

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the
WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen,
Witney, on Wednesday 26 February 2020 at 2:00pm

PRESENT

Councillors: Harry Eaglestone (Chairman), Jane Doughty (Vice-Chairman), Jake Acock, Joy Aitman, Alaa Al-Yousuf, Luci Ashbourne, Richard Bishop, Rosa Bolger, Jill Bull, Laetisia Carter, Louise Chapman, Nathalie Chapple, Andrew Coles, Owen Collins, Nigel Colston, Julian Cooper, Derek Cotterill, Suzi Coul, Maxine Crossland, Merylyn Davies, Duncan Enright, Hilary Fenton, Ted Fenton, Andy Graham, Jeff Haine, David Harvey, David Jackson, Ed James, Richard Langridge, Liz Leffman, Nick Leverton, Dan Levy, Norman MacRae MBE, Martin McBride, Michele Mead, James Mills, Toby Morris, Kieran Mullins, Neil Owen, Elizabeth Poskitt, Alex Postan, Carl Rylett, Geoff Saul, Harry St John and Ben Woodruff.

Officers in Attendance: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive); Jenny Poole (Chief Finance Officer), Keith Butler (Head of Democratic Services), Frank Wilson (Group Finance Director Publica), Christine Gore (Executive Director Commissioning, Publica), Philip Alway (Business Manager Business Support Services, Publica) and Ben Amor (Democratic Services Officer).

65. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22 January 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

66. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andrew Beaney, Mike Cahill, Steve Good and Gill Hill.

67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Saul declared an interest in Agenda Item 16 – Sealing of Documents in relation to document I1783, because he was a solicitor at Bradley Saul Solicitors.

68. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

68.1 Former Councillor Harriet Ryley

The Chairman referred to the recent passing of former Councillor Harriet Ryley, who had been elected to represent the Witney Central ward in May 2003 and served in that capacity for a single term, not standing for re-election in 2007. Harriet had served on the Finance & Management and Economic & Social Overview and Scrutiny Committees, and on the Standards Committee. As part of her contribution to the Council during that period Harriet personally researched the subject of scrutiny and wrote and submitted a review of the scrutiny function which was well-received. Harriet had also been appointed by the Council to the Board of Cottsway Housing, a position she continued with for a number of years after she ceased to be a member of the Council.

Members stood in silence to remember Harriet and to acknowledge her passing.

68.2 Oxford to Cambridge expressway

Councillor Mills informed Members that the Council had received a response from Highways England regarding the decision by Members at the January 2020 Council meeting to pass a motion opposing the expressway. Councillor Mills added that the letter would be circulated to all Members, but highlighted that no clear indication had been made as to the government's position in the matter.

68.3 Oxfordshire Growth Board

Councillor Mills reminded Members of the upcoming Growth Board meeting on 11 March 2020. He explained that the Board had recently highlighted that Members did not feel informed of the Board's work and that he therefore wished to briefly explain the meeting's agenda, which would include discussions on zero carbon emissions and Oxfordshire 2050.

68.4 Council Tax Bills 2020: EU Nationals

Councillor Mills explained that the 2020 Council Tax Bills sent to residents of the District would include information for residents who were EU nationals wishing to apply for settled status.

68.5 Coronavirus Outbreak

Councillor Mead informed Members of the closure of Burford School on 26 February 2020 following some students of the school returning from a trip to Italy. She added that the school would remain closed until 2 March 2020 to enable a thorough deep clean of the premises and advised Members that daily updates in relation to the virus outbreak were made at 2.00 pm at the gov.uk/coronavirus website.

Councillor Mead confirmed that the outbreak was not currently expected to cause any difficulties to the work of the Council and its Officers owing to the ability of Officers to work from home and to make contact through conference calls, if necessary.

68.6 Community Activity Support Grants

Councillor Mead reminded Members of the requirement to submit applications for grants up to a total of £500 by the closing date of 23 March 2020.

69. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

In accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure, Emma Kennedy of St Mary's Church, Chipping Norton had given notice of her wish to address the Council regarding the importance and effectiveness of empowering local communities to build a response to domestic abuse, and referencing the importance and effectiveness of the Freedom programme. A copy of her submission is attached as Appendix A to the original copy of these minutes.

The Chairman thanked Emma for her contribution and suggested that the matter be referred to the Council's Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This was proposed by Councillor Bull and seconded by Councillor Doughty, and it was -.

RESOLVED: That the matter be referred to the Council's Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

70. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE

The Council considered the report of the Head of Democratic Services setting out the recommendations made by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 12 February 2020, and the Chairman advised that the recommendations relating to the budget for 2020/21 would be considered after agenda item no. 8 relating to members' allowances.

In explaining the recommendation in relation to Community Infrastructure Levy, Councillors Mills informed Members that he wished to propose an amendment so that the first of the recommendations be amended to state 'i) (the Council) approves the Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule (DCS) attached at Annex A to the report, subject to the inclusion of a zero-rate CIL Charge in respect of strategic sites, for the purposes of a six-week period of public consultation in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)'. This amendment was seconded by Councillor Morris.

Councillor Saul expressed his disappointment at the proposed zero rated CIL charge for strategic sites and commented that many of the receipts of funding by towns and villages within the District were much needed and regularly offset the impact of developments within these communities. He also questioned from where funding would be available if not through CIL. Whilst also appreciating the technical analysis that had been undertaken in relation to the recommendation, Councillor Saul commented that he could not support the proposal.

Councillor Enright commented that he wished to echo the comments made by Councillor Saul and explained that he considered the main benefit of CIL funding was that it trickled down to the communities immediately affected by areas of development.

Councillor Rylett stated that the proposal, if approved, would affect Eynsham especially and he encouraged Members to review the proposals carefully once consultation had commenced.

Councillor Graham was concerned the amendment had only been highlighted shortly before the meeting and that the administration had made no previous mention of its intention to propose such an amendment. He added that he considered there was a risk of sending an unwelcome message to the District's communities and therefore stated that neither he nor his political group would be supporting the proposal.

Councillors Cooper, Davies and Leffman jointly expressed that they considered the Council was taking the side of developers in enabling them to make the maximum profit possible at the cost of local communities and that the interest of local residents should be the Council's priority first and foremost.

Councillor Acock stated that he wished to request the Leader formally refer the matter to the Council's Development Control Committee or one of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

In response, Councillor Haine explained that he fully understood the concerns of Members, but that the matter had been reviewed by independent consultants and that all five of the Council's strategic sites had shown negative viability. He emphasised that the proposal before the meeting was not a final decision in the matter, and that the matter would be subject to statutory consultation and consideration and recommendations from an independent examiner, and urged Members and others to make representations during the consultation for consideration by the Inspector.

Councillor Mills commented that he wished to respond to some points made by Members directly and in doing so, explained that he did consider the matter was being handled transparently as the decision would be followed by a public consultation. Councillor Mills added that there was the possibility that some development sites would still attract additional funding such as through Growth Deal funding or by S106 monies and emphasised that the matter had previously been considered at the Cabinet meeting on 12 February 2020, at which the fact that the final technical advice relating to strategic sites was then awaited had been mentioned, as had the possibility of zero rating for those sites.

Finally, he also stressed the consultation and consequent opportunity for interested persons and parties to give their views, for independent consideration.

A request was made for voting on the proposition to be recorded, and it was then put to the vote, with the voting being as follows:

For the proposition: Councillors Al-Yousuf, Bishop, Bull, Chapman, Colston, Cotterill, Coul, Crossland, Doughty, Eaglestone, Hilary Fenton, Ted Fenton, Haine, Harvey, James, Leverton, MacRae, McBride, Mead, Mills, Morris, Owen, Postan, St John and Woodruff.

Against the amendment: Councillors Acock, Aitman, Ashbourne, Bolger, Carter, Chapple, Coles, Collins, Cooper, Davies, Enright, Graham, Jackson, Langridge, Leffman, Levy, Mullins, Poskitt, Rylett and Saul.

There being 25 votes in favour and 20 against, the proposition was **carried**.

In proposing the recommendation with regard to Single Use Plastics, Councillor Mills explained that the matter had been considered by the SUP Working Party, Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet, and that he believed that it was not controversial.

Councillor Coles expressed his disappointment that despite the work of the Working Party over the previous 12 months, the Council was still using plastic milk bottles in its offices. He added that he considered the Council should 'practice what it preached' and therefore ensure the purchase of milk in glass bottles for use in the Council's offices.

In response, Councillor Harvey stated that he would investigate the matter further with Officers and respond back to Councillor Coles.

Councillor Al-Yousuf commented that he wished to thank all Members and Officers for their work in relation to the Working Party and for making positive recommendations to the Council's Climate Action Group.

RESOLVED: That, subject to the amendment recorded above in relation to the Community Infrastructure Levy, the recommendations made by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 12 February 2020 be approved in relation to:-

- a) Single Use Plastics (Minute No. CT/98/2019/2020); and
- b) Community Infrastructure Levy (Minute No. CT/102/2019/2020).

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

The reports of the meetings of the Cabinet and the Council's Committees held between 23 January and 12 February 2020 were received.

71.1 Homes For All Minute No. E&S/55/2019/2020

Councillor Leffman commented that a recent survey had highlighted that 78% of all councils nationally had established affordable housing companies and that she considered the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee should investigate the Council setting up such a company.

71.2 Equal Opportunities Minute No E&S 56.4/2019/2020

Councillor Leffman enquired if the policy was being reviewed and stated that she wished to see facts regarding how the matter was progressing. She added that she hoped the Committee would be reviewing the matter further and would report back to the Council in due course.

In response, Councillor Carter explained she would investigate the matter further and report back.

71.3 Domestic Violence
Minute No. E&S/56.6/2019/2020

Councillor Acock asked if the Council was planning to organise a domestic violence training session for all Members as had taken place for Members at Cotswold District Council.

Councillor Carter responded that the matter had been being discussed for some time and reported that Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Service (ODAS) would be reporting to the Committee at its next meeting and that the matter would also be referred to the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

71.4 European Union Nationals – ‘Settled Status’
Minute No. E&S/56.7/2019/2020

Councillor Cooper enquired whether the updated statistics had been published.

In response, the Head of Democratic Services confirmed that an update had been sent in January 2020 to all Members who had sat on the Working Party at that time.

71.5 Council Website
Minute No. F&M/63/2019/2020

Councillor Rylett requested information on when the new Council website would be launched and stated that a dashboard for Councillors would be useful, as would a member Working Party.

In response, Councillor Cotterill explained that the matter was continually discussed at the Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and suggested that Councillor Rylett attend a future meeting of the Committee to be advised of progress.

71.6 Flood Prevention, Drainage and Sewerage Infrastructure Issues
Minute No. E46.1/2019/2020

Councillor Graham commented that he had read a recent report in the Guardian newspaper regarding the River Windrush detailing the issues of pollution and that he wished for the matter to be referred to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Al-Yousuf confirmed he was happy for the matter to be presented to the Committee. Councillor MacRae added that he had written to the Secretary of State on the matter in light of the motion passed at the previous meeting of the Council but was yet to receive a reply.

71.7 Flooding
Minute No. E46.7/2019/2020

Councillor Acock questioned when the Council would expect to update its Flooding Plans, having been asked by Ascott under Wychwood Parish Council to raise the issue given that the last Plan was dated 2008. He also asked whether the Council would look to arrange a training session for town and parish councillors on flooding.

Councillor Al-Yousuf responded that the matter would be discussed at the next Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting and in the meantime, he would seek to discuss the matter further with the relevant Officers.

Councillor Postan added that he wished to commend the work of Drainage Engineering Officer Laurence King for his work in relation to Shilton Parish, which he considered was an ideal model to be replicated elsewhere.

71.8 Single Use Plastics
Minute No. Env48.1/2019/2020

Councillor Poskitt commented that whilst she wished to applaud the work of the Council's Single Use Plastics Working Group, she hoped that the recommendations would be passed to town and parish councils within the District in order for those councils to also increase their efforts to reduce plastic use. She also enquired as to progress with the social media campaign.

Councillor Harvey responded that he would seek an update on this matter from Officers and respond to Councillor Poskitt.

71.9 Internal Audit Plan Progress Report
Minute No. A&GP 29/2019/2020

Councillor Chapple commented that she considered it important that parish/town councils knew about Section 106 monies and when they were entitled to funding. She therefore requested that details of all monies both allocated and planned for each District Ward be circulated to all Members.

Councillor Doughty confirmed that the Audit and General Purposes Committee was aware of this issue, as referenced in the minutes of its meeting held 6 February 2020.

71.10 Fly Tipping
Minute No. CAB 96.3/2019/2020

Councillor Rylett explained that whilst he welcomed the initiative, he was concerned that the number of Officers in the waste team had been reduced and that this would therefore compromise the work of the team in the future as a result.

In response, Councillor MacRae confirmed the success of the initiative could be measured by the fact road verges were free from waste and that there had been no changes to the levels of staff in the waste team.

71.11 Chipping Norton Customer Access Review
Minute No. CAB 99/2019/2020

Councillor Saul expressed disappointment at losing face-to-face services and wished to receive further information as to the services the library had agreed to provide.

Councillor Morris responded that he had been in contact with Members of the County Council who had instigated a similar scheme in Charlbury to detail how a similar scheme could be created in Chipping Norton.

Councillor Graham commented that he had received complaints from some residents that the decision had been made before a full consultation had been undertaken and this therefore represented a decision based on data and not user needs. Councillor Carter also added that as a Member of Chipping Norton Town Council, she was aware that the Town Council had expressed concerns to the Council at the time regarding a reduction in opening hours.

Councillor Coles considered that the Council was encouraging people not to use their respective visitor information centres and highlighted that residents could not sign-up to the Council's garden waste service at the centres.

In response, Councillor Morris explained that a report had been considered by Cabinet in early 2019 and that a decision had consequently been made to trial reduced hours at the Chipping Norton office and this had been discussed with the Town and County Council and the library. He added that there had been no objections made at that time and that a wide consultation had taken place.

72. SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES FOR 2020/2021

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Democratic Services outlining the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and seeking agreement for a scheme of allowances for Members to be effective for the financial year 2020/2021.

In proposing the recommendations, Councillor Mills thanked the Members of the Allowances Panel for their work. He reminded Members that the Panel consisted of independent persons and suggested that it was incumbent upon Members to accept its recommendations.

Attention was drawn to the fact that the figures in the report and recommendations were based on an increase of 2.5%, which was the amount anticipated/budgeted for the staff pay award. As that award had not yet been finalised, the increases were likely to be implemented during the financial year and backdated to 1 April 2020.

Councillor Enright expressed his thanks to the Panel for their work and explained that he understood the difficulty in increasing Members' allowances using public money, but there was a need to ensure that the allowances were sufficient to ensure that no individual was discouraged from standing as a Member of the Council because of financial constraints. He added that he was supportive of the recommendations of the panel and the notes made by them.

On being put to the vote the proposition was carried, and it was -

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the basic allowance and all special responsibility allowances be increased with effect from 1 April 2020, to match the staff pay award, and it be noted that the figures in the report were based on a 2.5% increase;
- (b) That in the event of the staff pay award not being in place at the start of the financial year 2020/2021, the increases be backdated to 1 April 2020;
- (c) That, in the event of the staff pay award effective from 1 April 2020 being an amount other than 2.5%, that amount be applied for Councillors, with the Chief Finance Officer being authorised to round the resulting figures to the nearest £10;
- (d) That subsistence allowances should continue to be payable at the same rate as for Council/Public staff and may therefore be increased with effect from April or otherwise during the financial year;
- (e) That no other changes be made to the rates of allowances and expenses for 2020/2021 or to the allowances scheme; and
- (f) That the section 151 officer be authorised to amend the scheme of allowances as formally set out in Part 6 of the Council's Constitution to reflect any changes made as a consequence of these decisions.

73. BUDGET 2020/2021

The Council considered the recommendations made by Cabinet at its meeting held 12 February 2020 relating to the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy, General Fund Revenue Budgets, the Capital Programme for 2020/21 to 2029/30, Fees and charges for

2020/21, the Council's Pay Policy Statement, the Council's Capital Strategy 2020/21, the Council's Investment Strategy 2020/21, the Council's Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21, Prudential Indicators and the planned contribution of £1,395 to General Fund balances in 2020/21.

Councillors Mills stated that he had great pleasure in proposing the recommendations from Cabinet to the Council and explained that the Council had had another busy year playing a continuing role in Oxfordshire's success. He added that the number of affordable homes within the District was increasing rapidly and he as Leader was pleased that the Council was continuing to invest in efforts to reduce homelessness. Councillor Mills also drew attention to the upcoming opening of the Carterton Leisure Centre; high-speed broadband provision and the improved levels of customer service and contact for residents contacting the Council.

Councillor Mills then proceeded to thank all Members and Officers for their involvement in the preparation of the Budget and for enabling the Council to allocate funds to meet the Council's priorities. He specifically drew attention to the recent appointment of a Climate Change Manager, Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs), funding for a review of the District's leisure provision and healthy play provision, and explained that the Council would continue to face a resource uncertainty whilst still needing to guarantee front line services in a period where savings continued to be necessary. Councillor Mills highlighted that the Council was continuing its low-level of Council Tax with the rates representing the second lowest level of a shire district across the country and confirmed the continuing availability of free car parking in the District. He concluded that the proposals therefore represented excellent value and should be supported by the Council.

Councillor Morris then formally seconded the proposals.

Councillor Enright stated that the past decade had seen a national level of austerity which had resulted in all public services facing crisis. He also referred to the District's housing prices remaining largely unaffordable and stated that whilst he and his group welcomed the new Council Plan, he considered the Council needed to continue to tackle issues such as climate change. Councillor Enright added that the Council's funding of housing associations was welcomed and that it was also rewarding to see the Council's leisure provision being increased. He therefore expressed both his and his group's support for the proposals.

Councillor Graham commented that whilst he could applaud the Council on some areas of the Budget; he considered a key issue was the lack of provision for young people within the District and the fact the Council did not have a young people plan. He added that he was also aware that residents were confused as to the services provided by the different levels of local authorities and considered that the Council should therefore seek to utilise some of its services by changing its approach and combining efforts with other authorities. Councillor Graham stated that for these reasons, he would not be supporting the Budget.

Councillor Davies expressed that the Budget proposals represented improved performance by the Council and stated that the recent efforts of the Deputy Leader to help vulnerable residents with council tax was the reason she would be voting in favour of the Budget.

Councillor Ashbourne questioned the underspend in the 2018/19 Council Budget and the fact that whilst supportive of this year's Budget, she considered the spending committed to should be adhered to by the Council. In response, Councillor MacRae explained that the CCTV budget which Councillor Ashbourne was specifically referring to was taking place behind the scenes and that he hoped the new system would be in place by the end of 2020.

Various Members expressed their support for the proposals and highlighted that the Council tax proposed represented one of the lowest in the country and that the quality of front line services would be maintained. Those Members expressed disappointment that the Budget would not be supported unanimously by all Councillors.

Councillor Cooper commented that whilst he would support the proposals, he considered that the Council should review its current process of majority group Members chairing each of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees and that a process for ensuring all political groups of the Council had an option to make comments on the Budget should be established. Councillor Leffman also suggested that any amendments to the Budget should be highlighted to Members in advance of the Budget setting meeting to ensure appropriate scrutiny.

Councillor Ted Fenton wished to extend his thanks to the administration for their work in preparing what he considered was a balanced budget and one that would seek to minimise the effects of possible future financial challenges.

Councillor Morris then addressed the Council. In doing so, he extended his thanks to the Chief Finance Officer and her team for their work in preparing the Budget. He added that he considered the existing scrutiny arrangements could be reviewed in the future but highlighted that the Budget was also one that funded a large number of activities which did not fall within the statutory duties of the Council.

Councillor Mills then concluded the debate. He explained that the Budget and the indicated support from a number of Members highlighted that the administration had been listening to the views of all Members and residents and that he agreed the Council should continue to look towards the future, to engage young people and ensure that the Council continued to play a leading part in the success of Oxfordshire county.

As required by statute, voting on the proposition was recorded, and the voting was as follows.

For the proposition: Councillors Aitman, Al-Yousuf, Ashbourne, Bishop, Bolger, Bull, Carter, Chapman, Coles, Collins, Colston, Cooper, Cotterill, Coul, Crossland, Davies, Doughty, Eaglestone, Enright, Hilary Fenton, Ted Fenton, Haine, Harvey, Jackson, James, Langridge, Leverton, MacRae, McBride, Mead, Mills, Morris, Owen, Postan, Saul, St John and Woodruff.

Abstentions: Councillors Acock, Chapple, Graham, Leffman, Levy, Mullins, Poskitt and Rylett.

There being 37 votes in favour and eight abstentions, the proposition was **carried**.

RESOLVED: That the following be approved:

- (a) the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy at Annex A to the report;
- (b) General Fund revenue budgets as summarised at Annex B to the report;
- (c) the Capital Programme for 2020/21 to 2029/30 as set out at Annex D to the report;
- (d) Fees and charges for 2020/21 as set out in Annex E to the report;
- (e) the Council's Pay Policy Statement as set out in Annex F to the report;
- (f) the Council's Capital Strategy 2020/21 as set out in Annex G to the report;
- (g) the Council's Investment Strategy 2020/21 as set out in Annex H to the report;
- (h) the Council's Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21 as set out in Annex I to the report;

- (i) the Prudential Indicators as set out in Annex N to the report; and
- (j) the planned contribution of £1,395 to General Fund balances in 2020/21

74. COUNCIL TAX 2020/21

Councillor Mills informed the Council that he wished to propose the recommendations as per the published and circulated report. This proposition was seconded by Councillor Morris.

As required by statute, voting on the proposition was recorded, and the voting was as follows.

For the proposition: Councillors Aitman, Al-Yousuf, Ashbourne, Bishop, Bolger, Bull, Carter, Chapman, Chapple, Coles, Collins, Colston, Cooper, Cotterill, Coul, Crossland, Davies, Doughty, Eaglestone, Enright, Hilary Fenton, Ted Fenton, Graham, Haine, Harvey, Jackson, James, Leffman, Leverton, Levy, MacRae, McBride, Mead, Mills, Morris, Mullins, Owen, Poskitt, Postan, Rylett, Saul, St John and Woodruff.

Abstention: Councillor Acock.

There being 43 votes in favour and one abstention, the proposition was **carried** and the Council -

RESOLVED: That

- 1) for the purpose of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 Section 35(2), there are no special expenses for the District Council in 2020/21;
- 2) it be noted that at its meeting held on 15 January 2020 the Cabinet calculated the Council Tax Base for 2020/21:
 - a) for the whole Council area as 44,285.22 [item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the “Act”)]; and
 - b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish Precept relates as in the attached Schedule I.
- 3) the Council Tax requirement for the Council’s own purposes for 2020/21 (excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) is £104.38
- 4) the following amounts be calculated for the year 2020/21 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - a) £52,753,998 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils and any additional special expenses.
 - b) £44,201,727 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act.
 - c) £8,552,271 being the amount by which the aggregate at 4(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 4(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
 - d) £193.12 being the amount at 4(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (2(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses);

- e) £3,929,780 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act as per the attached Schedule 2.
- f) £104.38 being the amount at 4(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 4(e) above by Item T(2(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish Precept or special item relates;
- g) the amounts shown in Schedule 2 being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 4(f) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area shown in Schedule 2 divided in each case by the amount at 2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate;
- h) the amounts shown in Schedule 3 being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 4(f) and 4(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;
- 5) it be noted that for the year 2020/21 the Oxfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated below:

Valuation Band	Oxfordshire County Council £	Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley £
A	1,018.29	144.19
B	1,188.01	168.22
C	1,357.72	192.25
D	1,527.44	216.28
E	1,866.87	264.34
F	2,206.30	312.40
G	2,545.73	360.47
H	3,054.88	432.56

- 6) the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts shown in Schedule 4 as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2020/21 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.
- 7) the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2020/21 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- 8) the following Council/Public Officers: Chief Finance Officer, Group Manager – Resident Services, Legal Services Manager, Legal Executive, Business Manager – Operational Support, Revenues Manager, Revenues Lead and Court Officer be authorised to:

- a) collect and recover any National Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax, and
- b) prosecute or defend on the Council's behalf or to appear on its behalf in proceedings before a magistrate's court in respect of unpaid National Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax.

75. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

In accordance with paragraph 10 (b) of the Council's Rules of Procedure, Councillor Julian Cooper had given notice of the following questions for the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing:

Can I ask if the portfolio member for Housing has any update on the closure of Ryegrass older persons unit in Woodstock?

Could I also enquire if the District Council has carried out any research on possible restrictive covenants on the land that was built on in the mid-nineteen sixties?

In response to the first question, Councillor Haine stated: "Cottsway have held face-to-face meetings with residents to inform them about the closures (St Mary's Court, Witney) and (Ryegrass, Woodstock). They are reassuring them that they will be supporting them to find alternative homes and the Council wants to ensure that residents are the first to hear about this directly from Cottsway, who have also spoken to the relevant Ward Councillors, myself as Cabinet Member for Housing and the Leader of the Council to inform us of the details.

There are 23 one-bedroom flats and three two-bedroom bungalows at St Mary's Court and 18 one-bedroom bungalows and one three bedroom-flat at Ryegrass.

You will recall that Cottsway have already closed other former older persons' schemes in West Oxfordshire following a review and as you will be aware, some of these sites have already been redeveloped to provide extra homes that meet modern housing requirements.

Cottsway have worked closely with the Council's housing team and with other partner agencies during previous closures to ensure that residents find alternative homes that meet their needs, and will do the same as they prepare to move residents on from St Mary's Court and Ryegrass. They have stated that they want their homes to meet the high standards their customers expect and deserve and the two housing schemes in St Mary's and Ryegrass which were built in the mid-1960s are now deemed to fall below this standard.

Cottsway have carefully considered a number of options and they believe the best long-term solution is to redevelop the sites, maximising the land available so that they can provide more homes for people in housing need, built to high standards. This work will start in 2022.

Officers and Community Welfare Officers have met with residents at the schemes and visited them in their homes, of those that could not attend the meetings and they have explained they will work with each and every resident to find alternative homes that meet their needs and to support them with the move.

Residents were invited to bring a family member or friend to the general meeting for support, and more detailed one-to-one discussions which each household are being planned. Residents are also to be given an information sheet explaining what is happening, why and how they will be supported, to take away and read.

Cottsway's Housing Team and dedicated Community Welfare Officers are experienced in working with customers to find and move to alternative homes and will provide a tailored support service for individuals where needed, working with partner agencies including West Oxfordshire District Council.

Residents have been informed of the financial support that they will receive, including a statutory Home Loss payment of £6,400 per household and a disturbance allowance will also be provided to help with practical costs such as removals, redecorating, fitting carpets, blinds and curtain rails etc.”.

In response to the second question, Councillor Haine stated: *“The Council has taken legal advice as to the various deeds and documents referred to in the title. There was a Conveyance in 1964 which transferred the land to Chipping Norton Rural District Council but this did not contain any covenants. There was an earlier Transfer in October 1962 which imposed some restrictive covenants. The effect of these covenants is that the landowner cannot use the property for any trade, profession or occupation and they cannot behave in such a way that would cause a nuisance or annoyance to the adjoining landowners. For the purposes of this answer, adjoining landowners mean those who owned land adjoining Ryegrass. It does not include those who own or occupy any of the properties at Ryegrass”.*

76. NOTICE OF MOTION – FIREWORK DISPLAYS

The following motion had been received in the names of Councillors Toby Morris and Suzi Coul, namely:-

“This Council resolves:

- (a) To ask for all public firework displays within the local authority boundaries to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people*
- (b) To actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks*
- (c) To write to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays*
- (d) To encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock ‘quieter’ fireworks for public display”.*

Councillor Morris proposed the motion and explained that the matter had been brought to his attention by local residents who had been made aware of a similar proposal by the RSPCA. He added that as a dog owner himself, he was sympathetic to the intentions of the motion and whilst he did not wish to advocate being a ‘kill-joy’ considered it was one the Council should support. Councillor Morris explained that most public displays would already be advertised in advance, but the requirement to implement a maximum noise limit was due to the majority of private displays not being advertised to local residents and he hoped for these reasons, Council would support the motion.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Coul.

Councillor Postan expressed the view that whilst fireworks were a part of British history, they were, in his view, an uncontrolled and unlicensed nuisance which caused risks to livestock and pets. He added that he considered the activity was one that should be licensed and he therefore supported a review of the Council’s licensing system, should the motion be supported, to ensure firework displays were included as part of that system.

Councillor Bolger commented that whilst she supported the intentions of the motion, she wished to propose an amendment to recommendations (c) and (d) of the motion so as to read; *“(c) To write to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the environmental impact and maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays”;* and *“(d) To encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock climate-friendly and ‘quieter’ fireworks for public display”.*

Councillors Morris and Coul confirmed that they were happy to accept the amendment as proposed by Councillor Bolger.

Councillor Leffman informed the Council that whilst she agreed with the views of Councillor Postan, she considered that the main issue was with private displays and was unsure how lowering the decibel level would address this issue. Councillor Leffman therefore proposed that the motion be referred to the Council's Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Morris and Coul confirmed that they were content for the motion, as amended, to be referred to that Committee, and it was -.

RESOLVED: That the revised motion, having been duly proposed and seconded, be referred to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment and advice.

77. NOTICE OF MOTION – POLICING IN WEST OXFORDSHIRE

The following motion had been received in the names of Councillors Laetisia Carter and Duncan Enright, namely:-

“Despite remaining a low crime area residents of West Oxfordshire are rightly concerned about the increase in crime, particularly involving vulnerable people/young people and antisocial behaviour across the district. Our Community Safety Plan is reaching its end in 2021. Policing is under increasing financial pressure. West Oxfordshire District Council would like to work in closer partnership with Thames Valley Police to increase capacity to police our towns and villages. As a response to growing complex crime the Council resolves to negotiate with Thames Valley Police to put more police officers on patrol in West Oxfordshire, including the possibility of jointly funded posts.”

RESOLVED: That the motion having been duly proposed and seconded shall stand referred without discussion to the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment and advice.

78. NOTICE OF MOTION – ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS

The following motion had been received in the names of Councillors Duncan Enright and Rosa Bolger, namely:-

“In light of the climate emergency, the council will encourage businesses and organisations in the district to adopt more sustainable modes of operation. The council therefore resolves to investigate methods to encourage this by audit and award schemes to recognise good practice. These will include exploring best practice by local authorities, the inclusion of environmental measures in procurement decisions, considering awards similar to environmental health audits for food outlets, and discussion with West Oxfordshire Business Awards (WOBA) about sustainability awards.”

RESOLVED: That the motion having been duly proposed and seconded shall stand referred without discussion to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment and advice.

79. NOTICE OF MOTION – CCTV IN WITNEY

The following motion had been received in the names of Councillors Duncan Enright and Laetisia Carter, namely:-

“Witney's CCTV system is nearly two decades old, and despite finances being identified by West Oxfordshire District Council and Witney Town Council, only slow progress is being made in replacing it effectively. The Council therefore resolves to call a meeting with stakeholders at the

earliest opportunity, and to seek to expedite the replacement of the system with a target date for completion by the end of Summer 2020.”

RESOLVED: That the motion having been duly proposed and seconded shall stand referred without discussion to the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment and advice.

80. NOTICE OF MOTION – TENANTS FORUM

The following motion had been received in the names of Councillors Geoff Saul and Duncan Enright, namely:-

“The Council welcomes the private landlords forum. To better understand and support this sector, the Council resolves to establish a private tenants forum to hear the voice of residents and understand their concerns and perspective.”

Councillor Saul proposed the motion and explained that the Landlords Forum had been a positive step towards ensuring good quality housing provision. He added that private rented households accounted for 15% of all homes within the District and for which private renters did not receive the same level of protection as those of housing associations. Councillor Saul concluded that the Forum provided the opportunity for tenants to share experiences which could be used to create awareness campaigns or to establish a private renter’s telephone helpline and/or private rented charter and stated that he hoped Members would support scrutiny of the motion.

RESOLVED: That the motion having been duly proposed and seconded shall stand referred without discussion to the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment and advice.

81. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

The Council received and noted the report of the Head of Paid Service which gave details of documents numbered 11773 to 11783 sealed since its last meeting.

The meeting closed at 4.45 pm

CHAIRMAN