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Cherwell District Council

Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 22 May 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke (Chairman)
Councillor Dorothy Walker (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Tom Beckett
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Gordon Blakeway
Councillor Chris Brant
Councillor Besmira Brasha
Councillor John Broad
Councillor Mark Cherry
Councillor Becky Clarke MBE
Councillor Jean Conway
Councillor Grace Conway-Murray
Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor Nick Cotter
Councillor Dr Isabel Creed
Councillor Andrew Crichton
Councillor Donna Ford
Councillor Ian Harwood
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Matt Hodgson
Councillor Frank Ideh
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Simon Lytton
Councillor Kieron Mallon
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Andrew McHugh
Councillor Lesley McLean
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Julian Nedelcu
Councillor Rob Parkinson
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor Edward Fraser Reeves
Councillor David Rogers
Councillor Alisa Russell
Councillor Les Sibley
Councillor Dr Kerrie Thornhill
Councillor Dom Vaitkus
Councillor Linda Ward
Councillor Amanda Watkins

Councillor John Willett
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Nigel Simpson
Councillor Douglas Webb

Officers:

Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive
Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Stephen Hinds, Corporate Director Resources and Transformation
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

1 **Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed councillors, past Chairman, former councillors, the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, Mrs Miranda Markham, and her husband, guests and officers to the Annual Council meeting.

The Chairman welcomed newly elected councillors, Councillor Gordon Blakeway, Councillor Dom Vaitkus, Councillor Dr Kerrie Thornhill, Councillor Rob Parkinson, Councillor John Willett, Councillor Frank Ideh, Councillor Chirs Brant, Councillor David Rogers, Councillor Grace Conway-Murray and Councillor Linda Ward and congratulated them and all other councillors who were returned at the recent election. The newly elected councillors each introduced themselves to Council.

2 **Declarations of Interest**

11. Making of the Deddington Neighbourhood Plan.
Councillor David Rogers, Declaration, as one of the architects of the Plan.

3 **Communications**

Former Councillors

On behalf of Council, the Chair extended paid tribute and thanked those councillors who stood down or were not re-elected at the May elections for their service to the council, their wards and the district.

Annual Council

By convention, the minutes of Committees, questions, petitions and motions were not considered at Annual Council. These would be included on the agenda of the next scheduled Council meeting on Monday 15 July.

Process for Appointments

The Chairman reminded Council of the process for voting on appointments for any position to be filled by the Council, as set out in the Constitution.

Members' Pigeon Holes

Members were reminded to check their pigeon hole and take any post.

4 Election of Chairman for the Municipal Year 2024/2025

It was proposed by Councillor Woodcock and seconded by Councillor Hodgson, that Councillor Dr Okeke be appointed as Chairman of Cherwell District Council for the municipal year 2024/2025. There were no other nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Dr Okeke be appointed Chairman of Cherwell District Council for the Municipal Year 2024/2025.

(Councillor Sibley, outgoing Chairman chaired the meeting until Councillor Okeke was appointed)

5 Investiture of Chairman

Councillor Dr Okeke made, and signed, the required Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor Dr Okeke addressed Council thanking Members for the honor of appointing him as Chairman, a role he would embrace. The Chairman advised that his partner, Sandra, would be his consort and announced that he would raise funds for Oxfordshire Mind during his term of office.

6 Vote of Thanks to Immediate Past Chairman

The Chairman paid tribute to Councillor Sibley for the two years he had served as Chairman of the Council. Councillor Sibley was an outstanding Chairman, who had carried out his role passionately and steadfastly.

Councillor Sibley dedicated a lot of time and effort in raising money for his chosen charity, Alexandra House of Joy. He raised over £20,000 during his two years of chairmanship which

As Vice-Chairman, it had been very helpful learning from Councillor Sibley. One of the many things the incoming Chairman had learned from Councillor Sibley was reminding Councillors to speak through the Chairman.

Group Leaders, Councillor Hingley, Councillor Woodcock, Councillor Reeves and Councillor Middleton, and other Members, paid tribute to Councillor for his two-year tenure as Chairman.

The Chairman presented Councillor Sibley with his past Chairman's badge and a gift as a token of appreciation for his term of office.

7 **Past Chairman's response**

Councillor Sibley thanked Group Leaders and Members for their kind words and addressed Council.

Councillor Sibley congratulated Cllr Dr Okeke on his appointment and wished him and his consort, his wife Sandra, all the best for the forthcoming year.

Councillor Sibley thanked Members for their goodwill and confidence in appointing him as Chairman for a second term and hoped Members and residents considered he has fulfilled the duties required. Councillor Sibley also thanked the council's management and staff for their support and guidance and paid particular tribute to his PA. Councillor Sibley also extended his thanks to Councillor Okeke for his support as Vice-Chair during his term of office.

Councillor Sibley highlighted that he and his consort, his wife Mary, had enjoyed their role as ambassadors for Cherwell District Council visiting many places and meeting many people. Another highlight had been attending events along with members of the "Oxfordshire chain gang" and thanked them for their friendship and support.

One of his duties as Chairman was to raise funds and awareness of his nominated charity, Alexandra House of Joy. Councillor Sibley presented the founders of the charity, Ian and Rachel Scott-Hunter and presented them with a cheque for £20,000 raised over the past year

Councillor Sibley thanked his consort, his wife, for the wonderful support she had given him in his role as Chairman and presented her with flowers as a token of his appreciation.

8 **Election of Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2024/2025**

It was proposed by Councillor Hingley and seconded by Councillor McLean, that Councillor Walker be appointed as Vice-Chairman of Cherwell District Council for the municipal year 2024/2025. There were no other nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Walker be appointed Vice-Chairman of Cherwell District Council for the Municipal Year 2024/2025.

9 Investiture of Vice-Chairman

Councillor Walker, having made and signed the required Declaration of Acceptance of Office was invested with the Vice-Chairman's Chain.

Councillor Walker addressed Council and thanked Members for her appointment.

10 Minutes of Council

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11 Annual Council Business Report 2024/2025

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report to note the results of the 2 May 2024 district elections and to consider the appointments and allocation of seats on Committees for municipal year 2024/25 in accordance with the duty under Section 15 Local Government Housing Act 1989, to ensure that this reflects the political make-up of the Council following the elections. The political representation of members on committees needed to be considered on an annual basis.

The Chairman referred to recommendation 1.3 which related to the Leader of the Council and invited Councillor Wood to address the meeting.

Councillor Wood addressed Council and tendered his resignation as Leader of the Council. Councillor Wood had been Leader since his appointment at the Annual Meeting in 2004 and reported on his highlights as Leader. The Leader also paid respect and tribute to the Chief Executive Officers at the council over the past 20 years. Councillor Wood expressed his gratitude for the support of the Leader's PA who had been in post for the duration of his time as Leader. Councillor Wood, above all, thanked his wife for her support.

On behalf of Council, the Chairman thanked Councillor Wood for his service to the district, our residents and the council as Leader over the past 20 years.

Group Leaders, Councillor Reeves, Councillor Hingley, Councillor Woodcock, Councillor Middleton and Councillor Sibley paid tribute and extended their gratitude to Councillor Wood for his service as Leader.

Councillor Wood having resigned, it was necessary for Council to appoint a Leader. It was proposed by Councillor Lytton and seconded by Councillor

Cotter that Councillor Hingley be appointed Leader of Cherwell District Council.

There being no further nominations, Councillor Hingley was duly appointed Leader of the Council.

The Chairman invited the Leader to report on his Deputy Leader, Executive members and Portfolio Holder allocations for 2024/2025. The Leader advised Councillor Lesley McLean was his Deputy leader and Portfolio Holders as follows:

- Councillor David Hingley – Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership
- Councillor Lesley Mclean – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources
- Councillor Chris Brant, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services
- Councillor Jean Conway, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development Management
- Councillor Rob Parkinson – Portfolio Holder for Regulatory
- Councillor Rob Pattenden – Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities
- Councillor Chris Pruden – Portfolio Holder for Housing
- Councillor Ian Middleton – Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services
- Councillor Tom Beckett – Portfolio Holder for Greener Services

The Chairman led Council through the remaining recommendations and invited the Leader, and Group Leaders as required, to advise of nominations to outside bodies and working groups with appointments as set out in the resolutions.

Resolved

- (1) That the results of the District Elections held on 2 May 2024 be noted.

Ward	Elected	Party
Adderbury, Bloxham and Bodicote	Gordon Blakeway	Liberal Democrat
Banbury Calthorpe and Easington	Kieron Mallon	Conservative
Banbury Cross and Neithrop	Matt Hodgson	Labour
Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown	Dom Vaitkus	Labour
Banbury Hardwick	Kerrie Thornhill	Labour
Banbury Ruscote	Mark Cherry	Labour
Bicester East	Rob Parkinson	Liberal Democrat
Bicester North and Caversfield	John Willett	Liberal Democrat
Bicester South and Ambrosden	Frank Ideh	Liberal Democrat
Bicester West	Les Sibley	Independent
Cropredy, Sibfords and	Chris Brant	Liberal Democrat

Wroxton		
Deddington	David Rogers	Conservative
Fringford and Heyfords	Grace Conway-Murray	Liberal Democrat
Kidlington East	Linda Ward	Green
Kidlington West	Dorothy Walker	Liberal Democrat
Launton and Otmoor	Alisa Russell	Liberal Democrats

- (2) That the constitution of Political Groups and notification of Group Leaders which has been notified in accordance with Regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.
- Liberal Democrat Group (17 Members, all Liberal Democrat party members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor David Hingley
 - Labour Group (13 Members, all Labour / Labour & co-operative party members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Sean Woodcock
 - Conservative Group (11 Members, all Conservative Group members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Eddie Reeves
 - Green and Independent Alliance Group (5 Members, comprising 4 Green members and 1 Independent Member)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Ian Middleton
 - Independent Group (2 Members, comprising 2 Independent Members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Les Sibley
- (3) That Councillor Hingley be appointed Leader of the Council.
- (4) That the appointment of the Deputy Leader of the Council, the membership of the Executive and Executive portfolios for the municipal year 2024/2025 be noted.

Councillor	Portfolio
David Hingley (leader)	Strategic Leadership
Chris Brant	Corporate Services
Lesley McLean (deputy leader)	Finance and Resources
Jean Conway	Planning and Development Management
Chris Pruden	Housing
Rob Pattenden	Healthy Communities
Tom Beckett	Greener Communities
Ian Middleton	Neighbourhood Services
Rob Parkinson	Regulatory

- (5) That the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements be agreed (Annex to the Minutes, as set out in the Minute Book).

- (6) That members (and where appropriate, substitute members) be appointed to serve on each of the Committees as set out below in accordance the nominations made by political groups (Annex to the Minutes, as set out in the Minute Book).
- (7) That Councillor Walker be appointed as Cherwell District Council's representative to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2024/2025.
- (8) That Councillor Rob Pattenden be appointed as Cherwell District Council's appointed representative and Councillor David Hingley be appointed as Cherwell District Council's substitute to the Health and Wellbeing Board for the municipal year 2024/2025.
- (9) That Councillor Rob Parkinson be appointed as Cherwell District Council's appointed representative and Councillor David Hingley be appointed as Cherwell District Council's substitute to the Police and Crime Commissioner Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2024/2025.
- (10) That Councillor David Hingley be appointed as Cherwell District Council's representative and Councillor Lesley McLean be appointed as Cherwell District Council's substitute to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership for the municipal year 2024/2025.
- (11) That Councillors Besmira Brasha, John Broad and Barry Wood be appointed as Cherwell District Council's representatives to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2024/2025.
- (12) That Executive members be appointed as Cherwell District Council's representative and substitute to each of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership advisory sub-groups as set out below:

Advisory Group	Representative	Named Substitute
FOP Housing Advisory Subgroup	Councillor Chris Pruden	Councillor David Hingley
FOP Infrastructure Advisory Subgroup rep & named sub	Councillor Lesley McLean	Councillor David Hingley
FOP Environment Advisory Subgroup rep & named sub	Councillor Tom Beckett	Councillor David Hingley
FOP Planning Advisory Subgroup rep & name sub	Councillor Jean Conway	Councillor Lesley Mclean

- (13) That authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make changes required to the Constitution as a result of the changes referred to in this report.

The Assistant Director Planning and Development submitted a report to seek the making of the Deddington Neighbourhood Plan following the successful referendum and the recommendation of the Corporate Director - Communities.

Resolved

- (1) That the referendum result of 2 May 2024 where 93% of those who voted were in favour of the Deddington Neighbourhood Plan, which was above the required 50%, be noted.
- (2) That the Deddington Neighbourhood Plan be formally made so that it continues to have effect as part of the statutory Development Plan for Cherwell District.
- (3) That the Assistant Director – Planning and Development, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Planning, be authorised to issue and publicise a Decision Statement.

13 **Polling District and Polling Places Review 2024**

The Monitoring Officer & Assistant Director Law and Governance submitted a report to endorse the plans for a statutory review of polling districts and polling places within the administrative boundary of Cherwell District Council.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposed timetable for the review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations in the Cherwell district be endorsed.
- (2) That an informal cross-party Polling Place and District Boundary Review working with 9 members (3 Liberal Democrat, 2 Labour, 2 Conservative, 1 Green/Independent and 1 Independent) reflecting the political make-up of the Council and authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer & Assistant Director Law and Governance to finalise the membership in consultation with Group Leaders.

14 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 7.45 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Minute Item 11

Annex to Minutes - Proportionality Calculations

1.1 Under the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 made pursuant to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, allocations of committee seats are made to political groups and any member not in a political group is consequently not automatically entitled to seats on committees. There are no such members currently and the committee allocations take account of the Groups notified to the Chief Executive as set out below.

- Liberal Democrat Group (17 Members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor David Hingley
- Labour (13 Members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Sean Woodcock
- Conservative Group (11 Members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Eddie Reeves
- Green & Independent Alliance Group (5 Members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Ian Middleton
- Independent Group (2 Members)
 - Group Leader: Councillor Les Sibley

1.2 Allocation of Seats to Proportional Committees (*adjustments shown in italics*)

	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Conservative	Green & Ind Alliance	Independent	Total
% entitlement	35.9%	27.2%	22.8%	9.8%	4.3%	100%
Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee	3	2	2	1	0	8
Appeals Panel	4	3	2	1	0	10
Budget Planning Committee	4	3	3	1	1	12
Licensing Committee	5 (+1)	4 (+1)	2 (-1)	1	0 (-1)	12
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	4	3	3	1	1	12
Personnel Committee	4	3	3	1	1	12
Planning Committee	6	5	4	2	1	18
Standards Committee	3	2	2	1	0	8
Proportional Entitlement by Committee	32	24	22	9	5	92
Aggregate Entitlement	33	25	21	9	4	92
Adjustment Required	+1	+1	-1	0	-1	0

- 1.3 The Constitution sets out that the Planning Committee has 12 named substitutes. These appointments are not included in the main committee proportionality calculations above but the number of substitutes per Group should reflect the political makeup of the Committee with the adjustment to ensure each Group has a named substitute. Groups should appoint the number of named substitutes as set out below:
- Liberal Democrat Group - 4
 - Labour Group - 3
 - Conservative Group - 3
 - Green and Independent Alliance Group - 1
 - Independent Group - 1
- 1.4 Political Groups must have regard to the following when nominating Committee members:
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee must not include any members of the Executive
 - Personnel Committee members must include at least one member of the Executive and may not include members of the Appeals Panel
 - Appeals Panel members may not serve as members of the Personnel Committee

Annex to Minutes - Committee Appointments 2024/2025

Proportional Committees

(NB. The number in brackets indicates the number of seats for the Group on the Committee. All Group nominations are listed alphabetically by councillor surname)

Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee

Membership (8 members with unnamed substitutes who can be any member of the relevant Group. All committee members must have received training prior to attending a meeting)

Liberal Democrat (3)	Labour (2)	Conservative (2)	Green and Independent Alliance (1)	Independent (0)
Jean Conway	Dom Vaitkus	Nick Mawer	Ian Middleton	
Nick Cotter	Sean Woodcock	David Rogers		
Alisa Russell				

Appeals Panel

Membership (10 members with no substitutes – must NOT be Personnel Committee members)

Liberal Democrat (4)	Labour (3)	Conservative (2)	Green and Independent Alliance (1)	Independent (0)
Simon Lytton	Mark Cherry	Andrew McHugh	John Broad	
Julian Nedelcu	Dom Vaitkus	Kieron Mallon		
Alisa Russell	Sean Woodcock			
Dorothy Walker				

Budget Planning Committee

Membership (12 members with unnamed substitutes who can be any member of the relevant Group)

Liberal Democrat (4)	Labour (3)	Conservative (3)	Green and Independent Alliance (1)	Independent (1)
Gordon Blakeway	Matt Hodgson	Kieron Mallon	Tom Beckett	Les Sibley
Frank Ideh	Dom Vaitkus	Eddie Reeves		
Rob Parkinson	Sean Woodcock	David Rogers		
Rob Pattenden				

Licensing Committee

Membership (12 seats, with unnamed substitutes who can be any member of the relevant Group)

Liberal Democrat (5)	Labour (4)	Conservative (2)	Green and Independent Alliance (1)	Independent (0)
Gemma Coton	Rebecca Biegel	Andrew McHugh	Ian Middleton	
Nick Cotter	Besmira Brasha	Barry Wood		
Lesley McLean	Becky Clarke MBE			
Chris Pruden	Andrew Crichton			
John Willett				

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Membership (12 members with unnamed substitutes who can be any member of the relevant Group but shall not be a member of the Executive)

Liberal Democrat (4)	Labour (3)	Conservative (3)	Green and Independent Alliance (1)	Independent (1)
Gordon Blakeway	Dr Isabel Creed	Phil Chapman	John Broad	Harry Knight
Grace Conway-Murray	Andrew Crichton	Nigel Simpson		
Frank Ideh	Lynne Parsons	Barry Wood		
Simon Lytton				

Personnel Committee

Membership (12 members with unnamed substitutes who can be any member of the relevant Group but shall not be a member of the Appeals Panel)

Liberal Democrat (4)	Labour (3)	Conservative (3)	Green and Independent Alliance (1)	Independent (1)
Chris Brant	Rebecca Biegel	Phil Chapman	Fiona Mawson	Harry Knight
Gemma Coton	Lynne Parsons	Nick Mawer		
David Hingley	Amanda Watkins	Barry Wood		
Chris Pruden				

Planning Committee

Membership (18 members, 12 named substitutes. All committee members and named substitutes must have received planning training prior to attending a meeting)

Liberal Democrat (6)	Labour (5)	Conservative (4)	Green and Independent Alliance (2)	Independent (1)
Chris Brant	Rebecca Biegel	Ian Harwood	John Broad	Les Sibley
Jean Conway	Becky Clarke MBE	Andrew McHugh	Fiona Mawson	
Grace Conway-Murray	Dr Isabel Creed	David Rogers		
David Hingley	Dr Kerrie Thornhill	Barry Wood		
Lesley McLean	Amanda Watkins			
Rob Parkinson				

Named Substitutes (12 – not included in the proportionality calculations, all Groups to be represented)

Liberal Democrat (4)	Labour (3)	Conservative (3)	Green and Independent Alliance (1)	Independent (1)
Nick Cotter	Andrew Crichton	Phil Chapman	Linda Ward	Harry Knight
Rob Pattenden	Lynne Parsons	Eddie Reeves		
Dorothy Walker	Dr Chuk Okeke	Doug Webb		
John Willett				

Standards Committee

Membership (8 members with unnamed substitutes who can be any member of the relevant Group)

Liberal Democrat (3)	Labour (2)	Conservative (2)	Green and Independent Alliance (1)	Independent (0)
Nick Cotter	Andrew Crichton	Phil Chapman	Linda Ward	
Julian Nedelcu	Lynne Parsons	Barry Wood		
Dorothy Walker				