanner) from Councillor Jean Fooks.

Residents have to buy the paper ecosacks for garden waste in batches of 10 or 20. Can we assume that they will be allowed to use any sacks they still have at the end of this financial year in the next one?

Response: Yes.

8. Question to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Bob Price) from Councillor Mark Mills

Prayers at Council meetings

Should all local authorities follow Oxford City's example and avoid requiring councillors to participate in often hypocritical displays of religious devotion?

Response: It was a wise decision by the Courts and it is up to each Council to decide for itself.

100. STATEMENTS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

None received.

101. PETITIONS - "DON'T CUT SERVICES IN EAST OXFORD"

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which advised on the procedure that Council needed to follow under the Council's Petitions Scheme in respect of large petitions and provided information specifically on the petition concerning "Don't Cut Services in East Oxford".

Nigel Gibson the head petitioner presented the petition and spoke on its contents.

Councillor Mark Mills seconded by Councillor Graham Jones moved the following recommendation:

"Council notes the petition entitled "Don't Cut Services in East Oxford" and thanks those who have signed it for their views. Council believes that it reflects widespread unease with the Administration's current policy with regard to the provision of a pool. Council resolves to take all reasonable steps to retain a public swimming pool in the eastern half of the City within the ring road"

Following a debate, Council voted and resolved not to support the recommendation by Councillor Mark Mills.

102. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Council had before it one Motion on Notice and reached a decision as follows:

(1) **Opposition to Right to Buy – (Proposer – Councillor David Rundle, seconded by Councillor Stuart McCready)**

This Council notes the announcement at the Autumn's Conservative Party Conference of a renewal of the Thatcherite policy of Right to Buy (RTB) and its subsequent inclusion as a proposal in the Government's Housing Strategy.

This Council also notes the long-standing cross-party opposition to RTB with its impact of decreasing the social housing stock in our city which has a very real housing crisis.

This Council further notes the aspiration in the Government's Housing Strategy to offset the loss of social housing via RTB by provision of replacement dwellings, but not necessarily in the same part of the country. This Council does not accept that this provides sufficient safeguard against the damaging effects of RTB.

This Council therefore calls on the Chief Executive to ensure that there is a robust response to the consultation on this proposed policy, restating Oxford's reasoned opposition to RTB. That response should express opposition in principle to the policy and also underline the special situation of Oxford which would mean a return to RTB would make our city suffer more than most.

Councillor David Williams moved an amendment as follows:

To delete the word "Government" where it appears and to replace with the words "Coalition Government"

To add an additional paragraph as follows:

Council Officers will investigate the option of establishing a Cooperative Trust to manage all out Council house stock as suggested by the Local Authority Cooperative Network and the Rochdale model if that will circumvent the RTB provisions to be announced by the Secretary of State and thereby retain a form of social housing in Oxford.

Councillor Joe McManners, seconded by councillor Ed Turner moved an amendment as follows:

"To delete the amendment by councillor David Williams and to retain the substantive Motion by Councillor David Rundle"

The mover of the substantive Motion Councillor David Rundle accepted the amendment by Councillor David Williams. Following a debate, Council voted:

- (a) Not to adopt the amendment by Councillor David Williams;

(b) To adopt the substantive Motion un-amended as follows:

“This Council notes the announcement at the Autumn's Conservative Party Conference of a renewal of the Thatcherite policy of Right to Buy (RTB) and its subsequent inclusion as a proposal in the Government's Housing Strategy.

This Council also notes the long-standing cross-party opposition to RTB with its impact of decreasing the social housing stock in our city which has a very real housing crisis.

This Council further notes the aspiration in the Government's Housing Strategy to offset the loss of social housing via RTB by provision of replacement dwellings, but not necessarily in the same part of the country. This Council does not accept that this provides sufficient safeguard against the damaging effects of RTB.

This Council therefore calls on the Chief Executive to ensure that there is a robust response to the consultation on this proposed policy, restating Oxford's reasoned opposition to RTB. That response should express opposition in principle to the policy and also underline the special situation of Oxford which would mean a return to RTB would make our city suffer more than most”.

103. REPORTS AND QUESTIONS ABOUT ORGANISATION THE COUNCIL IS REPRESENTED ON

None raised.

104. REVISED CONTRACT AND FINANCE RULES AND OTHER MATTERS

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which presented revised Contract and Finance Rules and other matters for adoption.

Council resolved:

- (a) To adopt the revised Contract and Finance Rules and to replace with immediate effect the existing Contract and Finance Rules in the Constitution;
- (b) To approve the Constitutional amendment proposed at paragraph 18 of the report with immediate effect.

105. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Head of People and Equalities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which sought approval for a Pay Policy Statement for the Council as required under the Localism Act 2011.

Council resolved:

- (a) To approve the Pay Policy Statement as agreed with the Trade Unions with immediate effect;
- (b) To authorise the Head of People and Equalities to implement the approved Policy and make changes to it if required to put right any clerical mistakes or to reflect changes in the law.

106. PROGRAMME OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2012/13 AND 2013/14

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which sought Council's agreement to a programme of Council and Committee meetings for the Council Years 2012/13 and 2013/14.

Council resolved to approve the timetable of Council and Committee meetings for the Council Years 2012/13 and 2013/14 subject to the following further amendments:

FURTHER AMENDMENTS 2012/13

City Executive Board as originally proposed	City Executive Board amended proposal
Wednesday 27 th June	Wednesday 4 th July

Council as originally proposed	Council as proposed amended proposal
Monday 9 th July	Monday 16 th July

Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee as originally proposed	Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee amended proposal
Wednesday 11 th June	Wednesday 25 th June

Meeting with Parish Councils as originally proposed	Meeting with Parish Councils amended proposal
Monday 25 th June	Monday 23 rd July

FURTHER AMENDMENTS 2013/14

City Executive Board as originally proposed	City Executive Board amended proposal
Wednesday 26 th June	Wednesday 3 rd July

Council as originally proposed	Council amended proposal
Monday 8 th July	Monday 15 th July

Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee as originally proposed	Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee amended proposal

Monday 10 th June	Monday 24 th June
Meeting with Parish Councils as originally proposed	Meeting with Parish Councils amended proposal
Monday 24 th June	Monday 1 st July

107. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - BLACKBIRD LEYS PARISH COUNCIL - REDUCTION IN MEMBERS

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which sought approval for the terms of reference for a Community Governance Review into the number of Councillors on Blackbird Leys Parish Council.

Council resolved to approve the terms of reference for the Community Governance Review of Blackbird Leys Parish Council.

108. MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION

None.

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 9.35 pm

This page is intentionally left blank