

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Council



held on Wednesday, 14 July 2021 at 7.00 pm
at the First floor, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB

Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Margaret Crick (Chair), Jerry Avery, Matthew Barber, Paul Barrow, Ron Batstone, Eric Batts, Samantha Bowering, Nathan Boyd, Cheryl Briggs, Andy Cooke, Andrew Crawford, Eric de la Harpe, Amos Duveen, Neil Fawcett, Andy Foulsham, David Grant, Debby Hallett, Jenny Hannaby, Alison Jenner, Diana Lugova, Ben Mabbett, Patrick O'Leary, Helen Pighills, Judy Roberts, Val Shaw, Emily Smith, Bethia Thomas, Max Thompson, Elaine Ware, Catherine Webber and Richard Webber

Councillors in attendance remotely (not eligible to vote): Hayleigh Gascoigne, Simon Howell, Bob Johnston, Sarah Medley and Mike Pighills

Officers: Steven Corrigan, Mark Stone (in person). Steve Culliford and Margaret Reed (remotely)

Co.15 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Maddison and Shelley.

Co.16 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2021 as a correct record and agree that the chair sign them as such.

Co.17 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest

None.

Co.18 Urgent business and chair's announcements

Co.19 Public participation

Mr Lundie asked the following question to Councillor Thomas, Cabinet member for community engagement:

It is expected that the planning committee will soon approve Valley Park in Didcot, and with it the installation of thousands of gas fired boilers. Given the declaration of the climate emergency, why is the Council still approving thousands of gas fired boilers that will need to be removed within 10 years to achieve climate change commitments, rather than mandating lower carbon alternatives?

Councillor Thomas provided the following response:

As an administration we are committed to supporting low and zero carbon options wherever possible. On our own projects we have chosen climate friendly options like the ground source heat pump recently installed in Faringdon Leisure Centre.

You will be aware that the government has proposed under the Future Homes Standard that by 2025, all new homes will be banned from installing gas and oil boilers and should instead be heated by low-carbon alternatives. Sadly, whilst we think this is too slow, it is also a matter out of our control at this time. How a building is heated is not a matter that a planning committee can consider, but instead is controlled by the building regulations.

In advance of desirable changes to that legislation our Building Control teams are promoting alternatives to developers, and making them aware of the 2025 implications, but they cannot legally prescribe this. It's really frustrating and we think government should accelerate the necessary legislation in this area to help empower local councils to make the local changes needed in response to the climate emergency.

Co.20 Petitions

In accordance with the council's petition scheme, which provides for a Council debate if a petition is signed by in excess of 500 people, Council considered a petition, which had received in excess of 1,500 signatures, calling on Vale of White Horse District Council to open the Outdoor Pool at Abbey Meadows, Abingdon and extend the opening hours. The organiser of the petition, Naomi Richardson, was unable to attend the meeting but her statement, set out below, was circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting:

"This petition was necessary because once again Abingdon came last. And don't give me the covid excuse, because...

When other outdoor pools were opening early all over the country so that people could get out and exercise in safety, so that they could feel better and keep themselves physically and mentally healthy, Abingdon Outdoor Pool stayed shut.

When shops were opening and could have done with people coming into the town centre again to access the pool and the splashers who would have then bought sandwiches, takeaways and maybe the odd birthday present, these facilities stayed shut – the splashers are still shut.

When residents asked councillors why this was happening, they all got the same bland and uninformative standard response which basically said 'it's covid's fault, stop bothering us and wait'. It is disrespectful to your voters and taxpayers to be so dismissive when they raise concerns about the provision of their services – to fob them off with a pre-prepared statement of excuses rather than answering their questions responsibly and fully and engaging.

And months did go by with the same response – no timetable, no idea of what the hold-up was about just the same old negative ‘it costs money’. Well it costs money to keep it shut as well. Wallingford pool, also operated by GLL was open and we still have had no answer why that was prioritised over Abingdon. That costs money too you know but didn’t require a petition to get it open, and neither did Hinksey pool which has already been open for months.

It seems clear that without this petition and publicity that it generated this situation would have continued for the whole summer and the pool would have remained shut for 2021.

So, are we not worth it in Abingdon, because we made it very clear that this is a unique and important part of our community and we think it’s good value for what it provides; healthy exercise, a social hub, a place for all ages and social groups to enjoy, an asset to the local economy bringing people into the town centre and somewhere that people can get to without driving, which is pretty rare. And it has the best location of any Lido; people spend a whole day in the town when they come to the pool.

And do you know of any other council anywhere that is so negative about their Lido – NO, most are proud that they have these facilities, they support them and promote them. They don’t ‘talk them down’ at every opportunity.

There is a contract, there is a budget, there is a timetable for opening. Yet, every year the council act like it is a total surprise that the pool needs to be open and the people of Abingdon have to beg to get it going. And please stop using covid as an excuse when other councils and even GLL managed to open Lidos perfectly well elsewhere.

The delays, secrecy and poor communication have bred numerous conspiracy theories as to why the pool wasn’t opened. Where did the money allocated for it go? Are GLL paid to keep it shut? Someone wants to close the pool and grab the land for a restaurant. Abingdon is only good for building houses, not providing services. It’s just going to be annexed by Oxford City anyway and that’s why the Vale don’t want to spend anything here. That’s what you get with the lack of transparency.

Now that the pool is open at last, we need to think about how to move forward.

The council need to make a commitment to promote the pool and splashers and actively support these fantastic facilities – by doing this you are supporting all of Abingdon.

There aren’t even any brown signs to the pool. No promotions or offers, no opening events, no special events such as fun sessions or triathlon training, no intensive swimming courses, no engagement with local swimming clubs or other clubs and organisations, such as Brownies, schools, etc., no corporate promotions, no pool exercise classes, no early risers’ memberships. No hook ups with local businesses offering vouchers with swims or advertising space. The season needs to be longer – this should not just be a ‘school holiday’ pool. And don’t get me going on the kiosk – what a gold mine if it were run properly.

These are all ideas that people in Abingdon have had – it does not make GLL look like a very impressive operator does it? By the way, the Better app is atrocious as well - has anyone at the Vale actually tried to use it? We get the impression that the Vale think, well that’s outsourced so nothing to do with us now even if it stays shut, and

GLL take their money and open the doors if they really have to and that is about it, so that's that.

We need to get the CEO of GLL up to Abingdon to look at the facility and learn about the town and to discuss how they are going to support the pool and push it forward. We need the full support of the Vale to promote and support these facilities. We need a comprehensive plan from the Vale and operators to manage the pool every year, and push it forward every year, seamlessly without the need for petitions, and statements like this”.

In responding to the petition Councillor Helen Pighills, Cabinet member for healthy communities and Councillor Smith, Leader of the council, thanked Naomi Richardson, and those who had signed the petition, for the petition.

Councillor Pighills responded to the petition. She noted that the petition demonstrated how important the outdoor pool at Abbey Meadow is to the local community and was reassured that the efforts the council had made to get the pool open reflected what the community wanted. By the time the petition was started in June, the council had already agreed a financial package to support GLL to ensure the pool was able to open in good time for the summer holidays and negotiations and work were underway, behind the scenes, to reopen for this season. The opening hours have been extended compared to previous seasons and will be extended further at the weekends if the weather forecast is good. The opening hours, types of sessions, and demand are already being monitored carefully and can be changed as the season progresses and as we move from a term time timetable to a school holiday one. The council has been working with GLL, the local media and the 'Lido Ladies' over the past few weeks to promote the pool and encourage people to come and use the facility and will continue to consider other ways to promote the facility and offer new activities. The council is always open to new ideas to ensure the viability of the pool especially as the council develops its Active Communities Strategy.

Councillor Smith, Leader of the council, noted that the actions the petition being presented to Council called for, were already happening. Therefore, referring it to Cabinet to discuss further did not seem a logical way forward. She advised that she had asked Councillor Pighills to work with officers to monitor demand and how the opening hours are going and was encouraged to bring any issues to her and Cabinet for discussion if they emerge.

She therefore proposed that Council:

- acknowledge the petition and the popularity of the pool at Abbey Meadow;
- note that the action requested has already been taken;
- agree that there is no need for this petition to be referred to cabinet at this time;
- note that the Leader has asked the Cabinet member for Healthy Communities to keep the opening times under review and to bring a report back to the Cabinet if at any stage that is required.

RESOLVED: to

1. acknowledge the petition and the popularity of the pool at Abbey Meadow
2. note that the action requested has already been taken
3. agree that there is no need for this petition to be referred to Cabinet at this time

4. note that the Leader has asked the Cabinet member for Healthy Communities to keep the opening times under review and to bring a report back to the Cabinet if at any stage that is required.

Co.21 Appointment of the council's monitoring officer, interim monitoring officer, electoral registration officer and returning officer

Steven Corrigan and Mark Stone left the meeting during consideration of this item as the report included recommendations to appoint them to positions within the council.

Council considered the revised report of the deputy chief executive – transformation and operations, on the appointment of a monitoring officer, an interim monitoring officer, electoral registration officer and deputy electoral registration officer and a returning officer.

Councillor Smith, Leader of the council, noted that this meeting was Margaret Reed's final Council meeting prior to her retirement. On behalf of councillors, Councillor Smith thanked her for her many years of service to the council and Vale residents. Although due to retire in 2020, Margaret had agreed to stay on for a further year to assist the council with its response to the Covid pandemic. She thanked Margaret for her support, advice and approachable manner and wished her a well-earned retirement. Council showed its appreciation with a round of applause.

RESOLVED: to

1. appoint Patrick Arran as the council's monitoring officer with effect from his taking up his role as the councils' head of legal and democratic;
2. appoint Steven Corrigan, Democratic Services Manager, as the council's monitoring officer, on an interim basis, with effect from 16 July 2021 until Patrick Arran becomes monitoring officer when he takes up his role;
3. in terms of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and all related legislation, to appoint Mark Stone as the council's electoral registration officer with effect from 16 July 2021 and agree to continue the designation of Steven Corrigan as deputy electoral registration officer;
4. that in terms of section 35 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and all related legislation to appoint Mark Stone as the council's returning officer with effect from 16 July 2021, with authority to act in that capacity for elections to the council and all or any parish and town councils within the council's area;
5. authorise the council's electoral registration officer to act in respect of all related electoral, poll or referendum duties, including in relation to county council elections, and national, regional and local polls or referendums;
6. agree that in relation to the conduct of local authority elections and polls, and elections to the United Kingdom Parliament, and all other electoral duties where the council is entitled by law to do so, the council shall take out and maintain in force insurance indemnifying the council and the returning officer against legal expenses reasonably incurred in connection with the defence of any proceedings brought against the council or the returning officer and/or the cost of holding another election in the event of the original election being declared invalid (provided that such proceedings or invalidation are the result of the

- accidental contravention of the Representation of the People Acts or other legislation governing the electoral process, or accidental breach of any ministerial or other duty by the returning officer or any other person employed by or officially acting for him in connection with the election or poll);
7. agree that in the event of such insurance carrying an 'excess' clause by which an initial portion of risk is not insured, the council will indemnify the returning officer up to the value of such excess.
 8. authorise the monitoring officer to make any consequential changes required to the Constitution to reflect these changes.

Co.22 Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel

Council was invited to appoint a representative to the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel to replace Councillor Hannaby who, following her appointment to Oxfordshire County Council's Executive, was no longer permitted to sit on the panel.

RESOLVED: to appoint Councillor Bowring to the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel.

Co.23 Report of the leader of the council

Councillor Smith, Leader of the council, provided an update on a number of matters. The text of her address is available on the council's [website](#).

Co.24 Questions on notice

1. Question from Councillor Amos Duveen, to Councillor Catherine Webber, Cabinet member for climate emergency and environment

The Arc Leaders' Environmental Principles, endorsed by Cabinet in April, includes the aim of doubling tree and woodland cover over the Ox-Cam Arc region. This ambition is echoed by Oxfordshire Friends of the Earth in their 'In case of emergency' report calling for councils to double tree cover across the county by 2045. What is this council doing to increase tree cover?

Answer

The Council is clear that tackling the climate and ecological emergency is a core focus of our work. This is why we made tackling the climate emergency a central theme of our Corporate Plan and have embedded an environmentally focused approach across everything we do.

The Vale is incredibly lucky to already have over 5000 hectares of high-quality woodland across our district.

Increasing tree cover across the Vale is an important part of our work. Wherever opportunities exist to directly and sustainably increase tree cover on Council land either by ourselves or working with partners, or by making land available to residents and community groups, to facilitate tree planting on Council land is something that we are keen to encourage and facilitate. To that end we are currently developing a new policy for planting trees on Council land. This policy will clearly set out how residents, community groups or other interested parties can work with the Council to plant the right trees, in the right places as easily and as quickly possible.

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As well as encouraging and enabling others to plant on our land, the council is always looking for impactful new initiatives we can undertake to increase tree cover. As part of our work on the Strategic Property Review, we are looking to identify sites for a pilot of a new 'Tiny Forest' scheme in the Vale. These 'Tiny Forests' were developed by Dr Akira Miyawaki in Japan and focus on maximising the benefits of tree planting per square meter of land. Comprised of over 600 trees per site, it is estimated that they attract over 500 animal and plant species within the first three years and provide a nature-rich accessible green space for people to reconnect with nature.

Not only do we want to encourage new tree planting, but we want to ensure that existing tree cover across the district is protected through the utilisation of appropriate legislation and powers, such as Tree Protection Orders.

As part of our Climate Action Plan, we will seek to advise, influence and encourage residents and landowners to plant trees on land which we do not own across the district. As Oxfordshire Friends of the Earth identify, this activity will be a marathon, not a sprint, and we will seek to ensure that wherever possible, the right types of trees are planted in the right places, thereby ensuring their longevity and supporting a sustainable, biodiverse environment for generations to come.

2. Question from Councillor Eric de la Harpe to Councillor Andy Crawford, Cabinet member for finance and corporate assets

In early May Abingdon residents reported on social media that evidence of weed-killer was seen on Vale owned land. Thanks to these posts, councillors were able to alert senior officers who then stopped the weedkiller being used with immediate effect. Can the Cabinet member inform residents what was learned from the incident and give assurances that it will not happen again?

Answer

This was a regrettable incident for which we immediately apologised, and I am happy to repeat that apology this evening. The spraying which caused concern, for example around mature trees is not usual practice and was carried out incorrectly both in Abingdon and elsewhere in the District and should like to thank those residents who brought it to our attention. We will continue to endeavour to keep the use of herbicide to an absolute minimum on land the council maintains. In some instances, for example on paved areas, in car parks and in some play areas where a strimmer is likely to damage equipment, there is currently no practicable alternative to spraying. All members of the team have been reminded as to where and when they are permitted to use spray,

The grounds maintenance team has been in house since November 2020 and during the first 8 months we have concentrated on settling the team in and we are now planning phase two of the project. This will include mapping the wild-flower areas which we currently manage, reviewing the number for grass cuts per season which have already been reduced, and considering how each area of land is best managed taking into consideration ecological and health and safety needs. We will also be investigating environmentally safer alternatives to the herbicide currently used.

3. Question from Councillor Elaine Ware to Councillor Emily Smith, Leader of the council

At the 24 March 2021 meeting Council agreed the amended motion on health provision and for officers to contact Clinical Commissioning Group's to arrange meetings and for the Leader to write to the Ministers for Health and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Has this been done and if so when was contact made and what meetings have or are due to take place? What responses have been received from Ministers and MHCLG?

Answer

Following the motion on health provision agreed by Council at the meeting on 24 March 2021, I, as council leader, supported by officers, met with Directors for the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) on 24 May 2021. A meeting is still in the process of being arranged with Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group.

The discussion with OCCG included discussion of how population forecasts are used to plan healthcare requirements in the district and how the council can improve working with the CCG to ensure healthcare needs are included in S106 agreements and ensuring the associated monies are spent in a timely manner.

Following that meeting, officers have put in place regular meetings with the OCCG to maintain these discussions and to provide an opportunity to discuss particular site issues.

Also, at my meeting OCCG agreed to make a presentation for all councillors to explain how they operate and propose future reforms to help us in our work on behalf of communities.

In relation to the letters to the Ministers for Health and MHCLG, these have been drafted but not yet sent pending further discussions with the CCGs.

Supplementary question and answer

In response to a supplementary question, Councillor Smith confirmed that it was a coincidence that the invite for a councillor briefing with the OCCG, scheduled for 7 September, was issued today and not as a result of Councillor Ware's question. She would look into progress on the drafting of the letters to ministers, shared the concerns about the health care situation in the district which she raised at relevant meetings, would ensure councillors were updated and offered to update Councillor Ware on progress on a meeting date with the Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group.

4. Question from Councillor Eric Batts to Councillor Helen Pighills, Cabinet member for healthy communities

In the recent press release with a big splash of opening the Abbey Meadow pool, and stating that:

"We promised we would do everything we could to get the pool opened as soon as possible, as we know how popular it is with families, particularly over the summer. I'm so pleased that we've been able to pull out all the stops to achieve this"

Would Councillor Pighills please advise what this entailed and why it was the last pool in the area to open?

Answer

The agreement to open the outdoor pool has been reached through ongoing negotiation of the Council's Covid-19 Leisure Support Package, as approved by the

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Vale of White Horse District Council on 24 March 2021. Member colleagues will appreciate that I am not in a position to cover this detail here as these negotiations are commercially confidential, however according to the minutes, Councillor Batts participated in that March Council meeting when this support package was agreed by members.

It is not the case that the Abbey Meadow outdoor pool is the last to open in the area. For example, another GLL operated open air pool at Woodstock (West Oxfordshire) is not yet open and no opening date has been published.

5. Question from Councillor Nathan Boyd to Councillor Catherine Webber, Cabinet member for climate emergency and environment

Would the Cabinet member provide an update on the garden waste service in respect of a) the number of weeks the non-provision of service was experienced, b) the number of weeks lost not being able to take on new customers and the reason for this, and c) what is the estimated loss of income from the inability to take on new customers and the current waiting list?

Answer

The Garden Waste Service has been impacted by two key issues this year 1) the impact of the Covid pandemic and 2) the complexity of insourcing the exchequer service and finance systems from Capita from 1 April 2021.

From the start of the pandemic, our key focus was to prioritise the most critical elements of the waste service: Food, Residual, Recycling. During the first wave, we kept the garden waste service running and worked positively with our contractor Biffa to ensure they understood our priorities and in turn we were appraised of the issues they were facing.

During the second wave of the pandemic, at one point Biffa had 28 staff members who are not able to work due to Covid. We agreed to suspend the garden waste service after Christmas and reviewed the decision weekly. The service re-commenced on 15 February 2021 in Vale, as expected increased volumes were collected by the crew which caused some delays, all collections were completed within the first week. This resulted in the majority of residents having two weeks of non-service provision on top of the usual Christmas suspension. (Friday collection properties missed three weeks).

More recently, we have suspended the service to new Garden Waste (GW) customers for seven weeks as part of upgrading the finance systems and establishing the new in-house exchequer team, part of which involved learning how the garden waste back office system worked. This has meant that overall we have not been able to manage new customers in the normal way for 23 weeks. This led to a backlog of approximately 2,500 customers for South and Vale and therefore we had income of £128,750 pending across both councils.

The new in-house exchequer team inherited a backlog of finance and garden waste queries and as part of the process they agreed with the waste team that core finance processing (including paying suppliers) would be prioritised and set up first. In response to the delay the exchequer, waste and customer services teams agreed a plan to clear the backlog which was estimated to take approximately six to eight weeks to complete, commencing on 17 May. It is only fair to clarify that this backlog

has not been caused by Biffa and they are lined up to deliver the new bins as soon as we are ready. We have also not paid Biffa to collect from customers who are not set up on the system. To date 1,017 new customers have now been set up and we have emailed all customers on the backlog inviting them to register for the service.

Anyone who wishes to register their interest in joining the garden waste service may do so on the website, without joining a waiting list.

Supplementary question and answer

In response to a supplementary question, Councillor Webber undertook to investigate the issue of residents on a new housing development being issued with a brown garden waste bin but refused waste and recycling wheelie bins at their properties due to health and safety issues and planning constraints. She would also ensure the criteria for issuing brown bins is clarified for both customers and officers to address this anomaly.

6. Question from Councillor Simon Howell to Councillor Bethia Thomas, Cabinet member for community engagement

Following the launch of the White Horse Community Lottery on 14 June would the Cabinet Member provide an update on the success of the launch and how many organisations expressed an interest and signed up?

Answer

Of the 32 organisations that attended our lottery launch event, we are pleased that 26 have already registered to join it. The launch is just one part of our plans to get as many good causes registered at possible. We're still on track for tickets to go on sale from end of July, and the first draw is scheduled for 18 of September. Players and good causes can still continue to sign up at any point thereafter.

Co.25 Motions on notice

A. Councillor Andy Crawford moved, and Councillor Ron Batstone seconded, the motion as set out in the agenda at item 11 A

Amendment

Councillor Mabbett moved, and Councillor Boyd seconded, an amendment to add "our members of parliament", prior to "local councillors" in the first line of the motion, in recognition of the work undertaken by the current members of parliament.

With the agreement of Council, the mover and seconder of the motion accepted the amendment.

After debate and on being put to the vote the motion was agreed.

RESOLVED: to note that our members of parliament, local councillors and residents have campaigned for many years to get Grove Station reopened yet this much needed station remains unfunded.

Council notes that:

- Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study demonstrates that a station at Grove/Wantage can be justified by 2028 on the basis of the new housing currently being built or being planned for in the area and emerging proposals for further employment growth, including the Williams Technology Campus.
- A report published by SLC Rail in 2018 considered a station at Grove to be “high value for money” within the Department for Transport’s Value for Money Assessment.
- local councillors have successfully pushed for Network Rail to electrify the line in a way that did not impede the reopening of the line through Grove.
- local councillors have helped ensure the new bridge over the railway line at Grove was constructed in such a way as not to impede a reopening.
- Investment in rail is an essential part of decarbonising transport and reducing dependence on the personal car.
- progress on this project is being delayed by the failure of Government to provide funding to progress the project to the next stage.
- even if funding to develop the proposal further is awarded, the source of funding to deliver Grove station is uncertain.

Council reiterates our commitment to ensuring Grove Station is reopened.

This Council therefore calls upon the Leader to:

- write to the Secretary of State for Transport to make the case for funding Grove Station to be part of the current round of government grants to help develop proposals for new stations.
- ask the Secretary of State for Transport for a commitment for the station to be delivered as soon as possible.
- continue to make the case for Grove Station at the Oxfordshire, Ox-Cam Arc meetings, and in conversations with our two Members of Parliament.

B. Councillor Debby Hallett moved, and Councillor David Grant seconded, the motion as set out in the agenda at item 11 B

After debate and on being put to the vote the motion was agreed.

RESOLVED: to note that:

1. the UK Government has declared a legally binding target for the UK to be carbon neutral by 2050 and committed to achieving the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
2. this council has declared a Climate Emergency and adopted targets to be carbon neutral by 2030, with a target for the district to be carbon neutral by 2045.
3. the ‘Oxfordshire Strategic Vision’, adopted by all Oxfordshire Councils, articulates countywide shared aims and guiding principles for sustainable growth.
4. there are a number of consultations on spatial planning documents happening this summer that will impact on our ability to achieve the above targets and our corporate plan objectives.

Council believes that:

1. achieving our carbon reduction targets and realising the ‘Oxfordshire Strategic Vision’ for the district cannot be met without working effectively with partners across Oxfordshire, the region and beyond.
2. our emerging Joint Local Plan, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, the government’s Oxford to Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework, and any other plans for growth

- and development, are opportunities to help the world in its critical response to the climate emergency and efforts towards carbon neutrality.
3. we are in a position to gather evidence to contribute to and influence policy decisions as part of key local, regional and national consultations.
 4. we should aim to achieve those United Nations' 17 SDGs.
 5. there are critical sustainability challenges facing Oxfordshire that must be addressed; examples of these include:
 - a. water supply
 - b. Renewable Energy supply
 - c. reducing carbon emissions from existing homes through retrofitting
 - d. funding infrastructure required to support planned development.
 - e. decarbonising transport and reducing the need to travel
 - f. Identifying appropriate and sustainable levels of growth, and housing

Council therefore requests that:

1. officers ensure the challenges listed above are addressed through policy development and consultations, including:
 - a. policies in the emerging Vale of White Horse District Council-South Oxfordshire District Council Joint Local Plan and Design Guide
 - b. this council submitting a response to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 consultation, and continued active engagement with the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 work
 - c. this council submitting a response to the government's consultation on their Ox-Cam Arc Vision and subsequent consultations on the Arc Spatial Framework
 - d. any other consultation that comes forward from neighbouring authorities, regions or the government that affects local and regional planning
 2. officers ensure council's position is communicated effectively in print and social media.
 3. the council Leader and relevant cabinet members continue to advocate for these issues to be addressed at meetings of the Oxfordshire Growth Board and the Ox-Cam Arc Leaders Group (which is attended by a Civil Servant from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government)
- C. Councillor Neil Fawcett moved, and Councillor Max Thompson seconded, the motion as set out in the agenda at item 11 C**

Whilst the majority of councillors supported the motion, a number expressed the view that Council should await the publication of the full proposals before agreeing a position. A deferral of the motion would allow for an informed debate. However, contrary to this the view was expressed that the White Paper asked for comments and therefore the Council should submit a consultation response.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 67, which provides for a recorded vote if three members request one, the chair called for a recorded vote on the motion which was declared carried with the voting as follows:

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Co.12

For	Against	Abstentions
Councillors	Councillors	Councillors
Jerry Avery		Matthew Barber
Paul Barrow		Eric Batts
Ron Batstone		Nathan Boyd
Samantha Bowring		Ben Mabbett
Cheryl Briggs		Elaine Ware
Andy Cooke		
Andrew Crawford		
Margaret Crick		
Eric de la Harpe		
Amos Duveen		
Neil Fawcett		
Andy Foulsham		
David Grant		
Debby Hallett		
Jenny Hannaby		
Alison Jenner		
Diana Lugova		
Patrick O'Leary		
Helen Pighills		
Judy Roberts		
Val Shaw		
Emily Smith		
Bethia Thomas		
Max Thompson		
Catherine Webber		
Richard Webber		
Total: 26	Total: 0	Total: 5

RESOLVED: to note that

- the Government's proposals to reform the English Planning system which will significantly reduce the public's right to influence planning applications.
- the significant and growing concerns being expressed about the proposals across local councils, MPs of all parties and across planning, architectural and environmental organisations.
- local residents' concerns about their reduced ability to object to building works under Permitted Development Rights which have been extended under this Government.
- The Local Government Association has identified that more than 1million homes that have planning permission that are not yet built, including a significant number in the Vale.
- that councils across England approve nine in ten planning applications.
- the need to deliver more genuinely affordable housing for sale and rent.

Council is concerned that:

- the proposed planning reforms are trying to solve the wrong problem. In the Vale we are already approving applications for housing at a higher rate than needed to hit government ambition of 300,000 new homes a year.
- the proposed planning reforms will significantly reduce public input into the planning process, leaving communities feeling that development is being done to them, not with them.
- the proposed Planning reforms will make it more difficult for councils to ensure the homes that are built are genuinely affordable for local people.

Council calls for the Government to:

- scrap the current proposals for planning reform.
- undertake a review of permitted development rights.
- maintain the right of local residents to engage and comment on individual planning applications.
- support the right of local people, through robust Neighbourhood and Local Plan processes, to influence how their communities develop.
- enable councils to set strong local planning policies to maximise protection for the environment and reduce carbon emissions.

and asks the Leader to write to the Secretary of State and our local Members of Parliament to this effect.

Co.26 Exclusion of the public

RESOLVED: to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business under Part 1 of Schedule 12A Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 on the grounds that:

- (i) it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and
- (ii) the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Co.27 Affordable Housing and Oxfordshire Growth Deal - Heylo Housing

Council considered Cabinet's recommendation, made at its meeting on 28 May 2021, on a proposal for funding through the Oxfordshire Growth Deal and S106 affordable housing commuted sums to support the development of an affordable housing scheme by Heylo Housing of up to 45 affordable homes for low cost home ownership in Vale.

The Cabinet member for development and infrastructure reported that the scheme would provide 45 affordable homes of various sizes and in various locations across the Vale. They would be available for shared ownership—part buy/part rent—to make them more affordable. The shared ownership would be available from as low as 25

per cent, rising to 75 per cent. All information about the scheme and the shared ownership would be published to the council's website.

Cabinet had supported the proposal, as it would provide a mix of house types in several locations. Cabinet had noted that the Growth Deal funding was insufficient to cover the whole cost but agreed to use affordable housing commuted sums from section 106 agreements in the district to cover the necessary costs. The scheme would also provide prospective homeowners with a 25 per cent shared ownership option but allowed a higher ownership percentage if preferred. Cabinet had welcomed the proposal and recommended Council create the necessary budget.

RESOLVED: to create a capital budget of £1,882,800 towards the Heylo Housing project for the acquisition of 45 dwellings to be made available for 'part buy/part rent' home ownership, comprising a virement of £1,491,400 from the existing capital budget for growth deal affordable housing and funded by the Growth Deal, and £391,400 from Section 106 (S106) affordable housing commuted sums of which £366,400 is direct project funding, and £25,000 towards legal and finance fees.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm