

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Excerpt of the Record of Decisions of the meeting of the
Council

Held Virtual Meeting at 12.30 pm on **Wednesday, 28 April 2021**

PRESENT

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

Officers: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive), Frank Wilson (Group Finance Director - Publica) and Claire Hughes (Business Manager - Corporate Responsibility)

CL.80 **Declarations of Interest**

A declaration of interest was received from Councillor Harvey relating to Agenda Item 12 – Sealing of Documents because he was a tenant of Newman Court.

CL.87 **Notice of Motion - Re-use of IT Equipment**

The Chairman introduced the following notice of motion received from Councillors Graham and Enright:

“This Council notes that The Covid-19 lockdowns have shown how vital technology is to keeping people connected, in particular the vulnerable in society, many of whom have been confined to their homes and unable to see loved ones, and that according to Age UK 51% of digitally excluded people are over the age of 65, while refugees and the homeless also face worrying levels of digital exclusion.

This Council calls for:

- 1. The Council, public bodies in West Oxfordshire, and local businesses to reform their procurement policies by donating IT locally to those in need rather than scrapping it, using schemes such as the Laptops for Homeless and Vulnerable Initiative;*
- 2. A local re-use and recycling centre to enable SocialBox.Biz and its charity partners to collect and distribute old technology to those in need in West Oxfordshire; and*
- 3. Direct council suppliers to support the SocialBox.Biz initiative and, together with the Council, to proactively take part in sponsoring and promoting the SocialBox.Biz message to local businesses, through traditional media and social media channels.”*

The Chairman advised that he was not exercising the discretion for this motion to be debated, and after it had been proposed and seconded would propose that it was referred to the Economic & Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration and advice. Councillor Eaglestone advised that the proposer had indicated he was content with that.

As the proposer of the motion, Councillor Graham addressed the meeting and highlighted that there were over one million people in the country who did not have access to a computer and he hoped this motion would be a step towards helping to address that. He agreed that the motion should be referred to the scrutiny committee because they would be better informed to debate the matter appropriately.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Enright who reinforced the point regarding digital exclusion and how lockdown had highlighted the problem for many school children. He made reference to some of the schemes that had been run in West Oxfordshire including Witney ALBS and the University of the Third Age in Carterton to help distribute IT equipment. He recognised that if this had been a problem for school age children, it would equally an issue for many vulnerable adults.

The Chairman proposed that the matter be referred to the Economic & Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration and this was seconded by Councillor Enright.

On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried.

RESOLVED that the matter be referred to the Economic & Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration and advice.