

Notice of a Meeting

Charlotte Coxe Trust Committee

Thursday, 13 March 2025 at 10.00 am

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

These proceedings are open to the public

If you wish to view proceedings, please click on this [Live Stream Link](#).

However, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.

Membership

Chair - Councillor Geoff Saul

Deputy Chair - Councillor Robin Bennett

Councillors:

Felix Bloomfield

Freddie van Mierlo

Jane Murphy

Co-optees:

Notes:

Date of next meeting: Date Not Specified

For more information about this Committee please contact:

Committee Officer

Democratic

Services

E-Mail:

committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk



Martin Reeves
Chief Executive

March 2025

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**

Please see guidance note

3. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 2)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2025.

4. **Petitions and Public Address**

Members of the public who wish to speak at this meeting can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection.

To facilitate 'hybrid' meetings we are asking that requests to speak are submitted by no later than 9am four working days before the meeting i.e., 9am on Friday 7 March 2025. Requests to speak should be sent to colm.ocaomhanaigh@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 2 working days before the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

EXEMPT ITEM

In the event that any Member or Officer wishes to discuss the information set out in the report to Agenda Item 5, the Committee will be invited to resolve to exclude the public for the consideration of the report by passing a resolution in the following terms:

"that the public be excluded during the consideration of the report since it is likely that if they were present during that discussion there would be a disclosure of "exempt" information as described in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 and specified below the item in the Agenda".

THE REPORT TO THE ITEM NAMED HAS NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC AND SHOULD BE REGARDED AS 'CONFIDENTIAL' BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS ENTITLED TO RECEIVE THEM.

5. **Transfer of the Charlotte Coxe Trust to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation** (Pages 3 - 26)

Report by Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

The information in this case is exempt in that it falls within the following prescribed categories:

1. Information relating to a particular individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual

3. Information relating to the financial and business affairs of any person (including the authority holding that information); and
5. Information in which a claim to Legal Professional Privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings

and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The report and annexes containing exempt information under the above paragraph are attached.

The Committee is RECOMMENDED to

- a) Approve the incorporation of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation to be called the Charlotte Coxé Trust CIO;
- b) Approve the appointment of the 8 people who have put their names forward as potential trustees (details of whom appear in Annex A) along with the Council (as a permanent member) as the initial trustees and members of the CIO;
- c) Approve the transfer of the trusteeship and assets of the Charlotte Coxé Trust from the Council (as current sole trustee) to the CIO subject to the CIO (a) providing an indemnity in respect of liabilities which arise after the date of the transfer and (b) entering a legal obligation to grant a rent-free lease of Watlington Library back to the Council;
- d) Authorise officers to instruct Geldards LLP on behalf of the Trust to support them with the incorporation of the CIO and other specialist legal work associated with the transfer and leaseback of the library;
- e) Authorise officers on behalf of the Trust to approve the terms of the constitution of the CIO based on advice from Geldards, subject to the constitution containing the provisions detailed in the report; and
- f) Agree on behalf of the Trust that the Council should retain the right to appoint a certain number of trustees, and ensure safeguards are included in the constitution of the new CIO such that OCC can retain an ongoing interest in the CIO (amongst other things) to protect 33-35 High Street as a community asset for the long-term benefit of the people of Watlington.

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.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under other registrable interests, then 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.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 3

CHARLOTTE COXE TRUST COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 30 January 2025 commencing at 9.00 am and finishing at 9.15 am

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Geoff Saul – in the Chair

Councillor Felix Bloomfield

Councillor Freddie van Mierlo

Councillor Jenny Hannaby (In place of Councillor Robin Bennett)

Officers:

Whole of meeting Richard Hodby, Solicitor; Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Democratic Services Manager

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports are attached to the signed Minutes.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda No. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Jane Murphy and Councillor Robin Bennett (substituted by Councillor Jenny Hannaby).

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Agenda No. 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 August 2024 were approved.

4 FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2024

(Agenda No. 5)

The Committee considered the report on financial activities for the 2023/24 financial year.

Richard Hodby summarised the report. There had been little activity in the period of the report. The Trust received garage rental income and higher than expected

interest. There had been no expenditure. The County Council donated back the accountancy fees so makes no profit from the accountancy work.

The Chair put the recommendations to the Committee and they were agreed.

RESOLVED to

- (a) Approve the Statement of Financial Activities for the year to 31 March 2024 annexed to this report; and**
- (b) Authorise a Council officer to submit data from the Statement to the Charity Commission online before midnight on 31 January 2025 so that annual financial reporting obligations are complied with.**

5 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda No. 4)

The Chair agreed to a request to speak from Gill Bindoff.

Gill Bindoff expressed her frustration that no date had been set yet for a meeting of the Committee to make any substantive decisions despite the Committee meeting with some urgency last August. She was concerned that with the County Council election due in May the Trust's interests would be low on the agenda.

She was further concerned that the Government's plan for devolution introduced further uncertainty. She asked that informal discussions be held soon in advance of a Committee meeting.

Members gave assurances that there would be no lack of interest in the business of the Committee and agreed to aim to hold a meeting again by March.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 2025

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank