

Cherwell District Council

Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 17 July 2023 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Les Sibley (Chairman)
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Tom Beckett
Councillor Andrew Beere
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Besmira Brasha
Councillor John Broad
Councillor Mark Cherry
Councillor Becky Clarke MBE
Councillor Patrick Clarke
Councillor Jean Conway
Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor Nick Cotter
Councillor Isabel Creed
Councillor Andrew Crichton
Councillor Sandy Dallimore
Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Donna Ford
Councillor Ian Harwood
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Matt Hodgson
Councillor Simon Holland
Councillor Simon Lytton
Councillor Kieron Mallon
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Andrew McHugh
Councillor Lesley McLean
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Julian Nedelcu
Councillor Adam Nell
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Lynn Pratt
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor George Reynolds
Councillor Dan Sames
Councillor Nigel Simpson
Councillor Dorothy Walker
Councillor Amanda Watkins
Councillor Douglas Webb

Councillor Bryn Williams
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Eddie Reeves

Officers:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law, Governance & Democratic
Services/Monitoring Officer
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

19 **Declarations of Interest**

10. Motions.

Councillor Barry Wood, Other Registerable Interest, in relation to the NHS Anniversary as governor on South Central Ambulance Service.

Councillor Fiona Mawson, Non-registerable Interest, in relation to the Rail Crossing at Sandy Lane, Yarnton, motion as her property was in the vicinity of the crossing. She would address the meeting, then leave and not participate in the debate or vote.

Councillor Ian Middleton, Non-registerable Interest, in relation to the Rail Crossing at Sandy Lane, Yarnton, motion as her property was in the vicinity of the crossing. She would address the meeting, then leave and not participate in the debate or vote.

20 **Communications**

Members of the Public

The Chairman referred to the two public addresses to Council and reminded the meeting that members of the public may only speak at the appropriate time when invited to the front of the Chamber.

The Chairman asked Councillors to be respectful of each other when addressing the meeting and out of courtesy, to remain in their seat during items. If necessary, the Chairman would adjourn the meeting to allow for a comfort break at a suitable point.

Committee Membership Change

The Chairman invited the Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Wood, to report Conservative Group committee membership changes.

Councillor Wood advised that Councillor Patrick Clarke would replace Councillor Maurice Billington on Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Councillor Bryn Williams would replace Councillor Ian Harwood on Personnel Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That the amendments to committee membership, as advised by the Conservative Group Leader, be noted:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Remove – Councillor Maurice Billington

Add – Councillor Patrick Clarke

Personnel Committee

Remove – Councillor Ian Harwood

Add – Councillor Bryn Williams

Chairman's Engagements

A copy of the events attended by the Chairman published with the agenda. The Chairman advised Council that his fundraising dinner to raise money for his charity, Alexandra House of Joy, would be taking place on Saturday 18 November. Further information would be circulated in due course.

Members' Pigeon Holes

Members were reminded to check their pigeon hole and take any post.

21

Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

The Chairman advised that one petition had been submitted in accordance with the Constitution and explained that the petition organiser could address the meeting but there was no debate or discussion on the petition, which would be referred for consideration and Council advised of the outcome.

The Chairman invited the petition organiser, Linda Newbery, to address Council for up to 5 minutes to introduce the petition:

“We, the undersigned, petition Council to use its website and leaflets to households on recycling and food waste to raise awareness of the links between food choices, individual carbon footprints and biodiversity loss.

We ask Council to encourage residents to consume less meat and dairy and to support local growers and farmers by choosing seasonal, local produce.

In line with its Declaration of Climate Emergency, Council can show residents that small, everyday dietary changes can be effective ways to reduce their

personal impact on climate and environment, at the same time offering health and money-saving benefits.

‘Understanding and potentially influencing public attitudes to meat consumption must be a fundamental component of future greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategies’ – Chatham House Environment and Society programme.”

The Chairman thanked Linda Newbery and confirmed that she would be kept updated regarding consideration of the petition. .

The Chairman advised Council that one request to address the meeting had been received in accordance with the Constitution. Parish Councillor David Brown, Yarnton Parish Council, had requested to address the meeting on the Rail Crossing at Sandy Lane, Yarnton motion. The Chairman explained he would invite Parish Councillor Brown to address the meeting prior to Council considering the motion.

22 **Minutes of Council**

The minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 17 May 2023 and the reconvened Annual Council meeting on 23 May 2023 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

23 **Minutes**

a) **Minutes of the Executive, Portfolio Holder Decisions and Executive Decisions made under Special Urgency**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive and Portfolio Holder decisions as set out in the Minute Book be received and that it be noted that since the last meeting of Council at which this was reported, on 26 February 2023, two key decisions have been taken by the Executive which were not included in the 28 day notice relating to The Discretionary Housing Payments Policy 2023/24 review, and the Award of contract for the repair and refurbishment of Town Centre House

b) **Minutes of Committees**

Resolved

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

24 **Questions**

a) Written Questions

The Chairman advised that one written question, addressed to the Leader, 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 as annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book).

The question was from Councillor Beere in relation to Emergency Planning.

Councillor Beere thanked the Leader for the comprehensive response.

b) Questions to the Leader of the Council

Questions were asked and answers received on the following issues:

Councillor Woodcock: Impact of rail station ticket office closures on residents requiring passenger assistance

Councillor Cherry: Repair of CCTV at Bretch Hill

Councillor Creed: Flytipping

Councillor Hodgson: National funding cuts to the Canal and River Trust

Councillor Reynolds: Local authorities building on the green belt land

Councillor Billington: Bollard at Kidlington High Street

Councillor Pruden:

c) Questions to Committee Chairmen on the Minutes

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

25 Appointment of Representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Assistant Director Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer submitted a report to change the Cherwell District Council representative on the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC).

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Lesley McClean be appointed as the Cherwell District Council representative on the Joint Oxfordshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

26 Motions

The Chairman advised that six motions had been submitted. No amendments to any of the motions had been submitted. In line with the Constitution, no amendments were now permitted.

Motion One: Cost of Living

It was proposed by Councillor Woodcock and seconded by Councillor Watkins that the following motion be adopted.

"This council notes the ongoing pressure on the budgets of local residents and calls on the Executive to draw up a cost-of-living action plan within 100 days."

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

Motion Two: Rail Crossing at Sandy Lane, Yarnton

Prior to Council considering the motion, Parish Councillor David Brown, Yarnton Parish Council, address the meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor Simpson and seconded by Councillor Walker that the following motion be adopted.

"Cherwell District Council has acknowledged the Climate Change Emergency.

A major contributor to excessive CO₂ output are unnecessary car journeys. The proposal by Network Rail to shut the vital link between Yarnton and Kidlington by closing the rail crossing at Sandy Lane will result in a significant increase in carbon emissions.

Permanent closure would see drivers forced to use Frieze Way or Langford Lane resulting in an average extra distance travelled of nearly two miles per journey.

Based on current trends this is estimated to result in an extra 4750 miles travelled on weekdays and an additional 3800 at weekends, resulting in 1.5 million unnecessary miles per year.

The cost of such surplus miles in money is hundreds of thousands of pounds to residents and businesses who rely on their cars; and extra pollution in the form of many tonnes of carbon emissions, contrary to the Council's environmental objectives.

This would go directly against the council's ambition to reduce CO₂ output generated by transport and very significantly degrade the network of contacts that currently underpins the ancient and vital community nexus around the parishes of Yarnton, Begbroke, Kidlington and Gosford and Water Eaton.

The Council therefore asks the Executive to give careful consideration to keeping this vital link open, especially knowing that Oxford University Developments are proposing to fund and build a new road bridge on their site as part of their overall vision."

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

Motion Three: Active Lifestyle

It was proposed by Councillor Simpson and seconded by Councillor McHugh that the following motion be adopted.

“Cherwell District Council continues to excel in its delivery of award winning active lifestyle programs including Move Together, You Move and Fast which are recognised nationally as class leading initiatives. We are all aware of the benefits, both mentally and physically that these projects have provided to numerous residents in Cherwell especially in our most deprived areas. The Council congratulates all team members for their ongoing commitment to deliver such positive impacts to our communities.

Featured below are just some of the positive impacts of the Move Together Program -

- 1500 people with Long Term Conditions on programme
- Cherwell have 37% of referrals across all the districts
- 85% reported that their mobility improved
- 72% reported that their ability to self-care improved
- 64% reported that their pain levels improved or stayed the same
- 69% reported that their levels of anxiety or depression improved

The Council therefore resolves to ask the Executive to consider committing both physical resources and financial backing to not only these current schemes but to always be looking at future initiatives to keep Cherwell residents both active and healthy.”

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

Motion Four: Tenant's Charter

It was proposed by Councillor Crichton and seconded by Councillor Cherry that the following motion be adopted.

“While our own tenants will soon benefit from a Tenants' Charter, this council recognises its key role in supporting tenants in both the private and social rented sectors. We therefore call on the Executive to strengthen this Tenants' Charter by reiterating the basic rights of tenants across Cherwell, and the responsibilities of all landlords.

And that alongside this, it will run a public awareness campaign of the Charter encouraging tenants to be aware of their rights and of where local sources of advice and support can be found.”

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

Motion Five: NHS Anniversary

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

“The 75th anniversary of the founding of the NHS has recently been celebrated, recognising the outstanding achievement represented by the setting up of a ground-breaking health and welfare system shortly after World War II.

Since then the service has gone through numerous changes and has risen to increasing challenges, not least a global pandemic where all members of the service went above and beyond the call of duty in the face of unprecedented threats to their own lives and those of their patients.

On its 75th birthday the NHS continues to struggle to cope amidst staff shortages, funding crises, crumbling infrastructure and a growing elderly population. All this puts additional strain on a much-loved service that is still the envy of the world in terms of universal free healthcare at the point of use.

This council acknowledges the outstanding achievements of the NHS and applauds and thanks all those who work, and have worked, so diligently within the service, often against the odds, to keep us all healthy and cared for throughout our entire lives. We further affirm our support and thanks for all health workers in the Cherwell District.

We also call on the current and all future governments to ensure that the NHS remains where it has always been for most of our lives : at our side and on our side, fully funded and supported to ensure it will still be here in 2048 to celebrate its 100th anniversary.”

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

Motion Six: Littering

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

“Littering in Cherwell is reaching epidemic proportions, particularly in rural areas, where hedgerows, verges and drainage ditches are becoming clogged with food wrappers, drinks bottles and other detritus, often discarded by passing motorists. Another perennial problem is that of dog mess bags left hanging on trees or simply dropped on the floor which adds plastic waste to the problem of dog fouling in recreational areas.

CDC already encourages local litter-picks and our recycling and waste team do a fantastic job of dealing with major issues like fly-tipping and general household waste. But what is also needed is a concerted campaign to highlight the nuisance of general littering and make it socially unacceptable to simply drop rubbish in towns and villages or on our roads and highways. These places should not be being treated as dustbins, impacting the environment and increasing the demand on our recycling teams to clear up the mess.

We therefore request that officers investigate the possibility of a 'Keep Cherwell Tidy' campaign to bolster initiatives already in place and to ideally report to the executive within 6 months.

Things to consider could include a focussed advertising strategy, increased provision of litter bins and dog mess bins, partnerships with food and beverage retailers to tackle the problem of discarded food and takeaway wrappers and enhanced enforcement measures for littering. We should also work with schools and colleges to foster local and civic pride in our towns, villages and green spaces amongst our young people."

