

**URGENT BUSINESS AND SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION****Council****16 December 2024**

Agenda Item Number	Page	Title	Officer Responsible	Reason Not Included with Original Agenda
4.	N/A	<p>Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting</p> <p>There are no petitions or requests to address the meeting. The deadline for petitions and requests has now passed.</p>	N/A	Deadline for requests to address the meeting after agenda publication
8.	(Pages 3 - 6)	<p>Questions</p> <p>Responses to submitted written questions</p>	N/A	As set out in the Constitution, responses to written questions are published on the working day before the meeting
15.	(Pages 7 - 8)	<p>Motions</p> <p>An amendment has been submitted on the following motion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flooding <p>No amendments have been submitted on the following motions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfordshire County Council expenditure of development monies • Government change to Inheritance Tax treatment of farmland 	N/A	Deadline to submit amendments to motions after agenda publication

If you need any further information about the meeting please contact Natasha Clark, Democratic and Elections democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, 01295 221534

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Council

Monday 16 December 2024

Written Questions – responses from the Leader

Question From: Councillor Eddie Reeves

Question To: Leader of the Council, Councillor David Hingley

Topic: Small Business Champion

Question

“Small businesses, especially those in our retail and hospitality sectors, are the lifeblood of our local economy. They keep our town centres and larger village centres alive.

Regrettably, the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council has so far refused to appoint a Small Business Champion to act a single point of contact for local businesses concerned about the impact of *that* Council’s policies on their trade.

Will the Leader of *this* Council now appoint a Small Business Champion, drawn from an opposition political group, to ensure that businesses across Banbury, Bicester and our larger villages have a meaningful voice in local decision-making?”

Response from the Leader

According to the Councils constitution (10.7), Member Champions will only be appointed in support of policies and objectives where not directly covered by existing Executive portfolios. The Council’s responsible Executive member supporting local economic growth, including for small businesses, is the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Property & Regeneration, and of course all elected members are a point of contact for businesses within their own wards (with officer support available, as required)

On behalf of the Council, officers (especially the economic growth service) provide a point of contact for all businesses throughout the district, for inward investors, and for residents starting businesses or seeking work/careers with local employers.

In 2024/25, the Council has also - through its UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) – offered support to Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) throughout the district through, including:

Support programme for pre-start and start-up businesses – Cherwell Business Spark.

Support programme for growing SMEs – Cherwell Business Accelerator.

Rural Business Grants (REPF for small and micro businesses).

Economic Forum – in addition to day-to-day contact, an annual event for the Council to engage with key employers and partners.

Cherwell Business Awards - Headline sponsorship to engage all businesses and to champion/spread best practices.

Business Needs Survey – occasional detail research to identify the assistance required by businesses - to inform projects and services to respond to those needs.

Vacant premises survey – to identify and facilitate the restoration of business premises in our urban centres to become available for businesses to occupy.

Decarbonisation support – to engage with businesses through a Sustainable Business Development Officer, and to provide free carbon assessments and tailored decarbonisation plans.

The Council also works in partnership with local business networks, attending and supporting events (subject to available resources).

Question From: Councillor Donna Ford

Question To: Leader of the Council, Councillor David Hingley

Topic: Local banking Facilities

Question

“Further to Cllr Pruden's motion of 18 December 2023, please confirm what, if any, positive action has been taken to improve access to local banking facilities, especially for our vulnerable and elderly residents?”

Response from the Leader

Officers met with Cllr Pruden shortly after the motion to discuss next steps.

This included continuing to market empty units within our commercial estate. At this point, no banking services providers have approached the council seeking additional space in any of our assets.

In terms of current provision, Post Offices continue to provide local access to a range of essential banking facilities including savings, banking, borrowing and money transfers.

There are 5 post offices in Banbury, 5 post offices in Bicester and 5 post offices in and around the Kidlington area (including Bletchington and Cutteslowe). There is a Post Office concession within WHSmith at Castle Quay.

A number of village centres also have post offices which provide banking facilities across the rural areas of Cherwell.

Importantly, this council extended its money advice service through Citizens Advice in September 2024.

The money advice service access is predominantly through telephone or online however there is a drop-in service at hubs. It has been well used by residents facing financial hardship who may not be able to access other forms of financial advice and support and was extended through to 2026, in September 2024.

Question From: Councillor Donna Ford

Question To: Leader of the Council, Councillor David Hingley

Topic: Oxfordshire County Council Recycling Centres

Question

“Can you confirm if this council was consulted by Oxfordshire County council before they brought in compulsory advance booking for visiting the county’s recycling centres?”

Response from the Leader

Officers in Environmental Services were made aware through the Oxfordshire recycling and waste partnership of the proposed changes to Household Waste Recycling Centres to introduce a booking system for all visits. We are not aware of a formal consultation with the Council.

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Council

Monday 16 December 2024

Motions with proposed amendment

Topic	Proposer	Seconder
Flooding	Cllr Kieron Mallon	Cllr Andrew McHugh

No amendments have been proposed on the following motions:

- Oxfordshire County Council expenditure of development monies
- Government change to Inheritance Tax treatment of farmland

The deadline to submit has now passed and no further amendments are now permitted.

Motion as submitted:

Motion Proposer: Councillor Kieron Mallon

Motion Seconder: Councillor Andrew McHugh

Topic: Flooding

Motion

“Storm Bert brought significant flooding across the district. The flooding brought with it contamination of groundwater with sewage which then spilt onto roads and property across the district.

It is accepted that, in many cases, the sewage and drainage infrastructure is not able to cope with the new and increasing volumes of rainwater. However, the problems of flooding with inadequate infrastructure are compounded by a lack of routine maintenance. In the face of increased volumes of rainwater. We note that the number of gully’s cleaned by Oxfordshire County Council each year has dropped significantly over the last five years. It becomes more urgent for the county council, who have the primary responsibility for this, to increase their routine maintenance of drainage gullies, and where necessary, install drainage sumps to cope with increased water flows.

We call on the leader of the Council to write to The Leader and Chief Executive of Oxfordshire County Council to urge Oxfordshire County Council to do more to alleviate the misery caused to Cherwell residents by increasing their flood prevention activities such as gully clearance. Furthermore, we call on the county council to initiate a program of proactive gully clearance, and any other prophylactic measures that may be deemed necessary, at known flooding hotspots on receipt of severe weather warnings.”

Proposer of Amendment: Councillor Lesley McLean

Seconder of Amendment: TBC

Motion with Amendments

“Storm Bert brought significant flooding across the district. The flooding brought with it contamination of groundwater with sewage which then spilt onto roads and property across the district.

~~It is accepted that, in many cases, the sewage and drainage infrastructure is not able to cope with the new and increasing volumes of rainwater. However, the problems of flooding with inadequate infrastructure are compounded by a lack of routine maintenance. The recent flood events have illustrated that our existing infrastructure is inadequate~~ in the face of increased volumes of rainwater.

We note that the number of gully’s cleaned by Oxfordshire County Council each year has dropped significantly over the last five years. It becomes more urgent for the county council, who have the primary responsibility for this and flood mitigation plans, to ~~increase-review~~ their ~~routine~~ maintenance routine of drainage gullies, and where necessary, install drainage sumps to cope with increased water flows.

We call on the leader of the Council to write to The Leader and Chief Executive of Oxfordshire County Council to urge Oxfordshire County Council to do more to alleviate the ~~misery caused~~ risk to Cherwell residents by increasing their flood prevention activities such as gully clearance.

Furthermore, we call on the county council to initiate a program of proactive gully clearance, and any other ~~prophylactic~~ measures that may be deemed necessary to protect our residents, ~~at known flooding hotspots on receipt of severe weather warnings.~~”

CLEAN VERSION OF MOTION WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

“Storm Bert brought significant flooding across the district. The flooding brought with it contamination of groundwater with sewage which then spilt onto roads and property across the district.

The recent flood events have illustrated that our existing infrastructure is inadequate in the face of increased volumes of water.

We note that the number of gully’s cleaned by Oxfordshire County Council each year has dropped significantly over the last five years. It becomes more urgent for the county council, who have the primary responsibility for this and flood mitigation plans, to review their maintenance routine, and where necessary, install drainage sumps to cope with increased water flows.

We call on the leader of the Council to write to The Leader and Chief Executive of Oxfordshire County Council to urge Oxfordshire County Council to do more to alleviate the risk caused to Cherwell residents by increasing their flood prevention activities such as gully clearance.

Furthermore, we call on the county council to initiate a program of proactive gully clearance, and any other measures that may be deemed necessary to protect our residents.”