

## OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 8 September 2020 commencing at 10.30 am and finishing at 4.03 pm.

**Present:**

Councillor Les Sibley – in the Chair

Councillors:

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

*The Council considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda and Schedule of Business for the meeting and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda, reports and schedule, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.*

### **38/20 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item 1)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 July 2020 were approved and signed as an accurate record.

### **39/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(Agenda Item 3)

Councillor Emily Smith declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 17 by virtue of her position as Director of OxLEP;

Councillor Jenny Hannaby declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 18 by virtue of her positions as Chairman of a Wantage Care Home and Chairman of Wantage Hospital League of Friends;

Councillor Alison Rook declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 18 by virtue of her position as Director and Trustee of Vale House Alzheimer's Home;

Councillor Jane Hanna declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item by virtue of her position as CEO of a health charity Sudep Action.

### **40/20 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS**

(Agenda Item 4)

Council paid tribute and held a minute's silence in Memory of former Leader of Council Keith Mitchell and former County Councillor Maureen Hastings.

Council received an update from the Chairman on COVID19. It congratulated and paid tribute to staff and the community on their tremendous efforts and response during the Coronavirus pandemic.

### **41/20 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item 6)

Council received a public address from Mr Ashley Smith on behalf of Windrush Against Sewage Pollution in support of the Motion by Councillor Nicholas Field-Johnson.

### **42/20 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

(Agenda Item 8)

34 questions with Notice were asked. Details of the questions and answers and supplementary questions and answers will be set out in the Annex to the minutes.

In relation to Question 2, Councillor Heathcoat undertook to provide Councillor Emily Smith with a written answer clarifying whether over half of the money had been paid into the scheme has gone back to be Treasury and therefore had not been spent on training and education in Oxfordshire.

In relation to question 6, Councillor Walker invited Councillor Webber to email him with any particular concerns regarding the linking up of reporting tools.

In relation to question 7, Councillor Lindsay-Gale undertook to provide Councillor Hanna with a full written response, which had been omitted to her original question.

In relation to question 10, Councillor Lindsay-Gale undertook to provide Councillor Buckley with a written response detailing what was going to happen to the additional grant from government to compensate for additional costs from Covid.

In relation to Question 12, Councillor Constance undertook to provide Councillor Emily Smith with a written answer to explain why Bicester and Whitney scored higher than Abington or any other market town, together with the lists of projects that missed out on inclusion in the Tranche 2 bid, to help Seek alternative funding.

In relation to Question 18, Councillor Stratford undertook to provide Councillor Hannaby with a copy of the plans referred to in the answer, together with an explanation as to what monitoring would be taking place in relation supporting the vulnerable.

In relation to Question 20, Councillor Constance undertook to provide Councillor Phillips with a written answer detailing what the section 106 monies received from the Neilson site had been used on.

In relation to Question 2, Councillor Lindsay-Gale undertook to provide Councillor Turnbull with a written answer detailing school attendance figures for the first week of September in Oxfordshire.

In relation to question 24, Councillor Constance undertook to provide Councillor Sudbury with a written response detailing the projected emissions cuts in this decade and if they did not meet the 45% target, some detail about how and what the council and its partners were going to do to meet it.

In relation to question 25, Councillor Constance undertook to provide Councillor Pressel with a written answer to the question of when the Thames towpath was to be prioritised and by whom.

In relation to Question 27, Councillor Lindsay-Gale undertook to ask the Regional Schools Commissioner to provide Councillor Pressel with the answer she required.

In relation to Question 29, Councillor Constance undertook to provide Councillor Fawcett with a written answer detailing whether there was any evidence to suggest that repainting the cycle lanes improved safety or encouraged more cycling.

In relation to Question 31, Councillor Constance undertook to provide Councillor Leffman with a written response detailing how much of the emitted carbon at Ardley was recycled and how much ended up in the atmosphere.

In relation to Question 32, Counsellor Constance undertook to meet with Councillor Roberts, Councillor Liam Walker, Lee Turner and the new officer to discuss the matter further.

In relation to Question 33, Councillor Constance undertook to provide Councillor Roz Smith with a written answer detailing whether there was a remedial budget for the access to Headington works.

**43/20 REPORT OF THE CABINET**

(Agenda Item 9)

Council received the report of the Cabinet.

**44/20 UPDATE REPORT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FOLLOWING A MEETING OF OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL AUTHORITY LEADERS AND THE CHAIR OF OXFORDSHIRE LEP WITH SIMON CLARKE MP (MINISTER OF STATE -HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT) ON THE 7TH SEPTEMBER.**

(Agenda Item 10)

The business included at Item 10 of the agenda had been added to update Members on the outcome of a meeting due to be held 7 September 2020 with the Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government. That meeting had been postponed due to a clash of urgent parliamentary business and therefore there was no update to give. The Chairman therefore, in the interests of the efficiency of Council business, exercised his powers as Chairman under Article 1, paragraph 4.2 of the Constitution having consulted the Monitoring Officer to postpone the item until a meeting with the Minister had occurred.

**45/20 APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER**

(Agenda Item 11)

Following the appointment in May of Steve Jorden as the Interim Monitoring Officer it was necessary for the Council to make a permanent appointment to this statutory role. The Council had before it a report which set out the procedural requirements in making such an appointment.

**RESOLVED:** (on a motion by Councillor Sibley, seconded by Councillor Howson and carried nem con) to agree that Anita Bradley be appointed as the Council's Monitoring Officer with effect from her taking up the role of Director of Law & Governance.

**46/20 REVISED BUDGET 2020/2021**

(Agenda Item 12)

Council had before it the Revised Budget 2020/21 which was considered by Cabinet on 18 August 2020 and sets out the financial impact of the Council's

response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the additional funding that had been received from central government.

Councils had a legal duty to balance their budgets each year and act to avoid the possibility that expenditure might exceed available income in any year. This meant that Oxfordshire County Council, like other councils across the country, had no option but to take significant cost-saving measures to address this unavoidable funding shortfall. The report set out the actions required to address the risk of overspend and reflected the additional costs incurred by the Council in the response phase.

The revised budget would provide a balanced budget for 2020/21 that included budgets to meet the additional costs of COVID-19 to enable effective budget management.

Under the Council's Financial Regulations, Council approval was required for any virement greater than £1m that involves a major change in policy (as assessed by the Section 151 officer) requires Council approval. The virements required as part of the Revised Budget 2020/21 fell within this definition. However, the Revised Budget for 2020/21 did not change the calculation of the Council Tax Requirement or Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2020/21 approved by Council in February 2020 as required under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Councillor Hudspeth moved and Councillor Bartholomew seconded the recommendations as set out in the report and on the face of the Agenda. In seconding the report, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Bartholomew thanked Directorates and the Finance Team for all their hard work.

Following a lengthy debate, the motion was put to the vote and was carried by 32 votes to 30.

**RESOLVED:** (by 32 votes to 30) to:

- (a) approve the savings set out in Annex 1;
- (b) approve the revised revenue budget for 2020/21 set out in Annex 2.

#### **47/20 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2019/20 OUTTURN**

(Agenda Item 13)

Council had before it a report (CC13) which set out the Treasury Management activity undertaken in the financial year 2019/20 in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice. The report included Debt and Investment activity, Prudential Indicator Outturn, Investment Strategy, and interest receivable and payable for the financial year.

Councillor Bartholomew moved and Councillor Carter seconded the recommendations as set out in the report and on the face of the Agenda. In

moving the recommendations, Councillor Bartholomew paid tribute to the Treasury Management Team for the excellent report.

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

**RESOLVED:** (nem con) to note the Council's Treasury Management Activity in 2019/20.

**48/20 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR DEBORAH MCILVEEN**

(Agenda Item 14)

Councillor McIlveen moved and Councillor Afridi seconded the following Motion:

“This Council notes:

- The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic [BAME] communities, and the significant contribution of BAME individuals to the frontline COVID-19 response;
- The increase in hate crime towards people from BAME communities in Oxfordshire in recent years;
- The impact of the Hostile Environment on the ‘Windrush generation’ and others who have the right to live in this country;
- Structural racism is still an everyday reality for people from Black, Asian and other minority and refugee communities.

This Council also notes that:

- BAME communities are underrepresented in Oxfordshire County Council's workforce, and that the Council's Equality Policy and Strategy 2018-22 identifies the need to address this;
- Thousands of local people have expressed concerns about the existence of structural racism as part of the Black Lives Matters protests, vigils and events that have taken place in recent weeks across the county;
- Communities across Oxfordshire are united by a desire to live happy, healthy and productive lives, and recognise that reducing inequalities helps all communities to thrive;
- The County Council Equalities Strategy for employment, service delivery and participation is being updated and this is integral to renewal and recovery for Oxfordshire.

This Council therefore:

1. Pledges to make Oxfordshire an Anti-racist County
2. Will work with and listen to people experiencing racism;

3. Develop and implement an anti-racist strategy for employment, service delivery and participation; and
4. Will work with local authorities, public bodies, employers, trade unions and community groups and any other stakeholders to achieve this.”

Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and was carried by 51 votes to 0, with 10 abstentions.

**RESOLVED:** Accordingly.

**49/20 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR TIM BEARDER**

(Agenda Item 15)

Councillor Bearder moved and Councillor Fawcett seconded the following Motion:

“Council recognises the frustration and disappointment that residents in South Oxfordshire feel after their Local Plan was taken out of the district councils hands and forced through to the Examination in Public by the Secretary of State following the May 2019 elections .

Despite assurances from Mr Jenrick and the local MP, John Howell, that changes could be made during the Examination in Public, the Inspector has announced that he is minded to pass the plan largely as it is - even with STRAT13, which the County Council’s officers expressed concerns over in relation to transport impacts.

Given the Secretary of State said in a recent interview that he wants to introduce changes to the planning system that allow local people to protect environmentally sensitive land like Green Belt, and SSSI to "hand it onto the next generation", this council calls on the leader to write to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government, to ask that he respects the outcome of any vote by SODC's elected Councillors on whether to adopt the plan.”

Following debate, the Motion was put to the vote and was lost by 34 votes to 25, with 2 abstentions.

**50/20 MOTION BY COUNCILLOR NICHOLAS FIELD JOHNSTON**

(Agenda Item 16)

Councillor Field-Johnson moved and Councillor Walker seconded the following Motion:

“We need to end sewage pollution and make our rivers clean and fit for recreation once again. We have in this Country a "clean beach policy" - we now need a clean river policy (such as a Blue Flag approach for our rivers so that they can again become clean and healthy).”

Oxfordshire County Council therefore requests the Leader of the Council to write to Oxfordshire MPs and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, to ask that HM Government takes urgent action to ban the dumping of raw and untreated sewage into our rivers and to support a clean river policy including the reintroduction of quality status in order to re-establish the high quality of water in our rivers.”

Councillor Tim Bearder moved and Councillor Leffman seconded the following amendment as shown in bold italics below:

“We need to end sewage pollution and make our rivers clean and fit for recreation once again. We have in this Country a "clean beach policy" - we now need a clean river policy (such as a Blue Flag approach for our rivers so that they can again become clean and healthy).”

Oxfordshire County Council therefore requests the Leader of the Council to write to Oxfordshire MPs and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, to ask that HM Government takes urgent action to ban the dumping of raw and untreated sewage into our rivers, ***to block any attempt to weakening of the protections provided to our rivers by the EU’s water framework directive*** and to support a clean river policy including the reintroduction of quality status in order to re-establish the high quality of water in our rivers.”

Following debate, the amendment was put to the vote and was lost by 38 votes to 28.

The Substantive Motion was then put to the vote and was carried nem con.

**51/20 MOTIONS BY COUNCILLOR CHARLES MATHEW, COUNCILLOR JANE HANNA, COUNCILLOR BOB JOHNSTON AND COUNCILLOR LIZ BRIGHOUSE**

(Agenda Item 17)

The time being 4.05 pm, these Motion were considered dropped in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.1.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing .....