

Minutes



Listening Learning Leading

OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE Council

Held on Thursday 19 May 2022 at 6.00 pm
135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, OX14 4SB

Present in the meeting room:

Councillors: Jo Robb (Chair - in the chair for items 1 and 2), Ken Arlett, Anna Badcock, Pieter-Paul Barker, David Bartholomew, Robin Bennett, Sam Casey-Rerhaye, Sue Cooper, Peter Dragonetti, Maggie Filipova-Rivers, Stefan Gawrysiak, Elizabeth Gillespie, Kate Gregory, Victoria Haval, Lorraine Hillier, Kellie Hinton, Alexandrine Kantor, Mocky Khan, George Levy, Axel Macdonald, Jane Murphy, Caroline Newton, Andrea Powell, Leigh Rawlins, Sue Roberts, David Rouane, Anne-Marie Simpson, Alan Thompson, David Turner, Andrea Warren and Celia Wilson

Officers: Patrick Arran, Head of Legal & Democratic and Monitoring Officer, Steven Corrigan, Democratic Services Manager, and Adrianna Partridge, Deputy Chief Executive – Transformation and Operations

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Tim Bearder, David Bretherton, Lynn Lloyd, Ian Snowdon and Ian White

2 Election of chair

The outgoing Chair, Councillor Jo Robb, reviewed her year as Chair of the council and thanked councillors and the vice-chair for their assistance and support during the year.

Councillors David Rouane, Mocky Khan, Robin Bennett, Jane Murphy, Stefan Gawrysiak and Elizabeth Gillespie paid tribute to Jo Robb in recognition of her work as Chair of the council during the past year.

Councillor David Turner was nominated as chair for the 2022/23 municipal year.

RESOLVED: to elect Councillor Turner as chair of the council for the 2022/23 municipal year, until the next annual meeting of the Council in May 2023.

Councillor Turner signed his declaration of acceptance of office and made an acceptance speech. He advised that his chosen charities are Chalgrove and Watlington First Steps Children Centre and River Thame Conservation Trust.

Councillor Jo Robb presented Councillor David Turner with the chain of office.

Councillor Turner in the chair.

3 Appointment of vice-chair

Councillor Kellie Hinton was nominated as vice-chair for the 2022/23 municipal year.

RESOLVED: to appoint Councillor Hinton as vice-chair of the council for the 2022/23 municipal year, until the next annual meeting of the Council in May 2023.

Councillor Hinton signed her declaration of acceptance of office.

4 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2022 as a correct record and agree that the Chair sign them as such subject to the replacement of “result in” with “be purely for” in the last line of minute 71.

5 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest

None.

6 Urgent business and chair's announcements

None.

7 Public participation

One member of the public had registered to ask a question.

Melanie Mousley Jones asked the following question.

“I understand that South Oxfordshire District Council is assigning officers to work on climate change mitigation and adaptation. Please could you tell me how many full time equivalent officers are assigned to climate action work, and what their roles will be? I am particularly interested in what outward-facing roles there will be to enable greenhouse gas reductions in the district at-large”.

Councillor Andrea Powell, Cabinet member for corporate services, policy and programmes, responded to the question. Action to tackle Climate Change is a high priority in the Council’s Corporate Plan. The recently adopted Climate Action Plan, fully costed and included within the agreed 2022/23 budget, is now being implemented. Council has agreed additional funds to supplement the projects included within the action plan. The council aims to have six FTEs included in the core Climate Team, including a communications expert, to coordinate work in the action plan. However, it is important to note that all council service teams have climate action work embedded into their operational activities and, as such, all officers could be included as considered as being assigned to address climate work.

8 Petitions

None.

9 Appointments to committees, panels and joint committees for 2022/23

Council considered the report of the head of legal and democratic on the appointment of those committees and joint committees which are required to be politically balanced; together with the Climate Ecological Emergencies Advisory Committee, Licensing Acts Committee, Community Grants Panel and appointments to joint bodies.

The chair referred to the following recommendation, circulated prior to the meeting, covering these appointments and to reflect the allocation of the vacant committee positions.

That for the 2022/23 municipal year Council

1. appoints the committees and panels for the 2022/23 year and allocate seats to each political group as set out in the schedule circulated prior to the meeting;
2. appoints councillors and substitutes to sit on the committees and panels as set out in the schedule circulated prior to the meeting;
3. appoints councillors to the Licensing Acts Committee as set out in the schedule circulated prior to the meeting;
4. appoints councillors to the Climate Ecological Emergencies Advisory Committee as set out in the schedule circulated prior to the meeting;
5. appoints councillors to the Community Grants Panel as set out in the schedule circulated prior to the meeting;
6. appoints chairs and vice-chairs as set out in the schedule circulated prior to the meeting;
7. appoints David Turner as the council's representative and David Bretherton as substitute on the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
8. appoints Sam Casey-Rerhaye as the council's representative and Maggie Filipova-Rivers as substitute on the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel;
9. appoints Peter Dragonetti, Victoria Haval and David Turner to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel;
10. authorises the head of legal and democratic to make appointments to any vacant committee or panel seat and substitute positions in accordance with the wishes of the relevant group leader.

RESOLVED: to

1. appoint the following committees and panels for the 2022/23 municipal year and to appoint the membership, substitutes and chairs and vice-chairs as indicated to sit on them (see table below);

Planning Committee, 11 Members					
Conservative (3)	Green (2)	Henley Residents (1)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrat (3)	SORT (1)
Lorraine Hillier	Sam Casey-Rerhaye	Ken Arlett	Axel Macdonald	Tim Bearder	Elizabeth Gillespie
Ian Snowdon	Peter Dragonetti (Vice-Chair)			David Bretherton (Chair)	
Alan Thompson				Victoria Haval	
Preferred substitutes					
Conservative (3)	Green (3)	Henley Residents (2)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (3)	SORT (1)
Jane Murphy	Jo Robb	Stefan Gawrysiak	Mocky Khan	Kate Gregory	Sue Roberts
Caroline Newton	Vacancy	Kellie Hinton	Celia Wilson	Alexandrine Kantor	
Vacancy	Vacancy			David Turner	

Scrutiny Committee, 9 Members				
Conservative (3)	Green (1)	Henley Residents (1)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrat (3)
Anna Badcock	Jo Robb	Stefan Gawrysiak	Mocky Khan (Vice-Chair)	Alexandrine Kantor
David Bartholomew				George Levy
Ian White (Chair)				David Turner
Preferred substitutes				
Conservative (3)	Green (3)	Henley Residents (2)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (3)
Lorraine Hillier	Sam Casey-Rerhaye	Ken Arlett	Axel Macdonald	Tim Bearder
Ian Snowdon	Peter Dragonetti	Kellie Hinton	Celia Wilson	Victoria Haval
Alan Thompson	Vacancy			Kate Gregory

Joint Scrutiny Committee, 5 Members			
Conservative (1)	Green (1)	Henley Residents (1)	Liberal Democrat (2)
Ian White (Co-chair)	Jo Robb	Stefan Gawrysiak	Kate Gregory
			David Turner
Preferred substitutes			
Conservative (3)	Green (3)	Henley Residents (2)	Liberal Democrat (3)
Anna Badcock	Sam Casey-Rerhaye	Ken Arlett	Alexandrine Kantor
Caroline Newton	Peter Dragonetti	Kellie Hinton	Victoria Haval
Alan Thompson	Vacancy		George Levy

Joint Audit and Governance, 4 Members			
Conservative (1)	Green (1)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrat (1)
Jane Murphy	Peter Dragonetti	Mocky Khan (Co-Chair)	George Levy
Preferred substitutes			
Conservative (3)	Green (3)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (3)
David Bartholomew	Sam Casey-Rerhaye	Axel Macdonald	Victoria Haval
Alan Thompson	Jo Robb	Celia Wilson	Alexandrine Kantor
Ian White	Vacancy		David Turner

Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee, 6 Members			
Conservative (2)	HRG (1)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrat (2)
David Bartholomew	Ken Arlett	Mocky Khan	Maggie Filipova-Rivers
Lynn Lloyd (Chair)			David Turner
Conservative (3)	HRG (2)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (3)
Anna Badcock	Stefan Gawrysiak	Axel Macdonald	Peter-Paul Barker
Lorraine Hillier	Kellie Hinton	Celia Wilson	Sue Cooper
Ian Snowdon			George Levy

Joint Staff Committee, 3 Members	
Conservative (1)	Liberal Democrat (2)
Jane Murphy	David Rouane
	Maggie Filipova-Rivers
Substitutes	
The Leader may be substituted by another Cabinet member. Other members of the Committee may be substituted by any member of that Council's political group (executive or non-executive).	

General Licensing Committee, 12 Members					
Conservative (3)	Green (2)	Henley Residents (1)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrat (4)	SORT (1)
Lorraine Hillier	Peter Dragonetti	Kellie Hinton	Axel Macdonald	Victoria Haval (Chair)	Elizabeth Gillespie (Vice-Chair)
Ian Snowdon	Jo Robb			David Bretherton	
Andrea Warren				Leigh Rawlins	
				Anne-Marie Simpson	
No substitutes					

Licensing Acts Committee, 12 Members					
Conservative (3)	Green (2)	Henley Residents (1)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrat (4)	SORT (1)
Lorraine Hillier	Peter Dragonetti	Kellie Hinton	Axel Macdonald	Victoria Haval (Chair)	Elizabeth Gillespie (Vice-Chair)
Ian Snowdon	Jo Robb			David Bretherton	
Andrea Warren				Leigh Rawlins	
				Anne-Marie Simpson	
No substitutes					

Appeals Panel, 5 Members			
Conservative (1)	Green (1)	Liberal Democrat (2)	SORT (1)
Lorraine Hillier	Peter Dragonetti	Victoria Haval	Vacancy
		Anne-Marie Simpson	
Preferred substitutes			
Conservative (3)	Green (3)	Liberal Democrat (3)	SORT (2)
Lynn Lloyd	Sam Casey-Rerhaye	Kate Gregory	Vacancy
Caroline Newton	Vacancy	George Levy	
Ian Snowdon	Vacancy	Alexandrine Kantor	

Community Grants Panel, 9 Members				
Conservative (3)	Green (1)	Henley Residents (1)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrat (3)
Lynn Lloyd	Jo Robb	Kellie Hinton	Axel Macdonald	Kate Gregory
Ian Snowdon				George Levy (Chair)
Andrea Warren				Victoria Haval
Substitutes				
Conservative (3)	Green (3)	Henley Residents (2)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (3)
Lorraine Hillier	Sam Casey-Rerhaye	Ken Arlett	Mocky Khan	David Bretherton
Caroline Newton	Peter Dragonetti	Stefan Gawrysiak	Celia Wilson	David Turner
Alan Thompson	Vacancy			Alexandrine Kantor

Names	Climate Ecological Emergencies Advisory Committee, 12 Members				
Conservative (3)	Greens (2)	Henley Residents (1)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrat (4)	SORT (1)
Lynn Lloyd	Sam Casey-Rerhaye (Chair)	Stefan Gawrysiak	Celia Wilson	Sue Cooper	Sue Roberts
Jane Murphy	Andrea Powell			Kate Gregory	
Caroline Newton				Leigh Rawlins	
				David Rouane	
PREFERRED SUBSTITUTES					
Conservative (3)	Greens (3)	Henley Residents (2)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (4)	SORT (1)
Lorraine Hillier	Robin Bennett	Ken Arlett	Mocky Khan	Anne-Marie Simpson	Elizabeth Gillespie
Alan Thompson	Jo Robb	Kellie Hinton	Axel Macdonald	Alexandrine Kantor	
Vacancy	Vacancy			Victoria Haval	
				Maggie Filipova Rivers	

2. appoint David Turner as the council’s representative and David Bretherton as substitute on the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
3. appoint Sam Casey-Rerhaye as the council’s representative and Maggie Filipova-Rivers as substitute on the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel;
4. appoint Peter Dragonetti, Victoria Haval and David Turner to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel;
5. authorise the head of legal and democratic to make appointments to any vacant committee or panel seat and substitute positions in accordance with the wishes of the relevant group leader.

10 Adoption of Oxfordshire Code of Conduct for Councillors

Council considered the recommendation of the Joint Audit and Governance Committee, made at its meeting on 29 March 2022, to adopt the Oxfordshire Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED: to approve the Oxfordshire Code of Conduct, appended to the report of the monitoring officer to the meeting of the Joint Audit and Governance Committee held on 29 March 2022.

11 Appointment of Independent Persons

Council considered the report of the head of legal & democratic and monitoring officer which proposed the appointment of six Independent Persons to assist the monitoring officer with code of conduct matters. The report proposed that the Independent Persons are appointed by both South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.

RESOLVED: to appoint Mike Boon, Julie Byron, George Green, Andrew Mills-Hick, Chris Smith and Martin Wright as Independent Persons for a period of four years until the annual meeting in May 2026.

12 Report of the leader of the council

Councillor David Rouane, Leader of the council, provided an update on a number of issues. The text of his address is available on the council's [website](#).

13 Questions on notice

No questions had been submitted by councillors.

14 Motions on notice

Council considered the motions from councillors set out in the agenda in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 38.

- A. Councillor Ken Arlett moved, and Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak seconded the motion as set out in the agenda at agenda item 14

After debate and on being put to the vote the motion was agreed.

RESOLVED: that

Councillors have the ability to call in a planning application within 28 days of the start of the statutory consultation period. This is an exception to the general delegation to the Head of Planning who has authority to deal with planning applications.

Currently, there is no ability for a councillor to call in a planning application that has been amended after the 28 day period comes to an end.

It may well be the case that the majority of councillors are unaware that amended planning applications cannot be called in after the 28 day period has elapsed, yet there is no provision in the Constitution to resolve this.

Council resolves that:

The Constitution Review Group is asked to consider the delegations to the Head of Planning as part of its review of the Constitution and in particular whether the call-in exception should be extended to allow for a councillor to call in an amended planning application notwithstanding the 28 day period has elapsed.

- B. With the agreement of Council, Councillor Sue Roberts moved, and Councillor Elizabeth Gillespie seconded, an amended motion to reflect acceptance of amended wording prior to the Council meeting. Deleted words shown by a strikethrough and additional words in bold.

This Council Notes:

~~The Russia-Ukraine war has newly highlighted our dependence on dirty oil and gas from rogue states. A third of our people are expected to be plunged into poverty by October, as domestic fuel prices rise. We lack fuel security.~~

In October 2021, Council noted the need to retrofit, wrote to Government, and provided a report on the retrofit landscape. **The Council is now employing staff to deliver the recommendations of that report.**

~~Since then, the situation has greatly worsened. The response to fuel scarcity by the Government has been to focus on increasing supply of oil and gas, rather than reducing demand. The climate crisis has worsened, and protection of our populace from the ravages of global heating has come further into focus.~~

~~We need excellent insulation, not only to keep us warm in winter, but to keep homes cool in the summer. In 2003, 70,000 Europeans died over a few days from the heat; such summers are set to become the norm.~~

It is estimated that up to a third of the population could be plunged into poverty by October, as domestic fuel prices rise, and the country lacks fuel security. However, the Government has no plan for mass-retrofitting of homes with insulation, airtightness, mechanical ventilation, and renewable energy generation.

In South Oxfordshire, we aim to be zero carbon by 2030, but, **without Government help**, we have few means to make that happen. Almost a third of our greenhouse gas emissions are from homes. A Government mass-retrofit scheme could reduce this wastefulness ~~of our precious fuel.~~

~~In October, there will be further fuel price rises, and winter will be coming. To retrofit as many homes as possible by then, Government should go on a war footing in response to the collateral damage to our people from the Russia-Ukraine war. But builders and materials are in short supply, even for newbuild. Government could enable the requisition of builders and materials for this task.~~

~~Inevitably, this would reduce resources for new housing development, and Local Authorities (LAs) might be unable to fulfil development targets. Rules that punish LAs such as the 5-year housing supply rule should be relaxed to enable resources to be directed toward retrofit.~~

A secure long-term strategy with certain investment would enable mass retrofit to boost the economy and GDP; providing good, local work. Our country is rightly proud of its

world-leading managerial excellence. In mass-retrofitting we could have a new export, of systems-expertise for this complex task.

Council resolves:

1. To ask the Leader to write to **the Chair of the Environmental Audit Committee and to** relevant Government departments (~~once again~~) to request that a high level strategy be created for mass retrofitting of homes for the reasons given above, and specifically that:

- Local Authorities (LAs) be the delivery vehicles for mass-retrofit
- LAs ~~be~~ provided with constant and long-term funding to maintain retrofit units
- A structured strategy for mass-retrofit be mandated by Government
- Resources be ~~diverted from new build~~ **committed** for mass-retrofit as necessary
- ~~LAs be relieved of regulations requiring them to keep up a high supply of new housing~~
- **Government reject calls to expand fossil fuel extraction and focus instead on energy efficiency and the rapid rollout of renewables, and demand reduction strategies such as retrofit, consistent with the Government's stated net zero goals**

2. To respond immediately to fuel-poverty; ask Cabinet to ensure that the council:

- **Continues to provide** ~~has~~ an advice-line on what to do if you cannot afford your **household fuel** bills
- make this advice-line prominent - top position - on our website
- ~~can~~ provide **guidance and signposting** ~~good advice~~ on retrofitting ~~from a position of expertise in buildings fabric and renewables~~ **to residents, especially those most at risk of fuel poverty.**

After debate and on being put to the vote the motion was agreed.

RESOLVED:

To note that:

In October 2021, Council noted the need to retrofit, wrote to Government, and provided a report on the retrofit landscape. The Council is now employing staff to deliver the recommendations of that report.

It is estimated that up to a third of the population could be plunged into poverty by October, as domestic fuel prices rise, and the country lacks fuel security. However, the Government has no plan for mass-retrofitting of homes with insulation, airtightness, mechanical ventilation, and renewable energy generation.

In South Oxfordshire, we aim to be zero carbon by 2030, but, without Government help, we have few means to make that happen. Almost a third of our greenhouse gas emissions are from homes. A Government mass-retrofit scheme could reduce this wastefulness.

A secure long-term strategy with certain investment would enable mass retrofit to boost the economy and GDP; providing good, local work. Our country is rightly proud of its world-leading managerial excellence. In mass-retrofitting we could have a new export, of systems-expertise for this complex task.

Resolves:

1. To ask the Leader to write to the Chair of the Environmental Audit Committee and to relevant Government departments to request that a high level strategy be created for mass retrofitting of homes for the reasons given above, and specifically that:

- Local Authorities (LAs) be the delivery vehicles for mass-retrofit
- LAs be provided with constant and long-term funding to maintain retrofit units
- A structured strategy for mass-retrofit be mandated by Government
- Resources be committed for mass-retrofit as necessary
- Government reject calls to expand fossil fuel extraction and focus instead on energy efficiency and the rapid rollout of renewables, and demand reduction strategies such as retrofit, consistent with the Government's stated net zero goals

2. To respond immediately to fuel-poverty; ask Cabinet to ensure that the council:

- Continues to provide an advice-line on what to do if you cannot afford your household bills
- make this advice-line prominent - top position - on our website
- provide guidance and signposting on retrofitting to residents, especially those most at risk of fuel poverty.

C. Councillor Sue Roberts moved, and Councillor Elizabeth Gillespie seconded the motion as set out in the agenda at agenda item 14

Whilst a number of councillors spoke in support of a return to a committee system of governance, the majority did not consider that the time was right to consider its introduction, with other priorities for the council, including supporting Ukrainian families and staff resource implications with the commencement of preparations for the district and parish elections in May 2023.

On being put the motion was declared lost.

The meeting closed at 7:30pm

Chair

Date

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