

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 13 July 2021 commencing at 10.30 am and finishing at 12.20 pm.

Present:

Councillor John Howson – in the Chair

Councillors:

Juliette Ash	Donna Ford	Jane Murphy
Brad Baines	Andrew Gant	Michael O'Connor
Hannah Banfield	Stefan Gawrysiak	Michele Paule
David Bartholomew	Andy Graham	Glynis Phillips
Tim Bearder	Kate Gregory	Susanna Pressel
Robin Bennett	Jane Hanna OBE	Eddie Reeves
Liz Brighthouse OBE	Jenny Hannaby	G.A. Reynolds
Kevin Bulmer	Damian Haywood	Judy Roberts
Nigel Champken-Woods	Charlie Hicks	David Rouane
Andrew Coles	Tony Ilott	Geoff Saul
Yvonne Constance OBE	Bob Johnston	Les Sibley
Ian Corkin	Liz Leffman	Nigel Simpson
Imade Edosomwan	Nick Leverton	Roz Smith
Duncan Enright	Mark Lygo	Ian Snowdon
Mohamed Fadlalla	Kieron Mallon	Dr Pete Sudbury
Arash Fatemian	Ian Middleton	Bethia Thomas
Neil Fawcett	Freddie van Mierlo	Michael Waine
Ted Fenton	Calum Miller	Richard Webber
Nick Field-Johnson		

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.

37/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Felix Bloomfield, Councillor Nathan Ley, Councillor Sally Povolotsky, Councillor Alison Rooke, Councillor Jayne Strangwood and Councillor Liam Walker.

38/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Agenda Item 2)

Councillor Andrew Coles declared a non-pecuniary personal interest in Agenda Item 9 by virtue of his position as an employee of Stagecoach and a founder member and volunteer of West Oxfordshire Community Transport.

Councillor Liz Leffman declared a non-pecuniary personal interest in Agenda Item 9 by virtue of her position as a founder member and shareholder of West Oxfordshire Community Transport.

Councillor Andy Graham declared a non-pecuniary personal interest in Agenda Item 9 by virtue of his position as an Arts Practitioner.

Councillor Duncan Enright declared a non-pecuniary personal interest in Agenda Item 9 by virtue of his position as a founder member and shareholder of West Oxfordshire Community Transport.

39/21 MINUTES

(Agenda Item 3)

The minutes of the Meeting held on 18 May 2021 were approved and signed as an accurate record, subject to the following correction:

Minute 35/21 – Councillor Pressel seconded the appointment of Liz Leffman as Leader.

(3) The Office of Leader of the Opposition **RESOLVED**: to note ~~that~~ Councillor Eddie Reeves' **position** as the Leader of the Opposition.

Matters Arising

In relation to Minute 33/21 (Constitution Changes to Reflect Return to Physical Meetings), the Chairman reported that due to the Government Announcement being moved to July 19 and to keep business to a minimum, he had taken the decision not to report back on this item at this time, but to report to the September Meeting instead.

40/21 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

(Agenda Item 4)

Council congratulated the Lord Lieutenant on his award of KCVO from the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2021.

Council congratulated Ian Hudspeth on his OBE and all other Oxfordshire residents who had received honours from the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2021.

Council paid tribute and held a minute's silence in memory of Former Councillor Richard Farrell.

41/21 APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda Item 5)

RESOLVED: Council noted that under Cabinet Procedure Rule 12.2.2 the Leader of the Council had given notice of the following change to the Cabinet Scheme of Delegation. The Change came into effect on 22 June 2021:

Cabinet Member for Public Health & Equality - Councillor Mark Lygo

42/21 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item 6)

Council received the following Petition and Public Address:

A Petition from Mr Canio Santoliquido requesting an urgent review of Oxfordshire County Council's Adult Social Care Contributions Policy.

Council referred the Petition to the Corporate Director Adults and Housing Services for response.

Ms Carole Thomson, spoke in relation to Agenda Item 10 (Review of Scrutiny Arrangements) as the Chair of the Oxfordshire Governors' Association, OGA, which had been established in 1995, and had been useful to the council since then for liaison purposes and as a conduit for appointing governors to various consultative groups and panels, some statutory, others not, that had facilitated the work of the council.

From 1995 onwards apart from a short gap, the County Council recognised the Governors' Association through a non-voting position on the Committee dealing with education. In 2001 legislation introduced Parent Governor representatives onto Scrutiny committees, whose role was to represent parents but not governors. In 2013, the committee dealing with education changed from Children's Services to Education Scrutiny Committee, due to the high workload for the committee. She was therefore surprised at the proposed structure to have a single People committee with such a large area of responsibility, incorporating not only all of Children's Services, but also adult services. Acknowledging that it was a decision for Council to make, she made the following points which she hoped would inform the discussion.

Alongside the Governors' representation there had been a representative of the Council of Teachers' Organisations' or COTO on the Scrutiny committee with responsibility for education, this representation had provided useful information about the reality of working on the front line in a school. COTO believed that previous minutes had demonstrated that not only had this been an important part of the democratic process but had also ensured that all continued to work collectively for the best educational outcomes for our children.

