

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Council



Listening Learning Leading

HELD ON THURSDAY 19 APRIL 2018 AT 6.00 PM

THE FOUNTAIN CONFERENCE CENTRE, HOWBERY PARK, CROWMARSH
GIFFORD

Present:

Jeannette Matelot (Chairman)

Anna Badcock, Joan Bland, Felix Bloomfield, Kevin Bulmer, Steve Connel, Pat Dawe, Anthony Dearlove, David Dodds, Stefan Gawrysiak, Tony Harbour, Paul Harrison, Lorraine Hillier, Mocky Khan, Lynn Lloyd, Imran Lokhon, Jane Murphy, Toby Newman, Caroline Newton, David Nimmo-Smith, Bill Service, Ian Snowdon, Alan Thompson, David Turner, John Walsh and Ian White

Apologies:

Charles Bailey, Nigel Champken-Woods, John Cotton, Elizabeth Gillespie, Will Hall, Elaine Hornsby, Sue Lawson, Anthony Nash and Robert Simister tendered apologies.

Officers:

Steven Corrigan, Andrew Down, William Jacobs, Margaret Reed, Mark Stone and Chris Wheeler

91 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2018 as a correct record and agree that the chairman sign them as such.

92 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest

None.

93 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

There were no urgent items. The chairman provided housekeeping information.

On behalf of the council the chairman made the following statement following the resignation of Councillor Cotton as leader of the council:

“On behalf of the council, I would like to take the opportunity to say thank you to Councillor Cotton who has served as the council’s leader for the past three and a half years.

John had only been our leader for two months when our headquarters at Crowmarsh Gifford were burned to the ground in an arson attack and he did an admirable job of steering us through this very difficult time and the months that followed. He was a great support for councillors and officers and I am sure we are all grateful to him for this.

I think it’s fair to say that John has displayed a very strong community focus, encouraging all those within the council to support various schemes that have brought benefits to communities and the voluntary sector.

There have been a great deal of challenges facing local government during his time as leader, with changes at national level and the appointment of a new prime minister within months of him taking over the job. I know that John has done what he has considered best for South Oxfordshire throughout.

Being a council leader is no mean feat and I hope you will all join me in expressing your thanks to him and to wish him well with whatever the future holds for him”.

Councillor Jane Murphy, Conservative Group Leader, responded with the following statement:

“I have been fortunate to work with John over several years and would like to echo these thanks as leader of the Conservative Group.

John has been a district councillor for 19 years, a member of various committees and in addition to his role as leader, he held cabinet responsibility for planning policy and our key external partnerships. As the chairman pointed out, he has displayed his community focus with support for volunteering and schemes such as councillor grants and the recently launched SO Charitable Lottery, which I know are supported by many in our local communities. In addition to his council roles, he has remained an active member of his local community, being a strong voice and champion for the regeneration of Berinsfield and always maintaining a strong commitment to his role as a beaver scout leader.

I am sure that John will continue to passionately support his local electorate, as he carries on in his role as ward member for Berinsfield, Dorchester and Drayton St Leonard. I am equally sure you’ll all want to join me in wishing him all the best and to support the comments of the chairman”.

On behalf of Council the chairman thanked Richard Pullen, former councillor for the Benson and Crowmarsh ward, for his service to the council both as a ward councilor and as the chairman of the Scrutiny Committee.

94 Public participation

None.

95 Petitions

None.

96 Dorchester-on-Thames Neighbourhood Development Plan

Cabinet considered the recommendations of Cabinet, made at its meeting on 5 April 2018, on making the Dorchester-on-Thames Neighbourhood Development Plan part of the development plan for South Oxfordshire.

RESOLVED to:

1. make the Dorchester-on-Thames Neighbourhood Development Plan so that it continues to be part of the council's development plan; and
2. authorise the head of planning, in agreement with the Qualifying Body (Dorchester-on-Thames Parish Council), to correct any spelling, grammatical, typographical or factual errors, together with any improvements from a presentational perspective.

97 Election of leader of the council

RESOLVED: to elect Jane Murphy as leader of the council for a term ending on the date of the annual meeting of Council in May 2019.

98 Appointments to the Cabinet

Jane Murphy appointed Felix Bloomfield as the deputy leader of the council and Anna Badcock, Kevin Bulmer, David Dodds, Paul Harrison, Lynn Lloyd, Caroline Newton and Bill Service as Cabinet members with portfolios as follows:

Jane Murphy: Leader and communications

Felix Bloomfield: Deputy leader and planning

Anna Badcock: Legal and democratic

Kevin Bulmer: Corporate services

David Dodds: Finance

Paul Harrison: Development and regeneration

Lynn Lloyd: Community services

Caroline Newton: Housing and environment

Bill Service: Partnership and insight

She appointed Cabinet members to the following:

Health and Wellbeing Board – Anna Badcock

Oxfordshire Growth Board – Jane Murphy with all other cabinet members as substitutes

Safer Oxfordshire Partnership Oversight Committee – Caroline Newton

South and Vale Community Safety Partnership – Caroline Newton

99 Report of the leader of the council

Councillor Murphy stated that she was very proud to have been elected as leader of the council.

She set out what she hoped to achieve as leader. She would seek to maintain and improve the council's deserved reputation as an efficient and effective organisation that delivers excellent services that help to maintain the high quality of life for all residents.

She would put greater emphasis on providing housing support where it is most needed by encouraging more key worker housing in South Oxfordshire to support other public services attract the very best staff and by providing appropriate and necessary housing shelters in line with national policy.

She would build on the work already begun to enable residents to volunteer more, including looking at the possibility of a community incentive scheme where residents would receive rewards for their voluntary work.

She expressed the view that the council does not make the most of some of the best features of the district particularly the River Thames. The council would consider employing a resource to help unlock the potential of the river and make the most of the thousands of people using it to pass through the district. This will help boost the local economy and provide business opportunities for residents. She hoped to see the previously announced environmental enhancement team become a reality.

She stated that she would work to improve key working relationships with surrounding districts, Oxfordshire County Council and others, to progress a number of very important ongoing projects including securing Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) funding to support the infrastructure needed to deliver Didcot Garden Town and the Local Plan, which will shape the development of the district for years to come. She would ensure the council fully engages with the National Infrastructure Commission on the work they are doing along the Oxford–Cambridge corridor to ensure that South Oxfordshire's voice is heard clearly by those making the key decisions that will impact all residents.

She personally pledged to commit to work constructively with all members of the council without exception, regardless of differing points of view or political party. All councillors are elected to make South Oxfordshire a better place for residents. To achieve this councillors must work together and constructively with officers to deliver the positive outcomes.

100 Questions on notice

None.

101 Motions on notice

None.

The meeting closed at 6.15pm

Chairman

Date