

Cherwell District Council

Annual Council

Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 17 May 2023 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Les Sibley (Chairman)
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Tom Beckett
Councillor Andrew Beere
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Besmira Brasha
Councillor John Broad
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Mark Cherry
Councillor Becky Clarke MBE
Councillor Patrick Clarke
Councillor Jean Conway
Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor Nick Cotter
Councillor Isabel Creed
Councillor Andrew Crichton
Councillor Sandy Dallimore
Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Donna Ford
Councillor Ian Harwood
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Matt Hodgson
Councillor Simon Holland
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Simon Lytton
Councillor Kieron Mallon
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Andrew McHugh
Councillor Lesley McLean
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Adam Nell
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Lynn Pratt
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor Eddie Reeves
Councillor George Reynolds
Councillor Dan Sames
Councillor Nigel Simpson
Councillor Dorothy Walker

Councillor Amanda Watkins
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Bryn Williams
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Julian Nedelcu

Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law, Governance & Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

1 **Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed councillors, past Chairman, former councillors, guests and officers to the Annual Council meeting.

The Chairman welcomed newly elected councillors, Councillor Tom Beckett, Councillor Besmira Brasha, Councillor Becky Clarke MBE, Councillor Isabel Creed, Councillor Harry Knight, Councillor Simon Lytton, Councillor Andrew McHugh, Councillor Lesley McLean, Councillor Lynne Parsons, Councillor Rob Pattenden and Councillor Nigel Simpson and congratulated them and all other councillors who were returned at the recent election. The newly elected councillors each introduced themselves to Council.

Councillor Julian Nedelcu, who had been newly elected to the Launton and Otmoor ward, had submitted apologies for the Council meeting.

2 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3 **Presentation of Certificate of Recognition to Cherwell District Council**

Thames Valley Police Chief Superintendent, Emma Garside, presented a Certificate of Recognition to Cherwell District Council in recognition of its role in the multi-agency response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, between February 2020 and May 2021.

The Chairman received the Certificate on behalf of the Council.

Communications

Chairman's Engagements, Address and Presentation of Cheque

A copy of the events attended by the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman was published with the agenda.

The Chairman addressed Council to report on his term of office highlighting the many events he had attended. The Chairman thanked everyone who had attended fundraising events and donated funds to support Alexandra House of Joy during his term of office. The charity was raising money to build a new care facility in Bicester to offer support for adults with severe learning disabilities, and the funds raised would help make that aspiration a reality.

The Chairman presented a cheque for £10,600 to Ian and Rachel Scott-Hunter, representatives of Alexandra House of Joy.

Councillor Sibley thanked Members and officers for supporting him as Chairman.

The Chairman thanked his wife, Mary, who had been his consort during his term of office for her great support and presented her with a bouquet of flowers.

Tribute to Liz Matthew's, Chairman's PA

The Chairman paid tribute to his PA, Liz Matthews, who would be retiring on 31 May. Liz had been PA to many Chairmen during her time at Cherwell and her hard work and diligence had helped each Chairman during their term of office, in particular raising money for their charities and attending events. The Chairman presented Liz with flowers and wished her all the best in her retirement.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Wood, paid further tribute to Liz Matthews, highlighting the many senior managers she had been PA for during her time at Cherwell and thanked her for the support she had provided to him. The Chairman presented Liz with flowers and wished her all the best in her retirement.

Former Councillors

On behalf of Council, the Chair extended paid tribute and thanked those councillors who stood down or were not re-elected at the May elections for their service to the council, their wards and the district.

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By convention, the minutes of Committees, questions, petitions and motions were not considered at Annual Council. These would be included on the agenda of the next scheduled Council meeting on Monday 17 July.

Members' Pigeon Holes

Members were reminded to check their pigeon hole and take any post.

5 Election of Chairman for the Municipal Year 2023/2024

The Monitoring Officer called for nominations for Chairman of Cherwell District Council for the municipal year 2023/2024.

It was moved by Councillor Wood and seconded by Councillor Knight, that Councillor Les Sibley be appointed as Chairman for the municipal year 2023/2024. There were no other nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Les Sibley be appointed Chairman of Cherwell District Council for the Municipal Year 2023/2024.

6 Investiture of Chairman

Councillor Les Sibley, made and signed the required Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor Sibley thanked Members for appointing him for a second term as Chairman. It had been an honour and a privilege to serve as Chairman of the Council and he looked forward to continuing to represent the council in this important role in 2023–2024. He would continue to raise funds for Alexandra House of Joy during his second term of office.

7 Vote of Thanks to Immediate Past Chairman

The current Chairman having been re-elected for a second term of office, this item was not required.

8 Election of Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2023/2024

It was proposed by Councillor Woodcock and seconded by Councillor Watkins, that Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke be appointed as Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2023/2024. There were no other nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2023/2024.

9 Investiture of Vice-Chairman

Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke, having made and signed the required Declaration of Acceptance of Office was invested with the Vice-Chairman's Chain.

Councillor Okeke addressed Council and thanked Members for his appointment.

10 **Minutes of Council**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11 **Annual Council Business Report 2023/2024**

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Council to note the results of the 4 May 2023 district elections and agree the governance arrangements for the council following the elections for the municipal year 2023/2024.

The Chairman advised that he take Council through the report and ask Members to vote on each recommendation separately. Council unanimously agreed recommendations 1.1 and 1.2.

Turning to recommendation 1.3, which related to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Woodcock proposed a vote of no confidence in the current Leader of the Council, Councillor Wood. This was duly seconded by Councillor Watkins.

In response to a Point of Order raised by Councillor Cotter, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that if the vote of no confidence in the Leader was passed, the Chairman would seek nominations for Leader.

It was subsequently proposed by Councillor Middleton and seconded by Councillor Cotter that a recorded vote be taken.

Having been proposed and seconded, a recorded vote was duly taken and Members voted as follows:

Councillor Tom Beckett	For
Councillor Andrew Beere	For
Councillor Rebecca Biegel	For
Councillor Maurice Billington	Against
Councillor Besmira Brasha	For
Councillor John Broad	For
Councillor Phil Chapman	Against
Councillor Mark Cherry	For
Councillor Becky Clarke MBE	For
Councillor Patrick Clarke	Against
Councillor Jean Conway	For

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Councillor Gemma Coton	For
Councillor Nick Cotter	For
Councillor Isabel Creed	For
Councillor Andrew Crichton	For
Councillor Sandy Dallimore	Against
Councillor John Donaldson	Against
Councillor Donna Ford	Against
Councillor Ian Harwood	Against
Councillor David Hingley	For
Councillor Matt Hodgson	For
Councillor Simon Holland	Against
Councillor Harry Knight	Against
Councillor Simon Lytton	For
Councillor Kieron Mallon	Against
Councillor Nick Mawer	Against
Councillor Fiona Mawson	For
Councillor Andrew McHugh	Against
Councillor Lesley McLean	For
Councillor Ian Middleton	For
Councillor Adam Nell	Against
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke	For
Councillor Lynne Parsons	For
Councillor Rob Pattenden	For
Councillor Lynn Pratt	Against
Councillor Chris Pruden	For
Councillor Eddie Reeves	Against
Councillor George Reynolds	Against
Councillor Dan Sames	Against
Councillor Nigel Simpson	Against
Councillor Les Sibley	Against
Councillor Dorothy Walker	For
Councillor Amanda Watkins	For
Councillor Douglas Webb	Against
Councillor Bryn Williams	Against
Councillor Barry Wood	Against

Councillor Sean Woodcock For

The vote was won and the motion was carried.

The Chairman called for nominations for Leader of the Council. It was proposed by Councillor Woodcock and seconded by Councillor Watkins that Councillor Woodcock be appointed Leader of the Council.

In the course of the debate it was proposed by Councillor Middleton and seconded by Councillor Cotter that a recorded vote be taken.

Having been proposed and seconded, a recorded vote was duly taken and Members voted as follows:

Councillor Tom Beckett	Against
Councillor Andrew Beere	For
Councillor Rebecca Biegel	For
Councillor Maurice Billington	Against
Councillor Besmira Brasha	For
Councillor John Broad	Against
Councillor Phil Chapman	Against
Councillor Mark Cherry	For
Councillor Becky Clarke MBE	For
Councillor Patrick Clarke	Against
Councillor Jean Conway	Against
Councillor Gemma Coton	Against
Councillor Nick Cotter	Against
Councillor Isabel Creed	For
Councillor Andrew Crichton	For
Councillor Sandy Dallimore	Against
Councillor John Donaldson	Against
Councillor Donna Ford	Against
Councillor Ian Harwood	Against
Councillor David Hingley	Against
Councillor Matt Hodgson	For
Councillor Simon Holland	Against
Councillor Harry Knight	Against
Councillor Simon Lytton	Against

Councillor Kieron Mallon	Against
Councillor Nick Mawer	Against
Councillor Fiona Mawson	Against
Councillor Andrew McHugh	Against
Councillor Lesley McLean	Against
Councillor Ian Middleton	Against
Councillor Adam Nell	Against
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke	For
Councillor Lynne Parsons	For
Councillor Rob Pattenden	Against
Councillor Lynn Pratt	Against
Councillor Chris Pruden	Against
Councillor Eddie Reeves	Against
Councillor George Reynolds	Against
Councillor Dan Sames	Against
Councillor Nigel Simpson	Against
Councillor Les Sibley	Against
Councillor Dorothy Walker	Against
Councillor Amanda Watkins	For
Councillor Douglas Webb	Against
Councillor Bryn Williams	Against
Councillor Barry Wood	Against
Councillor Sean Woodcock	For

The vote was lost and the motion therefore fell.

The Chairman called for nominations for Leader of the Council. It was proposed by Councillor Wood and seconded by Councillor Nell that Councillor Wood be appointed Leader of the Council.

In the course of the debate it was proposed by Councillor Coton and seconded by Councillor Cotter that a recorded vote be taken.

Having been proposed and seconded, a recorded vote was duly taken and Members voted as follows:

Councillor Tom Beckett	Against
Councillor Andrew Beere	Against
Councillor Rebecca Biegel	Against

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Councillor Maurice Billington	For
Councillor Besmira Brasha	Against
Councillor John Broad	Against
Councillor Phil Chapman	For
Councillor Mark Cherry	Against
Councillor Becky Clarke MBE	Against
Councillor Patrick Clarke	For
Councillor Jean Conway	Against
Councillor Gemma Coton	Against
Councillor Nick Cotter	Against
Councillor Isabel Creed	Against
Councillor Andrew Crichton	Against
Councillor Sandy Dallimore	For
Councillor John Donaldson	For
Councillor Donna Ford	For
Councillor Ian Harwood	For
Councillor David Hingley	Against
Councillor Matt Hodgson	Against
Councillor Simon Holland	For
Councillor Harry Knight	For
Councillor Simon Lytton	Against
Councillor Kieron Mallon	For
Councillor Nick Mawer	For
Councillor Fiona Mawson	Against
Councillor Andrew McHugh	For
Councillor Lesley McLean	Against
Councillor Ian Middleton	Against
Councillor Adam Nell	For
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke	Against
Councillor Lynne Parsons	Against
Councillor Rob Pattenden	Against
Councillor Lynn Pratt	For
Councillor Chris Pruden	Against
Councillor Eddie Reeves	For
Councillor George Reynolds	For

Councillor Dan Sames	For
Councillor Nigel Simpson	For
Councillor Les Sibley	For
Councillor Dorothy Walker	Against
Councillor Amanda Watkins	Against
Councillor Douglas Webb	For
Councillor Bryn Williams	For
Councillor Barry Wood	For
Councillor Sean Woodcock	Against

The vote was lost and the motion therefore fell.

It was proposed by Councillor Hingley and seconded by Councillor Cotter that the meeting be adjourned to 6.30pm on Tuesday 23 May.

The proposal was debated and in the course of the debate, a procedural motion to move to the vote was proposed and seconded. On being put to the vote, the procedural motion was carried with 25 votes for, 22 votes against and no abstentions.

The procedural motion having been carried, the motion to adjourn the meeting to 6.30pm on Tuesday 23 May was put to the vote. The motion was lost with 14 votes for, 33 against and no abstentions.

It was proposed by Councillor Dallimore and seconded by Councillor Patrick Clarke that the meeting be adjourned for 30 minutes. On being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously agreed.

(The meeting adjourned at 8.15pm and reconvened at 8.45pm.)

The Chairman called for nominations for Leader of the Council. It was proposed by Councillor Wood and seconded by Councillor Nell that Councillor Wood be appointed Leader of the Council.

In the course of the debate it was proposed by Councillor Cotter and seconded by Councillor Coton that a recorded vote be taken.

Having been proposed and seconded, a recorded vote was duly taken and Members voted as follows:

Councillor Tom Beckett	Against
Councillor Andrew Beere	Against
Councillor Rebecca Biegel	Against
Councillor Maurice Billington	For

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Councillor Besmira Brasha	Against
Councillor John Broad	Against
Councillor Phil Chapman	For
Councillor Mark Cherry	Against
Councillor Becky Clarke MBE	Against
Councillor Patrick Clarke	For
Councillor Jean Conway	Against
Councillor Gemma Coton	Against
Councillor Nick Cotter	Against
Councillor Isabel Creed	Against
Councillor Andrew Crichton	Against
Councillor Sandy Dallimore	For
Councillor John Donaldson	For
Councillor Donna Ford	For
Councillor Ian Harwood	For
Councillor David Hingley	Against
Councillor Matt Hodgson	Against
Councillor Simon Holland	For
Councillor Harry Knight	For
Councillor Simon Lytton	Against
Councillor Kieron Mallon	For
Councillor Nick Mawer	For
Councillor Fiona Mawson	Against
Councillor Andrew McHugh	For
Councillor Lesley McLean	Against
Councillor Ian Middleton	Against
Councillor Adam Nell	For
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke	Against
Councillor Lynne Parsons	Against
Councillor Rob Pattenden	Against
Councillor Lynn Pratt	For
Councillor Chris Pruden	Against
Councillor Eddie Reeves	For
Councillor George Reynolds	For
Councillor Dan Sames	For

Councillor Nigel Simpson	For
Councillor Les Sibley	For
Councillor Dorothy Walker	Against
Councillor Amanda Watkins	Against
Councillor Douglas Webb	For
Councillor Bryn Williams	For
Councillor Barry Wood	For
Councillor Sean Woodcock	Against

The vote was lost and the motion therefore fell.

The Chairman called for nominations for Leader of the Council. It was proposed by Councillor Nell and seconded by Councillor Reeves that Councillor Wood be appointed Leader of the Council.

In the course of the debate it was proposed by Councillor Cotter and seconded by Councillor Coton that a recorded vote be taken.

Having been proposed and seconded, a recorded vote was duly taken and Members voted as follows:

Councillor Tom Beckett	Against
Councillor Andrew Beere	Against
Councillor Rebecca Biegel	Against
Councillor Maurice Billington	For
Councillor Besmira Brasha	Against
Councillor John Broad	Against
Councillor Phil Chapman	For
Councillor Mark Cherry	Against
Councillor Patrick Clarke	For
Councillor Jean Conway	Against
Councillor Gemma Coton	Against
Councillor Nick Cotter	Against
Councillor Isabel Creed	Against
Councillor Andrew Crichton	Against
Councillor Sandy Dallimore	For
Councillor John Donaldson	For
Councillor Donna Ford	For
Councillor Ian Harwood	For

Councillor David Hingley	Against
Councillor Matt Hodgson	Against
Councillor Simon Holland	For
Councillor Harry Knight	For
Councillor Simon Lytton	Against
Councillor Kieron Mallon	For
Councillor Nick Mawer	For
Councillor Fiona Mawson	Against
Councillor Andrew McHugh	For
Councillor Lesley McLean	Against
Councillor Ian Middleton	Against
Councillor Adam Nell	For
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke	Against
Councillor Lynne Parsons	Against
Councillor Rob Pattenden	Against
Councillor Lynn Pratt	For
Councillor Chris Pruden	Against
Councillor Eddie Reeves	For
Councillor George Reynolds	For
Councillor Dan Sames	For
Councillor Nigel Simpson	For
Councillor Les Sibley	For
Councillor Dorothy Walker	Against
Councillor Amanda Watkins	Against
Councillor Douglas Webb	For
Councillor Bryn Williams	For
Councillor Barry Wood	For
Councillor Sean Woodcock	Against

The vote was lost and the motion therefore fell.

It was subsequently proposed, seconded and carried, as set out in Minute 12, that the meeting be adjourned to 6.30pm on Tuesday 23 May 2023.

Resolved

- (1) That the results of the District Elections held on 4 May 2023 be noted:

Ward	Elected	Party
Adderbury, Bloxham and Bodicote	Robert Pattenden	Liberal Democrats
Banbury Calthorpe and Easington	Lynne Parsons	Labour
Banbury Cross and Neithrop	Becky Clarke MBE	Labour
Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown	Sean Woodcock	Labour & Co-operative
Banbury Hardwick	Besmira Brasha	Labour
Banbury Ruscote	Isabel Amelia Creed	Labour
Bicester East	Tom Beckett	Green
Bicester North and Caversfield	Simon Lytton	Liberal Democrats
Bicester South and Ambrosden	Nick Cotter	Liberal Democrats
Bicester West	Harry Knight	Independent – Bicester West Resident
Cropredy, Sibfords and Wroxton	Doug Webb	Conservative
Deddington	Andrew McHugh	Conservative
Fringford and Heyfords	Nigel Simpson	Conservative
Kidlington East	Ian Middleton	Green
Kidlington West	Lesley McLean	Liberal Democrat
Launton and Otmoor	Julian Nedelcu	Liberal Democrats

- (2) That the current constitution of the Council (48 Members) be noted:
- 20 Conservative (41.67%)
 - 12 Labour / Labour & Co-operative Party (25.00%)
 - 10 Liberal Democrat (20.83%)
 - 3 Independent (6.25%)
 - 3 Green (6.25%)
- (3) That the constitution of Political Groups and notification of Group Leaders be noted:
- Conservative Group – 20 members (all Conservative councillors)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Barry Wood
 - Progressive Oxfordshire Group – 14 members (comprising 10 Liberal Democrat, 3 Green and 1 Independent (Cllr Broad) councillors)
 - Group Leader: Councillor David Hingley

- Labour Group – 12 members (comprising all Labour / Labour & Co-operative councillors)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Sean Woodcock
- Independent Group – 2 members (comprising 2 Independent councillors, Cllrs Sibley and Knight)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Les Sibley

12 **Adjournment of Meeting**

Having been proposed by Councillor Hingley and seconded by Councillor Cotter that the meeting be adjourned to 6.30pm on Tuesday 23 May 2023.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried 24 votes for, 22 votes against and no abstentions. .

Resolved

- (1) That the meeting be adjourned to 6.30pm on Tuesday 23 May 2023.

The Chairman confirmed that the remaining recommendations of the Annual Business report, the Member Development Framework report and the Annual Report of the Accounts, Audits and Risk Committee 2022/23 would be considered when the meeting reconvened on Tuesday 23 May.

The meeting ended at 10.10 pm

Chairman:

Date: