

# ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

19 May 2015

## PRESENT:

D. S. Smith (Chairman)

Allsopp, Mrs J. A.	Fisher, Mrs H. E.	Shepherd, Miss O. J.
Awty, R. J.	Greatorex, C.	Smedley, D.
Bacon, Mrs N.	Hassall, Miss E. A.	Smith, A. F.
Baker, Mrs D. F.	Leytham, D. J.	Spruce, C. J.
Bamborough, R. A. J.	Marshall, T.	Stanhope MBE, Mrs M.
Banevicius, Mrs S. W.	Matthews, T. R.	Strachan, R. W.
Barnett, Mrs S. A.	Mills, J.	Tranter, Mrs. E. H.
Bland, Mrs M. P.	Mosson, R. C.	Warfield, M. A.
Boyle, Mrs M. G.	O'Hagan, J. P.	White, A. G.
Cox, R. E.	Powell, J. J. R.	Wilcox, M. J.
Drinkwater, E. N.	Pritchard, I. M. P.	Woodward, Mrs S. E.
Eadie, I. M.	Pullen, D. R.	Yeates, A.
Eagland, Mrs J. M.	Pullen, Mrs N. I.	Yeates, B. W.
Evans, Mrs C. D.	Rayner, B. L.	
Fisher, Miss B.	Salter, D. F.	

(**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Councillors Mrs Constable, Constable, Humphreys and Tittley.)

## PRAYERS:

Prayers were said by The Very Reverend Archimandrite S. Piers who made particular reference to Councillor Constable who had been taken to hospital earlier in the day.

## 1 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

No Declarations of Interest were made

## 2 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL 2015/2016:**

It was proposed by Councillor Spruce, seconded by Councillor Mrs Allsopp and

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Mrs Bacon be elected Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Mrs Bacon then made and signed the required Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was invested with the Chairman's Chain and Badge of Office.

Mr B. F. Bacon was also invested with his Badge of Office.

Councillor Mrs Bacon thanked Members for her election as Chairman.

### **COUNCILLOR MRS BACON (CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL) IN THE CHAIR**

Councillor Mrs Woodward welcomed Councillor Mrs Bacon to the Chairmanship of the District Council and expressed the hope that she would ensure that the opposition would be allowed to full take part in all debates.

### **3 VOTE OF THANKS TO RETIRING CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed by Councillor Wilcox, duly seconded and

**RESOLVED:** That the sincere thanks of the Council be accorded to Mr D. S. Smith and his wife for their services to the Council and the Community during the previous Municipal Year and during his time as Leader.

Mr D. S. Smith and Mrs G. Smith were then presented with their replica badges of office and Mr D. S. Smith formally thanked those who had supported him during his term of office and in previous years.

### **4 MINUTES – 14 APRIL 2014:**

It was proposed and duly seconded “that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 14 April 2015 (Volume 42 Part 6 Minute Book), as printed and previously circulated, be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.”

#### **Arising on the Minutes:**

#### **Minute No 251 – Chairman’s Announcements:**

Councillor Mrs Woodward referred to the history of the Authority that the former Chairman had reflected upon and stated that she thought that this was selective and partial and hoped that in future a balanced view would be expressed.

#### **Minute No 253 – Report of the Chairman of Leisure, Parks and Waste Management (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee:**

Councillor Awty asked that the word “his” be replaced by “her” in line one of the minute

It was then:

**RESOLVED:** That subject to the word “his” being replaced by the word “her” in Minute No 253 the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 14 April 2015 (Volume 42 Part 6 Minute Book) as printed and previously circulated be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **5 APPONTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL FOR 2015/2016:**

It was proposed by Councillor Greatorex, seconded by Councillor Pritchard and

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Salter be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Salter then made and signed the required Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

The Chairman then invested the Vice Chairman and his wife, Mrs P. J. Salter, with their Badges of Office.

## **6 CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION OF DISTRICT COUNCILLORS ON 7 MAY 2015:**

The Returning Officer submitted her report from the Election of District Councillors on 7 May 2015.

Councillor Wilcox extended his gratitude to the Returning Officer and her staff for the work that they had done during the election period and expressed the view that the election had proceeded very well. Those views were supported by Councillors Drinkwater and Mrs Woodward and Councillor Drinkwater added that he thought that in future Counts should be separated out to allow for rest periods.

Councillor Mrs Woodward took the opportunity of paying particular tribute to former Councillors Heath and Norman having regard to their service to the community over a number of years.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be received.

## **7 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

### **(a) Chaplain**

The Chairman announced that her Chaplain would be Reverend L. Collins.

### **(b) Civic Service**

The Chairman announced that her Civic Service would be held at 10.30 am on Sunday 21 June 2015 at Lichfield Cathedral.

### **(c) Charity**

The Chairman announced that her Charity for the year would be the "We Love Lichfield" Fund.

### **(d) New Members**

The Chairman formally welcomed all newly elected Members of the Council.

### **(e) Refreshments**

The Chairman invited Members and Officers to join her in the Committee Room for light refreshments following the conclusion of the meeting.

## **8 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES:**

### **(a) Planning Committee – 13 April 2015**

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Fisher, duly seconded and

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 13 April 2015 (Minutes Nod 243 – 248) be approved and adopted.

**(b) Planning Committee – 5 May 2015**

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Fisher, duly seconded and

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 5 May 2015 (Minutes Nod 261- 268) be approved and adopted.

**9 ELECTION OF THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

It was proposed by Councillor Cox and seconded by Councillor Awty “that Councillor Wilcox be appointed Leader of the District Council.”

It was proposed by Councillor Eadie and seconded by Councillor Marshall “that Councillor Pritchard be elected as Deputy Leader of the District Council.”

It was then:

**RESOLVED:** That Councillors Wilcox and Pritchard be elected as Leader and Deputy Leader respectively of the District Council

**10 CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP OF CABINET, COMMITTEES AND PANELS INCLUDING ALLOCATION OF SEATS AND APPOINTMENTS BY POLITICAL GROUPS:**

It was proposed by Councillor Wilcox and seconded by Councillor Pritchard “that the Constitution and Membership of Cabinet, Committees and Panels including allocation of seats and appointments by Political Groups as submitted be approved.”

In submitting the proposal Councillor Wilcox thanked Members for his election as Leader and reminded them of the challenges for the next few years. Councillor Wilcox explained that the proposed Cabinet had been put forward in order to try and balance those with full time jobs with their need to undertake work on behalf of the District Council and thus two additional positions in the Cabinet had been identified. Councillor Wilcox informed Members that he intended to introduce a Local Member Initiative and distribute an Information Card to each household giving information about the District Council.

Councillor Mrs Woodward informed Members that having regard to the results of the elections both nationally and locally and the responsibilities placed on the Conservative Administration it was important that her Group formed an effective opposition to scrutinise procedures in the interests of the electorate. Councillor Mrs Woodward said that whilst in previous years her Group had taken the position of Vice Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees that opportunity had now been declined in the hope that the Controlling Group would move the scrutiny process forward and backbench Members would take a more active role looking at the process in a positive rather than negative way.

Councillor White informed Members that with a small number of opposition Members the importance of scrutiny by all Members increased and gave an example of such instances at Staffordshire County Council.

It was then:

**RESOLVED:** That the Constitution and Membership of Cabinet, (including the increase from six to eight Members), Committees and Panels including allocation of seats and appointments by political groups as submitted be approved and that the Constitution be amended to reflect the changes.

(Councillor A. Yeates left the meeting at 6.40 pm)

## **11 ELECTION OF CHAIRMEN AND APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES, PANELS ETC.**

It was proposed by Councillor Wilcox and seconded by Councillor Pritchard “that the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees and Panels as submitted be approved.”

In submitting the proposals Councillor Wilcox said that he had looked carefully at the Scrutiny Committees and their proposed Chairmen and Vice Chairmen and whilst retaining the previous Chairmen for continuity has given the opportunity to new Members to take an active role.

Councillor Cox expressed the view that it was very important that the District Council got to grips with the scrutiny process and agreed with the views previously expressed by Councillor Mrs Woodward. Councillor Cox referred to the Peer Review which had questioned the way that scrutiny was undertaken and highlighted the need to improve.

It was then:

**RESOLVED:** That the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees and Panels as submitted be approved.

## **12 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES:**

It was proposed by Councillor Pritchard, seconded by Councillor Spruce and

**RESOLVED:** That the appointment of Representatives of Outside Bodies as submitted be approved.

## **13 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES:**

It was proposed by Councillor Spruce and seconded by Councillor Eadie “that the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel as submitted to the meeting be agreed.”

In submitting the proposal Councillor Spruce appreciated that there was never a right time to put forward an increase in allowances and referred to the Members IT Fund which had been specifically highlighted in the report. Councillor Spruce agreed that the fund should not be separately paid but should form part of the basic allowance and that this formed part of his proposal.

Councillor Drinkwater was not sure that the proposals for the IT Allowance was the correct one and thought that the proposal to increase allowances paid to Members was not appropriate during the current financial climate of the Country where many people were losing their jobs including Officers of the District Council. Councillor Mrs Woodward agreed with Councillor Spruce that it is always difficult to put forward an increase in Members Allowances and whilst thanking the Independent Remuneration Panel for their detailed report felt that there were some factual inaccuracies. Councillor Mrs Woodward said that she would prefer the report to be deferred for one cycle of meetings so that the full implications of it could be considered and scrutinised as appropriate.

Councillor Eadie gave Members details of the implications of the proposal to incorporate the IT Allowance into the basic allowance having regard to the usage of equipment by Members and the difficulty in separating business, personal and District Council work for Members.

Councillor Wilcox informed Members that his Group had carefully looked at the report and felt that the proposals put forward were the correct ones. That included the payment of Special

Responsibility Allowances to the two new Cabinet Posts in line with the existing Cabinet posts.

It was then:

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel as submitted to the meeting be received and accepted subject to the following:

- (a) That the Special Responsibility Allowance be paid to the additional two Cabinet Members
- (b) That the Members' Basic Allowance for 2015/16 be £3,547.00 and Members be no longer entitled to receive a Technology Fund

(2) That in the event that allowances are not within existing budgets any additional costs be met from reserves.

#### 14 QUESTIONS:

Question 1

Question from Councillor Mrs Woodward to Chairman of the Employment Committee:

"At the last Council meeting, as referred to in Minute 256(e), the Vice-Chairman of the Employment Committee agreed to discuss with the Committee Chairman, who was absent, a review of the remit of the Committee to include wider employment issues such as staff health and wellbeing. Has any such discussion taken place and, if so, what are the outcomes?"

Response from Councillor Powell, Chairman of the Employment Committee:

"I am aware of the undertaking to look at the Terms of Reference for Employment Committee and this will be done as soon as possible now that the new Committee Membership has been agreed."

Mrs Woodward asked the following supplementary question:

"In view of the increased allowance for the Chairman of Employment Committee which has now been agreed will Councillor Powell confirm that he will provide good value as Chairman of Employment Committee by dealing with a wide range of employment issues?"

Response from Councillor Powell:

"I have already started discussions with the District Council's Solicitor on issues to be addressed by the Employment Committee."

#### 15 LEADERS ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Leader reminded Members that Planning Training would take place on Thursday 21 May 2015 and congratulated Councillor Mrs Eagland on being elected as Chairman of Staffordshire County Council.

(The Meeting closed at 7.10 pm)

CHAIRMAN