

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 17 May 2011 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 1.10 pm.

Present:

Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles – in the Chair for Agenda Item 1
Councillor Patrick Greene – in the Chair for Agenda Item 2 onwards

Councillors:

Hilary Hibbert-Biles	Tim Hallchurch MBE	John Sanders
M. Altaf-Khan	Pete Handley	Larry Sanders
Alan Armitage	Jenny Hannaby	Don Seale
Lynda Atkins	Tony Harbour	Bill Service
Marilyn Badcock	Steve Hayward	Dave Sexon
Mike Badcock	Ian Hudspeth	Chip Sherwood
Maurice Billington	Sarah Hutchinson	C.H. Shouler
Norman Bolster	Ray Jelf	Dr Peter Skolar
Ann Bonner	Peter Jones	Roz Smith
Liz Brighouse OBE	Stewart Lilly	Val Smith
Iain Brown	Lorraine Lindsay-Gale	Richard Stevens
Nick Carter	A.M. Lovatt	Keith Strangwood
Louise Chapman	Kieron Mallon	Lawrie Stratford
Jim Couchman	Charles Mathew	John Tanner
Tony Crabbe	Keith R. Mitchell CBE	Alan Thompson
Arash Fatemian	David Nimmo-Smith	Melinda Tilley
Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor	Neil Owen	David Turner
Jean Fooks	Zoé Patrick	Nicholas P. Turner
Anthony Gearing	Susanna Pressel	Carol Viney
Michael Gibbard	Anne Purse	Michael Waine
John Goddard	G.A. Reynolds	David Wilmshurst
Janet Godden	David Robertson	

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.

42/11 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR 2011/12 COUNCIL YEAR

(Agenda Item 1)

Before inviting nominations for the office of Chairman of the Council, Councillor Hibbert-Biles (the retiring Chairman) addressed the meeting, reflecting on her year of office. She thanked the Vice-Chairman (Councillor Greene), her Husband, and Alison Clapton for all their help and support

during the year. She then presented Alison with some flowers. Councillors Mitchell, Patrick, Brighthouse and L Sanders paid tribute to Councillor Hibbert-Biles.

Councillor Mitchell proposed and Councillor Chapman seconded that Councillor Greene be elected Chairman of the Council for the 2011/12 Council Year.

Councillor Patrick proposed and Councillor Brighthouse seconded that Councillor Purse be elected Chairman of the Council for the 2011/12 Council Year.

Forty-four members voting in favour of Councillor Greene and 19 members voting in favour of Councillor Purse, Councillor Greene was declared elected. He read and signed the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office and presented his wife with the Chairman's consort badge.. Councillor Greene then took the Chair.

43/11 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2011/12 COUNCIL YEAR

(Agenda Item 2)

The Chairman called for nominations for the office of Vice-Chairman. Councillor Mitchell proposed and Councillor Service seconded that Councillor Seale be elected Vice-Chairman of the Council for the 2011/12 Council Year. Councillor Brighthouse proposed and Councillor Patrick seconded that Councillor V Smith be elected Vice-Chairman of the Council for the 2011/12 Council Year.

Forty-five members voting in favour of Councillor Seale and 19 members voting in favour of Councillor V Smith, Councillor Seale was declared elected. He read and signed the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

44/11 MINUTES

(Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 5 April 2011 be approved and signed.

45/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item 4)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Ahmed, Belson, Darke, Fulljames, Harvey, Heathcoat, Malik and Rose.

46/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE

(Agenda Item 5)

The following declaration of interest was made:

Councillor Ian Brown declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 14 due to ownership of property in the Parish of Steventon.

47/11 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

(Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman reported as follows:

- (i) Council congratulated the Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service following a demanding period, including extensive operations in support of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service's Swinley forest fire incident. Council further thanked the primary employers of Retained Duty System firefighters for their support during this time.
- (ii) The very sad news from the Finance Team at Thames Valley Police Authority that their Chief Executive, Jim Booth, had unexpectedly passed away. It was agreed to send a letter of condolence on behalf of the Council.
- (iii) The Chairman would send a letter of condolence on behalf of the Council to the commanding officer of 11 EOD on the tragic death of Capt Lisa Head while on active service in Afghanistan on 18th April. Council observed a minute 's silence as a mark of respect.

48/11 CABINET MEMBERSHIP AND DELEGATION OF CABINET FUNCTIONS

(Agenda Item 9)

The Council had before them the report of the Leader of the Council (CC9 - Annex 1 to the Schedule of Business). The report set out the appointments the Leader of the Council had made, together with the delegation of functions of the Cabinet.

Councillor Mitchell proposed and Councillor Robertson seconded the adoption of the recommendations set out in the report. Councillor Mitchell paid warm tribute to past Cabinet Members Councillor Ian Hudspeth and Councillor Michael Waine.

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

49/11 COMMITTEES AND REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE

(Agenda Item 10)

The Council had before them a report of the County Solicitor & Monitoring Officer (CC10) and an updated membership of committees and sub-committees (CC10 – Annex 1 to the Schedule of Business).

Councillor Mitchell moved and Councillor Robertson seconded the adoption of the recommendations set out in CC10 – Annex 1 to the schedule of business as amended at the meeting.

RESOLVED: (nem con) to:

- (a) confirm the political balance on committees shown in Annex 3 to the report;
- (b) to appoint to committees the councillors and co-opted members as shown in Annex 1 to these minutes.

50/11 OFFICER SCHEME OF DELEGATION

(Agenda Item 11)

The Council had before them a report by the Monitoring Officer (CC11).

RESOLVED: (nem con) to note the amendments to Article 11 of the Constitution identified in paragraphs 4-7 above and to approve the scheme of Officer Delegation contained in Part 7.3 of the Council's Constitution.

51/11 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

(Agenda Item 12)

8 Questions with notice were asked. Details of the questions and answers and the supplementary questions and answers, where asked and given, are set out in Annex 2 to the Minutes.

In relation to Question 6 (Question asked by Councillor Hannaby) Councillor Fatemian undertook to look again at the Ambulance Service provision.

In relation to Question 8 (Question asked by Councillor Hannaby) Councillor Fatemian undertook to bring a report to a future meeting of the Adult Services Scrutiny Committee on the Customer Service Centre, outlining the actual number of people taking calls from people that need assistance.

In relation to Question 8 (Question asked by Councillor Fooks) Councillor Mitchell undertook to provide Councillor Fooks with written confirmation that Big Society funding was available for Libraries.

52/11 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD STEVENS

(Agenda Item 13)

Councillor Stevens moved and Councillor Hutchinson seconded the following motion:

“This Council notes that the level of delayed transfers of care in Oxfordshire for 2010/11 has been higher than the previous two years, with a particularly high level of delays between June and December 2010. In relation to this period, Council further notes the comment of the Director for Social & Community Services (in his March 2011 report to the Adult Services Scrutiny

Committee) that, "we needed a period of reduced commitments from June to November 2010 to bring our expenditure back to budget."

While welcoming the reduction in delays in January and February 2011, Council calls on Cabinet to consider the reasons behind the high level of delayed discharges in 2010/11 and to work constructively with other organisations with responsibilities in this area to ensure that delayed transfers of care in Oxfordshire are minimised."

Councillor Fatemian moved and Councillor Skolar seconded the following amendment shown in bold italics and strikethrough:

"This Council notes that the level of delayed transfers of care in Oxfordshire for 2010/11 has been ***at times*** higher than the previous two years, with a particularly high level of delays between June and December 2010. In relation to this period, Council further notes the comment of the Director for Social & Community Services (in his March 2011 report to the Adult Services Scrutiny Committee) that, "we needed a period of reduced commitments from June to November 2010 to bring our expenditure back to budget."

This Council particularly notes that the number of delays for which Adult Services are responsible has continued to fall and now accounts for less than 1/3 of delays while delays for which the NHS is solely responsible account for around half.

~~In~~ While welcoming the ***hard work of the County Council and other partners which has led to a*** reduction in delays in January and February 2011, Council calls on Cabinet to consider the reasons behind the high level of delayed discharges in 2010/11 and to ***continue to*** work constructively ***and share ideas*** with other organisations with responsibilities in this area to ensure that delayed transfers of care in Oxfordshire are minimised."

Following debate the amendment was carried by 44 votes to 17, and it was:-

RESOLVED: (by 51 votes to 0, with 5 abstentions)

"This Council notes that the level of delayed transfers of care in Oxfordshire for 2010/11 has been at times higher than the previous two years, with a particularly high level of delays between June and December 2010. In relation to this period, Council further notes the comment of the Director for Social & Community Services (in his March 2011 report to the Adult Services Scrutiny Committee) that, "we needed a period of reduced commitments from June to November 2010 to bring our expenditure back to budget."

This Council particularly notes that the number of delays for which Adult Services are responsible has continued to fall and now accounts for less than 1/3 of delays while delays for which the NHS is solely responsible account for around half.

In welcoming the hard work of the County Council and other partners which has led to a reduction in delays in January and February 2011, Council calls

on Cabinet to consider the reasons behind the high level of delayed discharges in 2010/11 and to continue to work constructively and share ideas with other organisations with responsibilities in this area to ensure that delayed transfers of care in Oxfordshire are minimised.”

53/11 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR IAIN BROWN

(Agenda Item 14)

Councillor Brown moved and Councillor Tilley seconded the following motion as amended by Councillor Patrick in bold italic:

“This Council welcomes the findings of HM Planning Inspectorate in relation to Thames Water’s failure to get its Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) approved for implementation. Oxfordshire County Council also welcomes the fact that The Secretary of State for the Environment has accepted the findings of HM Planning Inspectorate in full, in relation to Thames Water’s WRMP.

This Council instructs the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council to write both to HM Planning Inspectorate and The Secretary of State for the Environment to thank them for their measured and thorough analysis of the 2,000 page document that Thames Water presented as a document for future water supply to the South East of England.

This Council acknowledges the hard and diligent work of officers and members at Oxfordshire County Council **and the Vale of White Horse District Council**, who, combined with local people and parishes as well as the Group Against Reservoir Development (GARD), have prevented up to 5,000 acres of productive farmland from being lost to a reservoir that has now been shown to be unnecessary.

Finally, this Council instructs the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council to write to our Oxfordshire Members of Parliament asking them to use their best endeavours to ensure that Thames Water, in its revised WRMP, is forced properly to consider all of the alternative water supply options, some of them outlined in the Oxfordshire County Council report dated 17 May 2006 and entitled "Can we rely on our Water Supply?"

Councillor Brown accepted the proposed amendment by Councillor Patrick

Following debate, the motion as amended was carried nem con.

RESOLVED: (nem con)

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Finally, this Council instructs the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council to write to our Oxfordshire Members of Parliament asking them to use their best endeavours to ensure that Thames Water, in its revised WRMP, is forced properly to consider all of the alternative water supply options, some of them outlined in the Oxfordshire County Council report dated 17 May 2006 and entitled "Can we rely on our Water Supply?"

54/11 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR JANET GODDEN

(Agenda Item 15)

Councillor Godden moved and Councillor Altaf-Khan seconded the following motion:

"Council needs assurance that Oxfordshire Schools are fully aware of the heightened responsibilities for school improvement laid upon them by the White Paper, The Importance of teaching, and explained in the plans for the restructuring of the CEF directorate (CAB 19 April, item 7, esp. pp.97-99). Only 15 schools responded to the consultation document, and although some briefing meetings for head teachers and chairs of governors have been held Council is concerned that governing bodies may not fully appreciate the changes that will face them this Autumn.

