



**West  
Northamptonshire  
Council**

## **Council**

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held at The Great Hall at The Guildhall, Northampton, NN1 1DE on Thursday 16 May 2024 at 6.00 pm.

### **Present:**

Councillor John Shephard (Chairman)

Councillor Ann Addison  
Councillor Jamal Alwahabi  
Councillor Azizur Rahman  
Councillor Anthony S. Bagot-Webb  
Councillor Fiona Baker  
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 Alan Chantler  
Councillor Pinder Chauhan  
Councillor Nazim Choudary  
Councillor Paul Clark  
Councillor Stephen Clarke  
Councillor Maggie Clubley  
Councillor Raymond Connolly  
Councillor Karen Cooper  
Councillor Daniel Cribbin  
Councillor Julie Davenport  
Councillor Janice Duffy  
Councillor Paul Dyball  
Councillor Alison Eastwood  
Councillor Penelope Flavell  
Councillor Louisa Fowler  
Councillor Matt Golby  
Councillor André González De Savage  
Councillor Andrew Grant  
Councillor Mike Hallam  
Councillor Enam Haque  
Councillor Jonathan Harris  
Councillor Rosie Herring  
Councillor Stephen Hibbert  
Councillor James Hill  
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 Lister  
Councillor Malcolm Longley  
Councillor Greg Lunn  
Councillor Charles Manners  
Councillor Peter Matten  
Councillor Ian McCord  
Councillor Dennis Meredith  
Councillor Kevin Parker  
Councillor Bob Purser  
Councillor Wendy Randall  
Councillor Emma Roberts  
Councillor Sam Rumens  
Councillor Brian Sargeant  
Councillor Sue Sharps  
Councillor David Smith  
Councillor Zoe Smith  
Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms  
Councillor Carl Squires  
Councillor Laura Stevenson  
Councillor Danielle Stone  
Councillor Winston Strachan  
Councillor Nick Sturges-Alex  
Councillor Walter Tarasiewicz  
Councillor Mike Warren

**Apologies for Absence:**

Councillor Jo Gilford  
Councillor Rufia Ashraf  
Councillor Muna Cali  
Councillor Imran Ahmed Chowdhury BEM  
Councillor Fiona Cole  
Councillor Terrie Eales  
Councillor Rupert Frost  
Councillor Terry Gilford  
Councillor Cheryl Hawes  
Councillor Nigel Hinch  
Councillor Jonathan Nunn  
Councillor Cathrine Russell  
Councillor Lisa Samiotis  
Councillor Gareth Eales

**Officers:**

Stuart Lackenby (Deputy Chief Executive)  
Cath Whitehead (Director – Legal & Democratic and Monitoring Officer)  
Paul Hanson (Head of Democratic & Elections)  
Tracy Tiff (Democratic Services Manager)  
Ed Bostock (Democratic Services Officer)  
Quentin Loeber La' Grue (Democratic & Electoral Services Trainee)

**197. Election of Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council**

The Chairman expressed that it had been an honour to serve as Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council. He highlighted several key points of his chairmanship, including the introduction of a Schools Debating Competition and noted that the civic service had been heavily musically influenced, with various forms of live music being played prior to meetings. He gave thanks to officers and the Civic team who had supported him during his tenure. The Chairman also congratulated Councillor Stone on her recent election as Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

The Chairman then proposed that Councillor Jo Gilford be elected Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council for the year 2024-25.

Councillor David Smith seconded the proposal.

Upon a vote, the proposal was agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

That Councillor Jo Gilford be elected Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council for the year 2024-25.

The Chairman proposed that, as Councillor Jo Gilford was absent, he continue in the Chair for the appointment of the Vice-Chairman.

Having taken the ascent of the meeting, this was agreed.

**198. Appointment of Vice-Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council**

Councillor Shephard proposed that Councillor Alison Eastwood be elected Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council for the year 2024-25.

Councillor Sturges-Alex seconded the proposal.

Upon a vote, the proposal was agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

That Councillor Alison Eastwood be appointed Vice-Chairman of West Northamptonshire Council for the year 2024-25.

The Vice-Chairman took the chair in the absence of the Chairman.

199. **Declarations of Interest**

None advised.

200. **Chairman's Announcements**

The Vice-Chairman read letter on behalf of Chairman in which she gave thanks for her election. She hoped to attend many events and aimed to attend at least one event in each ward, and asked members to get in touch if there was an event in their ward that they would like the Chairman to attend. The Chairman's chosen charities were SSAFA, a UK charity providing lifelong support to serving men, women, and veterans of UK armed forces, their families and dependents, and Stop Hate UK, another national charity which had been made available to Northamptonshire residents this month. The service was funded by donations from individuals and businesses and provided support and reassurance to anyone being targeted for simply being themselves.

The Vice-Chairman explained that normal service would resume at the next ordinary meeting in June, when members may submit motions and ask questions as per usual practice.

201. **Minutes of Council**

Councillor Clark asked that it be recorded that the minutes of the previous meeting did not mention that he was denied the right to speak on a matter of public interest.

**RESOLVED:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2024 were agreed and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

202. **Appointment of Leader of the Council**

Councillor Golby proposed that Councillor A Brown be appointed as Leader of the Council.

Councillor Lane seconded the proposal.

Council debated the proposal and made the following comments:

- The Council had gone through a difficult time; this was a chance to build bridges and repair the Council's reputation.
- Congratulations were offered to councillor A Brown on his appointment.
- The Labour group would be voting against the appointment due to past decisions taken by Councillor A Brown as Cabinet Member for Housing, and by Councillor Golby as the former Leader of Northamptonshire County Council.

- In respect of recent issues, members should make more of an effort on social media to signpost to services, charities, and partners.
- The Independent group looked forward to working with the new administration, and all other groups, to get the best outcomes for residents. It was hoped that new Cabinet appointments would be able to improve services, particularly the Planning service, which recently ranked 316<sup>th</sup> of 328 on their performance in determining minor applications in 8 weeks.
- It was hoped that the Leader would work with members of the Southfields Ward to tackle issues there.
- The Leader was responsive in his previous role as Cabinet Member for Housing in respect of queries from members; it was hoped that this responsiveness would continue.

**RESOLVED:**

That Councillor Adam Brown be appointed Leader of the Council.

The Leader thanked Council for his appointment. He welcomed the challenge of leadership with the support of his family, colleagues and council officers. He stated that his leadership would mean a fair and equitable balance between urban and rural areas, a focus on the council being productive and innovative as well as financially prudent, a renewed focus on the highways service, and continuing to be ambitious, attracting businesses in all of the towns and showcasing the best of West Northamptonshire to the country at large.

203. **Committee Proportionality and Appointment of Members to Committees and Other Bodies**

The Leader presented the report and advised of an amendment which replaced Councillor Colin Morgan with Charles Morton on the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The report set out the allocations of places on Committees between the political groups in accordance with the political balance requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and to confirm the appointment of Committee Chairs, Deputy Chairs, and members. The report also invited Council to note the names of the Leaders and Deputy Leaders of the political groups and to note the members of the Cabinet.

Councillor Gonzalez De Savage seconded the report.

Council debated the report and made the following comments:

- It was hoped that the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care remembered the hard lessons learned during his tenure as Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care at the former Northamptonshire County Council.
- Concern was raised around the suitability of the new Chair of the Democracy & Standards Committee, who had recently been pushing for a new parish council to be created in his ward; he had declared a conflict of interest at previous meetings of the Democracy & Standards Committee.

- There was a Conservative vacancy on the Corporate Parenting Board; Councillor Sharps, despite being a member of the Independent group, expressed an interest in being a member.
- Thanks were given to the Director of Children's Services for her work in the role.
- With regard to the lack of changes to Cabinet Member posts, it was stated that consistency in project management was vital.

**RESOLVED:**

Council:

- a) Received the names of the Leaders and Deputy Leaders of the political groups as set out at Appendix A of the report.
- b) Noted the members of the Cabinet set out at Appendix A of the report.
- c) 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 in section 5 of the report.
- d) Confirmed the appointment of Committee Chairs, Deputy Chairs and members to the various Committees and Joint Committees as set out at Appendix A of the report.
- e) Delegated to the Monitoring Officer the power to appoint Councillors and substitute Councillors to Committees and sub-Committees in accordance with the wishes of the Group Leaders except where appointments to those bodies is exercisable only by the Cabinet.

**204. Calendar of Meetings 2024-25**

Councillor Bignell presented the report which sought confirmation of the calendar of Council and Committee meetings for 2024 -2025.

Councillor Irving-Swift seconded the report.

**RESOLVED:**

Council approved the calendar of meetings for 2024-2025, as set out at Appendix A of the report.

**205. Urgent Business (previously agreed with the Chairman)**

None advised.

The meeting closed at 6.48 pm

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Council - 16 May 2024

Date: \_\_\_\_\_