

# OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the Extraordinary meeting held on Wednesday, 20 May 2026 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 10.45 am

**Present:**

Councillor Ted Fenton – in the Chair

Councillors:

Roz Smith (Vice-Chair)	Maggie Filipova-Rivers	Gavin McLauchlan
Thomas Ashby	Rebekah Fletcher	Ian Middleton
Brad Baines	James Fry	Toyah Overton
Ron Batstone	Andrew Gant	Glynis Phillips
Tim Bearder	Emma Garnett	James Plumb
Chris Brant	Sean Gaul	Susanna Pressel
Liz Brighthouse OBE	Stefan Gawrysiak	Leigh Rawlins
Mark Cherry	Laura Gordon	Judy Roberts
Nicholas Michael Cotter	Jane Hanna OBE	James Robertshaw
Dr Izzy Creed	Jenny Hannaby	Paul-Austin Sargent
Andrew Crichton	David Henwood	John Shiri
Imade Edosomwan	David Hingley	Ian Snowdon
Judith Edwards	Emily Kerr	Peter Stevens
Gareth Epps	Liz Leffman	Bethia Thomas
Lee Evans	Mark Lygo	Liam Walker
Neil Fawcett	Saj Malik	Tony Worgan
Nick Field-Johnson	Kieron Mallon	

*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.*

**35/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

(Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillors Barlow, Coles, Graham, Greenaway, Gregory, Higgins, Jones, Ley, Lugova, Markham and Saul.

**36/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE**

(Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

**37/26 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS**

(Agenda Item 3)

There were no announcements.

**38/26 PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item 4)

There were no public addresses.

**39/26 ELECTION OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

(Agenda Item 5)

Council had before it a report from the Monitoring Officer outlining the reasons for calling the Extraordinary meeting of Council following the resignation of Councillor Leffman as Leader of the Council.

The Chair moved the recommendation and it was seconded by the Vice-Chair for:

“Council to elect a Leader of the Council following the resignation of Councillor Liz Leffman as Leader on the afternoon of 12 May 2026.”

Members questioned why Councillor Leffman resigned immediately following the Annual Meeting of the Council, necessitating a further meeting of Council being called a week later. Members asked for Council to receive a report into the matter. The request was noted by the Chair.

The Chair invited nominations for the office of Leader of the Council.

Councillor Bearder was nominated by Councillor Leffman and seconded by Councillor Fawcett.

Councillor Walker was nominated by Councillor Mallon and seconded by Councillor Snowdon.

Councillor Brighouse was nominated by Councillor Pressel and seconded by Councillor Phillips.

The Chair called on Members to vote electronically for each nominee in turn in the order nominated by voting “Yes” for one nominee only.

Councillor Bearder received 30 votes, Councillor Walker received 12 votes and Councillor Brighouse received 10 votes.

Councillor Bearder, having received a majority of the 52 votes cast, was declared elected as the Leader of the Council.

The Chair noted that Councillors Walker and Brighouse will continue as Leaders of the Opposition.

Councillor Bearder thanked Council and announced his Cabinet Members and portfolios:

- Councillor Neil Fawcett, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources
- Councillor Sean Gaul, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
- Councillor Gareth Epps, Cabinet Member for Transport
- Councillor Dan Levy, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation
- Councillor Liz Leffman, Cabinet Member for Highways Construction and Repair
- Councillor Rebekah Fletcher, Cabinet Member of Adults
- Councillor Kate Gregory, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Inequalities
- Councillor Judith Edwards, Cabinet Member for Local Government Reorganisation and Human Resources
- Councillor Laura Gordon, Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy

..... in the Chair

Date of signing .....