

## OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 16 May 2023 commencing at 10.30 am and finishing at 11.50 am

### **Present:**

Councillor Felix Bloomfield – in the Chair

Councillors:

Alison Rooke	Nick Field-Johnson	Jane Murphy
Juliette Ash	Donna Ford	Michael O'Connor
Brad Baines	Stefan Gawrysiak	Glynis Phillips
David Bartholomew	Andy Graham	Sally Povolotsky
Tim Bearder	Kate Gregory	Susanna Pressel
Robin Bennett	Jane Hanna OBE	Eddie Reeves
Liz Brighthouse OBE	Jenny Hannaby	G.A. Reynolds
Kevin Bulmer	Damian Haywood	Judy Roberts
Nigel Champken-Woods	Charlie Hicks	David Rouane
Mark Cherry	John Howson	Geoff Saul
Andrew Coles	Bob Johnston	Les Sibley
Yvonne Constance OBE	Liz Leffman	Nigel Simpson
Imade Edosomwan	Nick Leverton	Roz Smith
Trish Elphinstone	Dan Levy	Ian Snowdon
Duncan Enright	Dr Nathan Ley	Dr Pete Sudbury
Mohamed Fadlalla	Mark Lygo	Bethia Thomas
Arash Fatemian	Kieron Mallon	Michael Waine
Neil Fawcett	Ian Middleton	
Ted Fenton	Calum Miller	

*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.*

### **28/23 ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THE 2023/24 COUNCIL YEAR**

(Agenda Item 1)

Before nominations were invited for the office of Chair of the Council, Councillor Susanna Pressel (the retiring Chair) took the opportunity to reflect on her year in office as Chair of the Council, and in particular her work to raise the profile of local government and emphasise the importance of voting. Through her attendance at events, she had also been able to thank many of the wonderful staff and community volunteers who give up their time to help other people.

Councillor Pressel thanked Members for electing her and thanked staff for their support throughout the year which had been an amazing and life-changing experience for her.

Councillor Brighthouse paid tribute to the outgoing Chair, thanking her for chairing the meetings so well and for raising the profile of the Chair of the County Council all around the County.

The Monitoring Officer, Anita Bradley then invited nominations for the office of Chair of the Council for the 2023/24 Council Year. Councillor Reeves moved and Councillor Ford seconded that Councillor Felix Bloomfield be elected as Chair of the Council for the 2023/24 Council Year. There being no other nominations and no dissent, Councillor Bloomfield was duly declared elected (nem con).

Upon election, Councillor Bloomfield signed the Statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**RESOLVED:** (nem con) that Councillor Felix Bloomfield be elected as Chair for the 2023/24 Council Year.

(Councillor Felix Bloomfield in the Chair.)

The Chair thanked Members for the great honour. He thanked Councillor Pressel for supporting so many individuals and groups across Oxfordshire in her year as Chair. He committed to promoting the best objectives and services of the Council and to foster community identity and pride in the County.

## **29/23 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE 2023/24 COUNCIL YEAR**

(Agenda Item 2)

The Chair called for nominations for the office of Vice-Chair.

Councillor Leffman moved and Councillor Brighthouse seconded that Councillor Alison Rooke be elected as Vice-Chair of the Council for the 2023/24 Council Year. There being no other nominations, Councillor Alison Rooke was duly declared elected Vice-Chair of the Council for the 2023/24 Council Year. Councillor Rooke signed the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**RESOLVED:** (nem con) that Councillor Alison Rooke be elected Vice-Chair for the 2023/24 Council Year.

## **30/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

(Agenda Item 3)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Banfield, Corkin, Gant, Ilott, van Mierlo, Walker and Webber.

### **31/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE**

(Agenda Item 4)

There were no declarations of interest.

### **32/23 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item 5)

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2023 were approved and signed as a correct record with the following amendments:

Added to the Attendance: Councillor Trish Elphinstone

Minute 11/23, on Page 3 at the end of the third paragraph:  
Insert "Member" before "should resign."

Minute 13/23, on Page 8 insert after the second paragraph:

"In response to a supplementary question from Mr Parnham, Councillor Gant said that he would provide a written response giving the date that the Council first became aware that pollution levels on Hollow Way and Oxford Road / Between Towns Road may have been breached, according to provisional city data".

### **33/23 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS**

(Agenda Item 6)

The Chair announced that for the ninth year in a row, residents in Oxfordshire had topped the table nationally when it comes to recycling, reusing and composting. Oxfordshire County Council had again been named the best performing county council waste disposal authority in England in that category. In 2021 - 22, residents recycled, reused or composted 58.2 per cent of their household waste, according to the latest government figures.

### **34/23 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item 7)

#### Petition

Themis Avraamides presented a petition with almost 500 signatures calling for restrictions on buses using narrow streets in Woodstock as a turning circle. The double-decker buses posed a health and safety danger to pedestrians. For example, a lady on the footpath was hit by a wing mirror on one occasion. Buses are often unable to get through causing an obstruction and the practice exposed town residents to higher levels of air pollution.

#### Speaker

Richard Parnham stated that the minutes of the last meeting omitted to record that the Chair directed Councillor Gant to circulate the response to Mr Parnham's supplementary question to all councillors. He had still not received a response to the question regarding air pollution levels around

Hollow Way in Oxford and asked the Chair to direct Councillor Gant to circulate a response.

The Chair responded that it was normal practice to circulate written responses to all Members. He would follow the matter up and ensure that a response is given.

**35/23 REPORT OF CABINET**

(Agenda Item 8)

Council received the report of the Cabinet.

In relation to a question from Councillor Eddie Reeves, Councillor Duncan Enright, Cabinet Member for Travel & Development Strategy, agreed to report to Council any amendments to the Terms of Reference or the Memorandum of Understanding in relation to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

**36/23 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

(Agenda Item 9)

Council had before it the Annual Report of the Audit & Governance Committee which summarised the work that had been undertaken both as a Committee and through the support of the Audit Working Group in 2022/23. Councillor Roz Smith, Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee, moved and Councillor Brad Baines, Deputy Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee, seconded that the Council receive the report.

In response to a question from Councillor Michael Waine, Councillor Smith stated that the Committee's Governance Working Group had met and the issue of having an Education Scrutiny Committee was discussed and will continue to be considered as part of their work.

**RESOLVED:** (nem con) to note the contents of the Annual Report of the Audit & Governance Committee 2022/23.

**37/23 CABINET MEMBERSHIP AND DELEGATION OF CABINET FUNCTIONS**

(Agenda Item 10)

Under the Council's constitution, the Leader of the Council was required to inform the Annual Meeting of the Council of the delegations she had made in relation to the functions of the Cabinet. Council had before it a report (appended to the Schedule of Business) which confirmed a change in the appointment to the Public Health & Equality portfolio. The Leader also made a change in that title to "Public Health & Inequalities."

The names of the people appointed to the Cabinet by the Leader of the Council for the coming year and their respective portfolios were as follows:

Leader – Liz Leffman  
Deputy Leader – Liz Brighthouse

Cabinet Member for:

Corporate Services – Glynis Phillips  
Community Services and Safety – Jenny Hannaby  
Climate Change Delivery and Environment – Pete Sudbury  
Travel and Development Strategy – Duncan Enright  
Highway Management – Andrew Gant  
Finance – Calum Miller  
Adult Social Care – Tim Bearder  
Public Health & Inequalities – Michael O'Connor

### **38/23 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 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.

The Council also had before it Annex 2 which set out the political balance on the committees and Annex 3 showing the membership of all committees, together with a number of additional changes set out in the Schedule of Business for the meeting.

The Chair noted that a revised report was included in the Schedule of Business at Page 9 along with revised Annexes 2 and 3. Annexes 1 and 4 remained unchanged.

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel should not have been included in the list of committees contributing to the calculations on political balance. The change did not affect the final number of seats for each political group. Also Annex 3 had been corrected to show Councillor Mallon as Chair of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Parenting Committee as having 9 places.

Councillor Felix Bloomfield moved and Cllr Alison Rooke seconded that the recommendations set out in the report be adopted. Council noted the revised report and Annexes 2 & 3 and the recommendations were agreed.

**RESOLVED** (nem con) to:

- a) note how the rules operate and approve necessary adjustments to achieve the balance across and within Committees to comply with the rules.

- b) appoint Councillors to the scrutiny and other committees of the Council listed in Annex 3 as required by any changes necessary as a result of applying the proportionality rules, and subject to any changes on the nomination of the political groups.

Council also noted the following appointments notified by the political group leaders:

Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire West Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

Cllr Elphinstone to replace Cllr Edosomwan

Corporate Parenting Committee:

Cllr Brighthouse and Cllr Lygo appointed

Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel:

Cllr Hicks to replace Cllr Baines

Horton Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

Cllr Levy has replaced Cllr van Mierlo

People Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

Cllr Edosomwan to replace Cllr O'Connor

Performance & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

Cllr Hicks to replace Cllr O'Connor

Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

Cllr Coles to replace Cllr Baines

Oxfordshire County Council & Teachers' Joint Committee:

Cllr Pressel to replace Cllr Brighthouse

Two further changes not in the Schedule:

Cllr Levy to replace Cllr van Mierlo on Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire West Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Horton Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

### **39/23 COMMITTEE DATES 2023/24**

(Agenda Item 12)

Council had before it a schedule of committee dates for the 2023/24 Council Year which had been approved at its meeting on 1 November 2022. The schedule had been drawn up to reflect the various rules regarding frequency of meetings set out in the Council's Constitution.

Councillor Calum Miller moved and Councillor Liz Brighthouse seconded that Council request officers to move the date of the February Council meeting from 13 February 2024 to 20 February 2024 to avoid it being held in the

school mid-term break, unless any legal problems were identified with such a change.

**RESOLVED** (nem con) to note the schedule of dates of committees in 2023/24 subject to the following amendments:

- a) the start time of Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee is 10.00am.
- b) move the date of the February Council meeting from 13 February 2024 to 20 February 2024, unless any legal problems were identified with such a change.

**40/23 OFFICER SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

(Agenda Item 13)

The Council is required annually to agree the scheme of delegation of Council responsibilities to Officers for inclusion in the Constitution.

Councillor Felix Bloomfield moved and Councillor Alison Rooke seconded the recommendations.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the Scheme of Delegation as it relates to Council functions including the amendments to Part 7.1 and Part 7.2 of the Council Constitution annexed to this report.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing .....