

# **County Council**

**14 February 2023**

## **Agenda**

To: Members of the County COUNCIL

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

**Tuesday, 14 February 2023 at 10.30 am**

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

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



Stephen Chandler  
Interim Chief Executive

February 2023

Committee Officer: **Chris Reynolds**  
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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 13 December 2022 and to receive information arising from them.

## 2. Apologies for Absence

## 3. Declarations of Interest

To declare any interests in accordance with the Member Code of Conduct. Please refer to the guidance attached to the agenda relating to disclosable pecuniary interests, registrable interests and non-registrable interests.

## 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. Requests to speak must be submitted by no later than 9am on the working day before the meeting i.e., 9am on Monday 13 February 2023. Requests to speak should be sent to [committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:committeesdemocraticservices@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 on the working day before the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.*

## 7. Pay Policy Statement 2023/24 (Pages 17 - 34)

Report by the Interim Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development

The Localism Act 2011 ('the Act') requires all councils to agree and publish a Pay Policy Statement every financial year. The Act lays down requirements on the content of the statement. This requirement is supplemented by detailed guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government entitled 'Openness and Accountability in Local Pay: Guidance under Section 40 of the Localism Act'.

**Council is RECOMMENDED to:**

- **Consider and approve the 2023/24 Pay Policy Statement following approval at Remuneration Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023.**

**8. Gender Pay Gap Report 2021/22 (Pages 35 - 44)**

Report by the Interim Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development

From 2017, an employer who has a headcount of 250 or more employees on a 'snapshot date' must comply with regulations on gender pay gap reporting. Gender pay gap calculations are based on employer payroll data drawn from a specific date each year. This specific date is called the 'snapshot date'.

The 'snapshot date' for Oxfordshire County Council (as with most other public authority employers) is 31 March every year. The Council must report and publish their gender pay gap information by 30 March of the following year.

The gender pay gap is the difference between the average (mean or median) earnings of men and women across a workforce.

**Council is RECOMMENDED to:**

- **Consider and approve the Gender Pay Gap report 2022 following approval at Remuneration Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023.**

**9. Strategic Plan (Pages 45 - 66)**

Report by the Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development & Resources

The Strategic Plan is the key element of the Council's Policy Framework that sets the Council's strategic priorities, and in turn, influences the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

This report forms part of the suite of information for the Budget and Business Planning process for 2023/24 to 2025/26. As such, the Sections referred to in this report are linked with those set out in the report at agenda item CC10 on Budget and Business Planning 2023/24 to 2025/26.

The proposed updated strategic plan is included at Section 1. The priorities, commitments and objectives in the strategic plan sit under a long-term vision 'to lead positive change by working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer and healthier county'.

**The Council is RECOMMENDED to:**

- a. adopt the Strategic Plan as set out in Section 1**

## 10. Budget and Business Planning 2023/24 - 2025/26 (Pages 67 - 334)

Report by the Director of Finance and Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development & Resources

This report is the culmination of the Budget and Business Planning process for 2023/24 to 2025/26. It sets out the Cabinet's proposed budget for 2023/24, medium term financial plan to 2025/26 and capital programme to 2032/33, together with a number of strategies and policies that the Council is required to approve for the 2023/24 financial year.

The report is divided into four sections, Section 1, the Strategic Plan is set out at item CC9 on this agenda.

**The Council is RECOMMENDED to:**

- a. have regard to the statutory report of the Director of Finance (at Section 3) in approving recommendations b to d below;
- b. (in respect of the budget and medium term financial strategy – at Section 4) approve:
  - (1) the council tax and precept calculations for 2023/24 set out in Section 4.3 and in particular:
    - (i) a precept of £466,654,611;
    - (ii) a council tax for band D equivalent properties of £1,734.03;
  - (2) a budget for 2023/24 as set out in Section 4.4;
  - (3) a medium term financial strategy for 2023/24 to 2025/26 as set out in Section 4.1 (which incorporates changes to the existing medium term financial strategy as set out in Section 4.2);
  - (4) the Financial Strategy for 2023/24 at Section 4.5;
  - (5) the Earmarked Reserves and General Balances Policy Statement 2023/24 at Section 4.6 including
    - (i) the Chief Finance Officer's recommended level of General Balances for 2023/24 (Section 4.6), and
    - (ii) the planned level of Earmarked Reserves for 2023/24 to 2025/26 (Section 4.6.1)
- c. (in respect of capital – at Section 5) approve:
  - (1) the Capital & Investment Strategy for 2023/24 to 2032/33 including the Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision Methodology Statement as set out in Section 5.1;
  - (2) a Capital Programme for 2022/23 to 2032/33 as set out in Section 5.4 which includes new capital proposals set out in Section 5.3.
- d. (in respect of treasury management – at Section 5) approve:
  - (1) the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2023/24 at Section 5.2 including the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators and the Specified Investment and Non-Specified Investment Instruments.
  - (2) that any further changes required to the 2023/24 strategy be

**delegated to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the  
Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance;**

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## **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.