

Tuesday, 16 July 2024

Tel: 01993 861000

email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk

COUNCIL

You are summoned to a meeting of Council, which will be held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB on **Wednesday, 24 July 2024 at 2.00 pm.**



Giles Hughes
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Council

Councillors: Elizabeth Poskitt (Chair), Andrew Coles (Vice-Chair), Joy Aitman, Lidia Arciszewska, Thomas Ashby, Hugo Ashton, Andrew Beaney, Michael Brooker, Adam Clements, David Cooper, Julian Cooper, Steve Cosier, Rachel Crouch, Jane Doughty, Genny Early, Duncan Enright, Roger Faulkner, Phil Godfrey, Andy Goodwin, Andy Graham, David Jackson, Edward James, Natalie King, Liz Leffman, Nick Leverton, Dan Levy, Andrew Lyon, Paul Marsh, Charlie Maynard, Martin McBride, Stuart McCarroll, Michele Mead, David Melvin, Rosie Pearson, Rizvana Poole, Andrew Prosser, Nigel Ridpath, Carl Rylett, Geoff Saul, Sandra Simpson, Alaric Smith, Ruth Smith, Tim Sumner, Sarah Veasey, 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. The quorum for Council is 14 members.

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 - 18)**

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Wednesday 22 May 2024.

4. **Receipt of Announcements**

To receive any announcements from the Chair, Leader of the Council, Members of the Executive, the Chief Executive Officer, the Director of Governance and the Director of Finance.

5. **Participation of the Public**

A member of the public, who is a registered elector in the District, may ask questions of the Chair of 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.

A member of the public is limited to asking one such question at any meeting of the Council, other than Annual Council. No more than one question can be asked on behalf of any organisation or body at any Council meeting.

Notice that the question is to be asked, together with a written copy of the question, must be provided to the Director of Governance, via email to democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk, and is to be received no later than noon on the seventh working day before the day of the meeting.

The deadline for submissions for public participation to be received by Democratic Services is 12.00pm on Monday 15 July 2024.

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).

Written responses will be circulated to Members and published on the Council's website at least one working day prior to the meeting. A Member submitting a question is entitled to ask one supplementary question at the meeting which must arise directly from the question or the response to it.

The supplementary questions and answers will be detailed in the minutes of the meeting.

Question 1: Councillor Thomas Ashby to Councillor Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects

How many hirings have we received for the new Council Chamber yet?

Question 2: Councillor Thomas Ashby to Councillor Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects

When will the plans be released for the new 3G Pitch in Witney?

Question 3: Councillor Jane Doughty to Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance

What are the plans to fill the shops in Marriotts Walk?

Question 4: Councillor Adrian Walsh to Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance

Will a structural survey be undertaken at Marriotts Walk to ensure the long-term viability of storing electric vehicles?

Question 5: Councillor Thomas Ashby to Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment

Our grass verges are in a desperate state, making West Oxfordshire look untidy and dangerous in visibility splays. What plans does the Council have in place to coordinate, Towns/Parishes, District and County Councils to ensure that our green spaces are well maintained across West Oxfordshire?

Question 6: Councillor Ed James to Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance

Since taking over Marriotts Walk, what has the return on investment been to the District Council?

Question 7: Councillor Adrian Walsh to Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council

Does the Leader support the new MPs view that Witney North's housing plans are moved to the land at Ducklington Farm?

Question 8: Councillor Nick Leverton to Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council

How much money has the Council spent on planning appeals?

Question 9: Councillor Alex Wilson to Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council
Can the Leader confirm that WODC will continue with bi-weekly bin collections?

Recommendations from the Executive and the Council's Committees

7. **Recommendations from the Executive (Pages 19 - 24)**

Purpose:

To agree recommendations made to Council by the Executive, from its meetings since 22 May 2024.

Recommendations:

The Executive Recommends that Council resolves to:

- I. Approve the addition of the capital programme for the landlord's fitout works (Letting of Unit at Marriott's Walk);

And subject to the resolutions of 22 July 2024, the Executive recommends that Council resolves to:

2. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Planning and Sustainable Development to submit the CIL charging schedule for independent examination in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) including any minor modifications, subject to there being no significant issues raised during the six-week consultation period (Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule);
3. Carry forward the capital budget of £4,086,328 (Financial Performance Report 2023-24 Quarter Four);
4. Approve the transfers to and between Earmarked Reserves as detailed in the report (Financial Performance Report 2023-24 Quarter Four);
5. Agree to utilise Housing Reserves as set out in section 4 of the report (Our House Project Funding Extension 2024-2026);
6. Note the appointments to outside bodies, as set out in Annex B (Outside Body Appointments – TO FOLLOW);
7. Approve the implementation of Phase I of the Publica Transition on the basis of the Detailed Transition Plan (Publica Transition Plan);
8. Delegate to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council the decision to deal with any final detail matters arising from the Detailed Transition Plan (Publica Transition Plan);
9. Delegate authority to the Director of Governance in liaison with the Leader to update the constitution by making any consequential changes required as a result of Phase I of the Publica Transition (Publica Transition Plan);
10. Carry out a budget re-basing for the 2026/7 financial year so that the funding provided to Publica is proportionate to the services received (Publica Transition Plan).

8. **Recommendations from the Council's Committees (Pages 25 - 46)**

Purpose:

To agree recommendations made to Council by the Licensing Committee from its meeting held on 18 June 2024.

Recommendations:

The Licensing Committee recommends that Council resolves to:

1. Approve the draft Pavement Licensing Policy, subject to any further amendments;
2. Approve the new fees as detailed in paragraph 3.3 of the original report (see Annex A).

Reports from Officers

9. **Results of Member Survey on Council Start Times (Pages 47 - 64)**

Purpose:

To report to Council the results of the Member Survey on Council start times which Council agreed to undertake at the Annual Meeting on 22 May 2024.

Recommendations:

That Council resolves to:

1. Note the report;
2. Agree any trial of a different start time for a meeting of full Council.

Motions on Notice

10. **Motion A: Council of Sanctuary - Proposed by Councillor Rachel Crouch**

This council acknowledges the dedication and achievements of the officer team in fulfilling the council's obligations towards people seeking sanctuary in West Oxfordshire.

The Council has acted promptly and efficiently to deliver support and housing for those seeking sanctuary (asylum seekers, refugees, guests), including using the main funding rounds for:

- 6 families via the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme since 2015
- The Afghan resettlement scheme since 2021
- Support for people from Ukraine, including the Homes for Ukraine scheme since 2022
- The Local Authority Housing Fund to provide follow-on housing for Afghan and Ukrainian residents, since 2023.

In many cases, particularly surrounding work with the Home Office and the residents of the Witney Four Pillars Hotel, council officers have worked in diligent new ways to ensure people seeking sanctuary receive the best welcome to Witney that could be offered.

This council pledges to learn from these experiences, from the local volunteers who work with our sanctuary seekers, and from sanctuary seekers themselves; and from organizations with even more experience, to develop into a district with a joined-up strategy and framework for welcoming people who seek sanctuary.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WeT7xRyDnqGr27As0BUEg6Aghw9wsVLg/edit>

To do this, the Council resolves to request that the Executive considers proposals to follow the Awards Process for becoming a Council of Sanctuary and to:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WeT7xRyDnqGr27As0BUEg6Aghw9wsVLg/edit>

1. Commit to joining the City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network, and to work towards recognition as a 'Council of Sanctuary'. (Steps 1-2 and Criteria 1-2 of the Process).
2. Develop a Strategy for People Seeking Sanctuary. This will be achieved through discussion with local groups and local people seeking sanctuary; via a Steering Group of councillors, local groups and officers; to identify what WODC can do better to facilitate a well-thought-through level of welcome and service for those seeking sanctuary within the community. (Steps 3-5 and Criteria 3-7).
3. Prepare and submit an application for recognition as a Council of Sanctuary, and to deliver its Strategy over the ensuing 3 years, working towards the next accreditation cycle. (Steps 6-9 and Criteria 3-7).

11. **Motion B: Community Governance Reviews - Proposed by Councillor Ruth Smith**
New developments on the boundaries between towns and villages and between larger and smaller villages bring with them the question of what structure of town and parish governance would best reflect the identities and interests of the new residents and the newly-shaped communities.

A Community Governance Review gathers evidence and viewpoints from the communities involved and may result in 'reparishing'; the redrawing of parish boundaries; changes to the number of councillors, changes to ward boundaries, changes to the name or type/style of 'parish' council, grouping or ungrouping parishes and even the creation of new councils.

West Oxfordshire District Council has not routinely conducted such reviews since the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

Council resolves to adopt, by the end of 2024, a policy for Community Governance Reviews, based on recommendations to be brought to the Executive when officers have considered it, to include:

- The expected interval between reviews, per parish and as a whole district
- The size of proposed developments that should trigger a CGR for parishes
- Other considerations in line with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the joint guidance on community governance reviews published by the Communities and Local Government Department and LGBC [Local Government Boundary Commission].

Links:

The webpage for the Vale of White Horse Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee <https://democratic.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=542>

Examples of recent local CGRs and evidence of a policy for regular reviews (Vale says every 4 years)

- Vale: <https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/community-governance-review/>
- Cherwell: <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/11/elections/315/community-governance-review>
- Vale and South working together every 4 years
<https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/democracy/have-your-say-on-proposed-changes-for-parishes-in-south-oxfordshire-and-the-vale-of-white-horse/>

A 2011 NALC roundup of lessons from CGRs. <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/create-a-council-resources/1357-community-governance-reviews-some-lessons-from-recent-practice/file>

Government Guidance on Community Governance Reviews (2010)

<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/community-governance-review-guidance.pdf>

(END)