



Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Wednesday, 24 May 2023.

Councillors present:

Dilys Neill	Nikki Ind	
Gina Blomefield	Paul Hodgkinson	Tony Slater
Claire Bloomer	Roly Hughes	Lisa Spivey
Ray Brassington	Angus Jenkinson	Tom Stowe
Patrick Coleman	Julia Judd	Jeremy Theyer
Daryl Corps	Juliet Layton	Clare Turner
David Cunningham	Andrew Maclean	Michael Vann
Tony Dale	Helene Mansilla	Jon Wareing
Mike Evely	Mike McKeown	Ian Watson
David Fowles	Clare Muir	Len Wilkins
Joe Harris	Nigel Robbins	
Mark Harris	Gary Selwyn	

Officers present:

Jan Britton, Managing Director - Publica	Ana Prelici, Democratic Services
Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer
Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer)	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive
Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services Officer	

25 Election of a Chair

The Chair of Council opened the meeting and addressed the meeting for the final time in her position.

The Chair welcomed new Members to the Council and thanked current and former Members for their support during her tenure as Chair of Council.

There were also thanks given to officers in the management team and also Democratic Services for the work in providing for the smooth running of Council and Committee meetings.

It was also noted by the Chair how it had been an honour to represent the Council at a number of civic events, including the Proclamation of the new King.

The Leader of the Council was then invited to submit a proposal for Chair of Council, and it was proposed that Councillor Nikki Ind take the Chair of Council for the Civic Year.

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The Leader paid tribute to Councillor Neill for her leadership during some challenging Council meetings.

The Leader in proposing Councillor Nikki Ind commented on the hard work that she undertakes in her Tetbury Ward, and her generosity towards others.

This proposal was then seconded by Councillor Juliet Layton who addressed Council, and described the breadth of experience even before Councillor Ind's first election in 2019.

Councillor Layton also spoke about how Councillor Ind would be a strong Chair of Council at a time of great uncertainty in the District and the country.

There were no further proposals made for Chair of Council.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Nikki Ind be elected as Chair of Council until the end of the Civic Year at the Annual Meeting in 2024.

Voting Record For 33, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 1 Did not vote/absent

For	Against	Abstention	Did not vote/absent
Andrew Maclean			Chris Twells
Angus Jenkinson			
Claire Bloomer			
Clare Muir			
Clare Turner			
Daryl Corps			
David Cunningham			
David Fowles			
Dilys Neill			
Gary Selwyn			
Gina Blomefield			
Helene Mansilla			
Ian Watson			
Jeremy Theyer			
Joe Harris			
Jon Wareing			
Julia Judd			
Juliet Layton			
Len Wilkins			
Lisa Spivey			
Mark Harris			
Michael Vann			
Mike Evey			
Mike McKeown			
Nigel Robbins			
Nikki Ind			
Patrick Coleman			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Ray Brassington			

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Roly Hughes			
Tom Stowe			
Tony Dale			
Tony Slater			

26 Appointment of a Vice-Chair

After signing the declaration of acceptance of office, Councillor Nikki Ind took the Chair of Council.

The Chair of Council then opened the appointment of a Vice-Chair of Council for the Civic Year ending at the Annual Meeting in 2024.

Councillor Claire Bloomer proposed the appointment of Councillor Mark Harris to be Vice-Chair.

Councillor Bloomer spoke of his dedication and care for the community as a former Mayor of Cirencester, and that she was honoured to propose Councillor Mark Harris as Vice-Chair.

Councillor Fowles raised an issue with the agenda, which said 'Appointment' rather than 'Election'. The Business Manager for Democratic Services clarified that the Local Government Act 1972 specified these terms. However it was noted that the website would be checked.

Councillor Jenkinson seconded the appointment of Councillor Mark Harris as Vice-Chair.

Councillor Jenkinson spoke of Councillor Mark Harris' calm and sensible approach as a councillor, and was pleased to be the seconder of this appointment.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mark Harris be appointed as Vice-Chair of Council for the Civic Year ending at the Annual Meeting in May 2024.

Voting Record

33 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 1 Did not vote/absent

For	Against	Abstention	Did not vote/absent
Andrew Maclean			Chris Twells
Angus Jenkinson			
Claire Bloomer			
Clare Muir			
Clare Turner			
Daryl Corps			
David Cunningham			
David Fowles			
Dilys Neill			
Gary Selwyn			
Gina Blomefield			
Helene Mansilla			
Ian Watson			

Jeremy Theyer			
Joe Harris			
Jon Wareing			
Julia Judd			
Juliet Layton			
Len Wilkins			
Lisa Spivey			
Mark Harris			
Michael Vann			
Mike Evey			
Mike McKeown			
Nigel Robbins			
Nikki Ind			
Patrick Coleman			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Ray Brassington			
Roly Hughes			
Tom Stowe			
Tony Dale			
Tony Slater			

27 Announcements from the Chair, Leader of Chief Executive (if any)

The Chair of Council welcomed newly elected Councillors and thanked those Councillors who did not get re-elected. Thanks were extended to the previous Chair Councillor Dilys Neill for the hard work that was done whilst in that role.

The Chair also welcomed the new Leader of the Conservative Group Councillor Tom Stowe and the newly elected Leader of the Green Group, Councillor Andrew Maclean.

The Chair also wished to reaffirm the 'Debate not Hate' initiative that Council endorsed in the previous Civic Year and how Members should treat each other with respect during debate in the new Council session.

It was also noted by the Chair that the Council's motto is 'United We Serve' and this should be what all Councillors seek to keep in mind.

The Leader paid tribute to all of the Councillors who stood and were elected and those Councillors who were not elected.

The Leader also wished to offer condolences on the passing of John Lafford as a notable business figure in Cirencester.

The Chief Executive addressed Council and offered his congratulations to the newly elected Chair and Vice-Chair. There were also congratulations offered to those Councillors elected and thanks for those who were no longer elected for their work.

There were also tributes paid by the Chair, Leader and Chief Executive to the Elections and Democratic Services teams for their work in organising and carrying out the recent local elections.

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There were also tributes paid to Jim Grant who was the principal of Cirencester College who sadly passed away. This included the work on the digital hub which was notable in the community.

Councillor Robins as former principal at the college who worked with Jim Grant, also addressed Council to offer tributes.

28 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Chris Twells.

29 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers on any of the items.

The Chair noted that there was a general dispensation for Members regarding the Independent Remuneration Panel report to allow discussion of Member Allowances.

30 Formation of Political Groups

The Chief Executive introduced the report and noted that Council was asked to note this report

The following groups were noted

Liberal Democrat – 21

Conservative – 9

Green – 2

Non-Grouped Independents - 2

Councillor Stowe noted that Councillor Twells who was not in attendance, was not part of the Liberal Democrat group and the Leader of the Council should explain the circumstances regarding this change following the election.

The Leader of the Council commented that it was up to Councillor Twells to address that question and that there had been a statement given by Councillor Twells to the media.

31 Election of Leader of the Council

Councillor Evemy proposed that Councillor Joe Harris be the Leader of the Council for the next 4 years.

It was noted that Councillor Harris was elected 12 years ago, at the age of 18, as the youngest member of the Council, and had the longest continuous record of service in the Council alongside Councillor Coleman and Councillor Layton.

It was commented that the Council had seen a number of positive changes since his first term as Leader of the Council in 2019.

Cllr Spivey seconded the proposal that Councillor Joe Harris be elected as Leader of the Council.

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It was commented that Councillor Harris had represented the Council on a number of platforms and was passionate about all of the residents of the District, including those in his hometown of Cirencester.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Joe Harris be elected as Leader of the Council for a term of office ending at the Annual Meeting in May 2027.

Voting Record

31 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention, 1 Did not vote/absent

For	Against	Abstention	Did not vote/absent
Andrew Maclean		Tom Stowe	Chris Twells
Angus Jenkinson			David Cunningham
Claire Bloomer			
Clare Muir			
Clare Turner			
Daryl Corps			
David Cunningham			
David Fowles			
Dilys Neill			
Gary Selwyn			
Gina Blomefield			
Helene Mansilla			
Ian Watson			
Jeremy Theyer			
Joe Harris			
Jon Wareing			
Julia Judd			
Juliet Layton			
Len Wilkins			
Lisa Spivey			
Mark Harris			
Michael Vann			
Mike Evely			
Mike McKeown			
Nigel Robbins			
Nikki Ind			
Patrick Coleman			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Ray Brassington			
Roly Hughes			
Tony Dale			
Tony Slater			

Councillor Joe Harris addressed Council and thanked residents in the Cotswolds for their support at the previous election.

Councillor Joe Harris commented that it was a life honour to lead the Council.

The Leader also paid tribute to former Cllr Tony Berry as Conservative Leader for his service to the Council despite the disagreements between them.

32 **Announcement of the Leader on Cabinet appointments**

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and confirmed there were no changes to the overall number of Cabinet Members.

There were changes to the portfolio areas which were outlined by the Leader to Council such as climate change which was also outlined as a priority for the new administration.

The Leader also welcomed Councillor Bloomer, Councillor Hodgkinson and Councillor McKeown as the new Members of the Cabinet.

The Leader paid tribute to previous Cabinet Members who did not stand at the last election for their work in serving the Council.

The new Cabinet appointments were therefore as follows:

Councillor	Portfolio Area	Areas of Responsibility
Joe Harris	Leader	Coordination of executive functions, Policy framework including the corporate plan, Publica, Council communications, Democratic services, Housing and homelessness, Clean and green campaign and street cleaning, Town and parish council liaison
Mike Evely (Deputy Leader)	Finance	Financial strategy and management, Property and assets, Waste and recycling, Revenues and benefits, Grants, Public toilets, UBICO
Mike McKeown	Climate Change and Sustainability	Climate and biodiversity emergency response, Community energy, Sustainable transport, Retrofit, Council sustainability
Tony Dale	Economy and Council Transformation	Business transformation, Local Enterprise Partnership and county-wide partnerships, Economic development, Car parking operations and strategy, Tourism and visitor information centres, Chamber of Commerce liaison, Customer experience and channel shift
Juliet Layton	Planning and Regulatory Services	Development management, Forward planning and the local plan, Heritage and design management, Environmental and regulatory services, Cotswold Water Park
Paul Hodgkinson	Health, Leisure and Culture	Public health, Mental health, Leisure centres, Museums, Culture , Young people
Lisa Spivey	Communities and	Improving social mobility and social isolation,

	Public Safety	Flooding and sewage, Safeguarding, Domestic abuse, Police liaison and crime, Refugees, Crowdfund Cotswold, Member Development
Claire Bloomer	Cost of Living and Inclusion	Cost of living support, Liaison with 3 rd sector, Diversity and inclusion, Supporting women and minorities

RESOLVED: That Council NOTED the new Cabinet appointments and the changes to the portfolios.

33 Appointment of Committees and Working Groups

The purpose of this report was to set out those matters reserved to Council at its Annual Meeting:

- To establish the allocation of seats to political groups based on political proportionality
- To make appointments to Committees for the Civic Year 2023/24
- To make appointments to the positions of Chair and Vice Chair of Committees for the Civic Year 2023/24

The Chair invited the Director of Governance and Development to introduce the report.

The report was outlined as being in two parts: the political balance calculations for each group at Annex A and the committee seat nominees as detailed in Annex B.

There was also a recommendation to Council that the 'Audit Committee' was renamed the 'Audit and Governance Committee' in line with the recommendations of the Peer Review undertaken.

The Leader of the Conservative Group addressed Council and stated that he looked forward to working with all Councillors across the Committees and the Cabinet.

It was also noted by the Leader of the Conservative Group that the renaming of the Audit Committee to the Audit and Governance Committee was welcomed to reflect the vital work that the Committee does.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Joe Harris. This was then seconded by Councillor Evely, who also noted the recommendations regarding substitutions of Members on Committees.

RESOLVED: That Full Council resolves to:

1. DETERMINE that, in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 ("the Act"), the Council shall continue to apply the political balance provisions under the Act to committees as shown in Annex A.
2. APPOINT Councillors to serve on the Council's Committees and working groups as set out in Annex B for a term of office expiring at the next Annual Meeting of the Council;
3. APPOINT Chair and Vice-Chair for the Council's Committees and working groups as shown in Annex B;
4. AGREE that the Audit Committee will now be called the Audit and Governance Committee from this Civic Year forward.

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5. NOTE the arrangements for substitutions set out in part 4 of the report

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For	Against	Abstention	Did not vote/absent
Andrew Maclean			Chris Twells
Angus Jenkinson			
Claire Bloomer			
Clare Muir			
Clare Turner			
Daryl Corps			
David Cunningham			
David Fowles			
Dilys Neill			
Gary Selwyn			
Gina Blomefield			
Helene Mansilla			
Ian Watson			
Jeremy Theyer			
Joe Harris			
Jon Wareing			
Julia Judd			
Juliet Layton			
Len Wilkins			
Lisa Spivey			
Mark Harris			
Michael Vann			
Mike Evey			
Mike McKeown			
Nigel Robbins			
Nikki Ind			
Patrick Coleman			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Ray Brassington			
Roly Hughes			
Tom Stowe			
Tony Dale			
Tony Slater			

34 Appointment to Outside Bodies

The Leader of the Council addressed the Council regarding the appointment of Outside Bodies.

It was noted that two Gloucestershire County Council Committees require appointments and there had been some confusion regarding the power to appoint.

Councillor Blomefield as the newly elected Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, questioned whether the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)

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and Gloucestershire Joint Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee were normally appointed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

It was noted by Councillor Blomefield that the Constitution was not clear on this point, and this needed to be looked at by the Constitution Working Group.

It was also noted that the Constitution had references to the 'Conservative Party' in regards to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a typographical error, which needed to be removed.

As further discussions needed to take place, the Leader stated that the appointments for the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) and Gloucestershire Joint Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee would not be made at this point in time.

Community Safety Partnership – Councillor Lisa Spivey

Cotswold Canal Partnership – Councillor Patrick Coleman

Cotswold Health and Wellbeing Partnership – Councillor Paul Hodgkinson

Cotswold National Landscape Board – Councillor Juliet Layton

GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership – Councillor Tony Dale

Gloucestershire County Council Economy Joint Executive Committee – Councillor Tony Dale

Gloucestershire County Council Strategic Planning Leaders board – Councillor Tony Dale

Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel – Councillor Ray Brassington

Leadership Gloucestershire – Councillor Joe Harris

Publica – Councillor Joe Harris

South West Audit Partnership – Councillor Nigel Robbins

South West Councils – Councillor Joe Harris

Ubico – Councillor Joe Harris (with Councillor Mike Evely as Cabinet Member also attending)

Safer Gloucestershire Board – Councillor Lisa Spivey

Cirencester Civic Society Board – Councillor Gary Selwyn

RESOLVED: That Council NOTED the appointments to outside bodies by the Leader of the Council.

35 Attendance Report

The purpose of the report was to report on Members attendance at Council and Committees for the Civic Year 2022/23.

The Chair opened the item by explaining that the data used had been drawn from the internal systems used by Democratic Services, and therefore the presentation of the report is different from last year.

It was noted that whilst Members attending meetings as observers was not shown in these figures, the full attendance record for all Members is available online on the District Council's website.

There were queries regarding attendance at meetings and whether a Member was a substitute, that this would be captured in the return. The Business Manager for Democratic Services confirmed that Members who substituted for another were captured, but Members who were observers were not captured in this return.

RESOLVED: That Council NOTED the record of attendance for the Civic Year 2022/23.

36 Return of Councillors Elected

The purpose of this report was for Council to note the return of Councillors elected.

The Leader of the Green Group addressed Council and thanked the residents of The Rissingtons and Blockley for their support in both of their Group Member's wards. It was also commented that the Green Group would be supporting initiatives across party lines on tackling climate change, river sewage and supporting biodiversity.

There were comments about the respectful campaigns fought in various wards in the District.

It was noted that the Watermoor ward and the New Mills ward had the lowest turnout percentages in the District, and that it was requested that those polling stations would be looked at. The Leader noted that the review of the polling stations is undertaken periodically and that the Leader and the Chief Executive would take the concerns to a future review.

It was noted that Members from all sides should work together for the benefit of all residents regardless of political affiliation.

RESOLVED: That Council NOTED the return of councillors elected.

37 Report and Recommendations from the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel

Councillor Joe Harris introduced the report as an important report for the agreement of an allowance scheme, and proposed with the report the revised recommendations from the Liberal Democrat Group.

The Director of Governance and Development was then asked to introduce the background of the report.

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It was noted that the Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel had given apologies for not being able to present the report.

It was outlined that the last allowance scheme was agreed in 2019 and now needed to be renewed.

It was noted that Members were consulted and analysis from other Councils' schemes in the South West was examined to ensure best practice.

It was highlighted that Councillors currently had an annual increase in line with Staff Pay Awards, but that the current pay award for 2023 had not been agreed.

There was also consideration given in this process to making sure that people from all backgrounds could become Councillors.

It was noted that there were no changes to the multipliers to the basic allowance for those Members who hold a position such as being a Chair. However, this would be reviewed in 2024.

Councillor Every then seconded the report and the revised recommendations.

The expansion of the employee assistance programme to Members was welcomed as a way to support Members' health and wellbeing. The maternity, paternity and adoption changes to the allowance scheme were also agreed.

It was noted by the Deputy Leader that the freezing of the allowances at the Budget in February is something that should be kept, but that the divergence from the staff pay award would have a greater impact on Members.

Therefore it was proposed that the freeze should take place for 2023, but that the increase would then be implemented in 2024 along with any increase in subsequent years.

The Leader of the Conservative Group agreed that the cost of living crisis was still ongoing and therefore that a freeze for 2 years would be preferable in the circumstances.

There were various comments that the allowance for Councillors was often misunderstood and perceived to be higher than the true figure.

RESOLVED: That Council APPROVE the proposed recommendations as amended:

1. Note the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Annex A), and thank them for their input;
2. ~~Agree to index link members' allowances with the pay settlement agreed by the National Employers for Local Government Services, known as "Green Book".~~ **Leave the members' allowances rates unchanged in 2023/24 and agree to index link members' allowances with the pay settlement agreed by the National Employers for Local Government Services, known as "Green Book" with effect from 1 April 2024, with the increase in 2024/25 reflecting the staff pay settlement increases for both 2023/24 and 2024/25.**

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3. Adopt the Draft Allowances Scheme 2023-27 (Annex B), **as amended by the new recommendation 2.** ~~or an amended version of it.~~
4. Extend the benefits of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) to all Members with immediate effect.
5. Implement maternity, paternity and adoption policies for Cabinet Members with immediate effect.
6. Support a mid-term review in 2024.

Voting Record - 23 For, 5 Against, 5 Abstention, 1 Did not vote/absent

For	Against	Abstention	Did not vote/absent
Angus Jenkinson	Andrew Maclean	Daryl Corps	Chris Twells
Claire Bloomer	David Cunningham	Gina Blomefield	
Clare Muir	David Fowles	Julia Judd	
Clare Turner	Jeremy Theyer	Len Wilkins	
Dilys Neill	Tom Stowe	Tony Slater	
Gary Selwyn			
Helene Mansilla			
Ian Watson			
Joe Harris			
Jon Wareing			
Juliet Layton			
Lisa Spivey			
Mark Harris			
Michael Vann			
Mike Evely			
Mike McKeown			
Nigel Robbins			
Nikki Ind			
Patrick Coleman			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Ray Brassington			
Roly Hughes			
Tony Dale			

38 Programme of Meetings Update

The purpose of the report was to consider a change of the next Council meeting date from 5th July 2023 to 19th July 2023.

Cllr Joe Harris proposed the recommendations, and explained that the Council sends a delegation of Members and Officers to the Local Government Association Conference, and this change would help to avoid a large number of absences from the next meeting of Council.

Councillor Mike Evely seconded the report.

There were various comments about the insight that the Local Government Association's conference can give to new and existing Members and Officers.

RESOLVED: That the date of the next meeting be moved from 5th July 2023 to 19th July 2023.

Voting Record - 28 For, 1 Against, 3 Abstention, 2 Did not vote/absent

For	Against	Abstention	Did not vote/absent
Andrew Maclean	Jeremy Theyer	Dilys Neill	Chris Twells
Angus Jenkinson		Len Wilkins	David Fowles
Claire Bloomer		Nigel Robbins	
Clare Muir			
Clare Turner			
Daryl Corps			
David Cunningham			
Gary Selwyn			
Gina Blomefield			
Helene Mansilla			
Ian Watson			
Joe Harris			
Jon Wareing			
Julia Judd			
Juliet Layton			
Lisa Spivey			
Mark Harris			
Michael Vann			
Mike Evely			
Mike McKeown			
Nikki Ind			
Patrick Coleman			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Ray Brassington			
Roly Hughes			
Tom Stowe			
Tony Dale			
Tony Slater			

39 Next meeting

The next meeting of Full Council will be on 19th July 2023 at 6pm.

The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 7.45 pm

Chair

(END)