

# Minutes

## OF A MEETING OF THE

## Council



Listening Learning Leading

### HELD ON THE RISING OF THE PRECEDING SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING ON THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2014

### COUNCIL CHAMBER, SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, CROWMARSH GIFFORD

#### Present:

Ann Midwinter (Chairman)

Margaret Turner, Anna Badcock, Roger Bell, David Bretherton, Dorothy Brown, Janet Carr, Celia Collett, MBE, Bernard Cooper, John Cotton, Kristina Crabbe, Philip Cross, Pat Dawe, Leo Docherty, David Dodds, Elizabeth Gillespie, Mark Gray, Will Hall, Tony Harbour, Marcus Harris, Neville F Harris, Stephen Harrod, Marc Hiles, Elizabeth Hodgkin, Malcolm Leonard, Lynn Lloyd, Judith Nimmo-Smith, Angie Paterson, Anne Purse, Christopher Quinton, Alan Rooke, David Turner, Michael Welply and Jennifer Wood

#### Apologies:

Joan Bland, Felix Bloomfield, Steve Connel, Margaret Davies, Eleanor Hards, Paul Harrison, Imran Lokhon, Denise Macdonald, Bill Service, Robert Simister and Pearl Slatter tendered apologies.

**Officers:** Steve Bishop, David Buckle, Steven Corrigan, William Jacobs, Anna Robinson and Margaret Reed

#### **32 Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest**

None.

#### **33 Minutes of previous meetings**

##### **RESOLVED:** to

1. approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2014 as a correct record subject to officers amending the recorded vote details in minute 20 for CGR 28 (proposal to extend the northern boundary of Wheatley parish to align with the A40 incorporating land currently in Holton parish) to correctly reflect the recorded vote sheet details and agree that the chairman sign them as such;

2. approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2014 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman sign them as such.

### **34 Chairman's announcements**

The chairman advised that tickets were now on sale for her Charity Concert at Cornerstone on Saturday 17 January in aid of the Royal British Legion Women's Section and SeeSaw.

She thanked officers for their hard work throughout the year, their generosity at the recent Chairman's quiz held in Abingdon and wished them and councillors a merry Christmas and happy new year.

### **35 Questions from the public and public participation**

None.

### **36 Council tax base 2015/16**

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 4 December 2014, on the council tax base for 2015/16.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) to approve the report of the head of finance to Cabinet on 4 December 2014 for the calculation of the council's tax base and the calculation of the tax base for each parish area for 2015/16;
- (b) that, in accordance with The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by South Oxfordshire District Council as its council tax base for the year 2015/16 be 54,233.6;
- (c) that, in accordance with The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by South Oxfordshire District Council as the council tax base for the year 2015/16 for each parish be the amount shown against the name of that parish in Appendix 1 of the report of the head of finance to Cabinet on 4 December 2014.

### **37 Council tax reduction scheme grant to towns and parishes**

Council considered Cabinet's recommendations, made at its meeting on 4 December 2014, on the council tax reduction scheme grant to towns and parishes for 2015/16.

Whilst councillors supported the proposal to pass the whole grant on to town and parish councils a number did not support the proposed review of the methodology to assess the impact of the council tax reduction scheme on parish precepts. The view was expressed that the district council should not interfere in the level of precept set by parish councils.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the total council tax reduction scheme grant to be passed down to town and parish councils for 2015/16 be £179,352;
- (b) that a review of the methodology for determining the total amount of grant for town and parish councils be undertaken during 2015/16 to assess the impact of the council tax reduction scheme on parish precepts; and
- (c) that the individual grant amounts for towns and parishes be as set out in appendix 1 to the report of the head of finance to Cabinet on 4 December 2014.

**38 Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 - proposal to appoint a joint Independent Remuneration Panel**

Margaret Reed, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, advised Council that, at its meeting on Wednesday 11 December 2014, Vale of White Horse District Council had resolved not to support the establishment of a joint independent remuneration panel at this time. In doing so councillors noted that the two councils were separate organisations, had different allowances and that a joint panel would achieve limited efficiencies. However, Council did resolve that the new Council should consider the issue following the May 2015 elections.

Whilst noting the above decision Council agreed that a review of South Oxfordshire District Council's allowances should be undertaken and that the recommendations of the independent panel would be considered at the Annual Council meeting in May 2015. Council agreed to authorise the head of legal and democratic services to make any additional appointments to the independent panel if required.

In supporting the above proposal Mr J Cotton, Leader of the council, expressed the view that he hoped councillors would agree the recommendations of the panel.

**RESOLVED: to**

1. request the independent remuneration panel to undertake a review of councillors' allowances and report to Council in May 2015;
2. authorise the head of legal and democratic services to make appointments to the independent remuneration panel if required, and advise councillors in due course of the outcome of the appointments process.

**39 Elections - fees and charges 2015**

Council considered the report of the returning officer on the setting of fees and charges for the 2015 district and parish elections.

In response to a question on the level of income expected from parish councils, officers undertook to provide councillors with the parish council recharge figure for the 2011 elections.

**RESOLVED:** to

1. agree the scales of fees for district and parish council elections, parish polls and neighbourhood planning referendums for 2015/16 as set out in the Appendix to the report of the returning officer to Council on 11 December 2014;
2. agree to continue to charge parish and town councils for running elections on their behalf.

**40 Review of appointments to committees, panels and joint committees 2014/15**

Council considered the report of the head of legal and democratic services on the review of the political balance and changes to the make-up and membership of committees following the resignation of Mrs Hodgkin and Mrs Wood from the Henley Residents Group and them joining the Independent Group and a request to review the political balance.

A schedule of appointments was circulated to councillors prior to the meeting which reflected the views of group leaders and the non-group councillors.

**RESOLVED:** to

1. appoint the following committees and panels for the remainder of the 2014/15 year and to appoint the membership, substitutes and chairmen and vice-chairmen as indicated to sit on them:

<b>Names</b>	<b>Planning Committee, 14 Members</b>			
<b>Conservative (9)</b>	<b>Independent (2)</b>	<b>Labour (1)</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat (1)</b>	<b>Non group councillor (1)</b>
Joan Bland	Celia Collett	Denise Macdonald	Roger Bell	Neville Harris
Felix Bloomfield (Chairman)	Jeni Wood			
Kristina Crabbe				
Phil Cross				
Pat Dawe				
Paul Harrison				
Malcolm Leonard				
Margaret Turner				
Mike Welply(Vice-Chairman)				

<b>Names</b>	<b>Planning Committee, 14 Members</b>			
<b>Conservative (9)</b>	<b>Independent (2)</b>	<b>Labour (1)</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat (1)</b>	<b>Non group councillor (1)</b>
<b>SUBSTITUTES</b>				
<b>Conservative (9)</b>	<b>Independent (3)</b>	<b>Labour (3)</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat (3)</b>	
Steve Connel	Mark Gray	Bernard Cooper	David Bretherton	
Leo Docherty	Elizabeth Hodgkin	Margaret Davies	Anne Purse	
Marcus Harris	Ann Midwinter	Eleanor Hards	David Turner	
Stephen Harrod				
Imran Lokhon				
Alan Rooke				
Pearl Slatter				
Rachel Wallis				

<b>Names</b>	<b>Scrutiny Committee, 13 Members</b>		
<b>Conservative (9)</b>	<b>Independent (2)</b>	<b>Labour (1)</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat (1)</b>
Joan Bland(Vice-Chairman)	Celia Collett	Eleanor Hards	David Turner (Chairman)
Steve Connel	Elizabeth Hodgkin		
Kristina Crabbe			
Pat Dawe			
Tony Harbour			
Paul Harrison			
Imran Lokhon			
Alan Rooke			
Margaret Turner			
<b>SUBSTITUTES</b>			
<b>Conservative (9)</b>	<b>Independent (3)</b>	<b>Labour (3)</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat (3)</b>
Felix Bloomfield	Mark Gray	Bernard Cooper	Roger Bell
Dorothy Brown	Ann Midwinter	Margaret Davies	Anne Purse
Phil Cross	Jeni Wood	Denise Macdonald	David Bretherton
Leo Docherty			
Marcus Harris			
Rachel Wallis			
Mike Welply			

<b>Names</b>	<b>Audit and Corporate Governance Committee, 8 Members</b>		
<b>Conservative (5)</b>	<b>Labour (1)</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat (1)</b>	<b>Non-group councillor (1)</b>
John Cotton	Margaret Davies	David Bretherton	Neville Harris
Kristina Crabbe(Chairman)			
Phil Cross(Vice-Chairman)			
Paul Harrison			
Mike Welply			
<b>SUBSTITUTES</b>			
<b>Conservative (5)</b>	<b>Labour (3)</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat (3)</b>	
Pat Dawe	Bernard Cooper	Roger Bell	
Leo Docherty	Eleanor Hards	Anne Purse	
Stephen Harrod	Denise Macdonald	David Turner	
Chris Hood			
Rob Simister			

<b>Names</b>	<b>General Licensing Committee, 10 Members</b>		
<b>Conservative (7)</b>	<b>Independent (1)</b>	<b>Labour (1)</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat (1)</b>
Joan Bland	Mark Gray	Bernard Cooper	Anne Purse
Pat Dawe			
Elizabeth Gillespie(Vice-Chairman)			
Malcolm Leonard(Chairman)			
Pearl Slatter			
Margaret Turner			
Mike Welply			
<b>SUBSTITUTES</b>			
<b>Conservative (7)</b>	<b>Independent (3)</b>	<b>Labour (3)</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat (3)</b>
Dorothy Brown	Celia Collett	Margaret Davies	Roger Bell
Will Hall	Marc Hiles	Eleanor Hards	David Bretherton
Tony Harbour	Ann Midwinter	Denise Macdonald	David Turner
Marcus Harris			
Stephen Harrod			

