

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 19 May 2015 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.15 pm.

Present:

Councillor Anne Purse – in the Chair

Councillors:

Lynda Atkins	Patrick Greene	David Nimmo Smith
Jamila Azad	Tim Hallchurch MBE	Neil Owen
David Bartholomew	Pete Handley	Glynis Phillips
Mike Beal	Jenny Hannaby	Susanna Pressel
Maurice Billington	Nick Hards	Laura Price
Liz Brighthouse OBE	Neville F. Harris	G.A. Reynolds
Kevin Bulmer	Steve Harrod	Alison Rooke
Nick Carter	Mrs Judith Heathcoat	Rodney Rose
Louise Chapman	Hilary Hibbert-Biles	Gillian Sanders
Mark Cherry	John Howson	John Sanders
John Christie	Ian Hudspeth	Les Sibley
Sam Coates	Bob Johnston	Roz Smith
Yvonne Constance OBE	Richard Langridge	Lawrie Stratford
Steve Curran	Stewart Lilly	John Tanner
Surinder Dhesi	Lorraine Lindsay-Gale	Melinda Tilley
Arash Fatemian	Sandy Lovatt	Michael Waive
Mrs C. Fulljames	Mark Lygo	Richard Webber
Anthony Gearing	Kieron Mallon	David Williams
Janet Godden	Charles Mathew	David Wilmshurst
Mark Gray	James Mills	

The Council considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and reports, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

22/15 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2015/16 COUNCIL YEAR

(Agenda Item 1)

Before inviting the Solicitor of the Council to seek nominations for the office of Chairman of the Council, Councillor Anne Purse (the retiring Chairman) addressed the meeting, reflecting on her year in office, in particular the commemoration of the 1st World War, the VE day celebrations and beacon lighting and her Charity Dinner in aid of Thomley Hall. She thanked members of the Council for their support throughout the year.

She then went on to thank her sister Edna, who had been her consort for the year and her personal assistants (Sara Lenihan and Lubnor Khalid) for all their help and support during the year. She then presented Sara Lenihan with flowers as a token of her appreciation and her sister with a consort badge and some flowers.

Councillors Hudspeth, Brighthouse, Williams and Webber paid tribute to Councillor Purse, expressing their thanks for her work as Chairman and ambassador for the Council.

The County Solicitor & Monitoring Officer sought nominations for the position of Chairman of the Council.

Councillor Brighthouse proposed and Councillor Hudspeth seconded that Councillor John Sanders be elected Chairman of the Council for the 2015/16 Council Year.

There being no further nominations and no dissent, Councillor John Sanders was declared elected as Chairman for the 2015/16 Council Year. Councillor Sanders then read and signed the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Upon signing the declaration, Councillor John Sanders expressed sadness and regret that Former County Councillor Val Smith had not been able to undertake the role of Chairman for the 2015/16 Council Year.

RESOLVED: (unanimously) that Councillor John Sanders be elected Chairman of the Council for the 2015/16 Council Year.

23/15 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2015/16 COUNCIL YEAR

(Agenda Item 2)

The Chairman called for nominations for the office of Vice-Chairman. Councillor Hudspeth proposed and Councillor Brighthouse seconded that Councillor Michael Waine be elected Vice-Chairman for the 2015/2016 Council Year. The being no further nominations and no dissent, Councillor Michael Waine was declared elected. Councillor Waine read and signed the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

RESOLVED: (unanimously) that Councillor Michael Waine be elected as Vice-Chairman for the 2015/16 Council Year.

24/15 MINUTES

(Agenda Item 3)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 April 2015 were approved and signed.

25/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item 4)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Neil Fawcett, Jean Fooks and Zoe Patrick.

26/15 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

(Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman reported as follows:

- Council held a Minute's silence to commemorate the life of former County Councillor Val Smith. Val had stood down as a county councillor in September 2014 having served the Leys and Lye division since 2005. She was the wife of Oxford East MP Andrew Smith and had been a city councillor for many years prior to becoming a county councillor. She was held in great respect across the political divide and commanded respect among officers and councillors alike. There was great sadness at her passing. Council's thoughts were very much with her husband Andrew Smith and her family at this time.
- Zoe Patrick had decided, for personal health reasons to retire as Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group but would remain on the Council. Council agreed to send Councillor Patrick a card and flowers and congratulated Councillor Richard Webber who had been duly appointed as the new Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.
- Council welcomed newly appointed County Councillor James Mills (Witney West & Bampton Division) and congratulated him on his appointment to the Council.
- A powerful earthquake had hit Nepal on 25 April. More than 8,000 people had been reported killed and more than 14,000 injured. A second massive earthquake struck on 12 May, killing an additional 65 people. The UN estimated that 8 million people across the country were affected - more than a quarter of the population. Over 700,000 houses had been destroyed or damaged.

An Oxfam Collection Tin would be circulated during the briefing following Council to provide clean water, toilets, hygiene kits, emergency shelter, food and seeds to the millions of people affected by the disaster. The Chairman urged members to donate.

- On Friday 8th May Oxfordshire joined locations across the country in lighting special v-shaped beacons to mark the 70th anniversary of Victory in Europe. VE Day marked the official end of Second World War hostilities in Europe, following the formal surrender of German forces. It was both an occasion of national celebration and one of sombre reflection for those who lost their lives in the six-year conflict, including 580,406 UK and Commonwealth Forces and 67,073 UK civilians. It was right that the Council continued to mark this important milestone in the country's history, and that the sacrifice, courage and determination of those who stood firm was not forgotten.

27/15 REPORT OF THE RETURNING OFFICER

(Agenda Item 9)

The Council had before them the report by the Returning Officer setting out the results of the by-election for the Witney West & Bampton Division held on 7 May 2015.

RESOLVED: (nem con) to note that James Francis Mills was accordingly elected County Councillor for the Witney West & Bampton Division.

28/15 CABINET MEMBERSHIP AND DELEGATION OF CABINET FUNCTIONS

(Agenda Item 10)

Councillor Hudspeth moved and Councillor Rose seconded the recommendations set on the face of the Agenda in relation to delegations made by the Leader of the Council with regard to the functions of the Cabinet.

Council noted that waste management and environmental management was now under the responsibility of the Deputy Leader.

RESOLVED: (nem con) to note the delegations made by the Leader of the Council with regard to the functions of the Cabinet.

29/15 COMMITTEES AND REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE

(Agenda Item 11)

The Council was required by the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 to review the political balance on its committees on an annual basis. The Council had before it a report (CC11) together with additional information set out in the Schedule of Business (Annex 3) which set out how the rules operate and sought approval for adjustments which were necessary to achieve the balance across and within committees to comply with the rules.

In summary the changes necessary were:

- (a) to obtain balance across the scrutiny committees, the Green Group had a seat on the Performance & Scrutiny Committee. There were no unfilled seats;
- (b) to obtain balance across the other committees of the Council and overall the Green Group had a seat on the Remuneration Committee and the Conservative Independent Alliance Group had an additional seat on the Planning & Regulation Committee. There were no unfilled seats.

Councillor John Sanders moved and Councillor Waine seconded that the recommendations set out on the face of the Agenda and in the report be adopted.

Councillor Webber moved and Councillor Roz Smith seconded that Councillor Anne Purse be nominated as the standing substitute for Councillor Zoe Patrick on the Oxfordshire County Council Joint Consultative Committee for Uniformed Members of the Fire Service.

The motion was put to the vote and was carried by 56 votes to 1, with 3 abstentions.

RESOLVED: (nem con) to:

- (a) confirm the political balance on committees shown in Annex 2 to the report;
- (b) appoint to committees the councillors and co-opted members shown in Annex 3, subject to Councillor Les Sibley being in place of Councillor Lynda Atkins on Pension Fund Committee;
- (c) Councillor Anne Purse be nominated as the standing substitute for Councillor Zoe Patrick on the Oxfordshire County Council Joint Consultative Committee for Uniformed Members of the Fire Service.

30/15 SCRUTINY COMMITTEES - ANNUAL REPORT

(Agenda Item 12)

The Council had before them the Scrutiny Annual Report (CC12) which outlined the activity of the Council's three scrutiny committees; Performance Scrutiny, Education Scrutiny and Health Overview & Scrutiny and the Cabinet Advisory Groups. The report highlighted the work carried out by each Committee to scrutinise service activity and performance as well as Cabinet decisions taken over the past year.

The Audit and Governance Committee had reviewed this report and welcomed the positive impact that the committees had in the past year. The report had also been reviewed by the Performance Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Brighthouse moved and Councillor Gray seconded that Council receive the Annual Report of the scrutiny committees.

Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and was carried nem con.

RESOLVED: (nem con) to receive the report.

31/15 AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT

(Agenda Item 13)

The Council had before them the Audit & Governance Annual Report (CC13) which set out the role of the Audit & Governance Committee and

summarised the work that has been undertaken both as a Committee and through the support of the Audit Working Group in 2014.

.....

Councillor Wilmshurst moved and Councillor Lovatt seconded that Council receive the Annual report of the Audit & Governance Committee.

Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and was carried nem con.

RESOLVED: (nem con) to receive the report.

32/15 OFFICER SCHEME OF DELEGATION

(Agenda Item 14)

At its Annual Meeting, Council is required to agree the officer scheme of delegation within the Council's Constitution. The Scheme of Delegation forms Part 7.3 of the Constitution and gives delegated authority to the Chief Executive, directors and to other chief officers whose titles and/or areas of responsibility are set out in Part 2, Article 11 of the Constitution.

This report highlighted some minor amendments to the Scheme of Delegation and to Article 11 principally to reflect the service areas of certain Chief Officer posts.

RESOLVED: (on a motion by Councillor John Sanders, seconded by Councillor Waine and carried nem con) to note the amendments to Article 11 and to Part 7.3 of the Constitution and to approve the Scheme of Officer Delegation (Part 7.3) as amended.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing