

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council

Held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB
at 2.00 pm on **Wednesday, 22 July 2026**

PRESENT

Councillors: Carl Rylett (Chair), Joy Aitman (Vice-Chair), Tammy Abarno, Thomas Ashby, Andrew Beaney, Adam Clements, Sandra Coleman, Andrew Coles, Rachel Crouch, Duncan Enright, Sarah Evans, Roger Faulkner, Nick Field-Johnson, Andy Graham, David Jackson, Edward James, Liz Leffman, Dan Levy, Jan Lund, Liam Mackenzie, Stuart McCarroll, Paul Marsh, Hannah Massie, Michele Mead, David Melvin, Rosie Pearson, Elizabeth Poskitt, Andrew Prosser, Nigel Ridpath, Geoff Saul, Sandra Simpson, Alaric Smith, Tim Sumner, Jack Treloar, Sarah Veasey, Liam Walker, Mark Walker, Simon Watson, Alex Wilson and Alistair Wray

Officers: Madhu Richards (Director of Finance), Andrea McCaskie (Director of Governance and Regulatory Services), Phil Martin (Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service), Frank Wilson (Managing Director - Publica), Andrew Brown (Head of Democratic and Electoral Services), Anne Learmonth (Democratic Services Officer), Maria Harper (Democratic Services Assistant), Ana Prelici (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Georgina Dyer (Head of Finance), Phil Shaw (Planning Services Transformation Lead), Emma Tarry and Andrew Thomson (Planning Policy Manager)

Guests: Julian Cooper

CL.120 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors:

Sandra Cosier

Steve Cosier

Genny Early

Phil Godfrey

Andrew Lyon

James Robertsahw

Jane Doughty

Toby Morris

CL.121 Declarations of Interest

The Chair explained that there was a general dispensation to allow the awarding of honorary titles to former members.

There were no declarations of interest received.

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CL.122 Participation of the Public

There was no participation of the public.

CL.123 Award of Honorary Title to Julian Cooper

The purpose of the item was to consider conferring the title of Honorary Alderman on former councillor Julian Cooper for eminent services to the Council.

Councillor Andy Graham proposed the recommendation, highlighting Julian Cooper's many years of dedicated public service, referencing qualities of integrity, leadership, extensive knowledge of local government and commitment to the communities of West Oxfordshire.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Andrew Coles, who paid tribute to Mr Cooper's long-standing service, commitment to residents, passion for local government and acts of personal kindness towards colleagues and constituents.

Members spoke in support of the nomination, raising the following points;

- Recognising Mr Cooper's exceptional service to the Council and the wider community.
- Paying tribute to his “encyclopaedic” knowledge of the Council's constitution and history, his dedication to representing residents, his support and mentorship of fellow councillors, and his longstanding commitment to public service.
- Members also noted his kindness, diligence and significant contribution to local government over several decades.

In summing up, Councillor Graham noted that Councillor Cooper had previously played a leading role in securing the same honour for Sir Barry Norton and emphasised that the award recognised distinguished service rather than political affiliation. The proposal was put to a vote, with the Chair noting that the Council’s constitution required a 2/3 majority for an honorary title to be conferred.

Council Resolved to:

1. Confer the title of Honorary Aldermen on former Councillor Julian Cooper for eminent services to the Council.

Voting record: For 32, Against 1, Abstain 6

The Meeting closed at 2.15 pm

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CHAIR