

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 14 February 2023 commencing at 10.30 am and finishing at 3.35 pm

Present:

Councillor Susanna Pressel – in the Chair

Councillors:

Felix Bloomfield	Andy Graham	Glynis Phillips
Brad Baines	Jane Hanna OBE	Sally Povolotsky
David Bartholomew	Jenny Hannaby	Eddie Reeves
Tim Bearder	Charlie Hicks	G.A. Reynolds
Robin Bennett	John Howson	Judy Roberts
Liz Brighthouse OBE	Tony Ilott	Alison Rooke
Nigel Champken-Woods	Bob Johnston	David Rouane
Mark Cherry	Liz Leffman	Geoff Saul
Andrew Coles	Nick Leverton	Les Sibley
Yvonne Constance OBE	Dan Levy	Nigel Simpson
Duncan Enright	Dr Nathan Ley	Roz Smith
Mohamed Fadlalla	Mark Lygo	Ian Snowdon
Arash Fatemian	Kieron Mallon	Dr Pete Sudbury
Neil Fawcett	Ian Middleton	Bethia Thomas
Ted Fenton	Freddie van Mierlo	Michael Waine
Donna Ford	Calum Miller	Liam Walker
Andrew Gant	Jane Murphy	Richard Webber
Stefan Gawrysiak	Michael O'Connor	

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.

1/23 MINUTES

(Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2022 were amended as follows:-

The deletion of Cllr Ash from the list of apologies for absence

and approved as a correct record.

2/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Ash, Banfield, Bulmer, Corkin, Edosomwan, Field-Johnson, Gregory & Haywood.

3/23 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

(Agenda Item 4)

The Chair reported as follows:-

Kim James, Head of Learning and School Improvement, received an MBE in the New Year honours list for her work in helping to minimise school closures during the COVID lock downs.

Local Energy Oxfordshire (project LEO), with Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) won a 'collaborative excellence' award at Utility Week Annual Awards

RAF Brize Norton had received a prestigious award, the Firmin Sword of Peace, that celebrates the most valuable humanitarian contributions by the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force.

This was the last meeting of Council that Stephen Chandler would attend in his role as Interim Chief Executive. The Chair asked that the Council's appreciation of Mr Chandler's work during this period be recorded. The Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Opposition also spoke in appreciation of the Interim Chief Executive's work for the people of Oxfordshire.

Mr Chandler responded and thanked members for their remarks..

Council paid tribute and observed a minute's silence in memory of former Cllr Margaret Godden who had served on the County Council from 1985 – 1989 and 1997 – 2005.

4/23 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023/24

(Agenda Item 7)

In 2012, a stand-alone Remuneration Committee was set up to report each year directly to full Council and to make recommendations regarding the Council's Pay Policy Statement. The Council had before it a report of the Remuneration Committee which updated the Council's Pay Policy Statement.

RESOLVED (on a motion by Councillor Phillips, seconded by Councillor Leffman, with 44 voting in favour, 0 against and 12 abstentions) to:-

a) receive the report of the Remuneration Committee;

b) approve the revised Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 as set out in the annex to the report

5/23 GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2021/22

(Agenda Item 8)

From 2017, an employer who had 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.

Council had before it a report on the payroll data for the year ending 31 March 2022.

RESOLVED (on a motion from Councillor Phillips, seconded by Councillor Leffman and approved nem con) to:-

- a) receive the report of the Remuneration Committee.
- b) approve the Gender Pay Gap Report 2022 as set out in the Annex to the report.

6/23 STRATEGIC PLAN

(Agenda Item 9)

Council had before it a report setting out the Strategic Plan, a key element of the Council's Policy Framework that set the Council's strategic priorities, and in turn, influenced the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The report formed part of the suite of information for the Budget and Business Planning process for 2023/24 to 2025/26.

Councillor Leffman moved and Councillor Brighthouse seconded the Cabinet's recommendations to adopt the Strategic Plan.

Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and carried by 35 votes to 17.

RESOLVED:- (35 votes to 17) to adopt the Strategic Plan as set out in Section 1 of the report.

7/23 BUDGET AND BUSINESS PLANNING 2023/24 - 2025/26

(Agenda Item 10)

Before the Council were the report and annexes, the Leader of the Council's statement, the Conservative Independent Alliance Group amendment and the Schedule of Business.

Councillor Leffman moved and Councillor Miller seconded the Cabinet's recommendations in relation to the revenue budget for 2023/24 and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2025/26 In moving and seconding the motion, Councillor Leffman and Councillor Miller paid tribute to Lorna Baxter, Kathy Wilcox and the finance team for all their work in preparing the budget.

Councillor Reeves moved and Councillor Bartholomew seconded an amendment to the Council's budget as set out in the additional papers. Councillor Reeves thanked the Director of Finance and her team for their work on the amended budget.

Following debate, the amendment by the Conservative Independent Alliance Group was lost by 36 votes to 18 with no abstentions.

Councillors voting for the amendment (18):

Bartholomew, Bloomfield, Champken-Woods, Constance, Fatemian, Fenton, Ford, Ilott, Leverton, Mallon, Murphy, Reeves, Reynolds, Sibley, Simpson, Snowdon, Waine and Walker.

Councillors voting against the amendment (36):

Baines, Bearder, Bennett, Brighouse, Cherry, Coles, Enright, Fadlalla, Fawcett, Gant, Gawrysiak, Graham, Hanna, Hannaby, Hicks, Howson, Johnston, Leffman, Levy, Ley, Lygo, Middleton, van Mierlo, Miller, O'Connor, Phillips, Povolotsky, Pressel, Roberts, Rooke, Rouane, Saul, Smith, Sudbury, Thomas, Webber

Following debate the Substantive motion was put to the vote carried by 36 votes to 14 with no abstentions.

Councillors voting for the motion (36):

Baines, Bearder, Bennett, Brighouse, Cherry, Coles, Enright, Fadlalla, Fawcett, Gant, Gawrysiak, Graham, Hanna, Hannaby, Hicks, Howson, Johnston, Leffman, Levy, Ley, Lygo, Middleton, van Mierlo, Miller, O'Connor, Phillips, Povolotsky, Pressel, Roberts, Rooke, Rouane, Saul, Smith, Sudbury, Thomas, Webber

Councillors voting against the motion (14):

Bartholomew, Champken-Woods, Constance, Fatemian, Fenton, Ford, Ilott, Leverton, Mallon, Reeves, Sibley, Snowdon, Waine and Walker.

It was accordingly

RESOLVED 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

CC1

with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member
for Finance;

..... in the Chair

Date of signing