

COUNCIL

23 MAY 2023

PRESENT:

Councillors Anketell, Ashton, Ball, Banevicius, Bennion, Booker, Bragger, Checkland, Coe, Cox, Cross, D Ennis, L Ennis, Evans, Farrell, Galvin, Harvey-Coggins, Hawkins, Henshaw, Hill, Ho, Holland, Hughes, Leung, Marshall, Mears, Norman, Powell, Pullen, Ray, Robertson, Rushton, Salter, Silvester-Hall, A Smith, J Smith, Strachan, P Taylor, S Taylor, Trent, Vernon, Warfield, Whitehouse, M Wilcox, S Wilcox, Woodward and B Yeates.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)

No apologies were received.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3 ELECTION OF CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE ENSUING YEAR (FOLLOWED BY DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE)

It was proposed by Councillor M Wilcox, seconded by Councillor Pullen and

RESOLVED: That Councillor Cross be elected Chair of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Cross made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Councillor Cross then thanked Members for his election as Chair.

COUNCILLOR CROSS (CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL) IN THE CHAIR

4 VOTE OF THANKS TO RETIRING CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Councillor Cox, seconded by Councillor Norman and

RESOLVED: That the sincere thanks of the Council be accorded to Councillor Greatorex and Mrs Greatorex for their services to the Council and the Community during the previous Municipal Year.

Mr Greatorex and Mrs Greatorex were then presented with their replica badges of office and Mr Greatorex thanked those who had supported him during his term of office.

5 TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 April 2023 were approved as a correct record.

5 TO RECEIVE THE RETURNING OFFICER'S CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION OF DISTRICT COUNCILLORS ON 4 MAY 2023 AND HIS REPORT ON COUNCILLORS' DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The Returning Officer submitted his report on the election of District Councillors at the election held on 4 May 2023.

RESOLVED: That the report be received.

6 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR OF COUNCIL FOR THE ENSUING YEAR (FOLLOWED BY DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE)

It was proposed by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Strachan and

RESOLVED: That Councillor Holland be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Holland signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and thanked Members for his appointment as Vice-Chair.

7 VOTE OF THANKS

It was proposed by Councillor Wilcox, duly seconded and

RESOLVED: That the sincere thanks of the Council be accorded to Mr Warburton and Mrs Warburton for their service to the Council and the community during the previous Municipal Year.

Mr Warburton thanked those who had supported him during his term of office.

7 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair announced that his chaplain for the year would be Reverend Elizabeth Wall.

He stated that the Civic Service had not yet been organised, but he would be informing members of details soon.

The Chair announced that his chosen charity would be Lichfield Dementia and Fradley Dementia Care Home.

8 ELECTION OF LEADER AND APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

It was proposed by Councillor Smith and seconded by Councillor Vernon "that Councillor Pullen be appointed Leader of the District Council."

Following a vote it was:

RESOLVED: That Councillor Pullen be elected as Leader of the District Council

Councillor Pullen then advised that Councillor Smith would be appointed as Deputy Leader of the District Council.

9 MEMBERSHIP OF CABINET, COMMITTEES, PANELS AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS (INCLUDING ALLOCATION OF SEATS AND APPOINTMENTS BY POLITICAL GROUPS)

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

RESOLVED:

(a) that the political allocation of seats on Committees and Panels be approved.

(b) that the appointments to the Cabinet be noted and the appointments to Committees and Panels be approved.

(c) that the Constitution be amended to reflect the changes made.

10 ELECTION OF CHAIRS AND APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES, PANELS ETC.

It was proposed by Councillor Pullen and duly seconded by Councillor M Wilcox “that the Chair and Vice-Chair of Committees and Panels as submitted be approved.”

RESOLVED:

(a) The Chairs and Vice-Chairs of committees and panels etc. be as submitted be approved.

(b) That Councillor Norman be appointed as the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

11 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

It was proposed by Councillor Pullen and duly seconded by Councillor Silvester-Hall “that the appointment of representatives on outside bodies as submitted be approved.”

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

12 REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL ON CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS

Councillor Pullen submitted his report on Cabinet Member Decisions.

13 MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND MEMBER STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Councillor Ho paid tribute to the previous Chair, Councillor Spruce, for his dedication and hard work whilst on the committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Ho, seconded by Councillor Silvester-Hall and

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2023 be approved and adopted.

14 QUESTIONS

Questions under Procedure Rule 11.2 for Council

Q1. Question from Councillor Ashton to the Leader of the Council

“On 18 April Councillor Norman asked the Leader (Q6) for the number of applications made to the Council for Voter ID enabling the holders to exercise their rights to vote. At that time, it was reported that 95 applications had been made.

Can the Leader now provide the total number of such applications made to this Council prior to the cutoff date, together with a list, by polling station, of the number of would-be voters in the Lichfield District who were initially turned away and prevented from voting as a result of their lacking any identification, or identification meeting the requirements of the recent legislation? In addition, can he provide a similar list of the numbers of those who were initially turned away and who subsequently returned with appropriate identification?”

Answer provided for the Leader of the Council (to be elected at the meeting)

“In total, there were 109 applications made for a Voter Authority Certificates before the deadline of the 25th April 2023.

On polling day 24 electors were initially turned away. Of these 24 individuals, 16 later returned with accepted ID and were subsequently issued with a ballot paper.

The Electoral Commission has advised that while we can provide overall totals, we are not permitted to publish data on individual polling stations.”

Supplementary Question from Councillor Ashton

“I’d like to thank the Leader for his detailed response. Does he feel a review of the lessons learned with regards to photo ID issues at the last election will be needed for future elections?”

Response from the Leader of the Council

“We know that after every election there will always be a lessons learned across all items that they cover at the council. It will also be going to Overview and Scrutiny Committee as well.”

Q2. Question from Councillor Trent to the Leader of the Council

“During the recent election campaign in Lichfield District, I was pleased to see political parties across the spectrum pledge their support to a campaign by Lichfield Foodbank to end the need for the service by 2025. The Leader publicly confirmed that he would “welcome a meeting with the food bank to identify both practical and policy changes that could be made to work towards eliminating food banks”. With the election now behind us, will the Leader re-affirm that commitment before this Council, and if so, can he update Councillors on what his next steps will be on this vital issue?”

Response from the Leader of the Council

“My offer to Lichfield Food Bank was to meet with them if I was elected and having been elected for 15 minutes, I have already taken the opportunity of writing to them to request a meeting over the weekend. I look forward to meeting both the Lichfield Foodbank but also Cannock & District Foodbank at the earliest opportunity.”

No Supplementary Question was asked

(The Meeting closed at 7.15 pm)

CHAIR