Central support will hence forward be confined to weak or challenged schools, and high-performing schools will be expected to help their less successful neighbours. Schools will be responsible for buying in their own improvement and support services.

Any lack of preparedness or readiness to assume these new responsibilities could result in lower attainment levels and poorer outcomes for pupils. Oxfordshire schools have struggled in recent years to reach levels of pupil attainment commensurate with expectations.

Council therefore requests the Director of CYPF to arrange briefing meetings district by district for all school governors, separately for primary and secondary schools, to ensure that any concerns can be heard and that governors become well informed and proactive participants in the changes to come."

Following debate, the motion was lost by 43 votes to 19.

55/11 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR MRS CATHERINE FULLJAMES

(Agenda Item 16)

Councillor Hudspeth moved and Councillor Stratford seconded the following motion:

“This Council opposes HS2 on the grounds that up to £750 million will apparently be spent on developing the scheme by consultants and lawyers when that money could provide better value for money by implementing schemes already worked up that will deliver economic growth across South East England and Oxfordshire.

This Council asks Cabinet to provide the evidence to support this position and to respond accordingly to the current consultation on HS2.”

The motion was put to the vote and was carried by 47 votes to 14, with 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED: (by 47 votes to 14, with 2 abstentions)

“This Council opposes HS2 on the grounds that up to £750 million will apparently be spent on developing the scheme by consultants and lawyers when that money could provide better value for money by implementing schemes already worked up that will deliver economic growth across South East England and Oxfordshire.

This Council asks Cabinet to provide the evidence to support this position and to respond accordingly to the current consultation on HS2.”

56/11 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR ZOE PATRICK

(Agenda Item 17)

Councillor Patrick moved and Councillor R. Smith seconded the following motion:

“Council:

Welcomes the announcement in the Budget on 23rd March 2011 that councils in England will be given extra money, on top of the £100 million announced in February, to spend on repairing potholes, meaning an extra £3.525m will now be available in this year’s council budget for pothole repairs in Oxfordshire.

Council welcomes the new partnership with Atkins and instructs officers to present options to speed up the identification and repair of potholes with reports from residents and condition surveys to be used to ensure that these funds are applied in an efficient and cost effective manner, with a view to

ensuring that the defects and deteriorating roads and pavements are tackled at the earliest opportunity.

Council also asks that the heavier traffic load on the City's roads is recognised in the distribution formula, not just the total length of roads. Council further requests that information to be published on the Council's website by 30 September 2011 showing where this extra money has been spent."

Following debate, the motion was lost by 41 votes to 17, with 1 abstention.

57/11 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR ALAN ARMITAGE

(Agenda Item 18)

Councillor Armitage moved and Councillor Godden seconded the following motion as amended by councillor Mitchell in bold italic and strikethrough:

~~"Council welcomes the support of Thames Valley Police in facilitating the return to operation of speed cameras across the county.~~

"Council notes the re-introduction of camera enforcement by TVP and welcomes the fact that no OCC service had to be cut to finance the operation.

Council believes that effective enforcement of all speed limits is necessary to ensure that ~~injuries and fatalities~~ on the county's roads continue to ~~reduce~~ ***ever be safe in the short and*** over the long term.

Council therefore calls upon Thames Valley Police to ~~bring in~~ ***use existing*** measures to see that enforcement of 20 mph speed limits in Oxford city ***and all other limits in Oxfordshire*** are given their ~~immediate~~ attention."

Following debate, the motion as amended was carried nem con.

RESOLVED: (nem con)

"Council notes the re-introduction of camera enforcement by TVP and welcomes the fact that no OCC service had to be cut to finance the operation.

Council believes that effective enforcement of all speed limits is necessary to ensure that the county's roads continue to be safe in the short and over the long term.

Council therefore calls upon Thames Valley Police to use existing measures to see that enforcement of 20 mph speed limits in Oxford city and all other limits in Oxfordshire are given their attention."

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 2011