

Tuesday, 21 November 2023
Reissued Wednesday 22 November 2023

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COUNCIL

You are summoned to a meeting of Council, which will be held at Carterton Community Centre, Marigold Square, Shilton Park, Carterton, Oxfordshire OX18 1AX on **Wednesday, 29 November 2023 at 1.00 pm.**



Giles Hughes
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Council:

Councillors: Andrew Coles (Chair), Elizabeth Poskitt (Vice-Chair), Joy Aitman, Alaa Al-Yousuf, Lidia Arciszewska, Thomas Ashby, Hugo Ashton, Andrew Beaney, Michael Brooker, David Cooper, Julian Cooper, Rachel Crouch, Colin Dingwall, Jane Doughty, Duncan Enright, Phil Godfrey, Andy Goodwin, Andy Graham, Jeff Haine, David Jackson, Edward James, Mark Johnson, Natalie King, Liz Leffman, Nick Leverton, Dan Levy, Andrew Lyon, Charlie Maynard, Martin McBride, Michele Mead, David Melvin, Lysette Nicholls, Mathew Parkinson, Rosie Pearson, Rizvana Poole, Andrew Prosser, Carl Rylett, Geoff Saul, Sandra Simpson, Alaric Smith, Ruth Smith, Harry St John, Tim Sumner, Dean Temple, Liam Walker, Mark Walker, Adrian Walsh, Alex Wilson and Alistair Wray.

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Executive, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted. By participating in this meeting, you are consenting to be filmed.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Democratic Services officers know prior to the start of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
To receive any Apologies for Absence from Members of the Council.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive any Declarations of Interest from Members of the Council on any items to be considered at the meeting.
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 9 - 26)**
To approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Wednesday 27 September 2023.
4. **Receipt of Announcements**
To receive any announcements from the Chair, Leader of the Council, Members of the Executive or the Chief Executive Officer.
5. **Participation of the Public**
Any member of the public, who is a registered elector in the District, is eligible to ask one question at this meeting, of the Chair of the Council, any Member of the Executive or the Chair of any Committee, on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the District.

Notice, together with a written copy of the question, must be provided to Democratic Services by email to:

democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk

or by post to:

**Democratic Services, West Oxfordshire District Council, Woodgreen, Witney,
Oxfordshire OX28 1NB**

no later than 12.00pm on the seventh working day before the date of the meeting.

A response may be provided at the meeting, or provided within three clear working days of the meeting.

A total of 15 minutes is allowed for questions from members of the public.

6. **Questions by Members**
The following questions have been submitted by Members of Council to Members of the Executive, in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules (Constitution Part 5A, Rule 12).
Oral responses will be provided at the meeting.
Following receipt of the answer to their question, Members are entitled to ask one supplementary question at the meeting. The Questions and Answers will be detailed in the minutes of the meeting.

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Q1. Councillor Andrew Lyon to Councillor Joy Aitman, Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities:

In July 2018, the previous administration voted to transfer the freehold of Unterhaching Park, in Witney Central ward, to Witney Town Council. It never materialised.

At the Executive meeting in June 2023, my fellow ward representative, Councillor Andrew Coles, asked for an update on the timeframe for transfer and was told that it was 'imminent'. Could I ask the Executive Member when the transfer will be happening please?

Q2. Councillor Thomas Ashby to Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council:

Witney Buttercross Scout Group is one of the largest Scout Groups in the country with over 400 young people from the ages of 4-18. During this year, members of the Groups Trustee Board have engaged the Estates and Asset Team, as well as the Leader of the Council to try and explore pieces of land in Witney and the surrounding area which could be used for camping and outdoor activities.

However, discussions have so far not progressed. Please can the Leader of the Council ask relevant officers to engage with members of the trustee board at Witney Buttercross Scout Group, to see if suitable land can be identified for the use of Witney's young people?

Q3. Councillor Jane Doughty to Councillor Joy Aitman, Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities:

I am pleased that after the hard work of local residents and councillors, planning applications for the shops and sports pavilion have been approved on Windrush Place. As part of the Section 106 contributions, there is a significant fund for an adventure play area, which would be of great benefit, not only to young people in my ward, but also the rest of the town.

Please can the Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities confirm how much S.106 contributions there are, and can they work with officers to ensure that this project begins in the next financial year?

Q4. Councillor Jane Doughty to Councillor Joy Aitman, Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities:

In July, the Executive Member confirmed that the District Council held regular meetings to ensure that the land for a Multi-Use Games area in Deer Park. Please can the Executive Member provide an update about how the progress is going and whether land will be transferred to Witney Town Council in early 2024?

Q5. Councillor Michele Mead to Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for the Environment:

At the last Executive meeting on 15 November 2023, you collectively agreed to raise the price of fly-tipping fines to the maximum levels allowed. I fully support this decision as like most of us, fly-tipping is in the top things complained about from residents. How

many reported fly-tipping incidents in the last year have we successfully fined?

Q6. Councillor David Cooper to Councillor Geoff Saul, Executive Member for Housing and Social Welfare:

Could the Executive Member confirm how many residents are recorded as homeless in West Oxfordshire?, and how does this compare to years 2020, 2021 and 2022?

Q7. Councillor Alex Wilson to Councillor Andrew Prosser, Executive Member for Climate Change:

What plans does this Council have to install more Electronic Vehicle (EV) charging facilities in West Oxfordshire for the year 2024??

Q8. Councillor Dean Temple to Councillor Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects:

The Government, via Sport England, has awarded this council £354,000 for Witney, Chipping Norton and Carterton Leisure Centres. Can you confirm how this extra funding will now be spent?

Q9. Councillor Martin McBride to Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council:

Please could the Leader confirm how much this administration has spent having Executive meetings on tour, including the cost of venues, travel and officer time?

Q10. Councillor Liam Walker to Councillor Geoff Saul, Executive Member for Housing and Social Welfare:

The Executive Member has the responsibility of neighbourhood policing in West Oxfordshire. Can he confirm if he's met with policing teams in the District, and what work is being done between the police and this Council as a result of these meetings?

Reports from Officers

7. Recommendations from the Executive (Pages 27 - 32)

Purpose:

To agree recommendations made to Council by the Executive, from its meetings since 19 July 2023.

Recommendations:

The Executive Recommends that Council Resolves to:

1. Adopt the twenty-six Employment and Health & Safety Policies (included in Annex A of the original Executive report;
2. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Director of Governance, to approve subsequent amendments to any West Oxfordshire District Council employment policies that may be necessary, in line with legal changes and best practice, to ensure the Councils policies remain compliant;
3. Agree to an increase in the fine levels to the maximum levels permissible, as

outlined in Table I;

4. Agree an early payment discount as outlined in Table I.

8. **Recommendations of the Constitution Working Group (Pages 33 - 42)**

Purpose:

To present recommendations of the Constitution working group relating to the adoption of Budget Procedure Rules and the terms of reference of the Performance and Appointments Committee.

Recommendations:

That Council Resolves to:

1. Approve the adoption of the Budget Procedure Rules (Annex A) as part of the Constitution (Part 5K);
2. Agree to amend the terms of reference of the Performance and Appointments Committee (Part 3C) to include responsibility for “To adopt and amend employment and health and safety policies”.

9. **West Oxfordshire District Council Draft Programme of Meetings 2024-2025 (Pages 43 - 54)**

Purpose:

To approve a programme of Council and Committee meetings for the municipal year 2024-25.

Recommendations:

That Council Resolves to:

1. Approve the Programme of Meetings for June 2024 to May 2025, as detailed in Annex A;
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Governance, in consultation with Group Leaders, to make changes to the programme of meetings in the event that there is any future decision of Council to change the committee structure or committee remit that impacts the programme of meetings;
3. Delegate authority to the Democratic Services Business Manager to set meeting dates for the Performance and Appointments Committee, member training, member briefing sessions, and any further working groups established by the Council.

10. **Appointment of Independent Persons (Pages 55 - 58)**

Purpose:

To appoint Alec Pridsam and Paul Evans as Independent Persons for the purposes of matters of Councillor conduct.

Recommendations:

That Council Resolves to:

1. Appoint Alec Pridsam and Paul Evans as Independent Persons for a period of 4 years;
2. Delegate Authority to the Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer) to extend the appointments for further periods of one year at a time if deemed appropriate.

11. **Change of Name - South Leigh Parish Council (Pages 59 - 60)**

Purpose:

To note, make a correction to, and amend the prior agreed name change from 'South Leigh and High Cogges Parish Council', to the Parish of 'South Leigh & High Cogges'.

Recommendation:

That Council Resolves to:

- I. Approve the agreed name of the Parish of South Leigh, to the Parish of 'South Leigh & High Cogges'.

Motions on Notice

12. **Motion A: Accountability of Large-Scale Housing Developers - Proposed by Councillor Lysette Nicholls, Seconded by Councillor Michele Mead.**

This Council feels that large scale developers need to be accountable for failing to build houses that have been approved by planning. With some developers not building in a timely manner, this has had a detrimental impact on West Oxfordshire's Local Plan.

Council Resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to:

- I. Write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and all Oxfordshire MPs, informing them that West Oxfordshire District Council would like the criteria for large housing development, once approved, to be tightened up, and for developers to incur a financial penalty for not building in the approved timeframe.

13. **Motion B: Market Gardens - Proposed by Councillor Rizvana Poole, Seconded by Councillor Rosie Pearson**

This Council notes that, nationally, we have gone from providing 82.7% of our fruit and veg in 1988 to 55.6% of vegetables and 16.3% of fruit in 2020. Small-scale, low-impact market gardening is an industry that lacks Government support. One of the aims of the Oxfordshire Food Strategy, to which we have signed up, is "to grow our local food economy through local enterprises, local jobs and local wealth creation."

This Council believes that market gardening could be a source of good long-term jobs and is an efficient use of land – In South Oxfordshire, the market gardener Iain Tolhurst produces 120 tonnes of fruit and veg each year on just 7 hectares. This Council further believes that giving priority to healthy local food production addresses at least 4 of the Council's corporate priorities:

- Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All;
- Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife;
- Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency;
- Working Together for West Oxfordshire.

Council Resolves to:

- I. Request that the Local Plan Member Working Group gives consideration to the development of a policy or policies in the new West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041, to positively encourage and support more opportunities for growing and consuming food locally in line with the Oxfordshire Food Strategy.

14. **Motion C: Youth Assembly - Proposed by Councillor Rosie Pearson, Seconded by Councillor Andy Graham.**

This Council notes that our 2022 Youth Needs Assessment, identified that 75% of young people were worried about climate change. In the same survey, 46% of those surveyed felt their voice was not heard. The Council also has aspirations that the newly refurbished Council Chamber will become far more of a community space.

This Council believes that action taken to address climate change can also benefit other aspects of young people's lives, such as mental health, physical fitness and engagement with society. This Council further believes that it would be appropriate to celebrate the refurbishment of our Council Chamber with an event dedicated to the future of our young people.

Council Resolves to:

1. Invite all secondary schools and colleges in the District (OR, failing this, those who took part in the Youth Needs Assessment) to nominate 2 or 3 students (preferably elected by the student body, or drawn from the school's eco-group where one exists) to attend a youth assembly to take part in the council chamber in 2024;
2. Ask that Officers, Executive Members and experienced members of the community, agree on questions to be put to the assembly for discussion, and to agree the finer details of the running of the assembly, with the aim being for assembly members to tell the Council how they would address the climate and nature emergency if they were in charge.

15. **Motion D: Barnard Gate Junction Safety Improvements - Proposed by Councillor Liam Walker, Seconded by Councillor Lysette Nicholls.**

The junction onto the A40 at Barnard Gate has, for some time, been a collision hotspot risking the safety of drivers and cyclists, along with impacting nearby communities when the road has to be closed. This council is concerned by the safety of this junction.

Council Resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to:

1. Write to the Cabinet Member for Transport Management at Oxfordshire County Council, to request that a road safety assessment is conducted, and to ask the County Council act on any suggested safety improvements.

(END)