<b>Names</b>	<b>General Licensing Committee, 10 Members</b>		
Chris Hood			
Alan Rooke			

<b>Names</b>	<b>Licensing Acts Committee, 10 Members</b>			
<b>Conservative (6)</b>	<b>Independent (1)</b>	<b>Labour (1)</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat (1)</b>	<b>Non-group councillor (1)</b>
Joan Bland	Mark Gray	Eleanor Hards	David Bretherton	Neville Harris
Dorothy Brown(Chairman)				
Pat Dawe(Vice-Chairman)				
Malcolm Leonard				
Pearl Slatter				
Margaret Turner				

<b>Names</b>	<b>NNDR Appeals Panel, 5 Members</b>	
<b>Conservative (2)</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat (1)</b>	<b>Non-group councillors (2)</b>
Elizabeth Gillespie	Anne Purse	Neville Harris
Malcolm Leonard		Christopher Quinton
<b>SUBSTITUTES</b>		
<b>Conservative (3)</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat (3)</b>	
Tony Harbour	Roger Bell	
Paul Harrison	David Bretherton	
Mike Welply	David Turner	

<b>Names</b>	<b>Housing Appeals Panel, 5 Members</b>	
<b>Conservative (3)</b>	<b>Labour (1)</b>	<b>Non-group councillor (1)</b>
Dorothy Brown	Bernard Cooper	Neville Harris
Pat Dawe		
Alan Rooke		
<b>SUBSTITUTES</b>		
<b>Conservative (3)</b>	<b>Labour (3)</b>	
Phil Cross	Margaret Davies	
Marcus Harris	Eleanor Hards	
Pearl Slatter	Denise Macdonald	



2. appoint Mr N Harris to the Independent group's seat on the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee and Housing Appeals Panel and one of the Conservative group's seats on the NNDR Panel;
3. appoint Mr M Welply as the council's representative on the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel;
4. appoint Mr N Harris to the Planning Committee and the Licensing Acts Committee; and
5. authorise the head of legal and democratic services to make appointments to any vacant committee or panel seat and substitute positions in accordance with the wishes of the relevant group leader.

#### **41 Community governance and electoral issues committee**

Council considered the report of the head of legal and democratic services on a proposal to establish a Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee.

Mr J Cotton, Conservative Group Leader, offered Mr N Harris one of the Conservative seats on the committee.

#### **RESOLVED: to**

1. establish a Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee comprising five Conservatives, one Independent, one Labour and one Liberal Democrat member with the following terms of reference:
  - To make recommendations to Council on reviews of electoral arrangements for the district undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England
  - To undertake parish community governance reviews
  - To respond to consultations from the Boundary Commission on reviews of parliamentary constituencies and county divisions within the district
  - To undertake reviews of polling districts and polling places
  - To consider reports from the Returning Officer on district and parish council elections.
2. appoint Mr N Harris to one of the Conservative group's seats on the Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee;
3. authorise the head of legal and democratic services to make appointments to the Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee in accordance with the wishes of the relevant group leaders.

#### **42 Councillors' allowances scheme**

The councillors' allowances scheme allows for the allowances payable under the scheme to be increased up to the RPI announced in the preceding September subject to Council decision.

In light of the earlier decision (see Minute 38(1)) to undertake a review of allowances Council agreed not to increase the councillors' basic and special responsibility allowances payable from 1 April 2015.

**RESOLVED:** to apply no increase to the councillors' basic and special responsibility allowances payable from 1 April 2015.

#### **43 Questions under Council procedure rule 34**

None.

#### **44 Urgent Cabinet member decision**

In accordance with the overview and scrutiny procedure rules, Mr J Cotton, Leader of the council reported that on 10 October 2014 Mrs A Badcock took a confidential decision to enter into a new contract for an electoral management system to address problems with the current provider and to vire funds from the capital contingency budget for the purchase of the system and the revenue contingency to cover training on the new system and cover the existing contract costs. The chairman of the scrutiny committee agreed to waive call-in because any delay could impact on the council's delivery of Individual Electoral Registration (IER).

#### **45 Motions under Council procedure rule 41**

Mr S Harrod moved and Mrs J Nimmo-Smith seconded the following motion:

To ask the leader of the council to write to the Secretary of State for Transport asking that he gives a high priority to resurfacing that part of the M40 that lies in South Oxfordshire with a lower noise surface material. This will improve the quality of life for those living in close proximity to the motorway.

In supporting the motion a number of councillors expressed the view that noise mitigation measures should include consideration of tree planting, fencing, a noise barrier and that all lanes are included in any road resurfacing scheme. In addition any scheme should include the motorway up to junction nine. Councillors requested that the leader reference these points in his letter.

#### **RESOLVED:**

To ask the leader of the council to write to the Secretary of State for Transport asking that he gives a high priority to resurfacing that part of the M40 that lies in South Oxfordshire with a lower noise surface material. This will improve the quality of life for those living in close proximity to the motorway.

The meeting closed at 11.30am

Chairman

Date