

## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Council**

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 18 December 2017 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Maurice Billington (Chairman)  
Councillor Jolanta Lis (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Andrew Beere  
Councillor Mike Bishop  
Councillor Hugo Brown  
Councillor Mark Cherry  
Councillor Colin Clarke  
Councillor Ian Corkin  
Councillor Nick Cotter  
Councillor Surinder Dhesi  
Councillor John Donaldson  
Councillor Sean Gaul  
Councillor Chris Heath  
Councillor Simon Holland  
Councillor David Hughes  
Councillor Shaida Hussain  
Councillor Tony Ilott  
Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes  
Councillor James Macnamara  
Councillor Kieron Mallon  
Councillor Nicholas Mawer  
Councillor Andrew McHugh  
Councillor Alastair Milne-Home  
Councillor Nigel Morris  
Councillor Richard Mould  
Councillor D M Pickford  
Councillor Lynn Pratt  
Councillor G A Reynolds  
Councillor Barry Richards  
Councillor Dan Sames  
Councillor Nigel Simpson  
Councillor Jason Slaymaker  
Councillor Barry Wood  
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Apologies  
for  
absence: Councillor David Anderson  
Councillor Ken Atack  
Councillor Hannah Banfield  
Councillor Claire Bell  
Councillor Carmen Griffiths  
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE  
Councillor Alan MacKenzie-Wintle  
Councillor Neil Prestidge

Councillor Sandra Rhodes  
Councillor Les Sibley  
Councillor Nicholas Turner  
Councillor Tom Wallis  
Councillor Douglas Webb  
Councillor Bryn Williams

Officers: Ian Davies, Director of Operational Delivery  
Paul Sutton, Executive Director: Finance and Governance /  
Section 151 Officer  
James Doble, Assistant Director - Transformational  
Governance / Monitoring Officer  
Natasha Clark, Interim Democratic and Elections Manager

## 58 **Declarations of Interest**

12. Bespoke / Custom Build Mortgage Bridging Loan Fund.  
Councillor Ian Corkin, Declaration, as a Non Executive Director on Graven Hill Village Development Company Limited and would leave the meeting for the duration of the item.

20. Acquisition of Castle Quay.  
Councillor Surinder Dhesi, Conflict of Interest, as an employee of Marks and Spencer and would participate in the debate but abstain from voting of the item.

## 59 **Communications**

### **Chief Executive**

The Chairman advised Council that the Chief Executive was unable to attend the meeting evening as her father had sadly passed away at the weekend. The Chairman and all Members extended their condolences to the Chief Executive and her family at this sad time.

### **Honorary Alderman Fred Blackwell**

The Chairman advised Members that Honorary Alderman Fred Blackwell had passed away on 13 December 2017. Honorary Alderman Blackwell had been a councillor for Cherwell and its predecessor authority, Banbury Borough Council, for 45 years, standing down in 2016.

Honorary Alderman Blackwell served as Cherwell's chairman for two years from 1981 to 1983 and the title of Honorary Alderman was conferred on him on 18 July 2016 in recognition of his decades of dedication to the district.

Members paid tribute to Honorary Alderman Blackwell sharing personal anecdotes and memories.

Council observed a period of silence in memory of Honorary Alderman Blackwell.

### **Chairman's Dinner**

The Chairman advised that his Charity Dinner on Saturday 10 March at Exeter Hall, Kidlington was now sold out and there was a waiting list. The Chairman advised that donations could be made and thanked Members who were unable to attend and had already made a donation explaining that all proceeds would go to the charities I was supporting as Chairman.

### **Chairman's Engagements**

A list of engagements attended by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman since the last meeting of Council was published as part of the agenda.

### **Post**

The Chairman reminded Members to collect any post from pigeon holes.

### **Festive Greetings**

The Chairman wished a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all Members and Officers.

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

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

## 61 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

## 62 **Minutes of Council**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendments:

**Attendance:** Change Councillor David Hughes from "Apologies for Absence" to "Present as Expected"

### **Minute 46: Motions**

*Amend and replace the following words of the first paragraph under the following motion:*

#### **b) Condition of BT Phones Boxes in the District**

It was moved by Councillor ~~Wood~~ Gaul, and seconded by Councillor ~~Hussain~~ Wood, that the following motion be adopted:

## 63 **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 on 16 October 2017 one decision had been taken which were not included in the 28 day notice relating to: Retail Unit A4, Block A Pioneer Square, Bicester.

**b) Minutes of Committees**

**Resolved**

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

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**Thames Valley Police - Address by Chief Constable**

The Chairman welcomed the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley, Anthony Stansfeld, the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police, Francis Habgood, and the Cherwell Local Area Deputy Commander Chief Inspector Emma Garside, to the meeting.

The Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable Habgood addressed the meeting regarding policing in Thames Valley. A number of Members asked questions and answers were duly provided.

The Chairman thanked the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable and Chief Inspector Garside.

65

**Questions**

**a) Written Questions**

The Chairman advised Council that one written question had been submitted with advance notice in accordance with the Constitution. The question was from Councillor Richards and addressed to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Wood, and was in relation to the council's housing waiting list. A written answer had been tabled at the meeting (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book).

Councillor Richards asked a supplementary question to which an answer was duly given.

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

Questions were asked and answers received on the following issues:

Councillor Ilott: Provision of a "changing place" facility in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington

Councillor Beere: Business Rates Retention Scheme

Councillor Cherry: Former Lincoln House Care Home

Councillor Dhesi: Vehicles parked illegally on double yellow lines in Banbury

Councillor Dhesi: Council owned car parks not being gritted during the recent snow

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

The following question was asked to Committee Chairmen on the minutes of meetings:

Councillor Reynolds to the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to Minute 32 of the 10 October 2017 meeting: Reference to the survey for parishes on mobile phone signals and ensuring county councillors are kept up to date. In the absence of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Wood responded to the question.

66

## **Motions**

### **Social Media**

It was moved by Councillor Mallon and seconded by Councillor Cotter that the following motion be adopted:

*“We as elected members of this council deplore the use of social media to denigrate members of the public and elected members at all levels of public life.*

In the words of the Prime Minister:

*“All of us should have due care and attention to the way we refer to other people and should show those within public life the respect they deserve.”*

And in the words of the Leader of Her Majesty’s opposition:

*“So I say to all activists, cut the personal abuse, cut the cyber bullying online.”*

We therefore pledge that as elected members and representatives of our political parties we will:

- not ourselves misuse social media;
- seek out and stop any personal attacks by our own political parties, the elected members of our parties, paid up members and activists of our political parties; and
- show due respect to the people we represent and to our elected colleagues.”

### **Resolved**

That the following motion be adopted:

We pledge that as elected members and representatives of our political parties we will:

- not ourselves misuse social media;

- seek out and stop any personal attacks by our own political parties, the elected members of our parties, paid up members and activists of our political parties; and
- show due respect to the people we represent and to our elected colleagues.

67 **Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2018-2019 and Council Tax Discounts 2018-2019**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report to provide members with an update on the consultation process that had taken place on the proposals for a Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2018-2019 and to seek approval for a Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the year 2018-2019 on the recommendation of the Executive and Budget Planning Committee.

The report also provided members with an update of Council Tax discounts and sought approval for the Council Tax discounts for the year 2018-19.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) for the year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 as set out in the annex to the Minutes (as set out in the Minute Book) be approved and implemented with effect from 1 April 2018.
- (2) That delegated authority be granted to the Section 151 Officer to make further amendments to the CTRS Regulations up to and including 31 January 2018 in consultation with the Lead Member for Financial Management.
- (3) That, having given due consideration, the following level of Council Tax discounts for 2018-2019 be approved:
  - 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 at zero.
  - Retain the discount for empty homes undergoing major repair at 25% for 12 months and thereafter at zero.
  - Retain the empty homes premium of an additional 50% for properties that have remained empty for more than 2 years.

68 **Bespoke / Custom Build Mortgage Bridging Loan Fund**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report to consider the creation of a capital budget for a pilot scheme of 10 bridging loans available to self-builders qualifying for mortgages under the Arlingclose Bespoke/Custom Build Mortgage scheme which will be considered by Executive in January 2018.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the creation of a capital budget of up to £2,500,000 to be made available in the event that Executive agree the business case for the pilot scheme in January 2018 be approved.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer to approve the final amount of each individual loan within the pilot scheme and the form of the loan agreements to facilitate those loans.

69

### **Constitutional Amendments and Review of Constitutional and Governance Arrangements**

The Assistant Director Transformational Governance / Monitoring Officer submitted a report to amend the terms of reference of the Joint Commissioning Committee (JCC), to delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer to reassign to the officer scheme of delegation in light of the newly agreed senior management structure and to agree the proposed approach to review constitutional and governance arrangements.

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That agreement be given to amend the terms of reference of the Joint Commissioning Committee to include the determination of terms and conditions and the determination of HR policies, the creation of new posts where there is an increase to the establishment and no budget and the restructuring of teams involving more than ten posts for all staff employed by Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Councils.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chief Executive, to reassign the officer scheme of delegation in accordance with the new senior management structure as agreed by the Joint Commissioning Committee to add the proposed delegations relating to Primary Authority status, restructures of ten posts or less and updates to the spatial planning delegations and to amend the constitution accordingly.
- (3) That officers be requested to carry out a review of constitutional and governance arrangements for discussion and consideration by group leaders.

70

### **Community Governance Review - Graven Hill**

The Chief Executive submitted a report to agree to carry out a Community Governance Review (CGR) as soon as practical to consult on the principle of including the development of Graven Hill within the boundaries of Bicester Town Council.

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That agreement be given to hold a Community Governance Review as soon as practical to consult on the principle of including the

development site of Graven Hill within the boundary of Bicester Town Council.

71 **Calendar of Meetings 2018/19**

The Assistant Director – Transformational Governance submitted a report for Council to consider the calendars of meetings for the municipal year 2018/19.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the calendar of meetings for Cherwell District Council (CDC) for the municipal year 2018/19 (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (2) That the joint committees calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2018/19 (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved, subject to similar agreement by South Northamptonshire Council.

72 **Local Government Ombudsman Annual Report 2016/17**

The Assistant Director – Transformational Governance and Monitoring Officer submitted a report to provide council with the Local Government Ombudsman's annual report on Cherwell District Council for the financial year 2016/17.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the report be noted.

73 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**Resolved**

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the ground that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

74 **Questions on Exempt Minutes**

There were no questions on exempt minutes.

75 **Retail Unit A4, Block A Pioneer Square, Bicester**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted an exempt report relating to Retail Unit A4, Block A Pioneer Square, Bicester.

**Resolved**

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

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**Acquisition of Castle Quay**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted an exempt report relating to the acquisition of Castle Quay.

**Resolved**

- (1) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (2) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (3) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (4) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (5) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (6) As set out in the exempt minutes.
- (7) As set out in the exempt minutes.

The meeting ended at 10.10 pm

Chairman:

Date: