

Cherwell District Council

Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 13 December 2021 at 6.30 pm

Present, in person:

Councillor Les Sibley (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair)

Councillor John Broad
Councillor Ian Corkin
Councillor Shaida Hussain
Councillor Tony Ilott
Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes
Councillor Andrew McHugh
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Perran Moon
Councillor Richard Mould
Councillor Lynn Pratt
Councillor George Reynolds
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Fraser Webster
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Present virtually (no voting rights):

Councillor Andrew Beere
Councillor Nathan Bignell
Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Mike Bishop
Councillor Hugo Brown
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Mark Cherry
Councillor Colin Clarke
Councillor Patrick Clarke
Councillor Conrad Copeland
Councillor Nick Cotter
Councillor Sandy Dallimore
Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Carmen Griffiths
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Councillor Matt Hodgson
Councillor Simon Holland
Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Kieron Mallon
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Adam Nell
Councillor Cassi Perry

Councillor Barry Richards
Councillor Dan Sames
Councillor Jason Slaymaker
Councillor Katherine Tyson
Councillor Dorothy Walker
Councillor Tom Wallis
Councillor Bryn Williams

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Hannah Banfield
Councillor Tony Mephram
Councillor Lucinda Wing

Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Bill Cotton, Corporate Director Environment and Place
Steve Jorden, Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets & Investment
Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Anita Bradley, Director Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

45

Welcome

The Vice-Chairman welcomed councillors and officers, whether attending virtually or in person, to the meeting.

The Vice-Chairman advised that the Chair was unwell and he would therefore be chairing the meeting. On behalf of Council, the Vice-Chairman extended best wishes to the Chair.

The Vice-Chairman explained that in light of the new COVID measures, to ensure that the council followed the guidance, protected public health, minimised risk whilst complying with the statutory requirements for formal meetings, a hybrid meeting was being held. To enable decisions to be made, a quorum of councillors, with each Group represented, were attending the meeting in person in the Chamber and all other councillors are attending virtually. Only the councillors in the Chamber may propose, second and vote but all councillors may speak on items.

The Vice-Chairman confirmed Cllr Webster was representing the Independent Group and that he would abstain from speaking on items and voting.

46

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

47 **Communications**

The Vice-Chairman made the following announcements:

Chair's Engagements

A copy of the events he or the Chair had attended was published with the agenda.

Addressing Council, length of speeches and voting

The Vice-Chairman reminded councillors of the length of speeches and the approach he would apply with regards seconders speaking on reports and motions.

48 **Thames Valley Police - Address by Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable**

The Vice-Chairman welcomed the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley, Matthew Barber, Chief Constable John Campbell and Superintendent Emma Garside, Thames Valley Police, to the meeting and invited them to address Council regarding policing in Thames Valley.

Following the presentation, the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable and Superintendent Garside answered questions Members had submitted in advance of the meeting and some supplementary questions.

The Vice-Chairman thanked the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable and Superintendent Garside for their attendance.

49 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

50 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

51 **Minutes of Council**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

52 **Minutes**

- a) **Minutes of the Executive, Lead Member Decisions and Executive Decisions made under Special Urgency**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive and Lead Member decisions as set out in the Minute Book be received and that it be noted that since the last meeting of Council held on 18 October 2021, one key decision has been taken by the Executive which was not included in the 28 day notice, an exempt decision relating to Castle Quay.

b) Minutes of Committees

Resolved

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

53

Questions

a) Written Questions

The Vice-Chairman advised Council that one written question, addressed to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Wood, had been submitted with advance notice in accordance with the Constitution and had been published with the agenda. A response to the question had been published as a supplement to the agenda (and are an annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book).

The question was from Councillor Cherry and in relation to the Sunshine Centre, Banbury.

Councillor Cherry thanked the Leader for the response and confirmed he did not have a supplementary question.

b) Questions to the Leader of the Council

Questions were asked and answers received on the following issues:

Councillor Middleton: Oxford Cambridge Arc

Councillor Woodcock: Virtual formal committee meetings

c) Questions to Committee Chairmen on the Minutes

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

54

Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Discounts 2022-2023

The Director of Finance submitted a report which, following the recommendation of Executive at their 6 December 2021 meeting, sought approval of the proposed levels of Council Tax discounts for the financial year 2022-23 and the banded scheme for Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the financial year 2022-23.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report and any financial implications for the Council.
- (2) That the following be agreed:
 - the option of no-change to the Council Tax Reduction Income Banded Scheme for Working Age Customers for 2022-23;
 - to amend the Working Age Regulations in line with annual uprating; and
 - to amend the Council Tax Regulations for pensioners in line with uprating announced by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- (3) That it be agreed that the levels of Council Tax discounts and premiums for 2022- 23 remain unchanged and remain as follows
 - Retain the discount for second homes at zero
 - Retain the discount for empty homes (unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) at 25% for 6 months and thereafter zero.
 - Retain the empty homes premium of an additional 100% for properties that have remained empty for more than 2 years.

55

Standards Arrangements - Appointment of Independent Persons

The Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer submitted a report to appoint statutory Independent Persons as part of the standards arrangements following a recruitment process.

Resolved

- (1) That Mr Graham Matthews be appointed as an Independent Person pursuant to section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011 for a term of four years expiring on the date of the December meeting of Council in 2025.
- (2) That Mr Tom Edwards be appointed as an Independent Person pursuant to section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011 for a term of four years expiring on the date of the December meeting of Council in 2025.
- (3) That it be noted that the appointment of the Independent Persons may be renewable in 2025 for a further term of four years subject to the Independent Persons wishing to continue in the role and Council agreeing the renewal of the appointment.

56

Delegation to Appoint External Auditor

The Director of Finance submitted a report which requested the Council to agree how external auditors will be appointed from the financial year 2023/24.

Resolved

- (1) That it be agreed to allow Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) to appoint external auditors on behalf of the Council.

57 **Amendments to Committee Membership**

The Vice-Chairman invited the Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor Woodcock, to advise Council of an amendment to Labour Group committee membership.

Resolved

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

Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee

Remove: Councillor Matt Hodgson

Add: Councillor Andy Beere

58 **Amendment to Outside Body Representative**

The Vice-Chairman reported that Councillor Donaldson had been appointed the council's representative to the to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the 19 May 2021 Annual Council meeting. Councillor Donaldson had advised that, due to other commitments, he was no longer able to act as the council's representative and it was therefore necessary to appoint a new representative.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Sandy Dallimore be appointed as the council's representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

59 **Motions**

The Vice-Chairman advised that one motion had been submitted. Not amendments to the motion had been submitted. In line with the Constitution, no amendments to the motion were now permitted.

Climate Change Emergency Response

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

“The COP26 Glasgow Climate Pact recognises the crucial role of local authorities in addressing and responding to climate change, and the urgent need for multilevel cooperation with, and active involvement of, local communities in designing and implementing action on climate change.

Shortly before COP26, the Government published its Net Zero Strategy report, including the proposal to establish a Net Zero Forum to coordinate with local councils.

The report recommended that Government should work with local authorities on a net zero delivery framework, establishing roles and responsibilities for local and central government and recognising the critical part local councils play in delivering a just transition to zero carbon. However it also noted that there was no clear commitment to a significant level of long-term government funding to facilitate this.

Therefore, as part of our climate change emergency response, this council resolves to :

1. Recognise a hierarchy of action with direct investment in facilities, infrastructure and changes to services first, and off-setting as a last resort.
2. Ensure critical enabling processes, such as planning policy and appraisal methodologies are aligned to zero carbon pathways in accordance with national planning policy where required.
3. Request that the Leader lobby government for predictable and long-term funding settlements to help realise effective local delivery of climate action goals.”

No amendments to the motion having been proposed, the motion was debated as submitted. On being put to the vote the motion was lost and therefore fell.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm

Chairman:

Date: