

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At the Meeting of the
WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen,
Witney, on Wednesday 24 June 2015 at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillors: N A MacRae MBE (Chairman), Mrs M J Crossland (Vice Chairman), Mrs J C Baker, M A Barrett, A C Beaney, R J M Bishop, Mrs L C Carter, A S Coles, N G Colston, J C Cooper, D A Cotterill, C Cottrell-Dormer, C G Dingwall, P J G Dorward, Mrs J M Doughty, H B Eaglestone, D S T Enright, Mrs E H N Fenton, E J Fenton, S J Good, A M Graham, J Haine, A D Harvey, Miss G R Hill, E H James, P D Kelland, R A Langridge, Ms E P R Leffman, Mrs L E C Little, R D J McFarlane, J F Mills, T J Morris, B J Norton, T N Owen, Dr E M E Poskitt, A H K Postan, W D Robinson, G Saul, T B Simcox and B J Woodruff.

13. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20 May 2015, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A J Adams, Mr M Brennan, Mrs L J Chapman, Mr R A Courts, Mr P Emery, Mr P J Handley, Mr H J Howard and Mr G H L Wall.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr G Saul declared an interest in agenda item No. 8 (Sealing of Documents) by virtue of his being a party to a lease referred to therein.

16. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

16.1 Mrs Elena Adams

The Chairman advised Members of the death of Mrs Elena Adams, the wife of Councillor Alvin Adams. The funeral service was to be held on Friday 3 July at St Marys Church, Witney at 2:00pm. The Chairman had sent condolences on behalf of the Council to Mr Adams.

16.2 Mr M Brennan

The Chairman advised Members that Mr and Mrs Brennan had been injured in a road traffic accident whilst attending a family funeral in Belfast. Mr and Mrs Brennan had now returned home and Members and Officers joined the Chairman in wishing them both a full and speedy recovery.

16.3 Gloucester Warwickshire Steam Railway

The Chairman was pleased to announce that volunteers of the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway had been honoured with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest award available to voluntary groups in the UK. Councillor Henry Howard served as a Director of the Trust.

16.4 Armed Forces Day

The Chairman expressed his thanks to F/S Elliot Percival & F/S Rosie Herridge of 2267 (Brize Norton) Squadron Air Training Corps, who had joined him in raising the Armed Forces Day flag at the Council's Woodgreen offices earlier in the week. The ceremony enabled the Council to show its support for the men and women of the Armed Forces past and present, including currently serving troops, Service families, Reservists, veterans and cadets. Signing the Armed Forces Covenant the previous year reflected the high esteem in which the Council held the Country's Armed Forces.

Mr Norton made reference to the recent adverse comments directed towards some authorities in the press and emphasised that West Oxfordshire took its responsibilities under the Covenant seriously, seeking to support serving and former members of the forces in areas within its remit.

16.5 Chairman's Charity Dinner

The Chairman advised that invitations had been despatched for the Chairman's Charity dinner which was to be held at Witney Lakes on Friday 11 September. Sister Francis Dominica, the Founder of Helen and Douglas House, was to be the guest of honour and funds raised for the benefit of that organisation.

16.6 Councillor D A Snow

The Chairman advised that Mr D A Snow had resigned from the Authority. Mr MacRae expressed his appreciation of Mr Snow's work on behalf of the Council.

16.7 Christine Gore – Shared Strategic Director

The Chairman introduced Christine Gore, the recently appointed shared Strategic Director, and welcomed her to the Authority.

17. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

No submissions were received from the public in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

18. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

The Council considered the report of the Chief Executive setting out recommendations made by the Cabinet and the Council's Committees from 27 May to 17 June 2015.

In proposing the recommendations, Mr Norton advised Members of an amendment made by the Cabinet at Minute No. CT/22(b) (ii) 2015/2016 revising the balance to be allocated to the Business Rates Movement Reserve from £866,583 as indicated in the schedule to £746,001. He also drew attention to the recommendation made by the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Minute No. F/10(b) 2015/2016 recommending the Council to approve that the Treasury Management activity and consequent Prudential Indicators are in compliance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy.

The recommendations, amended as detailed above, were seconded by Mr Robinson and on being put to the vote were carried.

RESOLVED: that the recommendations made by the Cabinet and the Council's Committees from 27 May to 17 June 2015 be approved in relation to:

- (a) Right to Move – Allocations Policy (Minute No. CT/09/2015/2016);
- (b) Disposal of Housing Stock Request from Cottsway Housing (Minute No. CT/10/2015/2016);

- (c) 2014/2015 Outturn Financial and Performance Report (Minute No. CT/22/2015/2016); and
- (d) Treasury Management activity and consequent Prudential Indicators being in compliance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy (Minute No. F/10(b) 2015/2016).

19. REPORTS OF THE CABINET AND THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES

The reports of the meetings of the Cabinet and the Council's Committees held between 27 May and 17 June 2015 were received:

19.1 Open Space Grass Cutting
(Minute No. ENV/8/2015/2016)

Mr Enright sought an update on discussions with town and parish councils regarding options for future grass cutting. In response, Mr Harvey advised that discussions were on-going and he had suggested that a meeting be held following the forthcoming Witney Town Council election to progress matters further.

19.2 Community Facilities Grants – Eynsham Cricket Club
(Minute No. CT/21/2015/2016)

Following the earlier decision to award a grant towards the cost of replacing the Eynsham Cricket Club's pavilion, Mr Graham enquired whether the recent HMRC VAT demand for £35,344.47 represented a risk to the Council and what could be done to assist the club. In response, Mr Mills made reference to the English Cricket Board guidance to cricket clubs from 2011 which explained how VAT on building works could be offset against certain types of income. He advised that the club had stated in its application that it did not intend to recover VAT on the works and indicated that he did not consider the Club's tax position to represent a threat to the Council.

20. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

The Council received and noted the report of the Chief Executive which gave details of documents numbered 11100 to 11114 sealed since the last meeting.

The meeting closed at 2:10pm

CHAIRMAN