

# **County Council**

**20 May 2026**

## **Agenda**

To: **Members of the County COUNCIL**

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

**Wednesday, 20 May 2026 at 10.00 am**

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

If you wish to view proceedings, please click on this [Live Stream Link](#). Please note, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.



Martin Reeves  
Chief Executive

May 2026

*Committee Officer:*            **Democratic Services**  
*E-mail:* [CommitteesDemocraticServices@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:CommitteesDemocraticServices@Oxfordshire.gov.uk)

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# AGENDA

## 1. Apologies for Absence

## 2. 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.

## 3. Official Communications

## 4. Public Address

Members of the public who wish to speak on an item on the agenda at this meeting, or present a petition, can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection.

Requests to speak must be submitted no later than 9am three working days before the meeting.

There is no opportunity to take petitions at this meeting, due to the notice period given for this extraordinary meeting.

Requests should be submitted 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 day of the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

## 5. Election of the Leader of the Council (Pages 7 - 10)

The Monitoring Officer has called an Extraordinary meeting of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 3.1 (iii).

The meeting is called to elect the Leader of the Council, following the resignation of Councillor Liz Leffman as Leader on the afternoon of 12 May 2026.

## **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.

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.

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## **Divisions affected – All**

### **COUNCIL**

**20 MAY 2026**

## **ELECTION OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

### **Report of the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. Council is RECOMMENDED to elect a Leader of the Council following the resignation of Councillor Liz Leffman as Leader on the afternoon of 12 May 2026.

#### **Background**

2. Following the conclusion of the Annual Council meeting on 12 May 2026, Councillor Liz Leffman resigned as Leader of the Council.
3. The Cabinet Procedure Rules, Constitution Part 4.1 paragraph 3, deal with the resignation of the Leader and state: “an election to fill the vacancy will be taken at the next ordinary meeting of the Council or at an extraordinary meeting of the Council”.
4. The Monitoring Officer decided to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council at the earliest opportunity, in order to address the fact that the Council does not have a settled position on an executive leader at a time when the Council
  - faces significant budget and policy reform challenges,
  - approaches Local Government Reorganisation with an expected minded to decision from the Secretary of State in July 2026 and
  - has important ongoing discussions within the Thames Valley in respect of Devolution.
5. During the interim period, until the election of a new Leader by the Council, the Deputy Leader will assume the responsibilities of executive Leader.
6. The election will follow the procedure specified in Council Procedure Rule 17.8 which is reproduced in Annex 1.

## **Legal implications**

7. The Monitoring Officer has the power to call an Extraordinary meeting of Council under Council Procedure Rule 3.1 (iii).

Comments checked by:

Jay Akbar, Head of Legal and Governance Services

## **Financial implications**

8. There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Comments checked by:

Ian Dyson, Director of Financial and Commercial Services

**Anita Bradley**

**Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer**

Annex: Annex 1 Voting on Appointments

Contact officer: Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Democratic Services Manager,  
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May 2026

## COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

### 17.8 Voting on Appointments

17.8.1 Where a vote is required on an election or appointment and only one person is nominated, they shall be declared elected/appointed.

17.8.2 Where a vote is required on an election or appointment and two persons are nominated, the Chair shall call for an electronic vote on the first nomination, followed by an electronic vote for the second nomination. No member shall vote for both nominees. The nominee with the highest number of votes shall be declared elected/appointed.

17.8.3 Where a vote is required on an election or appointment and more than two persons are nominated the following procedure shall apply:

- (i) Councillors will be invited to vote electronically for each one of the nominees in turn and no member shall vote for more than one nominee;
- (ii) if one nominee secures an absolute majority of those present and voting, they shall be declared elected/appointed;
- (iii) if no nominee secures an absolute majority of those present and voting, the nominee with the least number of votes shall be eliminated from the contest;
- (iv) steps (i) - (iii) will be repeated until one nominee wins an absolute majority of those present and voting. That nominee shall be declared elected/appointed.

#### Worked examples:

##### Two nominations

Cllrs Abbot and Barnes are nominated.

Cllr Abbot receives 21 votes  
Cllr Barnes receives 20 votes  
3 councillors abstain

Cllr Abbot is elected

##### Four nominations

Cllrs Cave, Davis, Eames and Farrell are nominated

1<sup>st</sup> round:

Cllr Cave 3 votes  
Cllr Davis 6 votes  
Cllr Eames 9 votes  
Cllr Farrell 15 votes  
(1 councillor abstains)

Total 33 votes

Cllr Cave is eliminated

2<sup>nd</sup> round:

Cllr Davis 7 votes

Cllr Eames 9 votes

Cllr Farrell 17 votes

(1 councillor abstains)

Cllr Farrell is elected – having more votes than the two remaining nominees combined –  $7 + 9 = 16$ .