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

Resolved

(1) That the following motion be adopted:

"This council notes the ongoing pressure on the budgets of local residents and calls on the Executive to draw up a cost-of-living action plan within 100 days."

(2) That the following motion be adopted:

"Cherwell District Council has acknowledged the Climate Change Emergency.

A major contributor to excessive CO2 output are unnecessary car journeys. The proposal by Network Rail to shut the vital link between Yarnton and Kidlington by closing the rail crossing at Sandy Lane will result in a significant increase in carbon emissions.

Permanent closure would see drivers forced to use Frieze Way or Langford Lane resulting in an average extra distance travelled of nearly two miles per journey.

Based on current trends this is estimated to result in an extra 4750 miles travelled on weekdays and an additional 3800 at weekends, resulting in 1.5 million unnecessary miles per year.

The cost of such surplus miles in money is hundreds of thousands of pounds to residents and businesses who rely on their cars; and extra pollution in the form of many tonnes of carbon emissions, contrary to the Council's environmental objectives.

This would go directly against the council's ambition to reduce CO2 output generated by transport and very significantly degrade the network of contacts that currently underpins the ancient and vital community nexus around the parishes of Yarnton, Begbroke, Kidlington and Gosford and Water Eaton.

The Council therefore asks the Executive to give careful consideration to keeping this vital link open, especially knowing that Oxford University Developments are proposing to fund and build a new road bridge on their site as part of their overall vision."

(3) That the following motion be adopted:

"Cherwell District Council continues to excel in its delivery of award winning active lifestyle programs including Move Together, You Move and Fast which are recognised nationally as class leading initiatives. We are all aware of the benefits, both mentally and physically that these projects have provided to numerous residents in Cherwell especially in our most deprived areas. The Council congratulates all team members for their ongoing commitment to deliver such positive impacts to our communities.

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The Council therefore resolves to ask the Executive to consider committing both physical resources and financial backing to not only these current schemes but to always be looking at future initiatives to keep Cherwell residents both active and healthy."

(4) That the following motion be adopted:

"While our own tenants will soon benefit from a Tenants' Charter, this council recognises its key role in supporting tenants in both the private and social rented sectors. We therefore call on the Executive to strengthen this Tenants' Charter by reiterating the basic rights of tenants across Cherwell, and the responsibilities of all landlords.

And that alongside this, it will run a public awareness campaign of the Charter encouraging tenants to be aware of their rights and of where local sources of advice and support can be found.”

- (5) That the following motion be adopted:

“The 75th anniversary of the founding of the NHS has recently been celebrated, recognising the outstanding achievement represented by the setting up of a ground-breaking health and welfare system shortly after World War II.

Since then the service has gone through numerous changes and has risen to increasing challenges, not least a global pandemic where all members of the service went above and beyond the call of duty in the face of unprecedented threats to their own lives and those of their patients.

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We also call on the current and all future governments to ensure that the NHS remains where it has always been for most of our lives : at our side and on our side, fully funded and supported to ensure it will still be here in 2048 to celebrate its 100th anniversary.”

- (6) That the following motion be adopted:

“Littering in Cherwell is reaching epidemic proportions, particularly in rural areas, where hedgerows, verges and drainage ditches are becoming clogged with food wrappers, drinks bottles and other detritus, often discarded by passing motorists. Another perennial problem is that of dog mess bags left hanging on trees or simply dropped on the floor which adds plastic waste to the problem of dog fouling in recreational areas.

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as dustbins, impacting the environment and increasing the demand on our recycling teams to clear up the mess.

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Things to consider could include a focussed advertising strategy, increased provision of litter bins and dog mess bins, partnerships with food and beverage retailers to tackle the problem of discarded food and takeaway wrappers and enhanced enforcement measures for littering. We should also work with schools and colleges to foster local and civic pride in our towns, villages and green spaces amongst our young people."

27 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm

Chairman:

Date: