

## Notice of a meeting of the

### **Personnel and Administration Committee**

5<sup>th</sup> August 2024 at 7.30pm

Park Room, Didcot Civic Hall



All members of the Personnel and Administration Committee are summoned to attend this meeting for the transaction of the business on the agenda.

#### **Admission of the public and media**

The Council welcomes members of the public to its meetings in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting) Act 1960.

#### **Reports and minutes**

We add reports and minutes to our website.

#### **Recording, photographs and filming**

The press or public may audio-record, photograph or film meetings, or report from the meeting using social media. As such members of the public may be recorded or photographed during the meeting.

We ask that anyone wishing to record or photograph the meeting notifies the Town Clerk before the start of the meeting.

#### **Public participation**

The Council welcomes the public's involvement in meetings, which must be in accordance with our rules (Standing Orders 30-32 on a matter before the Committee).

At the relevant time during the meeting, the Chair will invite members of the public to present their questions and statements. To contact the Town Clerk, please email – [jwheeler@didcot.gov.uk](mailto:jwheeler@didcot.gov.uk)

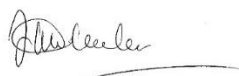
# Agenda

1. To receive apologies
2. To receive declarations of interest  
Members should declare any interests they may have on any item on this agenda in accordance with Didcot Town Council's code of conduct.
3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024 as a true record – *see minutes attached*
4. Questions on the minutes as to the progress of any items.
5. To note the amends in the staff handbook – *see attached document*.
6. To recommend to full Council support of the bid by Wallingford Radio for a licence to cover the Didcot and wider area – *see attached emails*.
7. To recommend to full Council adoption of the Oxfordshire Councils Charter – *see attached Charter and email*.
8. To consider activities to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day – *for discussion*.
9. Progress Report – *see attached*

## 10. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 the committee will be asked to exclude the press and public from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

11. To receive a staffing report including overview of senior appraisal reports – *report attached*.



**Janet Wheeler**  
**Town Clerk**  
30<sup>th</sup> July 2024

### Voting Committee members:

Cllr C Jennings (Chair)      Cllr J Loder (Deputy Chair)  
Cllr H Macdonald              Cllr D Macdonald      Cllr G Ryall

### Nominated substitute Committee members:

Cllr T Worgan                      Cllr O Glover              Cllr L Hislop  
Cllr D Guerra Aragao              Cllr M Khan

## Didcot Town Council

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# Personnel and Administration Committee

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024 at 7.30pm  
All Saints Room, Didcot Civic Hall



## Minutes

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of this committee.

### Councillors

C Jennings (Acting Chair)  
J Loder (Acting Deputy Chair)  
D Macdonald  
H Macdonald  
M Khan (Sub for Cllr G Ryall)

### Officers:

Mrs J Wheeler (Town Clerk)

#### 1. Nominations for the Chair of the Personnel & Administration Committee

Cllr J Loder nominated Cllr C Jennings as Chair of the Personnel & Administration Committee. This was seconded by Cllr H Macdonald. There being no further nominations, Cllr C Jennings was duly elected.

#### 2. Nominations for the Deputy Chair of the Personnel & Administration Committee

Cllr C Jennings nominated Cllr J Loder for the position of Deputy Chair. This was seconded by Cllr H Macdonald. There being no further nominations, Cllr J Loder was duly elected.

#### 3. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr G Ryall. Cllr M Khan was subbing for this meeting.

#### 4. Declarations of interest

None declared.

#### 5. To review the Terms of Reference for the Personnel & Administration Committee

The Terms of Reference were reviewed by the Committee and it was RESOLVED to accept the terms with no amendments. The vote was unanimous.

**6. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

It was proposed by Cllr H Macdonald and seconded by Cllr D Macdonald and RESOLVED to approve the minutes as a true record. The vote was unanimous.

**7. Questions on the Minutes**

There was a query on project management training. The Town Clerk confirmed that it was delegated to officers to tailor this training to project management specific for Didcot. The trainer had a good reputation but the course would need to be worked in with current everyday workloads.

**8. To review the list of outside bodies and working groups – deferred from the Annual Meeting**

The Leader, Cllr Chris Jennings, requested that this list was deferred from the Annual Meeting. He spoke of the desire to establish working relationships with key stakeholders in the town. It was unclear which groups he wanted to build a relationship with. Cllr Jennings spoke of service level agreements with these groups. Cllr H Macdonald wanted to see a report or up-date on what each outside body is doing.

**9. To reconsider the long service recognition scheme**

The Town Clerk gave an up-date of the work completed on this item since it first came on the agenda around a year ago. After further debate it was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND the following:

1<sup>st</sup> five years of service – voucher for £50 and letter of thanks

1<sup>st</sup> ten years of service – voucher for £100 and letter of thanks

1<sup>st</sup> twenty years of service – voucher for £200 and letter of thanks

Twenty-five years of service – a bespoke medal in appreciation of long service. The cost of the medal would be in the region of £398.86 each plus a first time cost of £748.

We have on member of staff who has been working with us for 28 years. There was no decision on whether and how to recognise his thirty years when he achieves this.

Total value of the awards would be:

**2024 - £1050**

Nine staff at five years @ £50 = £450

Two staff at ten years @ £100 = £200

Two staff at twenty years @ £200 = £400

**2025 - £50** – for one member of staff at five years.

Two medals would be made for two staff at twenty five years at a cost of approx..  
**£1,545.72** – inc one off cost of **£748** to make the die.

**10. To review a draft policy on banning live pets as prizes on DTC land**

The draft Policy was discussed. It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND this Policy for approval at full Council.

**11. To review amendments on the cemetery rules**

The Committee RESOLVED to amend points 3 and 20 of the Memorial Policy for Kynaston Road to the following:

Point 3 – *“All memorial work in the cemetery must be undertaken by a BRAMM or RQMF registered memorial mason on a date agreed with the Outdoor Services Manager.”*

Point 20 – *“All memorials must be fixed, or re-fixed in accordance with the National Association of Memorial Masons Recommended Code of Working Practice and all work must be undertaken by memorial masons who are registered on the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM) or the Register of Qualified Memorial Fixers (RQMF)”.*

The vote was unanimous.

## **12. To review the Ladygrove Lakes Fishing Association renewal**

The previous agreement expired on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2024. The Committee reviewed the new agreement and Officers' comments. It was minuted the hard work of Cllr Jim Broadbent to work with the Fishing Association and to help improve relations with DTC. The following was recommended:

- Agreement period - five years
- All hard landscaping must be carried out by DTC staff – however the members are welcome to work with the Council staff
- Any general maintenance work should in the first instance be carried out by DTC staff – however permission on a job-by-job basis may be given subject to risk assessments and competence of the fishing club member wishing to do the work. The reason is that the Ladygrove Lakes is a public facility.
- DTC is liable for all works carried out at the lakes and therefore must control what is done and when.
- The request for annual income to cover running costs is vague and a detailed costing of what the club needs the money for needs to be presented. The Club already receives the cost of the day tickets and entrance money for the fishing competitions held once a month.
- The Cefas Fish Health and Inspectorate registration must remain under DTC to ensure the fish stock in the first instance.
- In emergency situations, the Fishing Club should make the situation known to DTC officers and take action but not put themselves in danger by doing so.
- DTC will pay for the DBS checks for the water bailiffs. DBS checks to be renewed every three years.

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND the new agreement to full Council with the above clarified.

## **13. To approve a quote of £750 for Councillor training from OALC**

It was AGREED to confirm the training on an annual basis to help members to progress their skills whilst being a Town Councillor.

## **14. Progress report**

The Committee reviewed the progress report. The employee handbook was still with the HR consultant. Other items were ongoing and would be reported on once resolved.

**15. Exclusion of the press and public**

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**16. To receive a Staffing Report**

The Town Clerk presented the staff report. Cllr H Macdonald spoke to say that there would be some administrative work from the Neighbourhood Plan but he did not consider it to be excessive. There was a discussion on the additional workload of new working groups and also the opening of the splash park.

The Town Clerk proposed a potential new full time position of Environment and Estate Officer. The idea was to help the estate team to cover the new properties of the splash park and Northbrook when this opens next year. The position would also take on some of the Deputy Town Clerk's work on the Environment Committee to allow her time to take on more of the Town Clerk's work.

The Committee agreed in principle but wanted a re-work of the advert and job description with perhaps a different title. It was **AGREED** to refer this to the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee to review the staffing budget.

The rest of the staffing report was noted.

The meeting closed at 8.24pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chair Date \_\_\_\_\_

## EXTRACT FROM EMPLOYEES HANDBOOK.

If an emergency occurs and it is not possible for you to inform your manager in advance of any absence you should contact your manager as soon as possible to inform them of the situation. Appropriate arrangements may then be put in place.

If you suffer some other personal emergency you should talk to the town clerk who will discuss what arrangements can be made to grant you compassionate leave. These arrangements will always be at the discretion of the Council and will depend on the circumstances of the case and the impact that any absence on your part may have on the business. However, the Council will be sympathetic to your need for time off (which may be paid or unpaid at our discretion) to deal with the situation and make any arrangements that may be necessary.

**Carers Leave**

Employees are entitled to up to 4 weeks unpaid leave per annum to care for a Dependent with long term care needs.

Request can be for the whole 4 weeks at one time or in separate weeks, as well as individual or half days.

Requests to take this leave must be made in writing, giving the Company/Council at least twice as much notice as the amount of leave requested.

If the Company/Council is unable to accommodate the dates requested, the Employee will be informed before it was due to begin and it will be rescheduled by mutual agreement within one month of the initial Employee request.

The Council/Company recognises a dependent for the purposes of this leave as an Employees child, partner, parent of other member of the immediate family who has long term care needs.



### 3.9 Annual Leave

Your individual holiday entitlement, including the calculation of any holiday pay, is set out in your contract of employment. This section of the handbook outlines the general approach taken by the Council to requests for annual leave.

Full time staff, working 37 hours per week on a five day working pattern, are entitled to 23 days plus 4 statutory (1 to be taken at Christmas/New Year) for up to 5 years' service and 26 days plus 4 statutory (1 to be taken at Christmas/New Year) for 5 years' service and above. They are also entitled to the following bank holidays each year:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Early May
- Spring (normally late May)
- Summer (normally late August)
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

The Council offices normally close for the Christmas/New Year period, during dates agreed at an appropriate Personnel and Administration meeting.

Staff are advised that they may need to use annual leave to cover the Christmas/New Year period and should take this into account at the start of each leave year. Staff that do not have sufficient leave to cover the period will be required to work normal hours during the appropriate days.

Any staff not on duty or attending work on normal working days during the Christmas/New Year are to cover the days with leave or lieu.

Staff working less than 37 hours per week, or those not on a five day working week, are entitled to an appropriate proportion of the above entitlement based on number of hours worked and days worked. The entitlement may be shown in hours rather than days.

All requests for leave should be submitted in writing on the absence request form, to the appropriate Line Manager/Supervisor. Completed forms are then to be passed to the main Council office for recording.

The minimum amount of annual leave that may be taken at any one time is a half day or hourly equivalent.

Any requests for leave that are refused by the Line Manager/Supervisor are to be reported to the Town Clerk, with reasons, as soon as possible.



You should not make firm travel plans or commitments until a request for leave has been granted and the Council will not take such plans into account when dealing with conflicting holiday requests.

Further, no more than two consecutive weeks' holiday can be taken at one time. In certain circumstances, and at the discretion of the business, a longer period may be permitted. If this is required, you should discuss this with the town clerk, to establish whether this can be accommodated.

#### **What notice do I need to give?**

All requests for leave should be made as early as possible (with a minimum notice of the same number of days leave). The means of requesting leave may change from time to time and you should comply with whatever procedure is in place at the time of the request.

Your manager may refuse any request for leave if it would result in the workplace being understaffed or otherwise prejudice the business. Leave is likely to be refused if it is requested for a particularly busy period or a time when other employees have already had leave approved.

Certain times of year are particularly popular times for requesting holiday. Generally, subject to the needs of the business, leave will be granted on a first come first served basis, but exceptions may be made in the interests of ensuring that holiday is spread through the year on a fair and equitable basis.

#### **Our Holiday Year**

All employees are encouraged to take their full holiday entitlement during the holiday year which runs from 01 April to 31 March. However it is your responsibility to schedule your holiday so that it can be taken at an appropriate time.

Employees will not usually be permitted to carry over holiday entitlement into the following holiday year.

In certain circumstances, at the Council's discretion and subject to certain rules, the carrying over of up to 5 days annual leave may be allowed.

Employees who leave their employment during the course of a holiday year will be entitled to a pro-rata payment reflecting leave accrued but not taken. Where an employee has, at the time their employment ends, taken a larger proportion of their leave entitlement than the proportion of the holiday year that has expired, then a deduction will be made from the final payment of salary to reflect the holiday which has been taken but not accrued.

The Council may insist on annual leave being taken at particular times depending on the needs of the business and these are set out in your contract of employment. We will give reasonable notice of any such requirement (the length of the notice given will be at least twice the duration of the leave the Council requires the employee to take).

The Council may require annual leave to be taken during the notice period of any employee who has resigned or been dismissed.

#### **HOLIDAY PAY**

**PLEASE DELETE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TWO OPTIONS:**

#### **OPTION 1**

Holiday pay is calculated on the basis of an Employee's average earnings over a 52 week period. Employees are required to take 7/7.6 weeks paid leave per annum, during which they will be paid holiday pay based on their average weekly earnings for the 52 weeks leading up to the start of their leave.

#### **OPTION 2**

Holiday pay is calculated at 12.07% of the Gross Pay for any given pay period, and added to the Employees' weekly / monthly wage.

Payslips will identify the amount of holiday pay paid in each pay period under a separate budget heading.

**Please note** Employees are required to take 5.6 weeks paid leave during the year, however they will receive no holiday pay for their time off, as that has already been paid to them in their weekly wage.

### **3.10 Reserve Forces**

The Council supports employees who are also member of the reserve forces. Such employees have specific entitlements relating to time off including arrangements for them returning to work after a period of deployment. Employees who are members of the reserve forces or who are considering joining should discuss the implications with their line manager.

### **3.11 Time off in Lieu (TOIL)**

TOIL is to be specifically authorised by an employee's line manager in circumstances where a recognised and justifiable need exists. TOIL should be taken as soon as possible after the period in which it has been worked, and during the leave year no more than 3 days equivalent TOIL is to be carried over from any six month period to the next. TOIL may not be carried over from one leave year to the next unless specifically authorised by the Town Clerk.

Any absence which does not comply with the provisions of your contract of employment relating to holidays or sickness or which has not been expressly authorised by the Council in advance shall be regarded as an unauthorised absence and will result in disciplinary action being taken.



# 4

## FLEXIBLE WORKING AND FAMILY RELATED LEAVE

*The Council understands the particular issues faced by employees trying to balance their work and family life. This section sets out the Council's policies in this area and the specific rights given to new parents.*

### 4.1 Flexible Working

Employees are able to request changes to their start and finish times, amount of working hours each week and where they work from day one of their employment.

The Council will not be obliged to accept this request; however refusal will be based on one or more of the following:

1. The additional costs to the Council.
2. Reduced ability to meet the needs of the Council, its Members and the public.
3. Inability to share the person's workload amongst other staff.
4. Potentially damaging effects upon the quality of work produced.
5. Potentially damaging effects upon performance.
6. Inability to recruit extra staff to provide cover.

Employees are able to submit up to two requests within a rolling twelve month period. Requests must be submitted to either the clerk or Chair of the relevant Committee/Full Council. Requests to change working hours must be made in writing.

Upon receipt of a request the Council will initiate a two to three week consultation period with the Employee to assess how their request impacts on the six points detailed above.

Should the outcome of the consultation process be to reject the Employee's request for one or more of the above six statutory reasons, the Employee is able to appeal to the Chair of the Full Council.

The process of addressing a request and providing a written response should take no more than two months.

### 4.2 Maternity Leave

All employees who give birth are entitled to take maternity leave which lasts for a maximum of 52 weeks. Employees with at least six months' service immediately before the 15th week prior to the expected week of childbirth will also be entitled to be paid Statutory Maternity pay (SMP) for up to 39 weeks of their absence. Because this is a statutory payment there are a number of procedural requirements that must be met in order to make sure that an employee qualifies. The most important requirements are set out below, but if you have any doubts about the rules that apply you should speak to a member of the management team who will make sure that you have all the appropriate information.

#### Notification



Unless you give due notice to the Council of an earlier date of return, it will be assumed that you intend to take your full 52-week entitlement and you will not be expected back at work before your leave ends. You do not then have to give any notice of your return although it would be sensible to contact your manager some time in advance to discuss any arrangements that may need to be made.

At the end of your maternity leave you are generally entitled to return to the same job as you had before your leave began. If you are away for more than 26 weeks, however, there may be circumstances in which that is not reasonably practicable. In that case, the Council will provide you with a suitable and appropriate role at the same level of seniority and on no-less favourable terms and conditions.

### **Dismissal or Resignation**

While on maternity leave you remain employed by the Council and bound by your contract of employment. If you decide that you want to leave your employment you will need to submit your resignation in the normal way.

The Council will not dismiss you for any reason related to your pregnancy or your exercise of any right which arises from it. However, if separate circumstances require your dismissal (for instance, because of redundancy) then that will bring your maternity leave to an end.

If your position becomes redundant during your maternity leave then you will be offered any suitable alternative work that is available. Employees on or returning from Maternity/Adoption leave will be given priority option of being appointed to any suitable alternative positions for up to 18 months following the birth/adoption of their child.

### **Enhanced Maternity Pay**

The Council offers enhanced maternity pay in line with the provisions of the Green book. An employee who meets the other qualifying criteria listed in this policy, and who have more than one year's continuous service at the point of the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth will be entitled to enhanced Maternity pay as follows:

- 6 weeks' leave payable at 90% of normal pay;
- 12 weeks' leave payable at 50% of normal pay, plus Statutory Maternity Pay at the relevant rate; (capped at 100% of normal pay) and
- 21 weeks' leave payable at the relevant rate of SMP

NB: Normal pay includes all earnings that would be paid during a period of normal working, but excluding any payments not made on a regular basis.

Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) is paid to employees who have at least 26 weeks' service immediately before the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth and whose pay is above the Lower Earnings Limit for paying National Insurance Contributions (this changes each year). Employees who earn below that amount may be entitled to a state benefit called Maternity Allowance. The Council will provide you with an appropriate form to help you claim this, where appropriate.

To pay SMP, the Council needs to be given at least 28 days' notice that you intend to claim it. This will normally be given when you inform the Council of your intended start date for maternity leave. If it is not possible to give 28 days' notice, you should give as much notice as is reasonably practicable.

- 21 weeks' leave payable at the relevant rate of SAP

NB: Normal pay includes all earnings that would be paid during a period of normal working, but excluding any payments not made on a regular basis.

#### **Returning to Work Following Adoption Leave**

Your return to work at the end of your adoption leave is on the same basis as for the end of maternity leave (set out above).

### **4.4 Paternity Leave**

#### **Paternity Leave**

New Fathers with more than six months continuous employment are entitled to two weeks paid Paternity Leave, paid at the same rate as SMP. This can be taken as a period of a fortnight or two separate periods of one week.

This leave must be taken within the first 52 weeks of the child's birth.

Employees are required to show the Company's Management a relevant MATB1 when making a request to take this leave, and must provide at least 28 days prior notice.

### **4.5 Parental Leave**

Parental leave is a flexible form of unpaid leave designed to help employees spend time caring for their children. Parental leave can be taken up until the child's 18th birthday and is available to employees who have at least one year's service and who have formal parental responsibility for a child.

The basic entitlement is to 18 weeks of unpaid leave in respect of each child.

Parental leave must usually be taken in blocks of one week or more and no more than four weeks' leave will be granted in a single year. However, more flexibility is available in respect of disabled children and you should discuss your requirements with the Town Clerk if this applies to you.

A request to take parental leave should be submitted 21 days in advance. While the Council will always try to accommodate requests for parental leave, it has the right to postpone any leave for up to six months in order to accommodate business need.

No postponement will be required if you choose to take your first instalment of leave immediately after the birth or adoption of your child. In such circumstances you need only inform the Council of your intention 21 days before the expected date of birth or placement. The leave will then begin automatically when your child is born or placed with you.

Parental leave is an entitlement that can be transferred from one employment to another. You may therefore join the Council with some outstanding parental leave attaching to a particular child. In such circumstances you should be aware that the qualifying period for taking parental leave still applies and you will need to have been employed for at least one year before you can resume taking parental leave.

### **4.6 Shared Parental Leave**



The Council reserves the right not to follow these procedures in full for employees who are within their first two years of employment with the Council.

### 5.3 Disciplinary & Grievance Procedure

#### Informal Grievances-

If you are unhappy with an element of your employment with the Council, you should initially discuss the matter with the Clerk/Chair of Personnel on an informal basis.

If you are uncomfortable about talking to the Clerk/Chair of Personnel, you should approach the Chair of the Council.

#### Employee Conduct / Performance-

Should the Council be unhappy with either your conduct or performance, they will initially discuss their concerns with you on an informal basis.

The purpose of this meeting will be to provide guidance and support to address the problem. For this reason, notes will be taken during this meeting, and all present will be asked to sign the notes.

A Panel from the Personnel Committee and the Clerk will attend this meeting. There will be no entitlement to be accompanied.

#### Mediation-

In the event that an Employee is unhappy with the outcome of the Informal Grievance Procedure, or either party do not feel that performance / conduct issues are being addressed effectively, either the Clerk or the Council request that the matter be subjected to mediation.

This will involve the use of a third party Mediator. In its simplest form, Mediation will involve the Mediator talking to either party individually, to listen to their side of the issue. If the Mediator feels that a resolution to the problem is possible, a meeting will be arranged between all parties at which the Mediator will set out their assessment of the issues and invite both parties to reach their own resolution.

The resultant action plan should have the agreement and support of both parties, be set out in writing and be signed by all involved in the Mediation process.

#### Formal Grievances-

In the case of Grievances not being fully resolved at the informal stage, a formal written approach is required to the Council. As a consequence, a formal Grievance Hearing will be held to address the matter, within twenty-eight days of receipt of the Employee's letter.

The Hearing will be conducted by a Panel of between two and three Elected Members who will be appointed by the Council or an appropriate subcommittee.

At this meeting Employees are entitled – and encouraged – to be accompanied by a work colleague from the Council or Trade Union Representative. Employees will be informed in writing of the outcome of the meeting within seven days.

If the Employee making the grievance is unhappy with the response to the meeting, they can issue an appeal, in writing. This Appeal must be submitted within seven days of receiving the response to the original grievance meeting.



**Please Note**

Any Formal Grievance complaint, which concerns the conduct of a Councillor, will be addressed as a Code of Conduct complaint by the Council and will be referred to the District Council's Monitoring Officer. This Council will not address the Employee's Formal Grievance against an Elected Member. It will be addressed by the Monitoring Officer.

**Formal Discipline -**

**(this procedure only applies to Employees with two or more years continuous employment. Those with less may be subject to a short service dismissal for misconduct or poor performance).**

If an issue regarding an Employees conduct, behaviour or performance is not fully addressed by informal discussions, the Council will pursue the matter through its formal Disciplinary Procedures. Typical examples of areas of concern may be poor performance, unacceptable and unexplained absenteeism, poor conduct and behaviour at work, or lack of capability by an Employee to carry out their job.

This is a four-step procedure, which increases in the severity of its outcome if the issue is not resolved at the previous step. Each step involves a formal meeting between the affected Employee and a Disciplinary Panel, at which the Employee will be given every opportunity to put their side of the issue. Meetings will be conducted as soon as reasonably possible after the incident(s), which are being investigated to ensure that facts and witness statements are clear and up to date. At this meeting Employees are entitled - and encouraged - to be accompanied by a work colleague from the Council, or Trade Union/SLCC Representative.

If the allegation of misconduct is proven, the meeting may result in the following action being taken by the Council Management against the Employee:

STEP No	ACTION TAKEN	LIVE PERIOD	MANAGER RESPONSIBLE
1	Formal Oral Warning	Six months.	Disciplinary Panel
2	Formal Written Warning	Twelve months	Disciplinary Panel
3	Final Written Warning	Twelve months	Disciplinary Panel
4	Termination of Contract of Employment	N/A	Disciplinary Panel

Particularly severe acts of indiscipline may result in the Management bypassing Steps 1 and 2.

Employees will be informed by letter that they are required to attend a formal disciplinary meeting. This letter will include details of the allegation they are to answer, the date, time and venue of the meeting, and also inform them of their right to be accompanied by a work colleague from the Council, or Trade Union Representative if they hold such membership.

**Gross Misconduct-**

**(this procedure only applies to Employees with two or more years continuous employment. Those with less may be subject to a short service dismissal for**



**misconduct or poor performance).**

Acts of Gross Misconduct, if proven after an appropriate investigation and a Disciplinary Hearing, will result in Dismissal without notice.

Employees accused of Gross Misconduct will be suspended on full pay and receive a written invitation to a Formal Disciplinary Hearing, giving them details of the allegation they are to answer, the date, time and venue of the meeting, and also inform them of their right to be accompanied by a work colleague from the Council or trade union/SLCC representative. The letter will provide a minimum of 2 working days prior notice to the meeting.

The Council recognises the following as acts of Gross Misconduct. (This is not an exhaustive list).

**Theft.**

1. Abusive or threatening behaviour of any nature.
2. Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
3. Dishonesty in dealings with Management.
4. Sexist, racist or any other behaviour against an individual, which could be classed as creating a hostile, intimidating or threatening environment.
5. Breach of confidentiality.
6. Failing to carry out reasonable Management instructions.
7. Fighting and acts of aggression.
8. Deliberately damaging Council property.
9. Deliberate breaches of Council Health and Safety procedures.
10. Unauthorised access to Council computer files, software or any other such breach of confidentiality.

Employees who have been dismissed for acts of Gross Misconduct do have a right to Appeal against their dismissal. Appeals should be submitted within a reasonable timescale following the dismissal, and addressed to the Chair of the Council. A reasonable timescale would normally be no longer than a week following the dismissal. Employees submitting an appeal must make it clear that they are appealing against the decision to dismiss them, and set out the reasons for their appeal.

Once the Management have received notice of the Employee's decision to Appeal, they will follow the Appeal Procedure detailed below.

**Appeal Procedure-**

Employees have the right to Appeal against a decision made at any Formal Disciplinary step. Appeals should be made to the Chair of the Council in writing, and submitted within seven working days of the disciplinary meeting having occurred.

A Formal Appeal Hearing, involving the Employee and an Appeal Panel, will be held within fourteen days of receipt of the appeal request. At this meeting, Employees are entitled - and encouraged - to be accompanied by a work colleague from the Council or a Trade Union/SLCC representative.

The Employee making the appeal will be informed in writing of the outcome of the Appeal Hearing within seven days.



ITEM 6 SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE RADIO  
SUPPORT FOR OFCOM APPLICATION

Cc: GLOVER, Olly (MP) <[olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk)>; Chris Jennings <[cjennings@didcot.gov.uk](mailto:cjennings@didcot.gov.uk)>; Lucy Blake <[LBlake@didcot.gov.uk](mailto:LBlake@didcot.gov.uk)>  
Subject: RE: Wallingford Radio

Dear Janet,

Thanks for the email, and for the opportunity to present our ideas.

As you may know, Wallingford Radio is a not for profit community radio station run wholly by volunteers, based in Wallingford. We have an FM licence and broadcast to Wallingford and the surrounding villages on 107.3fm.

We are actively looking to expand to cover more of South Oxfordshire, and think Didcot would be an ideal area to cover. We've had initial discussions with Didcot Town Football Club about hosting a transmitter, which would cover Didcot and some of the surrounding villages to the north. We had previously spoken with Boundary Park, who were very supportive, but their lease with SODC would preclude a transmission site.

Naturally, would this expansion go ahead, there would be a name change - our current workshopping is pointing towards SO Radio (South Oxfordshire) - as we expand beyond Wallingford.

Having lived in Didcot myself, as do many of our current volunteers, this expansion would seem to be a great opportunity to bring community radio to the town, which would also present further (and more visible) opportunities for volunteering, access to our training programmes, and opportunities to be on air for Didcot residents.

In Wallingford we have hosted work experience placements with Wallingford School, covered live local events, reported on Council meetings, interviewed Councillors and MPs, as well as provided live coverage of key public events such as Remembrance, election hustings and the like, as well as providing a communication outlet for clubs and council announcements. We also provide live, locally produced entertainment content for the community, provided and guided by the community itself.

I thank again Olly Glover for the introduction, and at this juncture we would ask for an opportunity to present our plans to Didcot Town Council, with a view to hopefully securing a letter of support. This would be used as part of the OFCOM application process, which would help secure the second transmission site.

I would be happy to supply further information, to present in person, or to answer any and all questions on this topic, and indeed to take suggestions or guidance from members of the council on how to move forward with our outlined objectives.

Many thanks again for your time, for taking the time to read this email, and I hope this project is something which can be moved forward on together, for the benefit of the residents of Didcot.

Best wishes,

Liam

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---- On Thu, 25 Jul 2024 13:22:50 +0100 Janet Wheeler <[JWheeler@didcot.gov.uk](mailto:JWheeler@didcot.gov.uk)> wrote ---

Dear Liam

Further to the email from our MP, we have a meeting of the Personnel & Administration Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> August and they could make a recommendation to full Council.

I would be happy to include an item on the agenda for the P&A Committee to consider. If you have any further information on Wallingford Radio and your plans to expand over to Didcot – this would be of interest to our elected members. The agenda for the P&A Committee goes out next Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> July.

I look forward to hearing further from you.

Kind regards

**Janet Wheeler**

**Town Clerk**

Tel: 01235 750036

Email: [JWheeler@didcot.gov.uk](mailto:JWheeler@didcot.gov.uk)



Didcot Town Council contact details: 01235 812637 / [council@didcot.gov.uk](mailto:council@didcot.gov.uk) / [www.didcot.gov.uk](http://www.didcot.gov.uk)

Didcot Civic Hall contact details: 01235 512436 / [civichall@didcot.gov.uk](mailto:civichall@didcot.gov.uk) /



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**From:** GLOVER, Olly (MP) <[olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk)>

**Sent:** Thursday, July 25, 2024 11:27 AM

**To:** Liam

**Cc:** Chris Jennings <[cjennings@didcot.gov.uk](mailto:cjennings@didcot.gov.uk)>; Janet Wheeler <[JWheeler@didcot.gov.uk](mailto:JWheeler@didcot.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: Wallingford Radio

Hi Liam,

Thanks for this.

I'd be very happy to support your application to OFCOM, and to be on your station again.

Regarding Didcot, I have copied in the town clerk for Didcot, Janet Wheeler, and the town council leader, Chris Jennings, who I'd suggest contacting in the first instance.

Best wishes

Olly.

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Olly Glover

**Janet Wheeler**

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**From:** Liam  
**Sent:** 28 July 2024 20:01  
**To:** GLOVER, Olly (MP)  
**Cc:** Janet Wheeler; Chris Jennings; Lucy Blake  
**Subject:** RE: Wallingford Radio

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Hi Olly,

Many thanks for following up. I have not spoken to SODC at this time.

We spoke to Rachael Spindler at Boundary Park, who we know well as we support many of their events including Bands on the Boundary. Rachael - the site manager - was very happy to support us with a transmission site and having advertising on the radio station. At this point, however, their lease - held by SODC - precludes the installation of 'telecoms cable and infrastructure', which the board has interpreted as encompassing radio transmission equipment.

I don't disagree with their assessment, and so we investigated Didcot Town Football Club, who I also work with in the day job.

Boundary Park would be a natural site for a transmission, given its location on the hill - radio is still (not exactly) line of sight, and height massively boosts transmission range and or strength.

I do very much appreciate your email, and your support. Many thanks and best wishes,

Liam

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----- On Fri, 26 Jul 2024 10:42:49 +0100 **GLOVER, Olly (MP)** <[olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk)> wrote -----

Hi Liam,

Thanks for this background.

Given what you've said about Boundary Park, have you had any discussions with SODC? I can find the right person to speak with if not.

Olly.

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Olly Glover  
Member of Parliament for Didcot and Wantage

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**From:** Liam <[ljw@didcot.gov.uk](mailto:ljw@didcot.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 26, 2024 10:25 AM  
**To:** Janet Wheeler <[JWheeler@didcot.gov.uk](mailto:JWheeler@didcot.gov.uk)>



# ITEM 7 - OXFORDSHIRE COUNCIL'S CHARTER

**Janet Wheeler**

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**From:** Collier, Tannah - Oxfordshire County Council <Tannah.Collier@Oxfordshire.gov.uk> on behalf of Policy Team <PolicyTeam@oxfordshire.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 14 May 2024 17:38  
**Subject:** Introducing the Oxfordshire Councils Charter  
**Attachments:** Oxfordshire Councils Charter.pdf  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear clerks and councillors,

I'm excited to share with you the **Oxfordshire Councils Charter**, a dynamic framework designed to **enhance local democracy** and **partnership working** among Oxfordshire councils. The intention for the charter is to remain a 'living' document, acting as a roadmap for better communication, engagement, and collaboration.

The charter embodies our collective commitment to working together more effectively. It's not just about words on paper; it's about practical steps toward stronger partnerships.

## Your Feedback

First and foremost, I want to express our gratitude to all the councils, councillors, and clerks who actively participated in shaping this charter. Your feedback has been invaluable, and we've incorporated your concerns and priorities into the final version (attached).

We've also created a dedicated ["You Said, We Did"](#) page where you can find all responses to the consultation on the draft charter. It's important for us to share how your input shaped and influenced the final charter: [Oxfordshire Councils Charter - You said, we did | Let's Talk Oxfordshire](#)

## Next Steps

Our work doesn't stop here. At Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), we're already taking steps to put the charter into action. We're identifying practical measures to embed it effectively and at pace. Additionally, we'll provide a toolkit specifically for town and parish councils, helping them navigate OCC and foster stronger partnerships.

## Charter Launch Event

On the evening of July 1st, we'll officially launch the charter during OALC's Annual General Meeting. You'll receive invitations and further details from OALC. At the event, we'll outline our plans for implementation and how we'll better support town and parish councils going forward.

*delayed by election - held on 15th July - TC attended.*

## Toolkit

In the coming autumn, we'll roll out a toolkit tailored for town and parish councils. This resource will empower you to navigate OCC more effectively and how to become signatories to the charter should your council decide to do so (we hope you will!).

## Stay Engaged

Thank you for your ongoing engagement. We're committed to living up to the spirit of the Oxfordshire Councils Charter. If you have any questions, comments, or implementation ideas, feel free to reach out to us at [policyteam@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:policyteam@oxfordshire.gov.uk).



Best regards,

Tannah Collier  
Policy Officer

**Upcoming annual leave: 27<sup>th</sup> May – 5<sup>th</sup> June Inclusive**

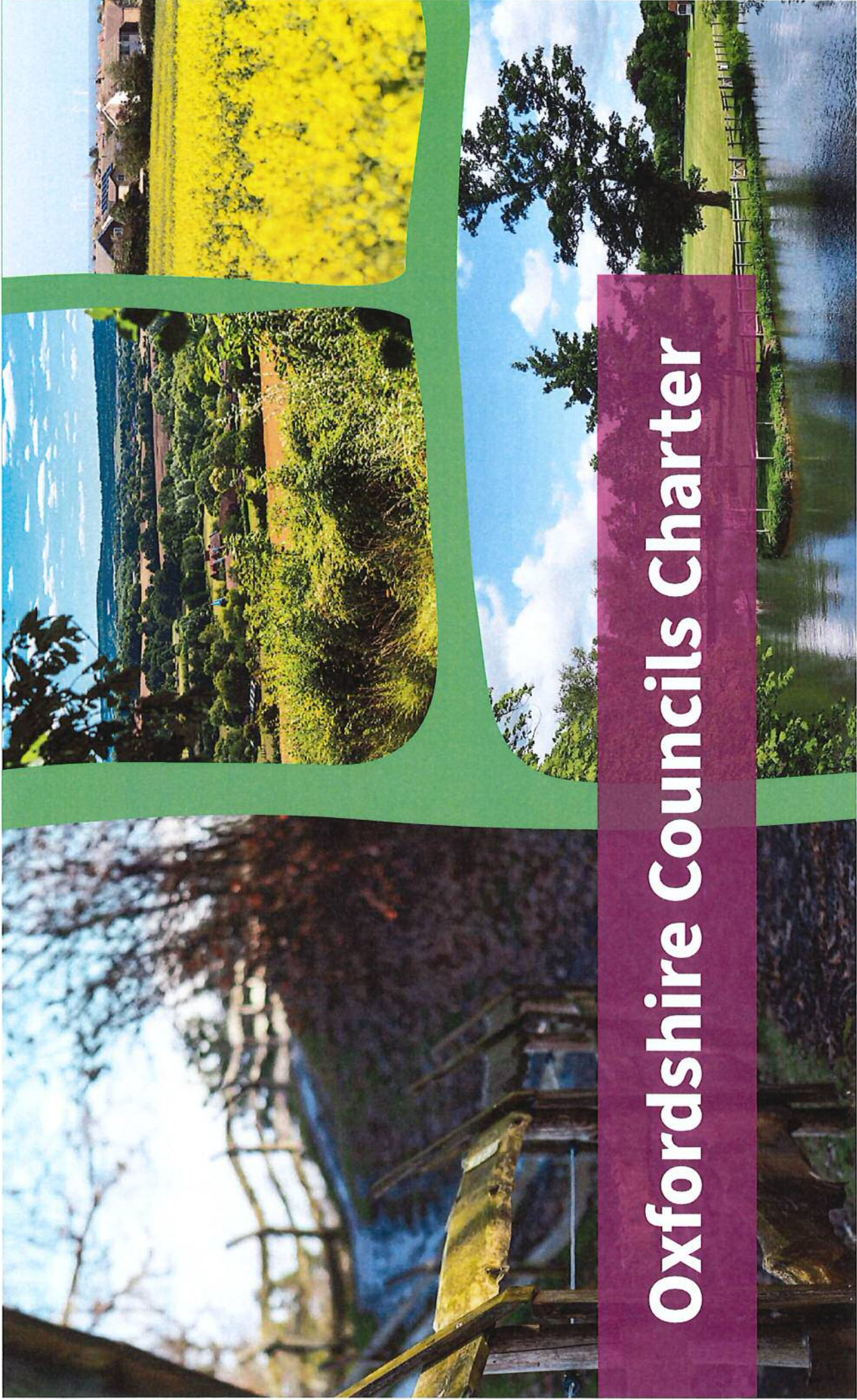
Communications, Strategy and Insight  
Oxfordshire County Council  
E-Mail: [tannah.collier@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:tannah.collier@oxfordshire.gov.uk)  
[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)



I've been recognised  
**for living  
our values**

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# Oxfordshire Councils Charter





## Foreword by Cllr Leffman

– Leader, Oxfordshire County Council

Our county of Oxfordshire is a rich tapestry of diverse communities, from our thriving market towns and picturesque rural villages to our urban centres of learning, innovation and business – all represented by over 300 local councils.

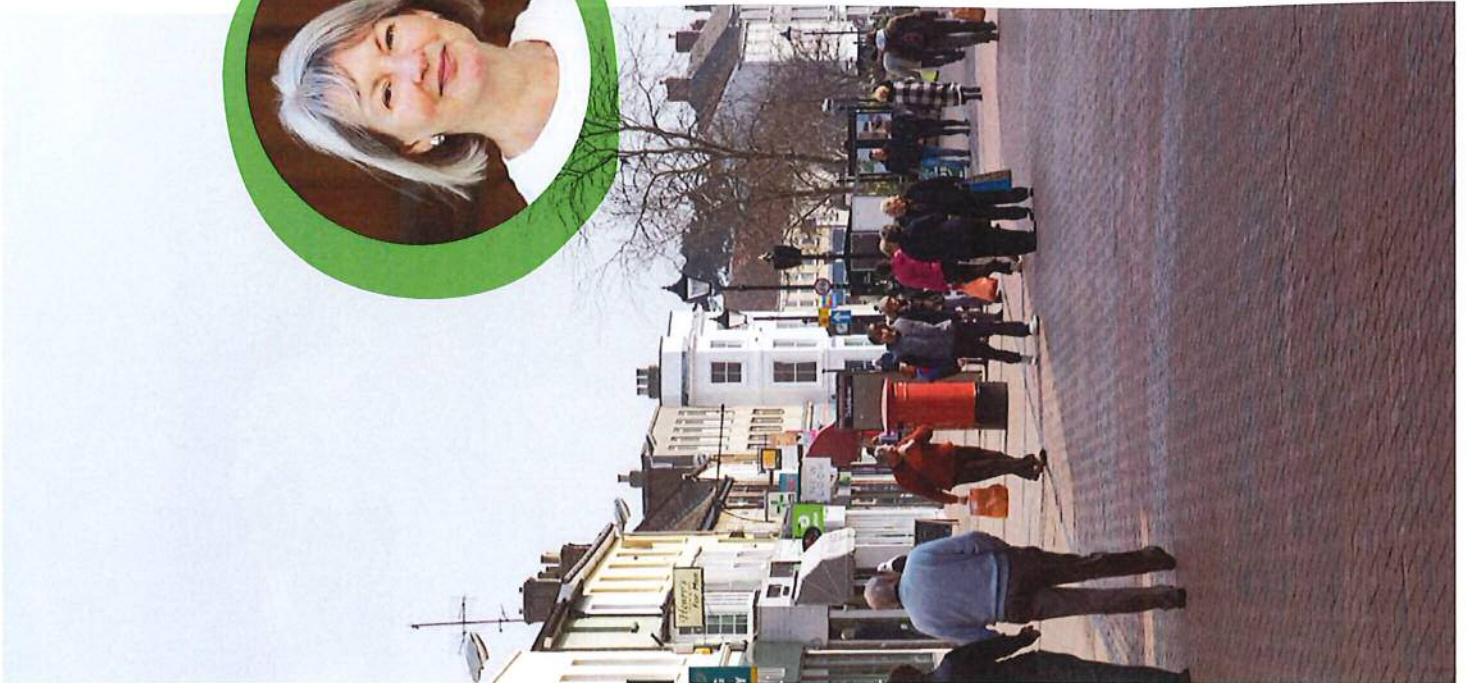
Our vision is that this charter enhances partnership working across councils to empower a vibrant democracy across Oxfordshire. Working in partnership with our local councils is essential for responding to the needs of our residents, understanding our diverse communities, and providing effective services.

This charter recognises the importance of Oxfordshire’s town councils, parish councils and parish meetings in representing and delivering for the residents of Oxfordshire. We have developed the charter in consultation with town and parish councils from across the county together with the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (OALC) and our district and city council partners. We have listened carefully to the many councillors and clerks, who have helped identify the opportunities we can explore through the commitments in this charter and we are very grateful for their contributions.

I am excited about the ambitions of this charter and the changes that are already underway to improve how we work and communicate with our local councils.

I invite all Oxfordshire councils to become signatories to the charter to demonstrate our mutual ambition to working better together through shared principles and commitments. I hope you will want to join us in this endeavour.

May 2024





## Foreword by Lucy Dalby, County Officer, Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (OALC)

As representatives of Oxfordshire's town and parish councils we are delighted to welcome this charter, which is a positive step to achieving better partnership working between Oxfordshire councils.

Since OALC instigated the idea of a charter, we have ensured local councils have been consulted directly and we have advocated for councils' needs and concerns throughout its development. We are proud to have created this charter in collaboration with Oxfordshire County Council and our city and district council partners.

It has been extremely positive to see so many councils engaging enthusiastically with this process and we want to thank every councillor, clerk and officer who has contributed.

This work does not end with the launching of the charter – we will remain involved as this work moves forward, and the real and impactful changes needed for partnership working to reach its full potential. Councils will also continue to have the opportunity to feed in to how the charter is implemented. We hope individual councils will want to become signatories too in demonstrating their commitment to better partnership working and enhancing local democracy for their communities.





## Introduction

This charter has been developed by a cross-council working group in collaboration with Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (OALC), to set out a framework for better partnership working in Oxfordshire. The contents of the charter have been shaped by feedback from town and parish councils across the county through a number of consultation and engagement activities.

The intention for the charter is that it is a voluntary framework that will help shape how Oxfordshire councils can work together in partnership to support better service delivery and outcomes, and to work together to ensure thriving local democracy across the county. This charter is not designed to replace or override existing frameworks, such as codes of conduct or councils' individual ways of working, but to enhance them, with a particular focus on cross-council working and recognising the role of local councils in supporting a thriving local democracy.





## Strategic aims for the charter

These aims represent our shared long-term goals as signatories to the charter. The charter's performance will be measured against these aims over time.

### 1. Stronger partnership working between Oxfordshire councils.

Taking a cooperative, collaborative and collective approach when working together for the wellbeing of our diverse communities, improving service delivery and supporting the needs of our residents.

#### Success looks like:

- Councils share best practice with each other, consistently working to improve how services are delivered and experienced by residents.
- Councils can identify opportunities where there is value in working collaboratively in partnership to deliver better outcomes for residents and communities.
- Councils are breaking down barriers to better partnership working.

### 2. Enhancing local democracy.

Working to empower resident and community participation in local democracy at all levels, recognizing that local democracy goes wider than the election cycle.

#### Success looks like:

- Councils use the tools and resources at their disposal to advocate for their communities and residents.
- Councils can identify barriers to resident and community participation in local democratic processes and take steps to break down those barriers.
- Councils can identify and build on opportunities to engage with their communities, particularly with underrepresented groups.





## Our shared principles

Our shared principles are the 'golden thread' of values that underpin how we aim to meet the charter's commitments and achieve the charter's strategic aims. These principles guide how we implement and integrate the charter, how we work together and how we treat each other as partners.

### Mutual respect

- We recognise and acknowledge what unites us – representing and delivering for our communities and residents.
- We treat each other with respect, civility, and dignity, abiding by our respective codes of conduct.
- We understand that different types of council operate differently – we respect our differences and act on good faith.

### Relationship building

- We foster constructive and collaborative relationships and connections between councils, councillors, clerks, officers, partners, and communities.
- We remove barriers to building effective relationships.

### Transparency and accountability

- We share information and communicate transparently.
- We are transparent with processes and how councils make decisions.
- We signpost appropriately.



## Our shared commitments

These are our shared commitments that will help to achieve our strategic aims: stronger partnership working and enhance local democracy. The commitments are purposely kept at a high-level to enable each council to apply them to their own priorities and ways of working, providing a framework for councils to shape how they work together.

### Communication

#### Councils will:

- Enhance how we listen and respond to one another. Availability and accessibility will be central to how we interact.
- Communicate with respect and civility, maintaining an open dialogue.
- Communicate openly and transparently, explaining processes and decision-making.

### Consultation and engagement

#### Councils will:

- Engage with one another at the earliest opportunity, recognizing the diverse perspectives and challenges faced by various stakeholders and communities.
- Ensure that consultation and engagement processes are as accessible as possible.
- Actively follow-up on consultations and feedback in an appropriate manner.

### Resources

#### Councils will:

- Share relevant and appropriate information to empower each other to best support our residents and communities.
- Optimise access and signposting to resources and practical support.
- Identify opportunities where resources and support can be effectively shared between councils to improve outcomes for residents.

### Local democracy

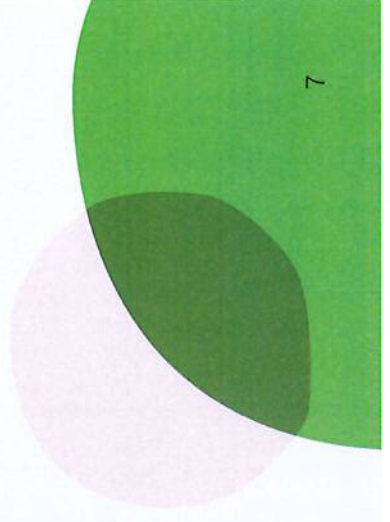
#### Councils will:

- Empower our residents and communities to participate in local democracy, including young people and underrepresented groups.
- Put residents and communities at the heart of what we do.
- Respect the democratic mandate of all councillors.

## Implementation

All Oxfordshire councils will be invited to be a signatory of the charter. The intention is that this charter remains a 'living' document, with the charter being the beginning and not the end of this work to improve partnership working.

Once the charter has been agreed by councils, each council will be responsible for their own implementation of the charter's principles and commitments. The working group will support councils to capture the progress and successes of the charter to enable sharing best practice and positive communications (e.g. 'you said, we did' pieces).





## ITEM 9 - PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE – PROGRESS REPORT

Meeting/minute	Item/topic	Up-date/status	Review date/meeting
Min 37 – October 2023	Employee Handbook full review	Town Clerk to check employee policies to ensure compliance	Agenda item
Min 37 – October	Review of all employment policies to ensure they complement the handbook	DTC to progress as the employee handbook review is completed	As above
Min 44 – December	Setting up a Youth Council	Steering group to be set up	Clr Jennings and Clr Nohre to progress – motion passed at full Council to set up a working group. Offered my help to Clr Nohre.
Min 46 - December	Brief and costs for a self-guided app to promote local facilities	Not yet progressed due to work load	outstanding
Min 72 – April	Community Liaison and communications improvement	Contact to Breakthrough Communications company to carry out a free “health check”	Company to be approached and health check booked
Min 7 – questions on minutes	Project Management training	Delayed by “live” projects such as the splash park and grass cutting – see staff report for other training that is in the process of being booked.	On-going
Min 8 – outside bodies and working groups	List of outside bodies	Approved at full Council – June 2024	Continue to work with other groups when time allows – NB not a lot of free time.
Min 9 – long service recognition awards	Report approved	Awaiting order to be placed for long service medals – vouchers to be purchased.	Out-standing item
Min 13 – Councillor training with OALC	Delayed by the election	Tim and day to be approved – suggest after August	Out-standing
Min 16 - Recruitment For new officer	Six applications received	TC to go through and invite some for interview.	On-going