

Tuesday, 8 September 2026

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COUNCIL

You are summoned to a meeting of the Council which will be held in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB on **Wednesday, 16 September 2026 at 2.00 pm.**



Phil Martin
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Council

Councillors: Carl Rylett (Chair), Joy Aitman (Vice-Chair), Tammy Abarno, Thomas Ashby, Andrew Beaney, Adam Clements, Sandra Coleman, Andrew Coles, Sandra Cosier, Steve Cosier, Rachel Crouch, Jane Doughty, Genny Early, Duncan Enright, Sarah Evans, Roger Faulkner, Nick Field-Johnson, Phil Godfrey, Andy Goodwin, Andy Graham, David Jackson, Edward James, Liz Leffman, Dan Levy, Jan Lund, Andrew Lyon, Liam Mackenzie, Stuart McCarroll, Paul Marsh, Hannah Massie, Michele Mead, David Melvin, Toby Morris, Rosie Pearson, Elizabeth Poskitt, Andrew Prosser, Nigel Ridpath, James Robertshaw, Geoff Saul, Sandra Simpson, Alaric Smith, Tim Sumner, Jack Treloar, Sarah Veasey, Liam Walker, Mark Walker, Simon Watson, 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.
2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 9 - 26)**
To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 22 July 2026.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive any declarations from Members of Council on any items to be considered at the meeting.
4. **Receipt of Announcements**
To receive any announcements from The Chair, Leader, Members of the Executive, Head of Paid Service, Director of Finance or Director of Governance.
5. **Participation of the Public**
To receive any submissions from members of the public, in accordance with the Council's [Public Participation Rules](#).

The deadline for submission is 2.00pm, two clear working days before the meeting.

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: From Councillor Thomas Ashby to Councillor Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Arts, Culture and Sports

Please can the Executive Member provide a detailed update on the following West Witney Projects:

- Witney 3G at West Witney Sports Ground
- Adventure Play Area (Windrush Place S106 Funding)
- Raleigh Crescent MUGA

The lack of serious progression is a serious concern amongst residents, therefore a detailed update on all three will be greatly appreciated.

Question 2: From Councillor Thomas Ashby to Councillor Cllr Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance

For several years I have been working to secure the sensible and sustainable estate maintenance Deer Park requires. While we made progress initially, the last few years have seen a significant decline in substantial works.

On 14 January this year, I was informed that substantial works would commence in Deer Park this autumn. However, I was recently informed that due to some trees failing because of the hot weather, some of these works may now be delayed until the start of the next financial year. This is unacceptable. The start of the financial year is April which is well within the nesting season and would therefore mean the works could not commence until this time next year.

Please can the Executive Member ensure, by working with the Chief Executive and Tree Officer, that Deer Park is prioritised for the estate maintenance it requires. Hundreds of thousands of pounds have been spent on subsidence claims over the years, and residents are rightly concerned that largely, tree pruning has not been undertaken significantly in 30 years.

Question 3: From Councillor Thomas Ashby to Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council

Please can the Executive Member outline, in detail, what discussions/engagement has been held with Town and Parish Councils regarding 'Asset Transfer' ahead of Local Government Reform. Many councils are suffering from anxiety by not knowing what assets and services may be heading their way, therefore, any direction the Executive Member can outline would be greatly appreciated

Reports from Officers

7. Members' Allowances Scheme for 2027/28 (Pages 27 - 30)

That Council resolves to:

- I. Request that the Independent Remuneration Panel reports to Council in early 2027 to make recommendations about a Members' Allowances Scheme for 2027/28 and up to three subsequent years.

8. Community Governance Review proposal (Pages 31 - 48)

Purpose

To present proposals for undertaking a Community Governance Review focused on the civic boundaries of Carterton, Chipping Norton and Witney, in response to full Council on 28 January 2026 agreeing an amended motion titled "Local Governance Review: Parish and Town Boundary Review for West Oxfordshire".

Recommendations

That Council resolves to:

- I. Note that, subject to the government's review of local government

reorganisation, delivering local government reorganisation while supporting business as usual activities will be the Council's immediate and overriding governance priority and will be resource intensive over the coming period.

2. Note that, given the time a CGR will take to complete and the uncertain timeline for local government reorganisation, any decisions resulting from a CGR undertaken by West Oxfordshire District Council may be taken by a successor unitary authority following Vesting Day (previously 1 April 2028, now TBC), in accordance with the Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) Regulations 2008.
3. Agree to begin a Community Governance Review (CGR) prior to local government reorganisation focused specifically on reviewing the civic boundaries of Carterton, Chipping Norton and Witney where development has taken place or is taking place outside of town council boundaries.
4. Agree the terms of reference for the CGR attached at Annex A.
5. Delegate authority to the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Constitution Working Group, to make minor amendments to the Terms of Reference to reflect any changes agreed at Full Council.
6. Authorise officers to advise Oxfordshire County Council of the Community Governance Review in accordance with Section 79 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
7. Agree to invite proposals from Carterton Town Council and its surrounding parishes, Chipping Norton Town Council and its surrounding parishes and Witney Town Council and its surrounding parishes, for changes to civic parish boundaries.
8. Agree that the Constitution Working Group will oversee the review, engage with ward members and report back to Council with initial proposals for public consultation, and subsequently final recommendations following public consultation to put forward to full Council or a successor unitary authority.
9. Note that if a successor unitary council is the ultimate decision maker then it will decide whether or not to give effect to any recommendation put to it and may wish to undertake further work on this CGR and/or a wider community governance review post-reorganisation, once the role of town and parish councils within future unitary structures is clearer.

9. **National Scheme of Delegation of Planning Functions (Pages 49 - 56)**

Purpose

To put arrangements in place to amend the Constitution when national changes to the functioning of Planning Committees in England come into effect (on 31 October 2026).

Recommendations

That Council resolves to:

1. Agree that a 12-Member Planning Committee will replace the Strategic Planning Committee and Development Management Sub-Committee following the October meeting cycle and that the Planning Committee will meet on the dates currently scheduled for the Development Management Sub-Committee.

2. Delegate authority to the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services to appoint Members to the Planning Committee in accordance with political proportionality and the nominations made by political groups.
3. Agree that the Chair of the Planning Committee will be the “nominated member” under the Regulations with the Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee as substitute, and that the Head of Planning will be the “nominated officer”, with the Development Management Manager the substitute.
4. Agree that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee will be paid the Special Responsibility Allowances payable to the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Development Management Sub-Committee under the Members Allowances Scheme 2023/24 to 2026/27.
5. Agree that all own-interest applications will be considered by the nominated member and nominated officer for referral to the Planning Committee, meaning that no own-interest applications will automatically be delegated to officers.
6. Delegate authority to the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee and the Chair of the Constitution Working Group, to update the Constitution (including parts 3C, 4F and 6Q) to put the new arrangements in place to ensure compliance with The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026, following consideration by the Constitution Working Group.

Motions on Notice

10. Motion A: Strengthening Food Security and Resilience, proposed by Councillor Steve Cosier, seconded by Councillor Tim Sumner

The UK is one of the least food self-sufficient countries in Europe. With its historic reliance on food imports from other countries.

Prof Lang of the University of London stated the “UK produced less food than it needed to feed itself, and as a small island that relied on a few large companies to feed its giant population, it is particularly vulnerable to climate shocks”.

Increased digitisation along the supply chain makes the UK’s food system more vulnerable to cyber breakdowns, including critical infrastructure failures and malicious activity.

As climate change drives more extreme weather both in the summer and the winter, the adoption of more climate resilient farming practices will become increasingly important. The changes in our climate are accelerating the spread and intensity of insect and plant diseases. Without a living breathing biosphere there is no stable economy and no food security. The future food security of our nation depends on the living systems that sustain us.

The UK remains reliant on imports for 40% of its food. We need to strengthen our diversify supply chains, invest in sustainable domestic production, and develop a climate-adapted national food security strategy. Taken together, this evidence demonstrates that the UK’s biosecurity and food production is on life support; fighting the accelerating risks posed by geopolitics, emerging diseases, global supply chain instability, climate change and biodiversity decline.

Council Notes:

- The UK is one of Europe's least food self-sufficient countries; relying on imports for approximately 40% of it from countries increasingly affected by climate change and geopolitical instability.
- The UK's "just-in-time" food supply chain makes it vulnerable to extreme weather, cyber-attacks, animal and plant diseases, and failures in critical infrastructure.
- Food insecurity and food price inflation continue to affect households across the UK, while climate change, biodiversity loss and global instability are increasing risks to long-term food security.
- UK's biosecurity and food production is on life support; fighting the accelerating risks posed by geopolitics, emerging diseases, global supply chain instability, climate change and biodiversity decline.

Council Resolves:

1. To request that the Leader writes to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and West Oxfordshire's Members of Parliament calling for a comprehensive National Food Security Strategy including:
2. Stronger statutory duties on Government to safeguard food security, protect its citizens from cost-of-living crisis, and safeguard national biosecurity; and
3. Greater investment in climate-resilient farming, domestic food production and environmental recovery.
4. To request that the Leader writes to the Cabinet Office and the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology urging enhanced cyber resilience for the UK's food distribution and cold-chain networks, including consideration of their designation as Critical National Infrastructure where appropriate.
5. To ask the Executive to work with local farmers, businesses and community organisations to identify opportunities to strengthen local food resilience and support sustainable food production across West Oxfordshire.

11. **Motion B: Empty MOD Homes in Long Hanborough Proposed by Cllr Roger Faulkner, Seconded by Councillor Toby Morris**

West Oxfordshire District Council notes with concern that a number of Ministry of Defence-owned homes in Marlborough Crescent and Becketts Close, Long Hanborough have remained empty for many years.

At a time when there is significant pressure on housing across West Oxfordshire, residents are understandably frustrated to see existing homes sitting vacant and deteriorating for such a prolonged period. They are also increasingly concerned at the anti-social behaviour (drug and alcohol use) which has involved the police in recent weeks.

The Council recognises that these properties are owned by the Ministry of Defence and that decisions regarding their future ultimately rest with the Government. However, the continued uncertainty surrounding the site is unacceptable for the local community, particularly those living close to the properties.

This Council believes that homes should not be left empty for years without a clear plan

for their future.

This Council therefore resolves to request that the Leader of West Oxfordshire District Council writes to the Minister for Veterans and People and to Calum Miller MP to:

1. Raise the Council's concerns about the length of time these MOD-owned homes have remained empty.
2. Request a clear update on the Ministry of Defence's plans and timescale for the site.
3. Seek confirmation as to whether the homes will be brought back into occupation, renovated for future use, or demolished and replaced with new homes.
4. Request greater certainty for Long Hanborough residents and assurances that the properties will not be allowed to remain vacant and deteriorating indefinitely.

(END)