

County Council

1 April 2025

Agenda

To: **Members of the County COUNCIL**

Notice of a Meeting of the County Council

Tuesday, 1 April 2025 at 10.30 am

Council Chamber - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

If you wish to view proceedings, please click on this [Live Stream Link](#). Please note, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.



Martin Reeves
Chief Executive

March 2025

Committee Officer:

Colm Ó Caomhánaigh

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AGENDA

1. Minutes (Pages 1 - 8)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2025 (**CC1**) and to receive information arising from them.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest - see guidance note

Members are reminded that they must declare their interests orally at the meeting and specify (a) the nature of the interest and (b) which items on the agenda are the relevant items. This applies also to items where members have interests by virtue of their membership of a district council in Oxfordshire.

4. Official Communications

5. Appointments

To make any changes to the membership of scrutiny and other committees on the nomination of political groups and to note any changes to the Cabinet made by the Leader of the Council.

See item 12 Committees and Review of Political Balance.

6. Petitions and Public Address

Members of the public who wish to speak on an item on the agenda at this meeting, or present a petition, can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection. Requests must be submitted no later than 9am one working day before the meeting i.e., 9am on Monday 31 March 2025. Requests to speak should be sent to committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that if the technology fails, then your views can still be taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9am on the day of the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

7. Questions with Notice from Members of the Public

8. Questions with Notice from Members of the Council

9. Annual Report of the Director of Public Health (Pages 9 - 42)

Report by Director of Public Health and Communities

The Council is to be informed on the structure and overview of content, including key messages, of the upcoming Oxfordshire County Council Director of Public Health Annual Report (2024/2025) focussed on children and young people's mental health and economic activity.

The Council is RECOMMENDED to note the Director of Public Health's Annual Report in Annex 1 and to take every opportunity to support actions and initiatives that will progress related work.

10. Report of the Cabinet (Pages 43 - 54)

Report from Leader of the Council.

The report summarises the decisions from the Cabinet meetings on 17 December 2024, 21 and 28 January 2025 and 25 February 2025.

11. Constitutional Amendments (Pages 55 - 292)

Report by Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

The Constitution Working Group met between November 2024 and February 2025 and has proposed amendments to the Constitution as outlined in this report. A small number of additional changes agreed by the Audit & Governance Committee and by the Oxfordshire Health & Wellbeing Board are also included in the report.

Council is RECOMMENDED to

(a) to approve amendments listed and tracked in Annex 1 (including Appendices 1 to 21) to the following Parts of the Council's Constitution, as proposed by the Constitution Working Group and, in the cases of (iii), (xii), (xiv) and (xvii), as amended by the Audit & Governance Committee:

- (i) Part 1.2 How Oxfordshire County Council Operates;
- (ii) Part 1.3 Decision Making;
- (iii) Part 3.1 Council Procedure Rules;
- (iv) Part 3.1A Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules (delete);
- (v) Part 3.3 Virement Rules;
- (vi) Part 4.2 Cabinet Procedure Rules;
- (vii) Part 4.4 Delegated Decisions by Individual Cabinet Members;
- (viii) Part 4.6 Transport Advisory Panel (delete);
- (ix) Part 5.1A Regulatory and Other Committees;
- (x) Part 5.1B Health and Wellbeing Board;
- (xi) Part 6.1A Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- (xii) Part 6.1B Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- (xiii) Part 6.1C Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire West Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference (new Part);

- (xiv) Part 6.2 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules;
 - (xv) Part 6.3 Protocol on Scrutiny Participation (delete);
 - (xvi) Part 7.2 Scheme of Delegation to Officers;
 - (xvii) Part 8.3 Contract Procedure Rules;
 - (xviii) Part 9.2 Protocol on Councillors' Rights and Responsibilities;
 - (xix) Part 9.4 Policy on IT Use by Members of the County Council (delete);
 - (xx) Part 9.6 Protocol on Member-Officer Relations;
 - (xxi) Part 10.1 Members' Allowances;
 - (xxii) correct erroneous references and update titles where they have changed;
- (b) to approve additional items in Annex 2 agreed by the Audit & Governance Committee;
- (c) to approve amendments in Annex 3 agreed by the Oxfordshire Health & Wellbeing Board to its Terms of Reference;
- (d) to delegate to the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer the ability to make any necessary additional changes to the Constitution to amend any inconsistencies arising from these proposed changes and where any existing drafting in the Constitution is inconsistent with the changes set out in this report and approved by Council.

12. Committees and Review of Political Balance (Pages 293 - 304)

Report by Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

Council is requested to approve committee appointments based on revised political balance calculations following the formation of the Green Group and Reform UK Group.

Council is RECOMMENDED

- a) **To note the review of political balance of committees to reflect the formation of the Green Group and Reform UK Group.**
- b) **To appoint members to the committees of the Council as listed at Annex 1.**

13. The Use of Urgency Provisions (Pages 305 - 308)

Report by Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

The Constitution makes provision for urgent decisions to be made exempt from call-in on the agreement of the Chair of the Council. When this occurs, it must be reported to the next meeting of Council.

Council is RECOMMENDED to note

- (a) **the exemption from Call-in of the following decision:**

- **Cabinet on 20 March 2025 - Initial Response to Government: Statutory invitation for Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution**

14. Interim Arrangements for Taking Emergency Decisions Immediately Following the County Council Elections (Pages 309 - 312)

Report by Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

The report seeks approval to a temporary variation to the delegated powers of the Chief Executive to aid effective decision making in the period between the retirement of councillors following the elections in May and the Annual Council meeting on 20 May 2025.

Council is RECOMMENDED to agree a temporary variation to Part 7.2 of the Scheme of Delegation to Officers with effect that from 5 May to 20 May 2025 paragraph 6.3 (c) is to be read as follows:-

“(c) Any function of the Cabinet or of a Council committee or sub-committee, after consultation with the appropriate Director and thereafter with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council and the Leader, as appropriate.”

MOTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

WOULD MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY AMENDMENTS TO MOTIONS WITH NOTICE MUST BE PRESENTED TO THE PROPER OFFICER IN WRITING BY 9.00 AM ON THE FRIDAY BEFORE THE MEETING

15. Motion by Councillor Glynis Phillips - National Care Service

A National Care Service is required in England to provide consistent high-quality care and provide further support for unpaid carers by creating and implementing national standards.

There is a crisis in the adult social care workforce with the figures from Skills for Care showing that there are currently over 131,000 vacancies in the care sector. There are variations across the country in the way this vital workforce is treated with some care workers suffering from poor pay and conditions.

This council agrees for the Leader to write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care setting out our support for a National Care Service that will

- Improve the quality of care for everyone who needs it and providing further support for unpaid carers
- Support independent living and enable people to recover outside hospital and care homes with the right level of support
- Promote public sector and not for profit organisations delivering care services
- Support partnership working with care providers including the voluntary sector, unions and government
- Implement a fair pay agreement with all care providers including the voluntary

sector.

This council supports the setting up of a National Care Service and urges the Leader to write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to prioritise this reform.

Note: The motion, if passed, would constitute the exercise of an executive function in which case it will be referred to the Cabinet together with any advice the Council may wish to give, in accordance with Rule 13.5.1 (i) of the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution.

16. Motion by Councillor Donna Ford - Banking Hubs

Councillors note the increasing number of vacant bank and building society buildings on our high streets, which are largely the result of technological change. The loss of community banking services is of concern to many residents, especially older constituents and those with disabilities and adaptive needs.

Buckinghamshire Council has set up a Banking Hub in Buckingham library for people to access banking services in the town centre.

Established in partnership with Buckinghamshire Council through its Buckingham and Villages Community Board, with the support of Buckingham Town Council and community representatives, the temporary Banking Hub provides local people with access to banking services. This offers a counter service operated by the Post Office, where customers of all major banks and building societies can carry out regular cash transactions. It also offers a Community Banker service where customers can talk to their banking provider about more complicated issues. Community Bankers work on rotation, with a different bank or building society available on each day of the week, to ensure fair and equitable access to major banking and building society customers.

Council requests the relevant Cabinet member for Community and Corporate Services and the Cabinet Member for Finance to take a lead from forward-thinking colleagues at Buckinghamshire Council and, working with its Town Council, and District Council partners, invite banks and building societies that have left – or are due to leave – our high streets to explore opportunities to work with this Council to set up similar banking hubs within appropriate Council libraries.

Note: The motion, if passed, would constitute the exercise of an executive function in which case it will be referred to the Cabinet together with any advice the Council may wish to give, in accordance with Rule 13.5.1 (i) of the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution.

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed 'Declarations of Interest' or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your employment; sponsorship (i.e. payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member 'must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself' and that 'you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned'.

Members Code – Other registrable interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your other registerable interests then you must declare an interest. You must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and you must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person's quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing.

Other registrable interests include:

- a) Any unpaid directorships
- b) Any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority.

- c) Any body (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

Members Code – Non-registrable interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest.

In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied:

Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:

- a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.