

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 1 November 2016 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 3.35 pm.

Present:

Councillor Michael Waine – in the Chair

Councillors:

Lynda Atkins	Mark Gray	Neil Owen
David Bartholomew	Patrick Greene	Zoé Patrick
Mike Beal	Tim Hallchurch MBE	Glynis Phillips
Maurice Billington	Pete Handley	Susanna Pressel
Liz Brighthouse OBE	Jenny Hannaby	Laura Price
Kevin Bulmer	Nick Hards	Anne Purse
Nick Carter	Neville F. Harris	G.A. Reynolds
Louise Chapman	Steve Harrod	Alison Rooke
Mark Cherry	Mrs Judith Heathcoat	Rodney Rose
John Christie	Hilary Hibbert-Biles	Gillian Sanders
Sam Coates	John Howson	John Sanders
Yvonne Constance OBE	Ian Hudspeth	Roz Smith
Steve Curran	Bob Johnston	Lawrie Stratford
Surinder Dhesi	Richard Langridge	John Tanner
Arash Fatemian	Lorraine Lindsay-Gale	Melinda Tilley
Neil Fawcett	Sandy Lovatt	Richard Webber
Jean Fooks	Mark Lygo	David Williams
Mrs C. Fulljames	Kieron Mallon	David Wilmshurst
Anthony Gearing	Charles Mathew	
Janet Godden	David Nimmo Smith	

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.

68/16 MINUTES

(Agenda Item 1)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 September 2016 were approved and signed subject to the word 'party' being changed to 'Council' in Minute 60/16.

At the request of Councillor Webber, The Chairman read out Motion 60/16 which had been agreed at the last Meeting of Council on 13 September 2016 as follows:

“We are proud to live in a diverse and tolerant society. We believe that hate crimes have no place in our country, whether they are based on Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation, Age, Disability or Gender Identity. Oxfordshire County Council condemns racism, xenophobia and hate crimes unequivocally. We will not allow hate to become acceptable.

We reassure all people living in Oxfordshire that they are valued members of our community.”

69/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Azad, Lilly, Mills and Rooke.

70/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Agenda Item 3)

Councillor John Christie voluntarily declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 5 (Appointments) by virtue of his relationship to Mr Richard Brown.

71/16 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

(Agenda Item 4)

The Chairman reported as follows:

The Chairman and Vice Chairman had participated in the Maggie Culture Crawl and raised £800 in aid of the Maggie Centre at the Churchill hospital, Oxford. The Chairman thanked Members for their support and for their generous contributions.

The Chairman informed members that the Chairman’s Dinner this year would be held in honour to raise funds for the Friends of the Young Musicians’ Association. He urged Members to come and support the Charity.

The Chairman congratulated Oxford Academy Head and Staff on their recent results, and in particular that the Academy were now 14th Nationally for Progress 8. Council agreed to write and send their congratulations.

Council congratulated Lucy Butler on her appointment to the role of Director for Children’s Services and Kate Terroni on her appointment to the role of Director for Adult Services. Council also paid tribute the Jim Leivers and John Mitchell for their service to Local Government.

The Chairman reminded members that, on the rising of Council there would be an all member briefing on the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Boards (covering Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children’s Board and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adult’s Board)

72/16 APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda Item 5)

RESOLVED: to appoint Mr Richard Brown as Parent Governor Representative for Primary Schools on the Education Scrutiny Committee with immediate effect.

73/16 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

(Agenda Item 8)

16 questions with notice were asked. Details of the questions and answers and the supplementary questions and answers (where asked) are set out in Annex 1 to the Minutes.

In relation to question 6 (Question from Councillor Coates to Councillor Lilly), Councillor Hudspeth undertook to ask Councillor Lilly to provide Councillor Coates with a written answer to 'whether Councillor Lilly would be giving particular consideration to oil extraction companies?'

In relation to question 6 (Question from Councillor Godden to Councillor Tilly), Councillor Tilly undertook to provide Councillor Godden with a written answer detailing representations that Cabinet Members had made to districts in relation to Children's Centres.

