

Cherwell District Council

Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 18 October 2021 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Hannah Banfield (Chair)
Councillor Les Sibley (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Andrew Beere
Councillor Nathan Bignell
Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Mike Bishop
Councillor John Broad
Councillor Hugo Brown
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Mark Cherry
Councillor Patrick Clarke
Councillor Conrad Copeland
Councillor Ian Corkin
Councillor Nick Cotter
Councillor Sandy Dallimore
Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Councillor Matt Hodgson
Councillor Simon Holland
Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Shaida Hussain
Councillor Tony Ilott
Councillor Kieron Mallon
Councillor Andrew McHugh
Councillor Tony Mephram
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Perran Moon
Councillor Richard Mould
Councillor Adam Nell
Councillor Lynn Pratt
Councillor George Reynolds
Councillor Barry Richards
Councillor Dan Sames
Councillor Jason Slaymaker
Councillor Katherine Tyson
Councillor Dorothy Walker
Councillor Tom Wallis
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Fraser Webster
Councillor Bryn Williams
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Colin Clarke
Councillor Carmen Griffiths
Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes
Councillor Cassi Perry
Councillor Lucinda Wing

Officers:

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

30 **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed Members, officers attending in person and virtually, and the press and public watching the broadcast to the meeting, the first Full Council meeting in the Chamber since February 2020.

31 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

32 **Communications**

The Chair made the following announcements:

Sir David Amess MP

The Chair paid tribute and passed condolences on behalf of Council to the family and friends of Sir David Amess MP, who had been murdered the previous week whilst holding a constituency surgery. Sir David had been the MP for Southend West in Essex.

Council held a minute's silence in memory of Sir David Amess MP.

Chair's Engagements

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

Update on Written Question

The Chair referred to the July Council meeting at which Councillor Beere had submitted a written question and as a supplementary question, asked the Leader to write to the German and Benelux embassies on behalf of the council to pass on sympathies and solidarity to people affected by the flooding in July.

Councillor Wood had duly written to the German, Luxembourg and Dutch embassies in the UK and had received letters back from the respective Ambassadors thanking the council for its support.

Addressing Council, length of speeches and voting

The Chair reminded councillors of the length of speeches and the approach she would apply with regards seconders speaking on reports and motions.

Members' Pigeon Holes

The Chair reminded Members to check your pigeon hole and remove any post.

33 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

34 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

35 Minutes of Council

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

36 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 19 July 2021, no key 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.

37

Questions

a) Written Questions

The 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 Regeneration of Garage Sites in 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 Consultation

Councillor Middleton: Bicester Town Council

Councillor Middleton: Cherwell District Council free advice service to local businesses

Councillor Hussain: Provision of facilities for HGV drivers in the district

Councillor Billington: Kidlington bollard

Councillor Billington: Refurbishment of Watts Way public toilets, Kidlington

Councillor Woodcock: Support to Cherwell residents in light of end of Universal Credit uplift

Councillor Cherry: Distribution of fuel poverty grants

Councillor Mallon: Banbury United Football Club FA Cup success

Councillor Richards: Joint procurement arrangement with Oxfordshire County Council

Councillor Richards: Provision of changing places facilities as part of the public toilet refurbishment in Kidlington

c) Questions to Committee Chairmen on the Minutes

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

38

Revised Statement of Community Involvement (Planning)

The Assistant Director – Planning and Development submitted a report to consider the proposed Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for adoption following recommendation from Executive dated 4 October 2021.

Resolved

- (1) That the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be adopted as a replacement for the current statement of community involvement (CSCI) adopted on 18 July 2016.
- (2) That the adoption of future Statements of Community Involvement and the approval of amendments be delegated to the Executive.
- (3) That authority to modify the Statement of Community Involvement in exceptional circumstances be delegated to the Assistant Director – Planning and Development the with the agreement of the Lead Member for Planning.

39

Cherwell District Wide Community Governance Review 2021

The Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer submitted a report for Council to approve the Terms of Reference for the District Wide Community Governance Review 2021; to delegate authority to the Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the working group, to make minor amendments to the timetable if required.

Resolved

- (1) That the Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review (CGR) (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairman (or Vice-Chairman in the Chairman's absence) of the Parliamentary Boundary and Community Governance Review working group, to make minor amendments to the timetable for the Community Governance Review if required.

40

Calendar of Meetings 2022/2023

The Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer submitted a report for Council to consider and agree the proposed calendar of the meetings for the municipal year 2022/2023.

Resolved

- (1) That the calendar of meetings for Cherwell District Council for the municipal year 2022/2023 (Annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be approved.

41 **Capital Programme Amendments**

The Director of Finance submitted a report to seek Council's approval to amend the Capital Programme for 2021/22 in line with the Financial Regulations.

Resolved

- (1) That an increase in the Capital Programme of £1.240m Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), funded by grant received from the Government, be approved.

42 **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report 2020/21**

The Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer submitted a report to provide Council with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's annual report on Cherwell District Council for the financial year 2020/21.

Resolved

- (1) That the report and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review of Cherwell District Council for 2020/21 be received.

43 **Amendments to Committee Membership**

The Chairman invited the Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Wood, to advise Council of the amendments to Conservative Group committee membership.

Resolved

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

Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee

Remove: Councillor Tony Ilott

Add: Councillor Adam Nell

44 **Motions**

The Chairman advised that three motions had been submitted and would be considered in the order submitted.

One amendment to the first motion, Planning, had been submitted. In line with the Constitution, no further amendments to motions were now permitted.

Motion 1: Planning

It was proposed by Councillor Corkin and seconded by Councillor Wood that the following motion be adopted.

“This council believes that planning works best when developers and communities work closely together to shape local areas when delivering new homes, infrastructure and commercial sites.

Notwithstanding the above, this Council further believes that the ability of individual residents to support or object to planning applications is an invaluable part of the planning system. As we await the emerging Planning Reform Bill, this council calls on the Leader of the Council to closely monitor the situation and lobby as appropriate, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, The Local Government Association and the District Councils Network to ask them to support and uphold this vital principle”

Councillor Middleton proposed the following amendment (amendments in italics), which was duly seconded by Councillor Walker.

“This council believes that planning works best when developers and communities work closely together to shape local areas when delivering new homes, infrastructure and commercial sites.

Notwithstanding the above, this Council further believes that the ability of individual residents to support or object to planning applications *and policy* is an invaluable part of the planning system *and should be given due weight as part of the decision process.*

As we await the emerging Planning Reform Bill, this council calls on the Leader of the Council to closely monitor the situation and lobby as appropriate, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, The Local Government Association and the District Councils Network to ask them to support and uphold this vital principle *and the Prime Minister's promise of a 'brownfield first' policy made at the Conservative Party conference.*

While we wait for the Prime Minister's pledge that there will be no further unnecessary building on green fields to become national planning policy, and in view of the significant local opposition to recent proposals to remove areas in Cherwell from the Green Belt, we further call on the leader to write to the Secretary of State to review Cherwell's Local Plan Partial Review in light of the Prime Minister's words and/or to call in any planning applications proposed on former Green Belt sites to establish if there are not now, or at the point of application, more suitable brown field sites available”

The amendment was debated and on being put to the vote was lost and therefore fell.

Council debated the motion as submitted, which on being put to the vote was carried and therefore approved.

Motion 2: Banbury FM

It was proposed by Councillor Mallon and seconded by Councillor Illott that the following motion be adopted.

“This Council welcomes Banbury FM’s objective to secure a licence to provide a locally run radio station dedicated to the listeners of North Oxfordshire.

More particularly, this Council supports Banbury FM’s aspiration to operate the local DAB multiplex and to secure an FM community radio licence when they become available.

This Council requests that the Leader writes to Ofcom and the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to convey our support to Banbury FM for its initiative to persuade Ofcom of Banbury FM’s community-mindedness and licensing credentials to ensure that Banbury FM’s laudable aims can be realised”.

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

Motion 3: Oxford Cambridge Arc

It was proposed by Councillor Middleton and seconded by Councillor Broad that the following motion be adopted.

“Council notes that the Government recently completed a public consultation on the Vision for The Oxford to Cambridge Arc.

The consultation appeared to be designed in such a way as to suggest that growth is a given and provided little opportunity to challenge the need for the Arc project.

The government commissioned Dasgupta Review criticised the UK’s approach to growth and the belief that technological progress can overcome the exhaustibility of natural resources.

While there have been attempts to prioritise nature and climate action by proposing the Arc Environmental Principles, the recent consultation essentially ignored them.

This 'top-down' approach overrides public opinion, flies in the face of planetary resource constraints and is incompatible with the levelling up agenda or commitments to combat climate change.

Council notes these concerns and asks the Leader to write to the Minister for Levelling up, Housing and Communities, asking him to:

1. Set out clearly the Government’s aims for the Arc, including expected costs, projected housing numbers and growth expectations.

2. Engage in genuine public consultation on the need for the Arc and if excessive growth should be targeted in the South East when other areas are in far greater need of investment to 'level up' the UK.
3. Ensure proper local democratic control, with local planning authorities able to set their own housing requirements based on local need.
4. Ensure local authorities within the Arc area have the powers and funding to protect biodiversity, enable nature restoration and maintain the highest environmental standards."

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

Resolved

- (1) That the following motion be adopted:

"This council believes that planning works best when developers and communities work closely together to shape local areas when delivering new homes, infrastructure and commercial sites.

Notwithstanding the above, this Council further believes that the ability of individual residents to support or object to planning applications is an invaluable part of the planning system. As we await the emerging Planning Reform Bill, this council calls on the Leader of the Council to closely monitor the situation and lobby as appropriate, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, The Local Government Association and the District Councils Network to ask them to support and uphold this vital principle"

- (2) That the following motion be adopted:

"This Council welcomes Banbury FM's objective to secure a licence to provide a locally run radio station dedicated to the listeners of North Oxfordshire.

More particularly, this Council supports Banbury FM's aspiration to operate the local DAB multiplex and to secure an FM community radio licence when they become available.

This Council requests that the Leader writes to Ofcom and the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to convey our support to Banbury FM for its initiative to persuade Ofcom of Banbury FM's community-mindedness and licensing credentials to ensure that Banbury FM's laudable aims can be realised".

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm

Chair:

Date: