



Ms Caroline Green, Chief Executive  
Oxford City Council  
Town Hall  
St Aldate's  
OX1 1BX

14 January 2026

Dear Ms Green

**Procedural concerns regarding the Special Meeting of the Council on Wed 14 January, at 5pm**

Thank you for your response to my letter of 12 January, received yesterday.

While the council is not being asked to take a decision on the postponement of the elections – which is quite clearly a decision that can only be taken by the Secretary of State – the Council is being asked, through the Leader, to express a view to the Secretary of State on whether or not Oxford City Council elections should be postponed.

So, there is a decision required on how to respond to the Secretary of State.

Our concern is about how that decision is being reached.

Thank you for clarifying (under the constitution Section 5: Who carries out Council responsibilities) the interpretation of 'powers to do with holding elections' at 5.16.26.

However, it remains the case that, in Section 3: Council responsibilities and executive responsibilities (in 3.2: Summary of Council responsibilities and executive responsibilities), 'elections and electoral registration' sits firmly under the list of Council responsibilities (as opposed to Executive responsibilities).

Furthermore, regarding the decision, the City Council has a track record of considering motions on issues for which it has no direct decision-making powers, and taking a vote on them. For example:

- 25 Nov 2019 - a motion was passed calling on UK Government to renounce the first use of nuclear weapons, cancel the replacement of Trident weapons, and actively pursue the elimination of nuclear arsenals;
- 27 Nov 2023 - the council voted to support a motion calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, and committing to write to the UK government and other political leaders, lobbying them on the issue.

So why wouldn't there be a motion at today's meeting, where the single agenda item is on an issue that does, very directly and immediately, affect the citizens of Oxford, and where the Secretary of State has indicated that the decision made **will** be influenced by the views of this council? Such an anomaly clearly cannot be justified.

IOA councillors will be in attendance at the special meeting later today, taking note of all views offered, and would request to see a copy of the response to be sent to the Minister before it goes.

Yours sincerely,

*Anne Gwinnett*

Dr Anne Gwinnett  
Party Chair