

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 10 December 2013 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 3.20 pm.

Present:

Councillor Tim Hallchurch MBE – in the Chair

Councillors:

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

84/13 MINUTES

(Agenda Item 1)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 November 2013 were approved and signed.

85/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Nick Carter, Caroline Newton and Val Smith.

86/13 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

(Agenda Item 4)

The Chairman reported as follows:

The death of Terry Joslin, who was a County Councillor for the Didcot Division 1989 – 2007, died in December 2013. Councillors Harris, Brighthouse, Mrs Fulljames, Hards and Purse paid tribute to the former County Council. The Council then observed a Minute's Silence in his memory.

The Council observed a Minute's Silence in Memory of Nelson Mandela.

The Chairman reminded members that 27th January next year was Holocaust Memorial Day. He encouraged colleagues and staff to attend the joint commemoration of this day at Oxford Town Hall at 2pm on the 27th January.

87/13 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item 6)

Mr Steve Pratt in support of Motion 12 (Councillor Pressel). He urged the County Council to give serious consideration to implementing a workplace parking levy on the basis that it would achieve less congestion in the City and additional income for the County Council which could be reinvested into local sustainable transport.

88/13 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

(Agenda Item 8)

12 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 12 (Question from Councillor Gill Sanders to Councillor David Nimmo Smith) Councillor Nimmo Smith undertook to provide Councillor Gill Sanders with a written answer to the question of why the Cuttleslow works could be carried out prior to the regulations coming into effect, when Blackbirds Leys works could not.

89/13 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-TERM REVIEW (2013/14)

(Agenda Item 9)

The Council had before them a report (CC9) which set out the Treasury Management Activity undertaken in the first half of the financial year 2013/14, including Debt and Investment activity, Prudential Indicator monitoring, changes in Strategy and forecast interest receivable and payable for the financial year.

Councillor Fatemian, Cabinet Member for Finance paid tribute to the Council's Treasury Management Team.

RESOLVED: to note the Council's Mid-Term Treasury Management Review 2013/14.

90/13 REPORT OF THE CABINET

(Agenda Item 10)

The Council received the report of the Cabinet.

In relation to paragraph 1 (Staffing Report – Quarter 2, 2013) (Question from Councillor Pressel) Councillor Lindsay-Gale undertook to look into what was happening with the post of Archaeological Conservator and to write back to Councillor Pressel with an answer.

91/13 LOCATION OF COUNCIL MEETING - APRIL 2014

(Agenda Item 11)

The Council had before them a report (CC11) which examined options for the Council to hold its April 2014 meeting at Bodicote House, Banbury to enable members to test webcasting capability at Bodicote House with a view to extending electronic access to Council Meetings in County Hall.

12 Members by standing in their places required a named vote in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15(a). Voting was as follows

Councillors voting for the motion (32)

Councillors Atkins, Bartholomew, Billington, Bulmer, Chapman, Constance, Fatemian, Mrs Fulljames, Gearing, Gray, Greene, Hallchurch, Handley, Heathcoat, Hibbert-Biles, Hoare, Hudspeth, Langridge, Lilly, Lindsay-Gale, Lovatt, Mallon, Mathew, Nimmo Smith, Owen, Reynolds, Rose, Sibley, Stratford, Tilley, Waine, Wilmshurst.

Councillors voting against the motion (15)

Councillors Beal, Brighouse, Cherry, Christie, Coates, Dhesi, Hards, Lygo, Phillips, Pressel, Price, Gill Sanders, John Sanders, Tanner, Williams.

Councillors abstaining (11)

Councillors Fawcett, Fooks, Godden, Hannaby, Harris, Johnston, Patrick, Purse, Rooke, R Smith, Webber.

It was accordingly:

RESOLVED: (by 32 votes to 15, with 11 abstentions) to:

- (a) agree in principle to hold its April 2014 meeting at Bodicote House, Banbury;
- (b) ask the County Solicitor & Head of Law and Culture and the Director for Environment & Economy to make the necessary arrangements

with Cherwell District Council for holding the meeting at Bodicote House and to liaise with the Chairman of the Council and with Group Leaders to finalise these.

92/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL

(Agenda Item 12)

Councillor Pressel moved and Councillor John Sanders seconded the following motions:

“Congestion in Oxford City is getting worse by the day. This has a negative impact on quality of life, health, economic development and many other aspects of life for the people of Oxfordshire and our many visitors.

Given the historic value and compact nature of the City and the constraints on the availability of public sector funds there are limited opportunities to tackle congestion without adopting a different approach. Council therefore requests Cabinet to investigate urgently how we can consult the people of our county on moving towards charging for workplace parking in Oxford City as speedily as possible, and to report back to the next Council meeting on progress towards this.”

18 Members by standing in their places required a named vote in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15(a). Voting was as follows

Councillors voting for the motion (16)

Councillors Azad, Beal, Brighthouse, Cherry, Christie, Coates, Dhesi, Hards, Lygo, Phillips, Pressel, Price, Gill Sanders, John Sanders, Tanner, Williams.

Councillors voting against the motion (42)

Councillors Atkins, Bartholomew, Billington, Bulmer, Chapman, Constance, Fatemian, Fawcett, Fooks, Mrs Fulljames, Gearing, Godden, Greene, Hallchurch, Handley, Hannaby, Harris, Heathcoat, Hibbert-Biles, Hoare, Hudspeth, Johnston, Langridge, Lilly, Lindsay-Gale, Lovatt, Mallon, Mathew, Nimmo Smith, Owen, Patrick, Purse, Reynolds, Rooke, Rose, Sibley, R. Smith, Stratford, Tilley, Waine, Webber, Wilmshurst.

Councillors abstaining (1)

Councillors Gray.

Accordingly, the motion was lost by 42 votes to 16, with 1 abstention.

93/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR KIERON MALLON

(Agenda Item 13)

Councillor Mallon moved and Councillor Tilley seconded the following motion:

“That this Council notes that it is estimated that up to 66,000 women and young girls in the UK have undergone Female Genital Mutilation, of this number 20,000 are under the age of 15. We further note that these procedures have no health benefits and is a harmful traditional practice and an act of violence against women and girls, constitutes a violation of their fundamental rights, particularly the right to personal security, physical and mental health and of their sexual and reproductive health and is an act of child abuse. Such violations can under no circumstances be justified by respect for cultural or religious traditions or initiation ceremonies.

To date, there has not been a single prosecution for this in 28 years within the UK for those responsible for perpetrating this horrific crime as opposed to a more proactive approach in France.

Council asks the Director for Children’s Services to ensure all health and social care professionals in Oxfordshire including midwives, obstetricians, nurses, social workers, community workers, police, Crown Prosecution Service and policy makers work together to identify women and young girls who are at risk and to work in partnership to take effective action to bring to and end this barbaric practice.”

Following debate, Councillor Hallchurch moved and Councillor Dhesi seconded “that the question be now put”.

The motion was put to the vote and was carried by 26 votes to 10.

RESOLVED: (26 votes to 10) that the question be now put.

The substantive motion was then put to the vote and was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: (unanimously)

That this Council notes that it is estimated that up to 66,000 women and young girls in the UK have undergone Female Genital Mutilation, of this number 20,000 are under the age of 15. We further note that these procedures have no health benefits and is a harmful traditional practice and an act of violence against women and girls, constitutes a violation of their fundamental rights, particularly the right to personal security, physical and mental health and of their sexual and reproductive health and is an act of child abuse. Such violations can under no circumstances be justified by respect for cultural or religious traditions or initiation ceremonies.

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94/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR JANET GODDEN

(Agenda Item 14)

Councillor Godden moved and Councillor Fawcett seconded the following motion:

“Council notes that time pressures at its meeting on 5 November meant that it was unable to debate the motion at Agenda Item 17, which proposed asking the Leader to invite the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to attend an additional ‘Talking Oxfordshire’ event about the impact of further cuts to services in Oxfordshire, with a randomly chosen audience from across the County.

Despite subsequent media coverage of exchanges between the Leader and the Secretary of State, Council remains unconvinced that the Department for Communities and Local Government has a full understanding either of the of the Council’s current financial situation or of the local consequences of the cuts that will result from the additional reductions in revenue.

Council therefore asks the Leader to write to the Secretary of State inviting him to come to Oxfordshire and meet with key workers and local members as first proposed, and to invite his parliamentary colleagues among the County’s MPs to meetings in their own constituencies for the same purpose.”

Following debate, Councillor Hallchurch moved and Councillor Hibbert-Biles seconded “that the question be now put”

The motion was put to the vote and was carried by 33 votes to 13.

RESOLVED: (33 votes to 13) that the question be now put.

The substantive motion was then put to the vote and was lost by 30 votes to 28.

RESOLVED: accordingly.

95/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS

(Agenda Item 15)

Councillor Williams moved and Councillor Coates seconded the following motion:

“There is mounting concern as to the likely impact on the environment of Oxfordshire in relation to hydraulic fracturing of natural gas and oil, the system popularly known as ‘fracking’.

The Council considers that the potential scale of environmental damage would place a severe strain on County Environmental services and will have immediate consequences on other County services whilst drilling operations are in hand. Of special concern is the potential release of carcinogenic Radon gas from pockets locked in the Oxfordshire geology.

The County Council is also aware that the release of climate changing gases such as methane and carbon dioxide that will result from the extraction of more fossil fuels will contradict the Council's commitment to moving to a local low carbon economy."

Following debate the motion was put to the vote and was lost by 28 votes to 14 with 13 abstentions.

RESOLVED: accordingly.

96/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS

(Agenda Item 16)

Councillor Williams moved and Councillor Coates seconded the following motion as amended with Council's agreement by Councillor Roz Smith in strikethrough:

"This Council notes with concern the Davies Commission's invitation for invitations to submit proposals for additional airport capacity within the South East and the potential implications for Oxfordshire.

Oxfordshire County Council is dismayed that a consultation and bids for greater airport capacity is being considered again even though only 3 years ago the Conservative party were arguing that there would be no need for greater capacity in the London area and therefore they would not back expansion at Heathrow. (Conservative Manifesto 2010 General Election)

The Council believes that any airport close to the already existing landing systems of Brize Norton and London Oxford Airport is unnecessary and would bring greater pollution and disturbance to the area.

Such a proposal would run counter to all the County Council's planning policies to date, meaning dramatic changes to assumptions made for transport, housing, environmental control, and economic planning. All County services would be directly affected from education to adult care to wildlife protection.

Oxfordshire County Council urges Cabinet in any consultation response to resist demands for ever more airport expansion because of the ~~carbon~~ burning consequences such proposals generate and to turn down any proposal for an Oxfordshire Airport as unsuitable to the needs of the County and the Country as a whole."

The motion, amended as shown in strikethrough was put to the vote and was lost by 29 votes to 14, with 13 abstentions.

RESOLVED: accordingly.

97/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR GLYNIS PHILLIPS

(Agenda Item 17)

Councillor Phillips moved and Councillor John Sanders seconded the following motion:

“This Council is very concerned about the deterioration to the road surface on London Road, Headington, Oxford and therefore calls on the Cabinet to reconsider its road maintenance priorities in order to expedite necessary repairs there.”

Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and was lost by 41 votes to 13, with 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED: accordingly.

98/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER

(Agenda Item 18)

Councillor John Tanner moved and Councillor Gill Sanders seconded the following motion:

“The residents of much of Blackbird Leys and Littlemore in Oxford have a partial residents’ parking scheme which only operates when football matches are played at the Kassam Stadium and when car-boot sales are held there. The football matches parking scheme works well and keeps supporters’ cars from flooding the area. But the car-boot sales scheme is unnecessary and only leads to local residents, their relatives and friends, being fined for parking.

We call on the Cabinet to re-examine the parking needs of the Blackbird Leys and Littlemore areas with a view to lifting the parking controls for car-boot sales.”

Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and was lost by 41 votes to 12, with 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED: accordingly.

99/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR ARASH FATEMIAN

(Agenda Item 19)

Councillor Fatemian moved and Councillor Rose seconded the following motion:

“Council is surprised to note that Oxford City Council has refused to sign the Local Contribution Legal Agreement to contribute funding towards the proposed East-West Rail project (OCC Cabinet Meeting, 15/10/2013 and Oxford Mail 11/11/2013). Given that all other authorities along the route recognise the importance of such a development for economic growth and prosperity, this Council notes with disappointment that Oxford City Council have chosen not to contribute.

The apparent reason given for non-contribution was that the City Council “see this is a project where the benefits for the city will be limited economically” (Oxford Mail, 11/11/2013)

Given that:

- The Oxfordshire LEP has stated that congestion into and around the City represents the biggest threat to growth in and around Oxford and that this will start damaging the local economy unless something is done and;
- That the new proposed East-West rail link will significantly improve congestion in and around Oxford by taking at least 200 lorries an hour off the ring road and offering a fast train service from Water Eaton to Oxford

It would appear that there are indeed very significant benefits for Oxford City from East-West Rail.

As such, Council asks the Leader to write to the City Council expressing this authorities’ disappointment, sadness, and regret that Oxford City Council have failed to recognise the obvious benefits such a scheme will bring to the residents of Oxford and the obvious Economic impact on the city as a whole and to invite the City Council to reconsider a short-sighted and ill-considered position.”

Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and was carried by 41 votes to 11, with 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED: (41 votes to 11, 2 abstentions)

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..... in the Chair

Date of signing