

## OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 10 September 2019 commencing at 10.30 am and finishing at 3.25 pm.

**Present:**

Councillor Les Sibley – in the Chair

Councillors:

John Howson	Stefan Gawrysiak	Charles Mathew
Sobia Afridi	Mark Gray	Glynis Phillips
Lynda Atkins	Carmen Griffiths	Susanna Pressel
Jamila Begum Azad	Pete Handley	Laura Price
Hannah Banfield	Jane Hanna OBE	Eddie Reeves
David Bartholomew	Jenny Hannaby	G.A. Reynolds
Liz Brighouse OBE	Neville F. Harris	Judy Roberts
Paul Buckley	Steve Harrod	Alison Rooke
Kevin Bulmer	Damian Haywood	Dan Sames
Nick Carter	Mrs Judith Heathcoat	Gill Sanders
Mark Cherry	Hilary Hibbert-Biles	John Sanders
Dr Simon Clarke	Ian Hudspeth	Emily Smith
Yvonne Constance OBE	Tony Ilott	Roz Smith
Ian Corkin	Bob Johnston	Alan Thompson
Arash Fatemian	Liz Leffman	Emma Turnbull
Neil Fawcett	Lorraine Lindsay-Gale	Michael Waive
Ted Fenton	Mark Lygo	Liam Walker
Nicholas Field-Johnson	D. McIlveen	Richard Webber
Mrs Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor	Kieron Mallon	
Mike Fox-Davies	Jeannette Matelot	

*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.*

### **50/19 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item 1)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 May 2019 were approved and signed as an accurate record of the meeting, subject to 'Ian' being changed to 'Liam' in Minute 39/19.

Councillor Dr Simon Clark questioned why the fact of a member leaving at lunchtime had not been recorded in the minutes. The Chairman reminded Council that apart from 'Apologies for absence' given at the start of the

meeting for the entire meeting, absences from the Council Chamber were not recorded.

Councillor Neville Harris questioned why a query he had raised at the last meeting under matter arising from the Minutes had not been recorded in the minutes, when the Chairman had indicated that the comment had been 'noted'. The Chairman stated that in general procedural points were not recorded in the minutes and that he had understood that the point raised would be 'noted' by the officers in attendance at the Meeting.

#### **51/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

(Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Suzanne Bartington, Tim Bearder, Maurice Billington and Lawrie Stratford.

#### **52/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(Agenda Item 3)

Councillor John Howson declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 17 (Motion by Councillor Neville Harris) for clarity, as although he no longer held his position as a trustee of the Charity, his name still appeared as a trustee on the Children Heard and Seen Website.

#### **53/19 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS**

(Agenda Item 4)

Council noted that the Chairman had sent a letter of Condolence to the Chief Constable on behalf of the Council expressing deep sorrow for PC Andrew Harper's family and friends.

Council gave a vote of thanks to Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service for their hard work over the exceptionally busy summer period. The Chairman asked the Chief Fire Officer to convey Council's appreciation to all staff.

The Chairman announced that his Charity Dinner would be held on Friday 18 October 2019 at the Holt in Steeple Aston. Invites would be sent out shortly.

#### **54/19 APPOINTMENTS**

(Agenda Item 5)

**RESOLVED:** Council noted the following appointments:

Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel - named substitute, Councillor Kevin Bulmer;

OCC appointments to Joint Shared Services & Personnel Committee:

Councillors Ian Hudspeth, Ted Fenton, Jeannette Matelot, Liz Brighthouse and Liz Leffman;

Named substitutes for the same body:

Councillors Judith Heathcoat, Mike Fox-Davies, Laura Price and Richard Webber.

## **55/19 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item 6)

Council Received the following Petition and public address:

### Petition

Mr Chris Knowles, presented a petition on behalf of the Clean Air in Chippy Campaign, requesting that the County Council remove Heavy Good Vehicles from Chipping Norton on grounds of safety and health.

The Chairman received the Petition and referred it to the Director for Planning & Place for consideration.

### Public Address

Mr Bill MacKeith, representing Oxford and District Trades Union Council, spoke in support of Agenda Item 14 (Motion by Deborah McIlveen on the Living Wage) on the basis that the Government's living wage, introduced in 2016 would reach less than £9.00 per hour by 2020 and that the real living wage was actually much higher, as calculated by the living wage foundation at £10.02 for Oxford. There were hundreds of vacancies currently in the public services, housing costs were comparable to London and there was an over-reliance on private agency staff in the National Health Service. A very modest increase would help. The Trades Union believed Oxfordshire County had a duty to address the increase in equality between the rich and the poor and look after the wellbeing of people in Oxfordshire who most needed it by adopting the Motion.

Ms Maria Semmonds, representing Children Heard and Seen, spoke in support of Agenda Item 17 (Motion by Councillor Neville Harris on Children Heard and Seen). Describing the life of Children supported by the Charity after losing a parent to imprisonment, including Stigma, bullying and isolation on a daily basis leaving them vulnerable and in the case of boys, a 7 out of 10 chance in offending themselves, she outlined the importance of the work the Charity undertook to break the cycle. In the five years since the Charity had opened, they had helped over 800 children and numbers of children offending had been very low. This had been achieved by providing targeted intervention for young people, focusing on raising self-esteem and confidence and managing difficult emotions. She thanked the Council for supporting the Charity.

## **56/19 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 8 (Question from Councillor Turnbull to Councillor Lindsay-Gale), Councillor Lindsay-Gale gave an undertaking that the appeals would be undertaken as quickly as possible and to provide Councillors with an update on the situation at the end of the month.

## **57/19 REPORT OF THE CABINET**

(Agenda Item 9)

Council received the report of the Cabinet.

In relation to paragraph 1 of the report (Business Management & Monitoring Report) (Question from Councillor Leffman to Councillor Bartholomew and Heathcoat) Councillor Bartholomew gave an undertaking that the Business Management & Monitoring Report format would be looked at with a view to refining and developing the report and providing a 'key highlights' or a 'summary of changes' in the report.

In relation to paragraph 8 of the report (Bus Access to Queen Street, Oxford) (Question from Councillor Johnston to Councillor Constance) Councillor Constance gave an assurance that there would be no further applications to reduce the number of buses in Queen Street.

In relation to paragraph 8 of the report (Bus Access to Queen Street, Oxford) (Question from Councillor Roz Smith to Councillor Constance) Councillor Constance gave an assurance to bring the state of the paving (including uneven slabs and poor patching) in front of the Westgate entrance to officers' attention for action.

In relation to paragraph 9 of the report (Provisional Revenue Outturn Report) (Question from Councillor Roberts to Councillor Bartholomew/Constance) Councillor Constance gave an undertaking to provide a written answer in relation to the on/off street parking surplus, detailing which projects had been identified for the spending of the surplus.

## **58/19 INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

(Agenda Item 10)

In line with revised statutory guidance (April 2018), the Council was formally required to have a Capital & Investment Strategy in place. This was approved by Council in Feb 2019. The overarching strategy included the Treasury Management Strategy and made reference to the development of an Investment Strategy, which would form a sub-section of that strategy, and required Council approval.

The Council had before it the strategy (CC10) which set out a new investment framework, under which the Council could undertake investments against the following broad categories:

- investments in property funds, bond funds, equities and multi asset classes;
- maximising the use of and value of our own assets (land & buildings);
- acquisitions & investments, which derive a service outcome or Council priority, and which generate a commercial return;
- investments for policy, social, community benefits.

**RESOLVED:** (on a Motion by Councillor Bartholomew, seconded by Councillor Reeves and carried by 46 votes to 0, with 11 abstentions) to approve the Investment Strategy document (the text of which will become a sub-section of the overall Capital & Investment Strategy).

### **59/19 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2018/19 OUTTURN**

(Agenda Item 11)

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) 'Code of Practice on Treasury Management (Revised) 2009' required that the Council and Audit & Governance Committee received an updated report on Treasury Management activities at least twice per year. The Council had before it a report (CC10) which was the second report for the financial year 2018/19 and set out the position as at 31 March 2019. The report was also considered by Audit and Governance Committee on 17 July.

In moving and seconding the report, Councillors Bartholomew and Carter paid tribute to Donna Ross and Lorna Baxter for their work in this area.

**RESOLVED:** (on a motion by Councillor Bartholomew, seconded by Councillor Carter and carried nem con) to note the Council's Treasury Management Activity in 2018/19.

### **60/19 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR LIZ BRIGHOUSE**

(Agenda Item 12)

With the consent of Council, Councillor Brighthouse moved and Councillor Phillips seconded the following motion, amended at the suggestion of Councillor Reeves as set out in bold italics and strikethrough below:

"This Council is concerned that Local Government in general and Oxfordshire in particular may have to make further cuts in staff and services for the most vulnerable people as a result of an emergency Spending Review. ~~which is required to fund Brexit.~~

The Leader is asked to write to the PM and Chancellor:

- Expressing the Council's deep concern about the impact of further cuts and in particular the impact of a one-year ad hoc Spending Review.

- Telling them of the Transition **formation** Programme which Oxfordshire has funded in order to ensure future stability and of the Innovative Partnership which has been established to make Service Delivery more efficient and effective.
- That this work undertaken by Oxfordshire could be seriously damaged given that Local Government **now needs stability**. ~~has already suffered crippling austerity cuts and now needs stability.~~

Following debate, the motion as amended was put to the vote and was carried by 57 votes to 0 (unanimously).

**RESOLVED:**

“This Council is concerned that Local Government in general and Oxfordshire in particular may have to make further cuts in staff and services for the most vulnerable people as a result of an emergency Spending Review.

The Leader is asked to write to the PM and Chancellor:

- Expressing the Council’s deep concern about the impact of further cuts and in particular the impact of a one-year ad hoc Spending Review.
- Telling them of the Transformation Programme which Oxfordshire has funded in order to ensure future stability and of the Innovative Partnership which has been established to make Service Delivery more efficient and effective.
- That this work undertaken by Oxfordshire could be seriously damaged given that Local Government now needs stability.”

**61/19 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR EDDIE REEVES**

(Agenda Item 13)

With the consent of Council, Councillor Reeves moved and Councillor Clarke seconded the following amendment to his motion as set out below in bold italic/strikethrough:

“This Council welcomes the ~~additional~~ **annual** investment from government (‘DfT’) in our highways, ***through our maintenance block allocation, and any additional funding that we have been awarded through the pot hole fund and the challenge fund***, which amounts to ***around £13,500,00 each year***.

***The Council has chosen to invest in highway maintenance from our additional £120,000,000 into infrastructure over ten years, plus investing £40,000,000 into street lighting. This amounts to:***

1. £10,000,000.00 in the financial year 2018/19; and
2. a further £15,000,000.00 in 2019/20.

This Council notes that the **government allocated** additional monies from the Highways Maintenance and Integrated Transport Block monies make Oxfordshire one of the most heavily invested counties in the South of England, with only significantly larger counties such as Hampshire and Kent receiving more funding in recent years.

This Council further notes the success of its internal and prudential borrowing policy, which is already yielding welcome improvements to roads across Oxfordshire.

This Council resolves to:

1. review ways in which non-ringfenced DfT funds **such as the Integrated Transport Block allocation of £3,700,000** can be leveraged alongside s.106. and ~~Councillors' Priority Fund ('CPF' monies with a view to improving roads and school crossings where there is demonstrable need;~~
2. consider extending the date for allocating any unspent **CPF Councillor's Priority Fund** monies beyond January 2020 where members are in discussions with officers regarding complementary s.106 monies that may be used to ~~generate more comprehensive solutions and said officers are in need of more time;~~ and
3. review traffic congestion management arrangements in our market towns with a view to working with both District partners and Thames Valley Police to explore opportunities for decriminalised parking and residents' parking schemes ~~in areas of acute need."~~

Following debate, the motion, as amended was put to the vote and was carried by 41 votes to 15, with 1 abstention.

**RESOLVED:** (by 41 votes to 15, with 1 abstention)

This Council welcomes the annual investment from government ('DfT') in our highways, through our maintenance block allocation, and any additional funding that we have been awarded through the pot hole fund and the challenge fund, which amounts to around £13,500,00 each year.

The Council has chosen to invest in highway maintenance from our additional £120,000,000 into infrastructure over ten years, plus investing £40,000,000 into street lighting. This amounts to:

3. £10,000,000.00 in the financial year 2018/19; and
4. a further £15,000,000.00 in 2019/20.

This Council notes that the government allocated Highways Maintenance and Integrated Transport Block monies make Oxfordshire one of the most heavily invested counties in the South of England, with only significantly larger counties such as Hampshire and Kent receiving more funding in recent years.

This Council further notes the success of its internal and prudential borrowing policy, which is already yielding welcome improvements to roads across Oxfordshire.

This Council resolves to:

4. review ways in which non-ringfenced DfT funds such as the Integrated Transport Block allocation of £3,700,000 can be leveraged alongside s.106. ~~and~~
5. consider extending the date for allocating any unspent Councillor's Priority Fund monies beyond January 2020 where members are in discussions with officers regarding complementary s.106 monies that may be used.
6. review traffic congestion management arrangements in our market towns with a view to working with both District partners and Thames Valley Police to explore opportunities for decriminalised parking and residents' parking schemes.

## **62/19 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DEBORAH MCILVEEN**

(Agenda Item 14)

With the consent of Council, Councillor Mcilveen moved and Councillor Mathew seconded the following motion, amended at the suggestion of Councillor Charles Mathew as shown in bold italics and strikethrough below:

*“Living costs in Oxfordshire are high and pay is relatively low. High housing costs mean that employers in the public and private sectors struggle to recruit and retain staff. There are vacancies in all areas of the public sector and this is affecting service delivery. Housing costs in Oxfordshire have risen at a similar rate to those in London where workers in the Public Sector are paid a London Living Wage of £10.55 per hour.*

Paying a Local Living Wage will enable people to take up job opportunities in Oxfordshire and according to employers would

- improve staff's quality of work;
- decrease Absenteeism;
- with better retention lower human resources costs.



It enables people to live on their wages and reduces in work benefits via Universal Credit. Paying the local Living Wage increases investment in the local economy.

Oxfordshire County Council asks the Cabinet to set up a working group with health partners and the Oxfordshire System Workforce Group to investigate implementation, ***including the cost to individual sectors of the Community, of a Living Wage policy in Oxfordshire (similar to London) and its countywide impact.***

During debate, Councillor Cherry moved and Councillor John Sanders seconded that 'that the question be now put'. The Motion was put to the vote and was carried by 38 to 9, with 2 abstentions.

Accordingly, the substantive motion as amended was put to the vote and was carried by 57 votes to 0 (unanimously).

**RESOLVED:** (unanimous)

Living costs in Oxfordshire are high and pay is relatively low. High housing costs mean that employers in the public and private sectors struggle to recruit and retain staff. There are vacancies in all areas of the public sector and this is affecting service delivery. Housing costs in Oxfordshire have risen at a similar rate to those in London where workers in the Public Sector are paid a London Living Wage of £10.55 per hour.

Paying a Local Living Wage will enable people to take up job opportunities in Oxfordshire and according to employers would:

- improve staff's quality of work;
- decrease Absenteeism;
- with better retention lower human resources costs.

It enables people to live on their wages and reduces in work benefits via Universal Credit. Paying the local Living Wage increases investment in the local economy.

Oxfordshire County Council asks the Cabinet to set up a working group with health partners and the Oxfordshire System Workforce Group to investigate implementation, including the cost to individual sectors of the Community, of a Living Wage policy in Oxfordshire (similar to London) and its countywide impact.

## **63/19 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR LYNDA ATKINS**

(Agenda Item 15)

With the consent of Council, Councillor Atkins moved and Councillor Gawrysiak seconded the following motion, amended at the suggestion of Councillor Brighthouse as shown in bold italics and strikethrough below:

“The way in which the County Council governs itself is a subject which should be carefully considered and regularly reviewed. The selection of our Chairman and Vice-Chairman is particularly important, as we all rely on the Councillor in the Chair to bring at least some semblance of order and civility to all our proceedings, and to help us get our job as a Council done.

The current arrangements for the selection of Chairman and Vice Chairman, involving rotation of the posts between the 3 main political groups, have currently been in place for 6 years (having been set up many years ago, with a 4-year interregnum between 2009 and 2013) and so the time is right for us to consider whether they work well or could perhaps be improved.

Council asks the Leader of the Council to ~~set up a cross-party group to look at how our Chairman and Vice-Chairman are selected, and if necessary, to make recommendations to the Council for change, bearing in mind that any choice is always subject to the overriding requirement for the Council to accept any nomination.~~ ***consider changes to the current arrangements of selecting the Chair and vice Chair as part of the normal constitution review.***

In summing up, Councillor Atkins announced her intention to resign as a County Councillor before the next Meeting of Full Council. She thanked the Council for its support and paid tribute to fellow County Councillors.

Following debate, the motion as amended was put to the vote and was carried nem con.

**RESOLVED:** (nem con)

The way in which the County Council governs itself is a subject which should be carefully considered and regularly reviewed. The selection of our Chairman and Vice-Chairman is particularly important, as we all rely on the Councillor in the Chair to bring at least some semblance of order and civility to all our proceedings, and to help us get our job as a Council done.

The current arrangements for the selection of Chairman and Vice Chairman, involving rotation of the posts between the 3 main political groups, have currently been in place for 6 years (having been set up many years ago, with a 4-year interregnum between 2009 and 2013) and so the time is right for us to consider whether they work well or could perhaps be improved.

Council asks the Leader of the Council to consider changes to the current arrangements of selecting the Chair and vice Chair as part of the normal constitution review.

## **64/19 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW**

(Agenda Item 16)

Councillor Bartholomew moved and Councillor Bulmer seconded the following motion:

“Reading Borough Council is proposing to build a vast new bridge to alleviate Reading’s traffic problems. It is included in their Draft Local Plan as a top priority. The bridge would take off at the Thames Valley business park near Reading and land near Playhatch in Oxfordshire. The only onwards option for traffic would be through the congested streets of Henley or along the narrow B481 country road through Oxfordshire villages.

Reading and the other Berkshire councils supporting the scheme are focusing almost entirely on the costs of building the bridge and the benefits it will bring to Reading. They recognise that the bridge would have a substantial impact on the Oxfordshire road network, but blithely state this will be dealt with by unspecified and uncosted ‘mitigation measures’.

This Council calls on the Leader to write to council leaders at Reading, Wokingham and Bracknell, plus MPs John Howell, John Redwood, Matt Rodda and Theresa May, stating that:

a) In the context of the Climate Emergency a car-based solution to a car-based problem that would pour thousands of cars and HGVs into Oxfordshire is totally inappropriate and should a new bridge be built it should be restricted to public transport, cyclists and pedestrians;

b) Notwithstanding the above, if a car-based solution is pursued, the bridge and necessary mitigation measures (i.e. improvements to the Oxfordshire road network) must not considered as two separate projects, but as one project so that the benefits, disadvantages and costs of the scheme can be holistically assessed.”

Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and was carried by 54 votes to 0, with 1 abstention.

**RESOLVED:** accordingly.

**65/19 MOTIONS BY COUNCILLOR NEVILLE HARRIS AND COUNCILLOR JOHN SANDERS**

(Agenda Item 17)

The time being after 3.30 pm, these motions were considered dropped in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.1.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing .....