

# County Council Decisions

These notes indicate the decisions taken at this meeting and the officers responsible for taking any resulting action. For background documentation please refer to the agenda and supporting papers circulated to all members of the Council and available on the Council's web site ([www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk).)

If you have a query please contact Deborah Miller (Tel: (01865) 815384; E-Mail: [deborah.miller@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:deborah.miller@oxfordshire.gov.uk))

## COUNTY COUNCIL - TUESDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2015

RECOMMENDATIONS	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p><b>1. Minutes</b></p> <p>To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2015 (<b>CC1</b>) and to receive information arising from them.</p>	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2015 were approved and signed.</p>	
<p><b>2. Apologies for Absence</b></p>	<p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Godden, Langridge, Owen and Webber.</p> <p>The Council welcomed Zoe Patrick back on her return to the Chamber.</p>	<p>HLC (a. Newman)</p>
<p><b>3. Declarations of Interest</b></p>	<p>There were none.</p>	
<p><b>4. Official Communications</b></p>	<p>The Chairman reported as follows:</p> <p>Council paid tribute to the Joanna Simons on her 10 years' service as Chief Executive to Oxfordshire County Council. The Chairman presented Joanna with bouquet of flowers as a token of its appreciation.</p> <p>Council paid tribute and held a minute's silence to honour the memory of former County Councillor Ann Bonner, County Councillor from 2009-2013 and former County Councillor Richard Rymer, County Councillor from 1985 – 1989.</p>	<p>CEO</p>
<p><b>5. Appointments</b></p> <p>To make any changes to the membership of the Cabinet, scrutiny and other</p>	<p>There were none.</p>	

committees on the nomination of political groups.		
<b>6. Petitions and Public Address</b>	<p>Council received the following public address:</p> <p>Ms Helen Marshall, on behalf of Protect Rural Oxfordshire (PRO), Agenda Item 14, Local Transport Plan 2015 - 2031;</p> <p>Ms Julie Maberley in relation to Agenda Item 14, Local Transport Plan 2015 - 2031;</p> <p>Ms Jill Huish, Agenda Item 8, Questions with Notice from Members of the Council against the closures of Children's Centres;</p> <p>Mr Alexander Murray, in support Agenda Item 15, Motion from Councillor Laura Price;</p> <p>Mr David Hartley, Witney Resident, in support of Agenda Item 15, Motion from Councillor Laura Price.</p>	
<b>8. Questions with Notice from Members of the Public</b>	<p>Mrs Alison Williams to Councillor Judith Heathcoat See Annex 1 for detail).</p>	
<b>9. Questions with Notice from Members of the Council</b>	<p>16 Questions with notice were asked. Details of the questions and answers and the supplementary questions and answers (where asked) will be set out in Annex 1 to the Minutes.</p> <p>In relation to Question 15 (Question from Councillor Harris to Councillor Hudspeth) Councillor Hudspeth gave a commitment to organise a meeting of interested councillors across the County</p>	<p>HLC (M. Peacock)</p>
<b>9. Senior Officer Appointments</b> <p>As a result of the current Chief Executive leaving the Council at the end of September 2015, it is a legal requirement for the Council to appoint a new Head of</p>		

<p>Paid Service.</p> <p>At the last meeting of Council on 14 July, the Council commenced the statutory procedure for making this appointment, nominating Mr Peter Clark, the Chief Legal Officer. Council also noted that if it wished to appoint the Chief Legal Officer as the Head of Paid Service then it would also need to make a nomination to the post of Monitoring Officer. This is because the law does not allow the same person to be both a Monitoring Officer and a Head of Paid Service for the same authority. As a result, Council nominated Mr Nick Graham, the Deputy Head of Law and Culture, to be the successor Monitoring Officer. These nominations were subject to consultation with Cabinet Members. No objections were made to either appointment and so this report sets out the procedural requirements for Council to finalise these senior officer appointments.</p> <p><b>Council is RECOMMENDED to confirm the following:</b></p> <p><b>(a) that the Chief Legal Officer be appointed as the Council's Head of Paid Service;</b></p> <p><b>(b) that the Deputy Head of Law and Culture be appointed as the Council's Monitoring Officer;</b></p> <p><b>(c) that both appointments take effect on the cessation of the current Chief Executive's employment with the Council.</b></p>	<p>Agreed by 58 votes to 0, with 1 abstention.</p>	<p>HHR (S. Munn)</p> <p>HLC (N. Graham)</p>
<p><b>10. Treasury Management Outturn 2014/15</b></p> <p>The report sets out the Treasury Management activity undertaken in the financial year 2014/15 in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice. The report includes Debt and Investment activity, Prudential Indicator Outturn, Investment Strategy, and interest receivable and</p>		

<p>payable for the financial year.</p> <p><b><i>Council is RECOMMENDED to note the Council's Treasury Management Activity in 2014/15.</i></b></p>	<p>Agreed (nem con)</p>	<p>CFO (L. Gosling)</p>
<p><b>11. Partnerships Update Report</b></p> <p>This Annual report to Council aims to set out some of the key activities over the past year of both the Oxfordshire Partnership, and a number of the key formal partnerships within which the County Council plays a part.</p> <p>This report provides an update on the Oxfordshire-wide partnerships which are critical 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.</p> <p>Each partnership report addresses 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 these will be addressed going forward.</p> <p><b><i>Council is RECOMMENDED to note the report.</i></b></p>	<p>Agreed (nem con)</p>	<p>CEO (M. Scott)</p>
<p><b>12. Director of Public Health Annual Report</b></p> <p>The annual report summarises key issues associated with the Public Health of the County. It includes details of progress over the past year as well as information on future work.</p> <p>It is an independent report for all organisations and individuals.</p> <p>The report covers the following areas:</p> <p>Chapter 1: The Demographic Challenge</p>		

<p>Chapter 2: Health, Houses and Roads  Chapter 3: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage  Chapter 4: Mental Health  Chapter 5: Lifestyle and Health: We are what we eat, drink, smoke and do  Chapter 6: Fighting Killer Diseases</p> <p>The report has also been considered during July 2015 at the Oxfordshire Health Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board and Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet.</p> <p><b>Council is RECOMMENDED to receive the report.</b></p>	<p>Agreed (nem con)</p>	<p>DPH</p>
<p><b>13. Report of the Cabinet</b></p> <p>Report of the Cabinet meeting held on 21 July 2015 (CC13).</p>	<p>The Council received the report of the Cabinet.</p> <p>In relation to paragraph 7 (2015/16 Financial Monitoring &amp; Business Strategy Delivery Report – May 2015) (Question from Councillor Smith) Councillor Stratford gave an assurance to ask Councillor Nimmo Smith to provide Councillor Smith with a written answer to the following 2 questions:</p> <p>Transport &amp; highways budgets for projects – when will we see how that money will be spent?</p> <p>What is being done about the A40 crossing and traffic calming in Quarry Hollow?</p> <p>In relation to paragraph 8 (Public Health Annual Report) (Question from Councillor Phillips) Councillor Hibbert-Biles gave an assurance to provide Councillor Phillips with a written answer with details on why the 7 Health targets will not be met.</p>	<p>DEE (C. Harris)</p> <p>DPH (V. Messenger)</p>
<p><b>14. Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015 - 2031</b></p> <p>Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031 (LTP4) was approved by Cabinet on 21 July 2015 and recommended for adoption by Full Council</p>	<p>With the agreement of Council, Councillor Nimmo Smith accepted the proposed amendment by Councillor Fooks as follows:</p>	

at its meeting in September 2015. This replaces LTP3 that was adopted as Council policy on 5 April 2011 and subsequent approved revision on 10 July 2012. The 16 year timescale of the Plan gives major benefits in terms of providing a transport strategy that covers the period of the district councils' Local Plans and allows for long term planning of major infrastructure.

Connecting Oxfordshire has been developed over the past 18 months, in response to the rapidly changing national and local growth, economic development, infrastructure planning and funding agendas. The aim has been to develop a comprehensive policy and strategy framework to maximise opportunities for Oxfordshire, building on the success over the past two years on City Deal and other initiatives, and complement the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and supporting documents.

It is next proposed to be updated in spring 2016. In the meantime, the LTP will continue to inform our strategic infrastructure planning work, bids for Growth Funding and other sources, and the updated Strategic Economic Plan. Thereafter, LTP4 will be reviewed and updated regularly (at least on an annual basis), with any interim changes being made with the agreement of the Deputy Director for Strategy & Infrastructure Planning and Cabinet Member for Environment, provided that these are presented to County Council for approval within 12 months.

This report outlines the further changes to LTP4 since approval by Cabinet in July 2015. This includes a proposed timeline for a revised County Rail Strategy (for adoption in spring 2016), and updates to the Local Area and Supporting Strategies, including Freight, as requested at July Cabinet. The annexes to the report have been circulated to all Members of the Council only and are available at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk).

"This Council passed a motion in April 2014 recommending that LTP4 should recognize the need to reduce pollutants from road traffic.

Whilst admitting that air quality "may well get worse with increasing traffic levels", LTP4 seriously underestimates the impact on health of exposure to NOx gases and Particulates.

LTP4 estimates that 13,000 premature deaths a year are caused by overall combustion emissions, with road transport being the biggest source, although the estimate until recently was that 29,000 premature deaths are caused each year due to particulates alone. Even this figure is less than half the latest estimate by the "Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants".

Council therefore requests that LTP4 should be strengthened in its aims to reduce air pollution by more positively:

- Encouraging walking and cycling
- Restricting diesel vehicles in town centres
- Working more proactively with the city and District Councils to develop and enact Air Quality Action Plans.
- introducing low-or zero-emission mass transit vehicles."

The motion, as amended was Agreed by 32 votes to 25, with 2 abstentions.

<p><b>Council is RECOMMENDED to:</b></p> <p><b>(a) adopt Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031 (LTP4) as council policy; and</b></p> <p><b>(b) instruct the Deputy Director of Environment and Economy (Strategy &amp; Infrastructure Planning), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, to keep the document under review and to make any necessary changes, subject to any such changes being reported to County Council for approval within 12 months.</b></p>		<p>DEE (C. Harris)</p>
<p><b>15. Motion From Councillor Laura Price</b></p> <p>“Since May 2015 several of our Community Hospitals have undergone changes to the services they deliver and how those services are delivered. Individually these changes have not been deemed appropriate for public consultation and communities have been left feeling cheated of an opportunity to engage.</p> <p>These hospitals form an integral part of the work of Oxfordshire Adult Social Care and are crucial in providing seamless appropriate and timely care for vulnerable elderly and disabled people in the County.</p> <p>This Council, therefore, asks that in their role as commissioner, the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Oxfordshire County Council urgently co-ordinate a full public consultation on the future shape of Oxfordshire's Community Hospitals before further incremental changes damage the public's relationship with these vital services.”</p>	<p>With the consent of Council, Councillor Price amended her own motion in strikethrough as follows:</p> <p>“Since May 2014 several of our Community Hospitals have undergone changes to the services they deliver and how those services are delivered. Individually these changes have not been deemed appropriate for public consultation and communities have been left feeling cheated of an opportunity to engage.</p> <p>These hospitals form an integral part of the work of Oxfordshire Adult Social Care and are crucial in providing seamless appropriate and timely care for vulnerable elderly and disabled people in the County.</p> <p>This Council, therefore, asks that in their role as commissioner, the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group lead on a full public consultation on the future shape of Oxfordshire’s Community Hospitals and that Oxfordshire Council fully engage with the process and <del>Oxfordshire County Council urgently co-ordinate a full public consultation on the future shape of Oxfordshire’s Community Hospitals before further</del></p>	<p>DPH (V. Messenger)</p>

	<p>incremental changes damage the public's relationship with these vital services."</p> <p>The motion, as amended was AGREED nem con.</p>	
<p><b>16. Motion From Councillor Kevin Bulmer</b></p> <p>"As we all know, this Council is facing extreme pressure to reduce expenditure, to the extent that we are now considering closing some of our Household Waste Recycling Centres in order to save some £350,000 annually. An alternative to these closures would be to charge residents for their use. However, long-standing legislation from the Civic Amenities Act 1967 to the Environmental Protection Act 1990 has required local authorities to provide free-to-use household waste recycling centres for their residents to dispose of household rubbish and recycling. The government's 2011 waste review upheld this principle.</p> <p>The government is concerned these charges will inconvenience residents; increase fly-tipping and back-yard burning; and make recycling harder for people rather than its stated objective of making it easier. The government believes that residents should continue to have free access to household waste recycling centres in their local authority area.</p> <p>However, when the alternative to 'free access' becomes 'no access', this argument loses some of its impetus. In spite of the noted success of kerbside recycling in Oxfordshire, there are still a million-plus trips made to HWRCs in this county annually. Clearly, a nominal charge of a pound a time would generate far more revenue than the £350,000 savings target.</p> <p>This Council calls upon the Leader of the Council to send a letter to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government requesting an urgent re-evaluation of the government's stance, thereby to enable LAs to charge residents</p>	<p>Agreed by 38 votes to 16</p>	<p>DEE (C. Harris)</p> <p>HLC (M. Peacock)</p>



<p>to use HWRCs, in order to prevent their closure.”</p>		
<p><b>17. Motion by Councillor Roz Smith</b></p> <p>“This Council recognises the invaluable work undertaken by volunteers running village halls and community centres throughout Oxfordshire. The community buildings the volunteers look after provide facilities such as lunch clubs, exercise classes, pre-schools, libraries and other activities to improve health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Austerity measures and budgets cuts have meant grants towards the costs of improving and maintaining the village halls and community centres are diminishing. The volunteers have to fund raise even more vigorously to maintain and upgrade the buildings they look after. Most building work on village halls and centres is liable for VAT at the standard rate of 20%; so, for instance, a village hall committee raising funds for a £100,000 extension has to find another £20,000 for the VAT bill. This is a tax on voluntary effort.</p> <p>This Council agrees to show support for the National Village Halls Forum campaign to reduce the VAT rate for building improvements to charitable organisations by writing to all Oxfordshire MPs to ask them to support the campaign to reduce this tax burden on charitable organisations looking after our village halls and community buildings when considering the next national budget.”</p>	<p>With the agreement of Council, Councillor Smith accepted the proposed amendment by Councillor Bartholomew as follows:</p> <p>“This Council recognises the invaluable work undertaken by volunteers running village halls and community centres throughout Oxfordshire. The community buildings the volunteers look after provide facilities such as lunch clubs, exercise classes, pre-schools, libraries and other activities to improve health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Austerity measures and budgets cuts have meant grants towards the costs of improving and maintaining the village halls and community centres are diminishing. The volunteers have to fund raise even more vigorously to maintain and upgrade the buildings they look after. Most building work on village halls and centres is liable for VAT at the standard rate of 20%; <b>but usually parish councils are able to claim this back. However, in some instances charities or community groups not aligned with parish councils could, for example, have to find another £20,000 for the VAT bill on a £100,000 extension.</b> <del>for instance, a village hall committee raising funds for a £100,000 extension has to find another £20,000 for the VAT bill.</del> This is a tax on voluntary effort.</p> <p>This Council agrees to show support for the National Village Halls, <b>by instructing the Chief Financial Officer to write to parish councils clarifying the VAT position and by writing to all Oxfordshire MPs to ask them to support calls to reduce the VAT burden on charitable organisations looking after our village halls and community</b></p>	<p>CFO</p>

***buildings when VAT cannot be reclaimed.*** Forum campaign to reduce the VAT rate for building improvements to charitable organisations by writing to all Oxfordshire MPs to ask them to support the campaign to reduce this tax burden on charitable organisations looking after our village halls and community buildings when considering the next national budget.”

The motion, as amended was agreed nem con.

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

**Mrs Alison Williams to Councillor Judith Heathcoat**

Can the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care assure ratepayers, Councillors and those who use the services that thorough risk assessments have been undertaken which take into account potential health & safety hazards that will be faced by the most vulnerable people in our county as a result of reduction in services due to the most recent cuts to their budgets in this financial year and following years?

Furthermore, can the responsible Councillor explain and give proof to elected members residents and users that reassure us that none of the people of Oxfordshire will be at any serious risk or harm as a result of this third round of severe cuts in services.

**Answer:**

Adult Social Care prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all service users and carers, and has overarching statutory responsibility for safeguarding the adult population of the county. As such, all decisions taken in the directorate include full consideration of the potential impact they will have, both positive and negative, to ensure that there will not be any unacceptable risks or consequences resulting from proposed changes.

In line with national good practice and Oxfordshire County Council policy, all proposals to change policy, service delivery or projects are informed by a Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA). This considers the potential impact of the proposals on individuals and communities, staff, other service areas, and partner and provider organisations. Assessments consider the full range of potential risks and impacts, including health and safety, and set out the action that will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts identified.

The Service and Community Impact Assessments are used to inform decision-making within Adult Social Care and for the Council as a whole - Service and Community Impact Assessments accompany Cabinet papers recommending changes in policy, projects and service delivery. An overall impact assessment considering the cumulative impact of changes in the council budget on particular groups and individuals is also produced each year as part of the papers agreed by Cabinet and Council.