

## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Council**

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 16 October 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 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 Dr 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 Julian Nedelcu  
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 Maurice Billington

Officers:

Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities  
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer  
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer  
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Officers Attending Virtually:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive  
Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources  
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director Wellbeing & Housing  
Mona Walsh, Assistant Director - Property

## 28 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 29 **Communications**

### **Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke**

On behalf of Council, the Chairman congratulated Councillor Dr Okeke on his recent marriage and wished him and his wife all the best for their future.

### **Meeting Etiquette**

The Chairman asked councillors to be respectful of each other when addressing the meeting and out of courtesy, to remain in their seat during items. If necessary, the Chairman would adjourn the meeting to allow for a comfort break at a suitable point.

### **Chairman's Engagements**

A copy of the events attended by the Chairman was published with the agenda. The Chairman reminded Members that his fundraising dinner to raise money for his charity, Alexandra House of Joy, would be taking place on Saturday 18 November.

### **Members' Allowance Survey**

The Chairman referred to the annual survey on Members' allowances. A paper copy had been given to all councillors and a link to complete the survey online would be emailed.

All councillors were encouraged to complete the survey as the feedback was valued by the Independent Remuneration Panel when considering its recommendations on Members' Allowances. The Panel's recommendations for the 2024/25 Allowance Scheme would be submitted to the 26 February 2024 Council meeting.

### **Members' Pigeon Holes**

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

### 30 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

### 31 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

### 32 **Minutes of Council**

Subject to the correction of her/she to his/her against Councillor Middleton under Minute 19, Declarations of Interest, the spelling correction of Councillor McClean, under Minutes 25, Appointment of Representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the spelling correction of Councillor Hingley under Minute 26, Motions, the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 33 **Minutes**

#### **a) Minutes of the Executive, Portfolio Holder Decisions and Executive Decisions made under Special Urgency**

#### **Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive and Portfolio Holder decisions as set out in the Minute Book be received and that it be noted that since the last meeting of Council at which this was report, on 17 July 2023, no key or exempt decisions have been taken by the Executive which were not included in the 28 day notice.

#### **b) Minutes of Committees**

#### **Resolved**

That the minutes of Committees as set out in the Minute Book be received.

34 **Questions**

**a) Written Questions**

There were no written questions.

**b) Questions to the Leader of the Council**

Questions were asked and answers received on the following issues:

Councillor Okeke: Empty properties in Banbury Town Centre

Councillor Biegel: E-scooter safety in Cherwell

Councillor Watkins: Working with Parish Councils to reduce food waste and distribute surplus food

Councillor Cherry: CCTV on Bretch Hill update

Councillor Mallon: Banbury Food for Charities

Councillor Mawer: Israel – Gaza war

Councillor Creed: Charging benches in Princess Diana Park

Councillor Middleton: Affordable housing threshold on sites within the draft Cherwell Local Plan

Councillor Hingley: Concerns from rural parishes regarding suspected drug dealing

**c) Questions to Committee Chairmen on the Minutes**

There were no questions to Committee Chairman on the minutes of meetings.

35 **Calendar of Meetings 2024/2025**

The Assistant Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer submitted a report for Council is asked to consider and agree the proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2024/2025.

In response to a Member comment regarding an incorrect date, the Monitoring Officer suggested Council agree to delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer to make any necessary amendments to the meeting calendar.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the calendar of meetings for Cherwell District Council for the municipal year 2024/2025 be agreed.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer to made any necessary amendments to the calendar.

36 **Amendment to Committee Membership**

The Chairman referred to the agenda which set out that the Labour Group Leader, Councillor Woodcock, had notified the Proper Officer of a Labour Group committee membership change.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the following Labour Group committee membership amendment be noted:

Appeals Panel  
Remove – Councillor Sean Woodcock  
Add – Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke

Personnel Committee  
Remove – Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke  
Add – Councillor Sean Woodcock

37 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**Resolved**

That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that they could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

38 **Town Centre House**

The Corporate Director Resources submitted an exempt report in relation to Town Centre House.

**Resolved**

- (1) As set out in the exempt Minutes.

39 **Readmittance of the Press and Public**

**Resolved**

That the press and public be readmitted to the meeting.

## **Motions**

The Chairman advised that three motions had been submitted. No amendments to any of the motions had been submitted. In line with the Constitution, no amendments were now permitted.

### **Motion One: Cherwell Community Climate Forum**

It was proposed by Councillor Cherry and seconded by Councillor Hodgson that the following motion be adopted:

“The council notes Cherwell District Council declared a climate emergency in 2019.

Since that declaration, every month brings news of another extreme weather event and associated loss of life and habitat. Anthropogenic global heating is a reality and we are now catching a glimpse of its devastating consequences. Worse is certainly yet to come.

It is paramount, therefore, that communities work together to attempt to mitigate the worst effects of this very great threat to all life on this planet, and that residents are provided with opportunities to have positive, meaningful and actionable input into Cherwell District Council’s necessarily evolving and adapting climate action plan.

This Council asks the Executive to:

- Initially undertake a one-off community forum, inviting local residents and representatives from local climate-action groups, with the aim to best map out the future agenda of Cherwell’s climate response.
- Action by January 2024.
- Consider how best to continue community engagement regularly thereafter.”

No amendments to the motion having been proposed, the motion was debated as submitted. On being put to the vote the motion was carried unanimously.

### **Motion Two: Retrofitting**

It was proposed by Councillor Woodcock and seconded by Councillor Okeke that the following motion be adopted:

“In the Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map & Action Plan presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2023, CDC commits Net Zero Target for the District by 2030 which includes the Domestic Energy Sector. It was noted in the original Tenant Charter presented in the Full Council meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2022 that 50% of properties in Cherwell do not meet basic energy efficiency standards. It is most likely that without retrofitting, the CDC's commitments to Net Zero will not be met.

Retrofitting properties not only ensures that CDC meets its Net Zero Target commitments and makes the Council-adopted Tenant Charter more beneficial to the residents, but it will also create jobs in the district.

This Council calls on the Executive to:

- Develop a retrofitting action plan for council-owned housing, showing how it will become carbon neutral by 2030.
- Engage with relevant partners to investigate retrofitting prospects across the district, spanning retrofitting properties in social housing, privately rented and owner-occupied.
- Acknowledge the benefit of retrofitting to the economy
- Seek relevant possible funding sources to advance this work.
- With the consent of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, this work is included within the Climate Action group.”

No amendments to the motion having been proposed, the motion was debated as submitted. On being put to the vote the motion was carried unanimously.

### **Motion Three: Facilitating Sport and Leisure in our District**

It was proposed by Councillor Simpson and seconded by Councillor Chapman that the following motion be adopted:

“This Council has always believed with cross Party support, that the provision of quality and affordable Sport and Leisure facilities are integral to the quality of life enjoyed by our residents. There is a strong connection between health, wellbeing and fitness. Healthy bodies, healthy minds.

This Council further believes that proactive forward planning for either refurbished or new additional projects is essential and that this requires active engagement with Members, Parish and Town Councils, and the Sports and Leisure stakeholders both local and national as appropriate.

The Council notes the current Leisure facilities forward plan that includes:

- \* modernisation of the Fitness changing rooms at Kidlington Leisure Centre.
- \* remedial works to cure roof leaks at Spiceball Leisure Centre.
- \* replacement of gym equipment at all the Leisure Centres in December.
- \* work for a new swimming pool at Bicester - the first phase feasibility study is now completed.
- \* Pre application planning advice now underway for the North Oxfordshire Academy 3G Pitch.
- \* redevelopment of the swimming pool changing facilities at Woodgreen.

\* work on the provision of a new seated spectator area at NOA.

\* work on the design proposals for pitches and pavilion at Graven Hill.

The Council requests that the Leader and Officers consider allocating an all Member briefing to this topic and also making it an agenda item for the next Parish Liaison Meeting.”

No amendments to the motion having been proposed, the motion was debated as submitted. On being put to the vote the motion was carried unanimously.

### **Resolved**

(1) That the following motion be adopted:

“The council notes Cherwell District Council declared a climate emergency in 2019.

Since that declaration, every month brings news of another extreme weather event and associated loss of life and habitat. Anthropogenic global heating is a reality and we are now catching a glimpse of its devastating consequences. Worse is certainly yet to come.

It is paramount, therefore, that communities work together to attempt to mitigate the worst effects of this very great threat to all life on this planet, and that residents are provided with opportunities to have positive, meaningful and actionable input into Cherwell District Council’s necessarily evolving and adapting climate action plan.

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- Action by January 2024.
- Consider how best to continue community engagement regularly thereafter.”

(2) That the following motion be adopted:

“In the Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map & Action Plan presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2023, CDC commits Net Zero Target for the District by 2030 which includes the Domestic Energy Sector. It was noted in the original Tenant Charter presented in the Full Council meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2022 that 50% of properties in Cherwell do not meet basic energy efficiency standards. It is most likely that without retrofitting, the CDC's commitments to Net Zero will not be met. Retrofitting properties not only ensures that CDC meets its Net Zero Target commitments and



makes the Council-adopted Tenant Charter more beneficial to the residents, but it will also create jobs in the district.

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- Engage with relevant partners to investigate retrofitting prospects across the district, spanning retrofitting properties in social housing, privately rented and owner-occupied.
- Acknowledge the benefit of retrofitting to the economy
- Seek relevant possible funding sources to advance this work.
- With the consent of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, this work is included within the Climate Action group.”

(3) That the following motion be adopted:

“This Council has always believed with cross Party support, that the provision of quality and affordable Sport and Leisure facilities are integral to the quality of life enjoyed by our residents. There is a strong connection between health, wellbeing and fitness. Healthy bodies, healthy minds.

This Council further believes that proactive forward planning for either refurbished or new additional projects is essential and that this requires active engagement with Members, Parish and Town Councils, and the Sports and Leisure stakeholders both local and national as appropriate.

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- \* Pre application planning advice now underway for the North Oxfordshire Academy 3G Pitch.
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- \* work on the provision of a new seated spectator area at NOA.

\* work on the design proposals for pitches and pavilion at Graven Hill.

The Council requests that the Leader and Officers consider allocating an all Member briefing to this topic and also making it an agenda item for the next Parish Liaison Meeting.”

The meeting ended at 8.50 pm

Chairman:

Date: