

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

14<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2019

Present:

Councillor Julian Beale - Chairman

Councillors -

Stephen Andrews  
Mark Annett  
Gina Blomefield  
Claire Bloomer  
Tony Berry  
Ray Brassington  
Patrick Coleman  
Rachel Coxcoon  
Tony Dale  
Andrew Doherty  
Mike Evemy  
Jenny Forde  
Joe Harris  
Mark Harris  
Nikki Ind  
Stephen Hirst  
Roly Hughes

Robin Hughes  
Sue Jepson  
Julia Judd  
Richard Keeling  
Juliet Layton  
Andrew Maclean  
Nick Maunder  
Richard Morgan  
Dilys Neill  
Richard Norris  
Nigel Robbins  
Gary Selwyn  
Lisa Spivey  
Ray Theodoulou  
Steve Trotter  
Clive Webster

CL.1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mark Harris declared an interest in respect of Agenda Item (11), as the Chairman of the Independent Review Panel was a constituent within his Ward.

Councillor Joe Harris declared an interest in respect of Agenda Item (11), as he had historically attended a dinner at which the Chairman of the Independent Review Panel had been present.

There were no declarations of interest by Officers.

CL.2 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

The retiring Chairman of the Council, Councillor Julian Beale, welcomed new and returning Members to the Meeting along with former Members and a number of Honorary Alderman. He explained that he wished to congratulate Councillor Joe Harris and his fellow party colleagues for a well-conceived and excellent campaign which he considered had been conducted in a fine manner and one which, had demonstrated 'a time for change'. Councillor Beale added that he wished to extend his personal thanks to all Members and Officers who had assisted him during his two year term as Chairman and

offered his congratulations to the Head of Paid Service who had admirably conducted the recent District and Parish Elections.

Councillor Joe Harris extended his thanks to Councillor Beale for his service as Chairman of the Council over the past two years and for the professional and open to all approach he had applied to the role.

Councillor Beale then reported/invited nominations for Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Nigel Robbins had been Proposed by Councillor Claire Bloomer and Seconded by Councillor Ray Brassington. They commented that Councillor Robbins was an experienced Member at County, District and Town Council levels; and that he had previously served as Mayor of Cirencester. They believed that he was therefore well-suited to fulfilling the role of Chairman of the Council.

In the absence of further nominations, it was

**RESOLVED that Councillor Nigel Robbins be elected Chairman of the Council, to hold office until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2020.**

Notes:

- (i) Councillor Robbins read out his Declaration of Office, which he duly signed.
- (ii) Councillor Robbins then took the Chair.
- (iii) Councillor Robbins thanked Members for electing him as Chairman of the Council and explained that it was a matter of pride to represent the Council and that he hoped he would be as inclusive a Chairman as Councillor Beale and would undertake the role with agreement from all parties.

**CL.3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL**

The Chairman reported/invited nominations.

Councillor Dilys Neill had been Proposed by Councillor Lisa Spivey and Seconded by Councillor Tony Dale.

In the absence of further nominations, it was

**RESOLVED that Councillor Dilys Neill be elected Vice-Chairman of the Council, to hold office until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2020.**

Notes:

- (i) Councillor Neill then read out her Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which she duly signed.

(ii) Councillor Neill thanked Members for the confidence expressed in appointing her as Vice-Chairman of the Council and stated that she had learnt a great deal from the approach taken previously by Councillor Beale.

**CL.4 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, LEADER OR HEAD OF PAID SERVICE**

The Chairman explained that he would endeavour to represent the Council fairly both within and outside of the Council Chamber and that the Council's new administration's prospectus had an ambition to change with the main aims of transparency; urgency of responding to climate change; the educational and social element of the District's market towns; and an increase in social housing provision. He added that the appointment of Honorary Alderman would be subject to a review and subsequent report at a future Council Meeting. The Chairman also expressed his desire for Members to become involved in a competition to design a pledge or affirmation for Council Meetings, which the Vice-Chairman would judge. He concluded by congratulating newly-appointed Independent Ward Member for Tetbury East and Rural, Councillor Nikki Ind, on her appointment to the role of Mayor of Tetbury.

The Chairman then welcomed Mr. Christopher Horne, formerly, of Moreton-in-Marsh, to the Meeting. Mr. Horne advised of his family's connection to historic politicians of the District and gifted a painting of William Gladstone, former British Prime Minister, to the Council's administration for display within the Council's offices.

The Chairman extended his thanks to Mr. Horne and accepted the painting on behalf of the Council.

Councillor Berry wished to extend his thanks to Councillor Beale for being, what he considered, an 'exceptional' Chairman. Councillor Berry also wished to extend his thanks to his group for their support during his short term as Leader of the Council and also to Officers for their assistance. He concluded by congratulating Councillor Joe Harris on a successful campaign and stated that he was inheriting a Council 'in pretty good shape' and one that was also financially sound.

There were no announcements from the Head of Paid Service.

**CL.5 RECORD OF ATTENDANCES**

The Council received the Record of Attendances at Meetings during the past Council Year.

**CL.6 LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

The Chairman of the Council reported/invited nominations.

Councillor Joe Harris had been Proposed by Councillor Mike Evely and Seconded by Councillor Rachel Coxcoon.

Councillor Evely explained that he considered it 'an honour' to nominate Councillor Harris as the first Leader of the Council's new administration and stated that, without his input, it would be unlikely that the Group would be

running the Council. Councillor Every added that Councillor Harris had eight previous years of experience on the Council and was both passionate about Cirencester and the wider District as a whole.

In the absence of any further nominations, it was

**RESOLVED that Councillor Joe Harris be appointed Leader of the Council, to hold Office until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2023.**

Notes:

(i) It was noted that, by virtue of the Constitution, the Leader of the Council would also be Chairman of the Cabinet. It was also noted that, under the 'Strong Leader' executive arrangement, the Leader appointment was for the term of the Council rather than on an annual basis.

(ii) Councillor Harris thanked Members for their support, echoed the comments previously made by Members regarding Councillor Beale, and stated that he was looking forward to working with his colleague Members in a more constructive environment. He added that the Council had been the subject of a historic election result which had been reflected in large media coverage nationally; and that, whilst often disagreeing with them, he wished to extend his thanks to the previous administration and Councillor Berry as previous Leader of the Council. Councillor Harris echoed the comments made by the Chairman in regard to the new administration's priorities and he hoped that all Members would be involved in the decision-making process and would consequently feel their role at the Council to be a worthwhile and fulfilling one.

**CL.7 APPOINTMENT OF THE CABINET**

It was noted that Councillor Joe Harris, as Leader of the Council, had made the following Cabinet appointments for the 2019/20 Council Year:-

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Portfolio Area</u>
Mike Every (Deputy Leader)	Finance
Rachel Coxcoon	Planning, Policy, Climate Change and Energy
Tony Dale	Economic Development, Skills and Young People
Andrew Doherty	Waste, Flooding and Environmental Health
Jenny Forde	Health, Well-being and public safety
Mark Harris	Car Parks and Town & Parish Councils

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Portfolio Area</u>
Lisa Spivey	Housing and Homelessness
Clive Webster	Development Management, Landscape and Heritage

The Leader explained that he did not consider that the Cabinet in its current form to be the best method of governance, and that he would insist that the Cabinet would exercise its power with caution. He added that whilst a potential future move could be to move away from the Cabinet system, the current increase to nine Cabinet Members would help to deliver the ambitious programme for the Council. Whilst recognising the various financial implications, the Leader also explained that the important and busy first year of the council term did, in his view, justify the increase in membership.

#### CL.8 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

The Council was requested to make appointments to the various Committees of the Council for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

Attention was drawn to the Briefing Note from the Head of Democratic Services, which set out the allocations of each of the political groups within the Council to the various Committee and it was

**RESOLVED that the Committee appointments for 2019/20 be confirmed,**

**Record of Voting - for 34, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 0.**

#### Note:

Details of the various appointments are set out in the Appendix to these Minutes.

#### CL.9 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2019/20

The Head of Paid Service introduced the item and informed Members that the Chairman of the Independent Review Panel (IRP), Mrs. Jane Winstanley, was unable to be present at the Meeting due to a prior engagement. He drew attention to the views of the Panel, as detailed within the circulated report, and of the strong view that delaying any increase would result in more difficulties in uprating any allowances in the future. The Head of Paid Service concluded by clarifying previous Council discussions and decisions on this item, and the Council decision at the September 2018 Meeting, that the Panel's recommendations should be presented at the first Meeting of the newly-elected Council in May 2019 for decision.

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance then Proposed that the Council accept the recommendations of the Panel to increase Members' Allowances with a basic allowance of £5,000 per annum, and with future allowance amounts to be indexed against staff pay awards. He added that the newly-elected Council in May 2023 should then decide the levels of Members' Allowances for the next term having agreed the recommendations made by the Independent Review Panel at that time.

The Cabinet Member for Car Parks and Town and Parish Councils Seconded the Proposition. He explained that the allowances would be in line with many other Councils across the county and would enable a more diverse range of people to stand for election to the Council in the future.

Councillor Berry, as Leader of the Conservative Group, commented that his Group could not support the Proposition as the rises in salary for Officers over the same period equated to 14% in comparison. He also drew attention to the increase in Cabinet Members and the additional expenses this would incur.

Various Members drew attention to the potential that the increase in Member Allowances would have in encouraging a wider and more diverse membership of the Council and that, currently, the Council was considered to be 'under-remunerating' its Members. Those Members also explained that some residents of the District, having been surveyed by the IRP, had agreed that member allowances should be increased and that the increase had been delayed for too great a time.

Other Members highlighted the unsuitable timing of any decision being made on this item given the recent election of Members to the Council and in addition, the greater increase to Member Allowances than had been received by Officers over the past 11 years.

The Deputy Leader of the Council was invited to address the Council again and reminded Members that the timing of consideration of this item was in line with the previous administration's decision to defer any action on this item until the first Meeting of the newly-elected Council in May 2019. He also drew attention to the fact the Panel had recommended an increase of up to £5,500 per annum per Member and that the Proposition incorporated an increase from £4,000 to £5,000 per annum.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.6, a recorded vote was requested; and this request was supported by the requisite number of Members.

On being put to the vote, the PROPOSITION was APPROVED.

**RESOLVED that the Council supports the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to 2019/20 and beyond.**

Note:

The Record of Voting was as follows:-

For: - Councillors Claire Bloomer, Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Rachel Coxcoon, Tony Dale, Andrew Doherty, Mike Evemy, Jenny Forde, Joe Harris, Mark Harris, Roly Hughes, Nikki Ind, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Nick Maunder, Dilys Neill, Nigel Robbins, Gary Selwyn, Lisa Spivey and Clive Webster - Total: 20;

Against: - Councillors Stephen Andrews, Mark Annett, Julian Beale, Tony Berry, Gina Blomefield, Stephen Hirst, Robin Hughes, Sue Jepson, Julia Judd, Richard Keeling, Richard Morgan, Richard Norris, Ray Theodoulou and Steve Trotter - Total: 14;

Abstentions: - Total: 0;

Absent: - Total: 0

CL.10 OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business that was urgent.

Note:

The Chairman reminded Members that all Committees would meet at the conclusion of the Council Meeting to deal with their respective Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman elections/appointments.

The Meeting commenced at 12.05 p.m. and closed at 1.40 p.m.

Chairman

(END)

Unconfirmed

**APPENDIX**

**APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES - COUNCIL YEAR 2019/20**

**PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE**

**Liberal Democrat Group Representation (8):** Claire Bloomer  
Ray Brassington  
Patrick Coleman  
Roly Hughes  
Juliet Layton  
Dilys Neill  
Gary Selwyn  
Clive Webster

**Conservative Group Representation (6):** Tony Berry  
Stephen Hirst  
Sue Jepson  
Julia Judd  
Richard Keeling  
Steve Trotter

**Non-Grouped Member Representation (1):** Nikki Ind

**Total Members: 15**



**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Liberal Democrat Group Representation (4):** Claire Bloomer  
Patrick Coleman  
Dilys Neill  
Gary Selwyn

**Conservative Group Representation (3):** Stephen Andrews  
Gina Blomefield  
Richard Norris

**Non-Grouped Member Representation (1):** Andrew Maclean

**Total Members: 8**

Unconfirmed

**AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**Liberal Democrat Group Representation (3):** Patrick Coleman  
Roly Hughes  
Nick Maunder

**Conservative Group Representation (2):** Richard Morgan  
Ray Theodoulou

**Total Members: 5**

(END)

Unconfirmed