

Council

Monday 16 December 2024

Motions

Topic	Proposer	Seconder
Flooding	Cllr Kieron Mallon	Cllr Andrew McHugh
Oxfordshire County Council expenditure of development monies	Cllr Edward Fraser Reeves	Cllr Nick Mawer
Government change to Inheritance Tax treatment of farmland	Cllr Edward Fraser Reeves	Cllr Doug Webb

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.”

Motion Proposer: Councillor Edward Fraser Reeves

Motion Seconder: Councillor Nick Mawer

Topic: Oxfordshire County Council expenditure of development monies

Motion

“Recalling its motion of 21 October 2024, this Council further regrets that Oxfordshire has not historically managed the expenditure of development agreements well. It also recognises that the law in this area must be more flexible to ensure that communities receive the improvements in infrastructure that are right for them as circumstances change.

Despite this District having taken its fair share of new homes in recent years, too often, development monies have gone unspent with elected members and parish colleagues forced to make circuitous enquiries of Council officers and developers to establish what local funds exist and when they might reasonably be spent.

Following work undertaken by Oxfordshire County Council’s Performance & Corporate Services and Place Overview & Scrutiny Committees, and research conducted by the Homebuilders’ Federation, £8 billion of developers’ contributions stand to be spent nationwide with Oxfordshire the worst-performing county in the country, holding £287.5 million.

This Council requests the Leader to write to:

1. The Leader of Oxfordshire County Council to agree a more effective mechanism for ensuring that development monies are spent; and
2. The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to request that the law be updated to introduce a presumption of reasonable expenditure on the part of local authorities or such other device as would enable Councils to spend money on improving local facilities that could not otherwise be envisaged when development agreements are signed.”

Motion Proposer: Councillor Edward Fraser Reeves

Motion Seconder: Councillor Doug Webb

Topic: Government change to Inheritance Tax treatment of farmland

Motion

“This Council considers that the government’s changes in its Autumn budget to Inheritance Tax treatment of farmland, increases to employers’ National Insurance and introduction of a new fertiliser tax on key agricultural imports will have a detrimental cumulative impact on family farms across North Oxfordshire.

This Council notes with concern that these family farm taxes risk:

- Adversely affecting local farmers' potential to employ people across North Oxfordshire's rural economy;
- Damaging the ability for family farmers to pass on their farms to their children; and,
- Making food production at competitive prices more difficult for us as a district.

This Council resolves

1. to ask Executive to review that its policies are as supportive of local farmers as reasonably possible.
2. to ask the Leader to write to the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council to request that the newly integrated Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership ('OxLEP') prioritises the local rural economy in its governance structure and ongoing development of its strategic plan, both of which are now under active consideration.
3. to ask the Leader to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ask that introduction of these family farm taxes be reconsidered for the sake of environmental protection and food security."