

Tuesday 17 September 2024

Tel: 01993 861000

email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk

COUNCIL

You are summoned to a meeting of Council, which will be held in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB on **Wednesday 25 September 2024 at 4.00pm.**



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 17 members.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of interest from members on any items to be considered at the meeting.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 7 – 22)**

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Wednesday 24 July 2024.

4. **Receipt of Announcements**

To receive any announcements from the Chair, Vice-Chair, Leader of the Council, Members of the Executive, or the Chief Executive.

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, or by post, and is to be received no later than Noon on the seventh working day before the day of the meeting.

The response will be recorded and incorporated into the minutes of the meeting. Where the reply cannot conveniently be given verbally, a written response within 3 clear working days, will be given and will also be circulated to all Members of the Council.

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 Julian Cooper to Councillor Hugo Ashton, Executive Member for Planning:

Can the Executive Member for Planning please update the Council on the progress of the Motion passed by Uplands Area Planning Sub-Committee on 13 November 2023 concerning World Heritage Site buffer zones?

Question 2: Councillor Andrew Coles to Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment:

In light of a few complaints I have received recently regarding the way this Council manages its trees; in particular the trees on the Deer Park estate in Witney which overhang onto properties in Windrush Valley Road in my ward, and also the woodland at Loom Lane near the Old Bathing Place, would the Executive Member be willing to see that this Council undertakes a review of the Tree Management Policy to ensure it is fit for purpose and meeting the needs of residents?

Question 3: Councillor Michele Mead to Councillor Duncan Enright, Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Economic Development:

Please can you update us on which Towns benefitted from the UK shared prosperity funding?

Question 4: Councillor Michele Mead to Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance:

Quarter one figures show this council is already £250k overspent £91k of this is from people not buying green waste licenses can I ask will you consider reducing the cost of the license next year?

7. Appointments Made under Delegated Authority

Purpose

To update Council on appointments on committees and sub-committees made by the Monitoring Officer under delegated authority (Constitution Part 5A, 2.4).

Since the previous meeting of Council:

Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt has replaced Councillor Joy Aitman on the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Julian Cooper has resigned from the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel – replacement Member TBC.

Recommendation

That Council resolves to:

- I. Note and ratify the appointment(s) made under delegated authority.

Reports from Officers

8. Recommendations from the Executive (Pages 23 – 26)

Purpose:

To agree recommendations made to Council by the Executive, from its meetings since 24 July 2024.

Recommendation:

The Executive Recommends that Council resolves to:

- I. Agree to include an additional £750,000 in the revised Capital Budget for 2024/25, as set out in 2.25 of the original Executive report.

9. Recommendations from Constitution Working Group (Pages 27 – 46)

Purpose:

To present Council with recommendations from arising from a meeting of the

Constitution Working Group, held on Friday 19 July 2024.

Recommendations:

That Council resolves to:

1. Adopt the Lawyers in Local Government (LLG)'s Members Planning Code of Good Practice, as an addition to Part 6 of the Council's Constitution, following appropriate revision by Officers;
2. Agree to extend the time period for Councillor Call-In from 21 days to 28 days (from the date of notification), to align with the time period for representations;
3. Agree to make the size of the Lowlands and Uplands Area Sub-Committees more flexible in Part 3C: Committee Functions:
 - The Uplands and Lowlands Sub-Committees must have a minimum of 10 members, with the Chair of the Development Control Committee being appointed to both sub-committees and all other members of the Development Control Committee being appointed to either the Uplands or Lowlands Sub-Committee, depending on the ward they represent. Where wards cross the Lowlands and Uplands boundary the ward member may be appointed to either Sub-Committee. This would also be kept under review in future;
4. Agree that instruction be given to private practice solicitors or suitable counsel to undertake legal work when considered necessary or appropriate;
5. Agree to include the Protocol for Recording at Public Meetings in Part 6 of the Council's Constitution.

10. **Appointment of Independent Persons (Pages 47 – 52)**

Purpose:

To appoint two appropriately skilled and experienced members of the public to be "independent members" of the Audit & Governance Committee.

Recommendation:

That Council resolves to:

1. Appoint Gemma Collings and Richard Deuttenburg to the Council's Audit & Governance Committee for a four-year term, commencing immediately.

Motions on Notice

11. **Motion A: Winter Fuel Payments – Proposed by Councillor Thomas Ashby, Seconded by Councillor Michele Mead**

This Council deplores the government's decision to cut Winter Fuel Payments (WFPs). Age UK estimates that the government's changes to WFPs could hit 2 million people across the country, who badly need the money to stay warm this winter.

This Council resolves to:

1. Request that the Executive considers a report from officers with proposals for launching a District awareness campaign working with our local NHS partners, and charitable, civic and religious groups, to encourage elderly residents who are eligible for means-tested benefits such as Pension Credit to register and claim them to ensure that they continue to receive WFPs this Winter;
2. Request that the Leader of the Council writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, urging a review of the government's precipitous decision to means-

test WFPs without public consultation and asking HM Treasury to ensure that vulnerable pensioners, particularly those who are eligible for, but who do not – or cannot – claim, other benefits under current thresholds are protected from fuel poverty.

(END)