



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at Franklin's Gardens, Weedon Road, Northampton, NN5 5BG on Thursday 20 May 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Present Councillor Ann Addison (Chair)
 Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage (Vice-Chair)
 Councillor Jamal Alwahabi
 Councillor Rufia Ashraf
 Councillor Mohammed Azizur Rahman (Aziz)
 Councillor Anthony S. Bagot-Webb
 Councillor Dermot Bambridge
 Councillor Harry Barrett
 Councillor William Barter
 Councillor Sally Beardsworth
 Councillor Phil Bignell
 Councillor Lizzy Bowen
 Councillor Rebecca Breese
 Councillor Adam Brown
 Councillor Michael Brown
 Councillor Muna Cali
 Councillor Alan Chantler
 Councillor Nazim Choudary
 Councillor Imran Ahmed Chowdhury BEM
 Councillor Paul Clark
 Councillor Stephen Clarke
 Councillor Maggie Clubley
 Councillor Fiona Cole
 Councillor Raymond Connolly
 Councillor Karen Cooper
 Councillor Daniel Cribbin
 Councillor Julie Davenport
 Councillor Janice Duffy
 Councillor Paul Dyball
 Councillor Gareth Eales
 Councillor Terrie Eales
 Councillor Alison Eastwood
 Councillor Louisa Fowler
 Councillor Rupert Frost
 Councillor Jo Gilford
 Councillor Terry Gilford
 Councillor Matt Golby
 Councillor Andrew Grant
 Councillor Mike Hallam
 Councillor Enam Haque
 Councillor Lauryn Harrington-Carter
 Councillor Jonathan Harris

Councillor Cheryl Hawes
Councillor Rosie Herring
Councillor Stephen Hibbert
Councillor James Hill
Councillor Nigel Hinch
Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere
Councillor Mark Hughes
Councillor Rosie Humphreys
Councillor Cecile Irving-Swift
Councillor David James
Councillor Koulla Jolley
Councillor Paul Joyce
Councillor Andrew Kilbride
Councillor Anna King
Councillor Jamie Lane
Councillor Phil Larratt
Councillor Daniel Marc Lister
Councillor Malcolm Longley
Councillor Greg Lunn
Councillor Charles Manners
Councillor Peter Matten
Councillor Ian McCord
Councillor Dennis Meredith
Councillor Colin Morgan
Councillor Charles Morton
Councillor Jonathan Nunn
Councillor Kevin Parker
Councillor Suresh Patel
Councillor Ken Pritchard
Councillor Bob Purser
Councillor Wendy Randall
Councillor Emma Roberts
Councillor Jake Roberts
Councillor Sam Rumens
Councillor Cathrine Russell
Councillor Lisa Samiotis
Councillor Brian Sargeant
Councillor Sue Sharps
Councillor John Shephard
Councillor David Smith
Councillor Zoe Smith
Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms
Councillor Laura Stevenson
Councillor Danielle Stone
Councillor Nick Sturges-Alex
Councillor Walter Tarasiewicz
Councillor Mike Warren

Apologies for
Absence: Councillor Fiona Baker
Councillor Pinder Chauhan
Councillor Penelope Flavell
Councillor Winston Strachan

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chauhan, Strachan, Baker, Flavell and Stevenson.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

None.

3. **Election of Chair of West Northamptonshire Council**

Councillor Larratt expressed his thanks to Chris Millar for his contribution as Chair of West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority. He proposed that Councillor Ann Addison be elected Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council.

Councillor Lane seconded the proposition.

Upon a vote, the proposition was Carried.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Ann Addison be elected Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council for the year 2021-22.

4. **Election of Vice-Chair of West Northamptonshire Council**

Councillor Rumens proposed that Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage be elected as Vice-Chair of West Northamptonshire Council.

Councillor Kilbride seconded the proposition.

Upon a vote, the proposition was Carried.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Gonzalez De Savage be elected Vice-Chair of West Northamptonshire Council for the year 2021-22.

5. **Chair's Announcements**

The Chairman announced the sad passing of Alderman Gina Ogden in March 2021. She was a member of Northamptonshire County Council from 1967 to 2013 and at the time of her retirement, was the longest serving councillor in the county and one of

the longest serving in the country. Alderman Ogden is survived by her husband Michael, four children, six grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

6. Appointment of Leader of the Council

Councillor Brown proposed that Councillor Jonathan Nunn be appointed Leader of the Council.

Councillor King seconded the proposition.

Upon a vote, the proposition was Carried.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Jonathan Nunn be appointed Leader of the Council.

7. Leader's Announcements

The Leader congratulated Councillor Addison on her election as Chairman and thanked Councillor McCord for his commitment over the last 12 months as the Leader of West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority. He stated that the new council's success relied on respectful and supportive collaboration between elected members and also wider partners in the public and private sectors. The administration would hold in high regard scrutiny and committees and the Leader thanked members already giving their time and talent to committee work. He noted the creation of Assistant Cabinet Member roles which, whilst not an official part of the council's governance structure and receiving no additional allowance, the positions were given as a result of specialist knowledge in exchange for a firm commitment to support the portfolio area with their time and experience. The Leader confirmed that a motion would be brought to the next full Council meeting to declare, at the earliest opportunity, a climate emergency in line with the predecessor councils.

8. Political Group Leadership, Committee Proportionality and Appointment of Members to Committees and other bodies

The Chairman advised Council that an up-to-date list of committee appointments had been placed on desks.

The Leader of the Council presented a report which sought to advise of the names of the Leaders and Deputy Leaders of the political groups and to confirm appointments to committee places and additional appointments contained within the report.

Councillor Brown seconded the report.

Councillor G Eales congratulated the Leader on his appointment and expressed his disappointment that there were no opposition members on the Children's Trust and hoped that further discussions would take place in respect of this. He further expressed concern over the Leader managing 2 portfolios, stating that regeneration should be a focus. Accommodation should be a priority so that sums of money did not continually need to be spent hiring venues for council meetings.

Councillor Beardsworth commented that the council must not forget past mistakes to ensure that they would not be made again in the future. She noted the hard work of officers during the pandemic and their work in setting up the new authority and expressed her gratitude in respect of this. She hoped that all members could work together for the benefit of their communities.

Councillor Meredith congratulated the Leader on his appointment and also expressed disappointment that there were no opposition members on the Children's Trust; he believed that backbench councillors should have been given the opportunity to be on the Trust. Councillor Meredith also stated his concern that there were no councillors on the Corporate Parenting Board.

Councillor Nunn commented that constitutional matters prevented opposition members from sitting on the Children's Board but asked members to judge him on what he had done recently to try to make it happen and hoped that all councillors were comfortable with what the Children's Trust was doing presently. Regular meetings with opposition members in respect of the Children's Trust had been agreed. The Leader advised of more work around the Cabinet but gave his assurance that Economic Regeneration and Development would not be a "poor relation".

In response to a question around opposition membership on the South Northamptonshire Local Area Planning Committee, the Monitoring Officer advised that this seat would rotate annually between the Liberal Democrat Group and Independent councillors, with the Liberal Democrats taking the seat for 2021-22.

Upon a vote, the recommendations contained within the report were agreed.

RESOLVED:

Council:

- i) Received the names of the Leaders and Deputy Leaders of the political groups as set out at Appendix A of the report.
- ii) Agreed to constitute and decide on the allocation of places on committees between the political groups in accordance with the political balance requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, as set out at paragraph 3.11.1 of the report.
- iii) Agreed to appoint Members to the various Committees as set out at Appendix A of the report.
- iv) Agreed to appoint Members to the various joint Committees as set out at Appendix A of the report.
- v) Agreed that the appointments to the Local Area Planning Committees are not politically balanced as they fall within the political balance exemption for area committees; but should reflect the political makeup of the relevant area.

- vi) Agreed that, the appointment to outside bodies is delegated to the Chief Executive, West Northamptonshire Council.
- vii) Confirmed the appointment of Committee Chairs, Deputy Chairs and members.
- viii) Noted the members of the Executive set out at Appendix A of the report.

9. **Calendar of Meetings**

Councillor Patel presented a report which sought Council's approval of the calendar of meetings for the year 2021-2022

Councillor Chowdhury seconded the report.

Councillor Shephard commented that, despite the reference to 6pm in the report and in the calendar, there was no reference to timings within the Constitution and hoped that there would be no impediment for daytime meetings if it was required.

Councillor McCord advised that similar wording was included within the Constitution; alternative committee start times would be at the Chair's discretion.

Councillor J Gilford noted that the Council was striving to be open and transparent; daytime meetings would be a barrier towards this since most members of the public would struggle to attend them.

Upon a vote, the recommendations within the report were agreed.

RESOLVED:

That the calendar of meetings for 2021/22 is approved.

10. **West Northamptonshire Council Constitution**

Councillor Brown presented a report which sought amendments to the constitution to enable decisions to be made which would be necessary for the delivery of services; and to identify the need for a further Constitutional review by the Democracy and Standards Committee to consider wider improvements to the Constitution.

Councillor Brown noted 2 alterations following publication of the report: the removal of paragraph 2.1.4 and to alter paragraph 2.1.5 to read "a further review of the Constitution and Member-Officer Protocol be carried out by the Democracy and Standards Committee and referred to a future meeting of the Council."

Councillor Nunn seconded the report.

Councillor Beardsworth stated her agreement with regular constitutional reviews.

Councillor Chantler voiced his support with the proposed amendment and expressed disappointment with the Member Enquiry service; he had been waiting a week for a response to an enquiry.

Councillor McCord supported the recommendations and welcomed a future review of the Constitution; however, he took issue with the vagueness of some parts, specifically around the definition of a Key Decision and “timely” in relation to member enquiries.

Councillor Roberts noted that she had made 5 enquiries to the Member Enquiry service so far and had received prompt responses to all.

Councillor Brown commented that Councillor Beardsworth was a valued member of the Constitution Task & Finish group and encouraged all members of the Democracy and Standards Committee to raise any issues regarding the Constitution that they felt needed reviewing. Members’ experiences so far were useful in respect of the Member Enquiry service and highlighted the need for a review and noted, in relation to Councillor McCord’s comment, that the Democracy & Standards Committee would set the SLAs that members deemed appropriate.

Upon a vote, the recommendations as altered were agreed.

RESOLVED:

Council agreed that:

- 1.2.1 The changes to the Constitution already made by the Monitoring Officer under her delegated power be noted;
- 2.1.2 The proposed changes to the Constitution set out in Appendix 1 of the report be agreed;
- 2.1.3 Delegated power be granted to the Monitoring Officer to amend the Constitution to give effect to the agreements for joint arrangements with LGSS (Cambridgeshire, Bedford, Milton Keynes) Northampton Partnership Homes and North Northamptonshire Council.
- 2.1.4 A further review of the Constitution and Member Officer Protocol be carried out by the Democracy and Standards Committee and referred to a future meeting of Council.

11. **Ashton Neighbourhood Plan**

Councillor Breese presented a report which sought Council’s consideration of the outcome of the Referendum on the Ashton Neighbourhood Plan and to formally ‘make’ the Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Clarke seconded the report.

Upon a vote, the recommendations contained within the report were agreed.

RESOLVED:

Council:

- a) Noted the Referendum result of the 06 May 2021, where 95.7% of those who voted, were in favour of the Ashton Neighbourhood Plan, which was above the required 50%;
- b) "Made' the Ashton Neighbourhood Plan, so that it has effect as part of the statutory Development Plan for the area;
- c) Approved the issuing and publication of a Decision Statement.
- d) Authorised the Assistant Director of Growth, Climate and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to finalise the necessary documents to support adoption including the Decision Statement (draft at Appendix C of the report) and to make such minor editorial corrections to the Neighbourhood Plan (Appendix A of the report) as deemed necessary ahead of publication.

12. **Urgent Business**

None.

The meeting closed at 7.08 pm

Chairman: _____

Date: _____