74/16 REPORT OF THE CABINET

(Agenda Item 9)

The Council received the Report of the Cabinet.

In relation to paragraph 10 (2016/17 Financial Monitoring & Business Strategy Delivery Report) (Question from Councillor Smith) Councillor Stratford gave an undertaking to provide Councillor Smith with a written answer in relation to the Business Strategy Delivery Report detailing 'how much of the transition programme that was started will be part of the business strategy, giving some examples.'

75/16 PARTNERSHIP UPDATE REPORT

(Agenda Item 10)

The Council had before it the Annual Partnerships Update report which set out some of the key activities over the past year on the Oxfordshire-wide partnerships in progressing key countywide priorities, enabling partners to work across the themes of a thriving Oxfordshire, including economic growth, health and wellbeing, thriving communities, and support to the most vulnerable.

Each partnership report addressed the following points: the current focus for the Partnership; the personnel (Chairman and supporting staff) of the

Partnership; the Partnership's governance arrangements; the Partnership's key achievements in the last year; the aims for the Partnership in the year ahead; the key challenges for the Partnership and how those would be addressed going forward.

Councillor Liz Brighthouse made a statement as Chairman of the Performance Committee who had considered the report at their meeting on 22 September 2016.

Councillor Waine moved and Councillor Patrick seconded that the recommendation set out on the face of the Agenda be adopted. In moving the motion, the Chairman gave an undertaking that a detailed note would be taken of any questions raised about the partnership in order that they may be addressed. The following points were raised in debate:

- How does Stronger Communities feel about communities being weakened through the loss of their children's centres?
- Concern was raised regarding the amount of duplication among partnerships especially when you add in all the others at district level not reporting here.
- Members felt that partnership were not working well, swathes of decision making was removed from Councillors and officer support to these partnerships came at the expense of proper support to scrutiny and CAGs
- The report contained a lot Good work, though there were silos, e.g. why hadn't the Environment Partnership spoken to street lighting about solar; why wasn't Health & Wellbeing Board engaged with highways on walking and cycling; ironic Early Years Board coincides with pulling back from universal services?
- Councillors taken for granted, reports not clear about reporting period and proofreading issues in particular for Growth Board. Should Growth Board be discussing rail transport? Is OEP working with solar schools and addressing risk of Government imposing business rates on their solar panels? Safer Ox doesn't seem to reflect rate of burglaries in his division
- As the accountable body for the LEP, OCC should be more informed, can Councillors get the agenda and minutes at least? *(nb these are meant to be on the website but the updating is often poor).*
- LEP and Growth Board are too Oxford-centric and failing to address the housing challenge. Should push more economic growth out of the city where housing is more affordable. Also should consider environmental challenge.
- European funding via the LEP, could the Leader promise he'll raise what happens after Brexit;
- OEP doesn't sufficiently consider biodiversity issues;
- OEP is really valuable (City Member) happy to work with DNS to discuss biodiversity;
- Cooperation is valuable, HOSC and HWB do overlap but different membership / remit. Would welcome section in reports on how each partnership cooperates with other partnerships;

- Lack of breakdown of how LEP money has been used. Note LEP appointing two new non-exec directors - what's the appointment process? Is the new Deputy PCC value for money? Should street pastors have a higher profile?
- This report shows that we need a unitary to simplify the partnership landscape. Noting reports is a poor use of time;
- We need to take a closer look at these as they are effectively quangos, and work out who holds them to account;
- Growth board is a failure and anodyne report doesn't reflect that, performance and funding still issues;
- Growth Board process has resulted in impossibly high SHMA targets. What is the timescale for SHMA refreshes? Can DNS commit that housing growth now agreed will deliver Lodge Hill funding?
- Could use a more overarching consideration of the report to determine where there is duplication or conflict, especially given existence of other partnerships not reporting here. Pro-unitary as one part of the simplification process.

Following debate, the Motion was put to the vote and was carried nem con.

RESOLVED: (nem con) to note the report.

76/16 DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT

(Agenda Item 11)

The Council had before them the 9th Annual Report by the Director of Public Health which summarised key issues associated with the Public Health of the County. It included details of progress over the past year as well as information on future work. It was an independent report for all organisations and individuals.

The report had also been considered at the Oxfordshire Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee in September and the Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet in October 2016.

RESOLVED: (on a motion by Councillor Hibbert-Biles, seconded by Councillor Hudspeth and carried nem con) to receive the report.

77/16 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR JANET GODDEN

(Agenda Item 12)

Councillor Godden moved and Councillor Heathcoat seconded the following Motion:

This Council notes that:

- 1 in 4 adults will experience a mental health episode in any given year.
- Mental illness costs some £105bn each year in England alone.
- People suffering from mental illness are disproportionately likely to have other problems such as housing issues, employment and debt.

- People with severe mental illness die up to 20 years younger than their peers in the UK.

As a local authority we have an important role to play in improving the mental health of all – by supporting people in our communities living with mental illness and tackling some of the widest most entrenched inequalities in health.

Mental health should be a priority across all local authority areas of responsibility, including housing, community safety and planning. All councillors can play an important part in championing mental health, both as individuals and on a strategic basis, adding weight to the work of our social care, public health and community safety services.

The Council resolves to sign up to the Local Authorities' Mental Health Challenge and to support measures to promote positive mental health in Oxfordshire, enhancing our joint working with our partners in the NHS, the police authority and the voluntary sector.”

Following debate, the Motion was put to the vote and was carried unanimously.

78/16 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS

(Agenda Item 13)

With the consent of Council, Councillor Williams moved and Councillor Gill Sanders seconded the following motion as amended by Councillor Gill Sander below in bold italics/strikethrough:

“Given that the Council has now opened a bidding process seeking external funding to maintain as large a number of Children’s Centres as possible, this Council recognises that rental costs will be a key element of each Centre’s survival. With this in view the Council calls on the Cabinet to ***waive rental charges where this will keep a centre open that would otherwise be forced to close.***

- ~~Waive rental fees for 2016-2017 as a major contribution to keeping all centres open beyond the proposed closure dates. Security of accommodation will be a vital factor in bidding for external funding in that it signals continuity of existence and will be the one contribution the County could make to keep the maximum number of Centres open if the future is to be built on external funding for activity based projects at each centre.~~
- ~~Widely publicise the support of all the Children’s Centres to stop the rapid erosion of staffing that is now underway.~~
- ~~During 2016-2017 carry out constructive consultations with the new authorities that emerge from any devolution decision to begin along with other organisations that may be willing to co-sponsor the Children~~

~~Centres beyond 2017 such as the Health Service, the Police, parish councils and charities.”~~

The motion as amended was put to the vote and was carried by 51 votes to 0, with 4 abstentions.

RESOLVED: (51 votes to 0, 4 abstentions)

Given that the Council has now opened a bidding process seeking external funding to maintain as large a number of Children’s Centres as possible, this Council recognises that rental costs will be a key element of each Centre’s survival. With this in view the Council calls on the Cabinet to waive rental charges where this will keep a centre open that would otherwise be forced to close.

79/16 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS

(Agenda Item 14)

Councillors Williams moved and Councillor Coates seconded the following Motion:

There are now at least two proposals for the reorganisation of local government in Oxfordshire. Both envisage a unitary structure to service delivery and seek to rationalise local government into more effective and economic systems. Both have their merits and detractions.

Unfortunately, it would appear that there is no consensus between the County and District/City authorities as to what would be the most appropriate new structure and the process seems deadlocked.

The cornerstone of any new structure must be that it is democratic and what the people of Oxfordshire perceive as representing their local community interest.

With this in view the County will conduct a full public consultation in Oxfordshire via internet poll of those that accept the unitary principle and present three options:

- 1) One single County Wide Unitary with a high degree of devolution.
- 2) Two Unitary Authorities. The City of Oxford and a unitary incorporating all the market towns around the City.
- 3) Three Unitary Authorities. The City of Oxford and two unitaries incorporating one to the North and one to the South.

Advocates of all these structures to make their case to the electorate during the in depth consultation.

The results of this consultation to be submitted to Central Government to illustrate the wishes of local people along with the various submissions from the existing local governments if these are to be made.

Following debate, the Motion was put to the vote and was lost by 38 votes to 2, with 10 abstentions.

RESOLVED: Accordingly.

80/16 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR SAM COATES

(Agenda Item 15)

With the consent of Council, Councillor Coates moved and Councillor Fooks seconded the motion as amended by Councillor Fooks below in bold/strikethrough:

The EU Referendum held on the 23 June with its decision to EXIT the ~~European referendum~~ **Union** is not a mandate for abandoning the progressive reforms that the European Union introduced or the obvious advantages of the Single Market to industry and trade.

This Council is concerned that there seems no clear indication of what stance the Government will take in the negotiations after article 50 is triggered and alarmed at ~~certain Ministers who are willing to consider~~ **the prospect of** a hard BREXIT – withdrawal from all aspects of EU cooperation including access to the Single Market. ~~Such a move~~ **This** would destroy many industries in Oxfordshire, **disadvantage educational and research establishments on all of which Oxfordshire's growth depends**, and send the national economy into long term decline.

What is to be done in vital cooperation issues directly related to Council services such as pollution controls, recycling, structural funds, competition rules plus numerous rules and regulations related to employment and procurement are as yet totally unclear.

The Council calls on the Government to clarify its aims in the EU negotiations and to establish that a primary objective will be to maintain our exporters ability to access the Single Market with ease. Such a stance will stop the speculative runs on the pound we have already witnessed and make it clear to foreign companies who are only operating here because of our present tariff free access to Europe that they should remain.

The Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister to illustrate the ~~Council's~~ **Council's** concerns on this issue.

Following debate, The motion as amended was put to the vote and was lost by 28 votes to 25.

RESOLVED: (by 28 votes to 25)

The EU Referendum held on the 23 June with its decision to EXIT the Union is not a mandate for abandoning the progressive reforms that the European Union introduced or the obvious advantages of the Single Market to industry and trade.

This Council is concerned that there seems no clear indication of what stance the Government will take in the negotiations after article 50 is triggered and alarmed at the prospect of a hard BREXIT – withdrawal from all aspects of EU cooperation including access to the Single Market. This would destroy many industries in Oxfordshire, disadvantage educational and research establishments on all of which Oxfordshire's growth depends, and send the national economy into long term decline.

What is to be done in vital cooperation issues directly related to Council services such as pollution controls, recycling, structural funds, competition rules plus numerous rules and regulations related to employment and procurement are as yet totally unclear.

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The Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister to illustrate the Council's concerns on this issue.

81/16 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR JOHN SANDERS

(Agenda Item 16)

With the consent of Council, Councillor John Sanders moved and Councillor Curran seconded the motion as amended by Councillor Stratford below in bold/strikethrough:

"Cowley division is suffering from development without consideration of the necessary transport infrastructure, whether it is cycle routes, pedestrian access, parking controls, traffic controls, potholes or rat-running, there never is enough money made available to meet the demands of increased traffic on local roads.

This Council resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Transport and the Chancellor of the Exchequer demanding targeted government investment in road maintenance and minor traffic infrastructure improvements to mitigate the critical pressures on ~~Cowley's and other division's~~ roads **in ALL division's across Oxfordshire."**

With the consent of Council, Councillor Roz Smith withdrew her amendment (set out in Annex 1 to the Schedule of Business).

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Following debate, the Motion as amended was put to the vote and was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: (unanimously)

“Cowley division is suffering from development without consideration of the necessary transport infrastructure, whether it is cycle routes, pedestrian access, parking controls, traffic controls, potholes or rat-running, there never is enough money made available to meet the demands of increased traffic on local roads.

This Council resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Transport and the Chancellor of the Exchequer demanding targeted government investment in road maintenance and minor traffic infrastructure improvements to mitigate the critical pressures on roads in all division’s across Oxfordshire.”

82/16 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR SAM COATES

(Agenda Item 17)

The time being after 3.30 pm the motion was not moved and seconded and therefore considered in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.1.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing