

# **County Council**

**1 November 2022**

## **Agenda**

## Declarations of Interest

### The duty to declare.....

Under the Localism Act 2011 it is a criminal offence to

- (a) fail to register a disclosable pecuniary interest within 28 days of election or co-option (or re-election or re-appointment), or
- (b) provide false or misleading information on registration, or
- (c) participate in discussion or voting in a meeting on a matter in which the member or co-opted member has a disclosable pecuniary interest.

### Whose Interests must be included?

The Act provides that the interests which must be notified are those of a member or co-opted member of the authority, **or**

- those of a spouse or civil partner of the member or co-opted member;
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as husband/wife
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as if they were civil partners.

(in each case where the member or co-opted member is aware that the other person has the interest).

### What if I remember that I have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the Meeting?.

The Code requires that, at a meeting, where a member or co-opted member has a disclosable interest (of which they are aware) in any matter being considered, they disclose that interest to the meeting. The Council will continue to include an appropriate item on agendas for all meetings, to facilitate this.

Although not explicitly required by the legislation or by the code, it is recommended that in the interests of transparency and for the benefit of all in attendance at the meeting (including members of the public) the nature as well as the existence of the interest is disclosed.

A member or co-opted member who has disclosed a pecuniary interest at a meeting must not participate (or participate further) in any discussion of the matter; and must not participate in any vote or further vote taken; and must withdraw from the room.

Members are asked to continue to pay regard to the following provisions in the code that *“You must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself”* or *“You must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned.....”*.

Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting should you have any doubt about your approach.

### List of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:

**Employment** (includes *“any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain”*.), **Sponsorship, Contracts, Land, Licences, Corporate Tenancies, Securities.**

For a full list of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and further Guidance on this matter please see the Guide to the New Code of Conduct and Register of Interests at Members’ conduct guidelines. <http://intranet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/Insite/Elected+members/> or email [democracy@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@oxfordshire.gov.uk) for a hard copy of the document.

**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, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.**

To: **Members of the County COUNCIL**

## ***Notice of a Meeting of the County Council***

**Tuesday, 1 November 2022 at 10.30 am**

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

If you wish to view proceedings, please click on the link on the website. Please note, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.



Stephen Chandler  
Interim Chief Executive

October 2022

Committee Officer: **Chris Reynolds**  
Tel: 07542 029441; E-Mail: [chris.reynolds@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:chris.reynolds@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018, notice is given that the meeting will be recorded. The purpose of recording proceedings is to provide an *aide-memoire* to assist the clerk of the meeting in the drafting of minutes.

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***Members are asked to sign the attendance book which will be available in the corridor outside the Council Chamber. A list of members present at the meeting will be compiled from this book.***

# AGENDA

**1. Minutes (Pages 1 - 16)**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2022 (**CC1**)

**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 the Cabinet, scrutiny and other committees on the nomination of political groups.

**6. 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 Wednesday 26 October 2022. Requests to speak should be sent to [chris.reynolds@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:chris.reynolds@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.*

**7. Questions with Notice from Members of the Public**

**8. Questions with Notice from Members of the Council**

**9. Report of the Cabinet (Pages 17 - 22)**

Report of the Cabinet meetings of 20 September and 18 October 2022

**10. Dispensation from attending meetings (Pages 23 - 24)**

Report by Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

**Council is RECOMMENDED to**

**(a) Grant a dispensation to Cllr Nick Field-Johnson from the statutory requirement to attend a meeting of the Council within a six-month period from the last noted attendance for family reasons.**

**(b) Approve that the dispensation last up to and including 31 December 2022.**

**11. Officer Scheme of Delegation (Pages 25 - 46)**

Report of the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

**COUNCIL IS RECOMMENDED to approve the Scheme of Delegation as it relates to Council functions and the amendments to the parts of the Council's Constitution annexed to this report (which include a revised Officer Scheme of Delegation) where these are not already within the delegations granted to the Director of Law and Governance**

**12. Calendar of meetings 2023/24 (Pages 47 - 52)**

Report by the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

**COUNCIL IS RECOMMENDED to approve the calendar of meetings for the 2023-24 civic year attached to the report.**

**13. Capital Governance - Amendments to the Financial Regulations, Section 5, Capital (Pages 53 - 70)**

Report of the Director of Finance

**Council is RECOMMENDED to**

**Approve the amendments to the Financial Procedure Rules (Financial Regulations, Section 5 'Capital') as set out in Annex 1, as recommended by the Audit and Governance Committee.**

**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*

#### **14. Motion by Councillor Roz Smith**

This Council notes:

There are over 2 million employees providing unpaid care to friends and family members, such as personal care, medical and social support, and attending appointments.

The pressure on people as they balance their work with caring is hard. This Council believes that more action is needed to support people in employment with caring responsibilities.

Council therefore proposes to support the Carer's Leave Bill being brought to Parliament which will, for the first time, create a statutory entitlement for employers to offer unpaid leave for employees with caring responsibilities.

The Bill is expected to provide for up to one week's unpaid leave per year (in addition to paid leave allowance) and would provide more flexibility for carers, making things easier for them and their employers.

Eligibility for the leave would be clearly defined in the Bill, taking a broad approach to reflect the wide range of caring relationships and responsibilities.

Council therefore:

1. resolves for the leader to write to all Oxfordshire MP's asking them if they will support the Carer's Leave Bill
2. resolves to ask the Cabinet to commission a review of the communications and support for local advice services for employed Careers residing in Oxfordshire to ascertain if there is any further support that can be given

#### **15. Motion by Councillor Eddie Reeves**

This Council notes that significant concerns have been raised locally and nationally surrounding the data sets used to justify the introduction of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs).

This Council further acknowledges its shortcomings in connection with certain of the LTN consultations and restates its commitment to consult more fully with local businesses, community groups and residents with mobility and/or religious requirements that make LTNs in parts of Oxford more problematic than in others.

Without prejudice to the administration's aim of reducing car-use, this Council recommends to Cabinet that it halt any immediate expansion in LTNs with a view to reassuring residents surrounding the data-sets and consultation methodologies used to justify and aid their introduction.

This Council further recommends to Cabinet that an independent audit of LTNs introduced in, or planned for, Oxfordshire be set in train to allow the Local Government Association or such other organisation to impartially assess their value in economic and environmental terms, together with their corresponding levels of democratic support.

## **16. Motion by Councillor Charlie Hicks**

This Council has considered a change of Governance in the past from Leader and Cabinet to having a more inclusive Committee structure. The Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance wishes to review the decision-making structures of the County Council, with the aim of operating in a much more inclusive way that can involve all the talents of the council.

The Council now requests the Director for Law & Governance to institute a Full Governance Review of the County Council as soon as practicable, with any recommended changes to the Council's Executive and Governance structure to be decided by Full Council and fully implemented by May 2024

## **17. Motion by Councillor Nigel Simpson**

Oxfordshire County Council has acknowledged the Climate Change Emergency.

A major contributor to excessive CO2 output is unnecessary car journeys. The proposal by Network Rail to shut the vital link between Yarnton and Kidlington by closing the level crossing at Sandy Lane will result in a significant increase in carbon emissions.

Permanent closure would see drivers forced to use alternative routes resulting in an average extra distance travelled of nearly two miles per journey.

Based on a recent survey undertaken by Yarnton Parish Council and on current usage this is estimated to result in an extra 4750 miles travelled on weekdays and 3800 at weekends, resulting in 1.5 million unnecessary miles per year.

The cost of such surplus miles is hundreds of thousands of pounds to residents and businesses who rely on their cars; and extra pollution in the form of many tonnes of carbon emissions, contrary to the Council's environmental objectives.

This would go directly against the Council's ambition to reduce CO2 output generated by transport and very significantly degrade the network of contacts that currently underpins the ancient and vital community nexus around the parishes of Yarnton, Begbroke and Kidlington.

This Council calls upon the Leader to request relevant Cabinet colleague(s) to engage with the local parishes, Network Rail and Oxford University Developments to discuss with them the ways in which this vital link can be maintained at least cost to the environment and for the benefit of all users with improvements, especially for cyclists and pedestrians.

## **18. Motion by Councillor Eddie Reeves**

Given the scale of the cost-of-living crisis, this Council resolves to show a lead by recommending to Cabinet that catering for meetings of Full Council and at civic functions be cancelled unless catering is considered essential.

Where appropriate, this Council further recommends to Cabinet that it commit to reallocating such monies to helping those residents in greatest need

## **19. Motion by Councillor Sally Povolotsky**

The UK government has announced only a £100 payment for “Off Grid” homes relying on oil or LPG. A big gap in fiscal support compared to the £400 for all other households on the grid.

Heating and oil prices have seen huge hikes. The average cost of filling a 1,000-litre tank at the start of the year was about £620. By August, which is oil buying season, Oxfordshire residents prices had peaked and the same tank cost £1,108 or more to fill, and the market fluctuates.

The disparity is that most people are required to pay up front for oil, while people on mains energy pay monthly. Residents don't just face a warmth crisis but that low-income households in rural areas face a potential health crisis due to cold homes. Without action, this government risks the health of many of the 1.5 million who have no option other than to use oil or LPG to heat their homes.

There's a potential cost and service gap issue to local authorities by the increased demand for health and mental health services.

This council asks our leader to write to government to;

1. Match the £400 energy grant for ALL energy users
2. Create a package for rural Oxfordshire communities to provide grants for renewables / air source heat pumps or help switch to biofuel boilers, as well as retrofitting and insulation.
3. Recognise that this cost of living emergency has further health service impacts in Oxfordshire and fund the needs of society

## **20. Motion by Councillor Nathan Ley**

This Council recognises that excessive noise pollution from major highways raises the risk of negative health outcomes for our residents, most notably cardiovascular disease, cognitive impairment, and sleep disturbance. This particularly affects those who live in closest proximity to the busiest major strategic roads, including the A34 and M40.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines “strongly recommends reducing noise levels produced by road traffic below 53 dB, as road traffic noise above this level is associated with adverse health effects”. However, it's well known that noise levels are far in excess of this in many residential areas, especially where formally defined as



'Noise Important Areas', where the highest 1% of noise levels at residential locations can be found. This includes neighbourhoods within Abingdon, Botley and Banbury among others.

Traffic volumes on our major roads have massively increased, with the number of cars on the road doubling in the past 30 years. In light of this, and given the absence of physical sound mitigation measures along many highways-adjacent areas in Oxfordshire, we believe National Highways must take action to improve residents' quality of life. The existing designation of several 'Noise Important Areas' provides a framework for further investigation, and this must be matched by appropriate physical remedies.

Acknowledging the important future role of our strategic network, Council asks the Leader to write to National Highways' Chief Executive Nick Harris to stress the importance of funding and implementing physical noise mitigation infrastructure as soon as possible, especially pre-existing 'Noise Important Areas'.

## **21. Motion by Councillor Robin Bennett**

This council considers that the UK government's so-called 'investment zones', proposed by the Chancellor in his recent 'mini-budget', are a disaster in the making, for the environment, local communities, democracy and public finances.

Consultations and environmental regulations have been presented as 'burdensome requirements'. Development which 'responds to the market' in these zones is required to be additional to the sites already set out in Local Plans, which are already carefully planned to respond to local needs and to respect the local environment; Investment zones will be able to 'relax' policy requirements that have been consulted on and approved by local councillors. They are there for a reason.

EU-based environmental regulations such as Habitat Regulation Assessments will be scrapped in these zones, with no clarity as to how they will be replaced.

Instead of treating nature protection as something that is in the way of growth, the environment should be at the heart of decision-making, given that it is the foundation of all economic prosperity.

Oxfordshire's six councils have already agreed a Strategic Vision for long-term sustainable development; adopting a get rich quick scheme devised by disaster capitalist think tanks is not in keeping with that vision.

Council fully endorses the Leader's response to DLUHC confirming that Oxfordshire is already a key contributor to the economy and that democratic local plans remain the best vehicle to deliver that contribution. Responding to the market alone is not enough: Oxfordshire's residents need to be heard, not sidelined, and our environment respected.