

# Council



Listening Learning Leading

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## **Summons to attend a meeting of Council**

to be held on

**THURSDAY 9 DECEMBER 2021 AT 6.00 PM**

at

**FIRST FLOOR, 135 EASTERN AVENUE, MILTON PARK, MILTON, OX14 4SB**

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Patrick Arran  
Head of Legal and Democratic

# Agenda

## 1 Apologies for absence

To record apologies for absence.

## 2 Minutes (Pages 9 - 29)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the extraordinary Council meeting held on 24 September 2021 and the Council meeting held on 7 October 2021.

## 3 Declarations of interest

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and any conflicts of interest in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

## 4 Urgent business and chair's announcements

To receive notification of any matters which the chair determines should be considered as urgent business and the special circumstances which have made the matters urgent, and to receive any announcements from the chair.

## 5 Public participation

To receive any questions or statements from members of the public that have registered to speak.

## 6 Petitions

To receive any petitions from the public.

## 7 Review of Joint Gambling policy (Pages 30 - 66)

Cabinet, at its meeting on 2 December 2021, will consider a report on the review of the Joint Gambling Policy following statutory consultation.

The report of the head of health and housing, which Cabinet will consider on 2 December, is **attached**.

Cabinet's recommendations will be circulated to all councillors.

## 8 Treasury management mid-year monitoring report 2021/22 (Pages 67 - 81)

Cabinet, at its meeting on 2 December 2021, will consider a monitoring report on the treasury management activities for the first six months of 2021/22 and an update on the current economic conditions with a view to the remainder of the year.

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee considered the report at its meeting on 30 November 2021.

The report of the head of finance, which Cabinet will consider on 2 December 2021, is **attached**.

Cabinet's recommendations will be circulated to all councillors.

## **9 Council tax base 2022/23 (Pages 82 - 85)**

Cabinet, at its meeting on 2 December 2021, will consider a report on the council tax base for 2022/23.

The report of the head of finance, which Cabinet will consider on 2 December, is **attached**.

Cabinet's recommendations will be circulated to all councillors.

## **10 War and War Widow(er)s Pension Disregard top up in Housing Benefit (Pages 86 - 88)**

Cabinet, at its meeting on 2 December 2021, will consider a report on the War Pensions and War Widow(er)s Pension in calculating Housing Benefit entitlement.

The report of the head of finance, which Cabinet will consider on 2 December 2021, is **attached**.

Cabinet's recommendations will be circulated to all councillors.

## **11 Constitution Review Task Group**

Council is invited to agree the establishment of a joint Constitution Review Task Group with Vale of White Horse District Council to undertake a review of the constitution and make recommendations to Council.

Officers propose that the task group comprises 6 councillors with three from South Oxfordshire and three from Vale of White Horse.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Council

1. establishes a joint Constitution Review Task Group with Vale of White Horse District Council comprising three councillors from each council;
2. agrees that any councillors on the council may substitute for this council's appointed representatives;
3. authorises the head of legal and democratic to make appointments to the task group in accordance with the wishes of the relevant group leader.

## **12 Arrangements for investigating allegations under the member code of conduct (Pages 89 - 118)**

The Joint Audit and Governance Committee, at its meeting on 30 November 2021, considered a report on draft arrangements for dealing with complaints under the

code of conduct.

The committee unanimously agreed to recommend the arrangements to Council.

The report of the monitoring officer, which the committee considered on 30 November, is **attached**.

**RECOMMENDATION:** to agree the draft arrangements for investigating complaints appended to the report.

### **13 Councillors' Parental Leave Policy** (Pages 119 - 124)

To consider the report of the head of legal and democratic on the adoption of a Parental Leave Policy for councillors – **attached**.

### **14 Council Motions Update - May 2019 - present** (Pages 125 - 126)

To note progress on the approved Council motions – **report attached**. Appendix one to follow.

### **15 Report of the leader of the council**

To receive the report of the Leader of the council, Councillor David Rouane.

### **16 Questions on notice**

To receive questions from councillors in accordance with Council procedure rule 33.

1. Question from Councillor Sue Roberts to Councillor David Rouane, Leader of the council

We encourage developers to deliver homes that are zero carbon both in operation and construction (Para 8.35 of our Local Plan). We should lead and set an example with the new Council office to be built in Didcot. The advice from the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee (now CEEAC), accepted by Cabinet, and concerning the original design for the office at Crowmarsh, was that it should be as low carbon *as possible* in operation and construction.

Advice has not been sought from CEEAC on the very different design for the Didcot office. It will release 1670 Tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent in the construction phase. By comparison, this would be around 300 years' worth of emissions from you or me. The final build will achieve only BREEAM excellent and not BREEAM outstanding.

I understand it would cost 10% extra to achieve BREEAM outstanding. This should be seen in the context of the *many-fold* increase in cost from the original specification to the current design.

My question, therefore, is given that we know it to be possible, why are we not building to the standard that we want others to build to? Could we please, at this

stage, request a design and costing for a truly zero-carbon BREAM-outstanding construction?

I need hardly remind you that the magnitude of worldwide carbon emissions *in the next 9 years* are critical to keeping global heating to below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Heating above that would be catastrophic. Our near-term (construction) emissions are even more important than our long-term (operational) emissions. The UK must take a lead in reducing carbon emissions, especially over the next year whilst we hold the Presidency of the Conference of Parties (COP) 26.

2. Question from Councillor Sue Roberts to Councillor David Rouane, Leader of the council

This question is asked in the light of the critical need swiftly to reduce worldwide carbon emissions in the short-term. This urgency has become more apparent since the Conference of Parties (COP) 26.

We have a major task ahead of us to get our Council estate to net zero carbon by 2025 in accordance with the target set by this Council. Retrofitting our leisure centres and other buildings will consume labour, materials and money.

My question is about whether it might be better to use the existing Abbey House in Vale for our shared Council administration rather than building a new office in Didcot, following the precept of a circular economy; re-using rather than disposal.

I understand that the space there is more than sufficient. Abbey House itself would require full retrofitting for energy efficiency and updating for modern use. Transport links are poor. However, the draft Oxfordshire Plan 2050 vision is for a connected county, with good public transport. The Councils could use their influence and resources to kickstart superb connectivity for Abingdon. The land saved at Didcot could be used for all sorts of other purposes, such as social housing and a welcoming park. Most importantly, precious resource could be diverted from a brand-new build to attending to the retrofitting of our own estate.

Please could you tell me whether a *recent* assessment has been made, in the light of the climate and ecology priorities in our new Corporate Plan, of the suitability of Abbey House as a shared office space for the two councils? By recent, I mean since our Corporate Plan was published. If so, please could we see the resulting report? If not, could a new assessment be made, with a joint committee of Vale and South councillors set up for this purpose?

## 17 Motions on notice

To consider motions from councillors in accordance with Council procedure rule 38.

- (1) Motion to be proposed by Councillor Caroline Newton, seconded by Councillor Jane Murphy:

Council:

- o notes that the leader of the Liberal Democrats Party has re-stated his

- party's commitment to building 380,000 homes a year
- notes that 380,000 homes pa is fully 25% higher figure than targets proposed by any other political party in recent years
- considers it important to understand what this building target might mean for South Oxfordshire
- requests the Leader of the council to write to the Liberal Democrats Party Leader seeking clarification of how many extra houses he envisages this would bring to South Oxfordshire.

(2) Motion to be proposed by Councillor David Rouane, seconded by Councillor Sue Cooper:

At its meeting on 25 March 2021 council passed a motion noting:

- the failure of healthcare services within the district to keep pace with the growth in the population, and
- the failure of the present system putting our planning service and planning committee under pressure to approve new housing without plans for healthcare in place.

The motion went on to call for officers to continue to try to engage with the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) and for the Leader to request a meeting with the CCG to discuss these issues.

Council notes that in April 2022 the CCG will be replaced by the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (ICS).

Council therefore requests that the Leader seeks an early meeting with the Leadership of the ICS in order to raise the issues highlighted in the March motion to ensure that they are aware of the serious issues facing the district in term of healthcare provision and, in particular, the importance of the ICS engaging with the planning process to ensure that services keep pace with development.

(3) Motion to be proposed by Councillor Ian White, seconded by Councillor Jane Murphy:

Council asks the Leader to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities asking that he give focus to Planning Enforcement in his review of the Planning White Paper, including a review of the current powers and consideration to the introduction of additional powers available elsewhere in the UK, such as the requirement for developers to give notice of commencement and completion.

(4) Motion to be proposed by Councillor Sam Casey-Rerhaye, seconder to be notified:

### **Council Notes:**

- That this authority has declared both a climate and an ecological emergency
- That the [Glasgow Climate Pact](#) recognises a crucial role for communities and local authorities. By “recognizing the important role of ... local communities and civil society, including youth and children, in addressing and responding to climate change, and highlighting the urgent need for multilevel and cooperative action” the Pact makes plain the need for action at every level of government

and society. Furthermore, the Pact explicitly calls on us “to actively involve ... local communities in designing and implementing climate action”.

- That shortly before the Glasgow conference the UK government published its Net Zero Strategy, which includes the intention to establish a Net Zero Forum to coordinate the strategy with local government.

### **Council believes:**

- That COP26 failed to provide the national targets that could put the world on course for limiting global average temperature rise to 1.5C; it failed to provide the carbon price mechanisms needed to shift the world economy away from fossil fuels; it failed to provide the necessary finance for developing nations to develop without fossil fuels or to deal with the loss and damage caused to them by wealthier nations that are historically responsible; it failed to outlaw all loopholes in ‘offsetting’ mechanisms; it failed to commit to phasing out fossil fuels.
- That the chances for a strong outcome from COP26 were weakened by the UK government’s mixed messages on climate action; not least the reduction in tax on internal flights, the continued commitment to new fossil fuel extraction in Cumbria and the North Sea oil fields, and the cuts to overseas aid.
- That the Climate Change Committee is correct when it states that it is “crucial for the [Net Zero] Forum to promptly develop an agreed understanding of the role of local government in delivering Net Zero. Furthermore, Government must ensure that critical enabling processes, such as the planning system and appraisal methodologies, are properly aligned to these pathways.”

### **Council resolves, in line with the Glasgow Pact and associated declarations:**

- To provide leadership in the form of clear and regular guidance and information on the road to net zero, with transparency regarding the council's work and honesty with regard to the changes in homes, transport and diets required of us all
- To publish our Climate Action Plan as soon as possible, where we set out how we will accelerate work on waste reduction, circular economy initiatives, retrofitting our buildings, sustainable food strategies and natural carbon capture
- To strengthen partnerships with other councils, local NHS trusts, businesses and OxLEP including through as the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, so all partners bring forward plans for decarbonising both their own activities and their supply chains.
- To play our part in the wider transport system transformation, including support for active travel, public and shared transport
- To investigate opportunities for local Green Investment Bonds (as promoted by LGA) which can enable those in our communities to invest to contribute to the development of local green infrastructure projects.

## **18 Exclusion of the public**

To consider whether to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business under Part 1 of Schedule 12A Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 on the grounds that:

- (i) it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and
- (ii) the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

## **19 Minutes (Pages 127 - 128)**

To adopt and sign as a correct record the confidential minutes of the Council meeting held on 7 October 2021.

Patrick Arran  
Head of Legal and Democratic