The Committee had not been short of work or debate as an education specific committee and also she believed that constraints on officer time had created some challenges for the work of the committee, so she hoped the

necessary support to help prioritise such a wide range of legal and moral responsibilities had been comprehensively considered in developing this proposal.

One amongst many major education challenges the council currently faced related to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant, which was neither balancing the books nor providing universally good levels of support for the Oxfordshire children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, even before one considered the long term impact of the pandemic and the massive disruption to the education and well-being of children in schools across Oxfordshire.

She urged Council to ensure that whatever structures and committees were agreed; that the educational needs of the majority of children and young people were not overlooked in addressing the needs of the highly important, but relatively small groups of children that were particularly vulnerable.

In Annex 2 of the Additional Papers at Paragraph 3 there was reference to additional voting members of the committee, from which Councillors might assume that the role of COTO and OGA would seem superfluous. She pointed out that none of those roles have been filled in recent years, there had been no diocesan representative since May 2017. Similarly, there had not been a single parent governor representative for the past twelve years, apart from a short interlude of less than 18 months between 2016 and 2018. In practice it was always very difficult to find parents who could attend daytime meetings when they were already juggling domestic responsibilities and working lives, particularly as no mechanism existed for them to consult the parents they were supposed to represent. The academisation agenda has introduced additional challenges for the county council in meeting their responsibilities for all children and has reduced significantly the pool of potential parent governor candidates.

She urged the Council to consider continuing to invite Governors' Association and COTO representation to relevant discussions that impact all the schools in Oxfordshire.

43/21 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

(Agenda Item 8)

6 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 1 (Question from Yvonne Constance to Councillor Duncan Enright) Councillor Enright undertook to provide Councillor Constance with a written reply detailing who sits on the steering group and the exact locations of the trial sites.

In relation to question 2 (Question from Councillor Yvonne Constance to Councillor Duncan Enright) Councillor Enright undertook to provide

Councillor Constance with a written reply detailing the membership of the group who will be meeting with Highways England.

44/21 REPORT OF THE CABINET

(Agenda Item 9)

Council received the report of the Cabinet.

In relation to paragraph 21 of the report (Question from Councillor Robin Bennett to Councillor Duncan Enright) Councillor Enright undertook to provide a written answer regarding whether a carbon impact assessment had been undertaken for HIF1, including what the emissions will be from the construction and from the vehicles that use it once constructed.

In relation to paragraph 22 of the report (Question from Councillor Freddie Van Mierlo to Councillor Duncan Enright) Councillor Enright undertook to provide a written answer regarding the Watlington Edge Road Scheme and whether it is on track to be approved at Cabinet in September.

45/21 REVIEW OF SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

(Agenda Item 10)

At the Annual Meeting, Council re-appointed the Education and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committees that had existed under the previous administration. This enabled the work of these committees to continue pending a review of scrutiny arrangements. Council had before it a report (CC10) which proposed that the arrangements be reviewed and that a broader set of overview and scrutiny committees be established in place of the two current overview and scrutiny committees. This was to enable a greater range and depth of scrutiny activity inclusive of a wider range of members of the Council. Council was invited to consider establishing three committees and their terms of reference and, if established, to make appointments to them on the basis of political proportionality.

Councillor Leffman moved and Councillor Phillips seconded that the recommendations set out in the report be adopted. Following debate, the Motion was put to the vote and was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: (unanimously) to:

- (a) approve the draft terms of reference (at Annex 1) and the allocated subject areas (at Annex 2) for three new overview and scrutiny committees, namely:
 - (i) Place
 - (ii) People
 - (iii) Performance and Corporate Services
- (b) agree that these committees be appointed to replace the current overview and scrutiny committees (Education and Performance), effective from September 2021;

- (c) make appointments to the three committees based on political proportionality as set out in paragraph 9 and at Annex 3;
- (d) request the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer to amend the Constitution to reflect these changes;
- (e) authorise the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer to determine and confirm the dates of meeting for the three committees for the remainder of the 2021/22 Council Year.

46/21 SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

(Agenda Item 11)

Council had before it the Scrutiny Annual Report (CC11) which highlighted the key work undertaken by the Council's scrutiny committees to address current and emerging issues including the delivery of improved services for the residents of Oxfordshire. The report 2020-2021 was presented to full Council, having been considered by the Performance Scrutiny Committee on 3 June 2021.

Councillor Brighthouse moved and Councillor Reeves seconded that the recommendation set out on the face of the Agenda be adopted. Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and was carried nem con.

RESOLVED: (nem con) to receive the report.

47/21 AUDIT & GOVERNANCE ANNUAL REPORT

(Agenda Item 12)

Council had before it the Audit & Governance Annual Report which set out the role of the Audit & Governance Committee and summarised the work that has been undertaken both as a Committee and through the support of the Audit Working Group in 2020/21.

Councillor Roz Smith moved and Councillor Brad Baines seconded that the recommendations set out on the face of the Agenda be adopted. Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and was carried nem con.

RESOLVED: (nem con) to receive the report.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing