



Council  
26 May 2021

**Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held at Cirencester Baptist Church on Wednesday, 26 May 2021.**

**Councillors present:**

Nigel Robbins - retiring Chair	Dilys Neill - Chair	Nikki Ind - Vice-Chair
Stephen Andrews	Mike Evey	Juliet Layton
Tony Berry	Jenny Forde	Nick Maunder
Gina Blomefield	Joe Harris	Richard Morgan
Claire Bloomer	Stephen Hirst	Richard Norris
Ray Brassington	Robin Hughes	Ray Theodoulou
David Cunningham	Roly Hughes	Gary Selwyn
Patrick Coleman	Sue Jepson	Lisa Spivey
Rachel Coxcoon	Julia Judd	Steve Trotter
Tony Dale	Richard Keeling	Clive Webster (from 2.30pm)
Andrew Doherty		

**Officers present:**

Chief Executive	Deputy Chief Executive
Monitoring Officer Democratic Services	Interim Head of Legal Services

**CL.1 Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Councillor Maclean.

**CL.2 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest by Members or Officers.

**CL.3 Election of Chair of the Council**

The Vice-Chair took the Chair and then reported/invited nominations for Chair of the Council for the ensuing year. Councillor Dilys Neill had been Proposed by Councillor Joe Harris and Seconded by Councillor Layton. They commented that Councillor Neill was an experienced Member of the Council and had served diligently as Vice-Chair of the Council since 2019.

In the absence of further nominations, it was

**RESOLVED that Councillor Dilys Neill be elected Chair of the Council, to hold office until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2022.**

Notes:

- (i) Councillor Neill read out the Declaration of Office, which she duly signed.
- (ii) Councillor Neill then took the Chair.
- (iii) Councillor Neill thanked Members for electing her as Chair of the Council and explained that it was a matter of pride to represent the Council.

#### **CL.4 Appointment of Vice-Chair of the Council**

The Chair reported/invited nominations.

Councillor Nikki Ind had been Proposed by Councillor Neill and was Seconded by Councillor Hirst.

In the absence of further nominations, it was

**RESOLVED that Councillor Nikki Ind be elected Vice-Chair of the Council, to hold office until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2022.**

Note:

Councillor Ind then read out the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which she duly signed.

#### **CL.5 Announcements from the Chair, Leader or Chief Executive**

##### **Announcements from the Chair:**

The Chair welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting and members of the public watching the livestream online. She thanked the Council for electing her as Chair of Council and advised that she was the first female Chair of Council for over 10 years and advised that she would be speaking with Councillor Jepson as a former female Chair of Council for advice in the future.

The Chair welcomed Angela Claridge, Interim Monitoring Officer, to the meeting and explained that she looked forward to working with her going forward.

The Chair advised that the former Council Chair's Awards which had been instigated by former Council Chair and Councillor Julian Beale would be re-starting and would combine with a Covid-19 awards scheme to recognise the contribution made by the District's residents during the pandemic. The Chair advised that a cross party working group would be established shortly.

Thanks were extended by the Chair to Councillor Robbins for his work as Chair during the lockdown, particularly in reference to the meetings he had chaired over the past year, all of which had been held virtually.

The Chair then paid tribute to the work of former Councillor and Council Chair Julian Beale who had resigned from the Council in March 2021 due to ill health. The Chair advised that Julian had been a Conservative Councillor for the Fossebridge Ward since 2012 having been elected in a by-election on 31 May 2012. In that time, he held a number of positions, including Chair of the Licensing Committee between 2014 and 2015, Vice-Chair of the Council between 2015 and 2017 and subsequently Chair of the Council between 2017 and 2019. During his time as Chair of the Council, Councillor Beale instigated the launch of a community awards scheme, which sought to find the District's greatest champions who helped to make the area a better place to live. The scheme culminated in an awards evening held at the Royal Agricultural University in November 2018 at which the seven awards were presented.

All those present joined a round of applause in tribute to former Councillor Beale's efforts.

The Chair welcomed Councillor David Cunningham as the new Ward Member for Fossebridge to his first meeting of the Council.

The Chair then advised Members that this would be the last meeting supported by Democratic Services Officers Ben Amor and Kathryn Skill. She extended her thanks to both Officers for their work during their time at the Council.

Councillor Layton also paid tribute to both Officers and, in particular, highlighted the support they had given to her as Chair of the Planning and Licensing Committee during the past Council year when Committee meetings had been required to be held virtually and the challenges that had been overcome.

Councillor Morgan, as Leader of the Opposition Group, was invited to address the Council. He echoed the various tributes paid and commended the re-introduction of the Chair's Awards Scheme.

#### **Announcements from the Leader:**

The Leader echoed previous tributes and in doing so, expressed his admiration to those in the District who had helped to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic and in particular key workers and extended his thanks to them.

All those present joined a round of applause in tribute to those affected, and who had supported the District's approach to tackling the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Leader thanked the staff at Cirencester Baptist Church and the Barn Theatre for enabling the meeting to take place and extended his congratulations to Councillors Hirst and Spivey for their recent election to Gloucestershire County Council.

#### **Announcements from the Chief Executive:**

The Chief Executive echoed previous tributes paid by the Chair and Leader and extended his thanks to Members for their support during his first five months in office.

The Chair then invited Councillor Forde to address the Council. Councillor Forde advised on the upcoming Cotswold Youth Roadshow taking place and explained that

13 venues across the District would be visited and that Member support would be welcome.

#### **CL.6 Record of Attendances and Decisions of the Leader and Individual Cabinet Members**

The Council received the Record of Attendances at Meetings during the past Council Year and details of the decisions taken by the Leader and Cabinet Members.

#### **CL.7 Appointment of Cabinet**

It was noted that Councillor Joe Harris, as Leader of the Council, had made the following Cabinet appointments for the 2021/22 Council Year:-

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Portfolio Area</b>
Mike Every (Deputy Leader)	Finance
Rachel Coxcoon	Climate Change and Forward Planning
Tony Dale	Economy and Council Transformation
Andrew Doherty	Environment, Waste and Recycling
Jenny Forde	Health and Wellbeing
Juliet Layton	Development Management and Licensing
Lisa Spivey	Housing and Homelessness

The Leader reported that the majority of Cabinet roles remained unchanged but that Councillor Layton replaced Councillor Webster as Cabinet Member with responsibility for planning. The Leader extended his thanks to Councillor Webster for his previous service on the Cabinet and advised that Councillor Layton brought a wealth of planning experience with her having previously served as both Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning and Licensing Committee and as a Committee Member since her election in 2011.

The Leader also advised that responsibility for licensing matters would transfer from Councillor Doherty's portfolio to Councillor Layton in addition to responsibility for the Cotswold Water Park, which would transfer from Councillor Every's portfolio. Councillor Dale would now have responsibility for internal transformation and service design; young people would transfer from Councillor Dale to Councillor Forde and town and parish council liaison would now transfer to the Leader.

#### **CL.8 Political Composition of the Council and Formation of Political Groups**

The Council received the notifications received under Regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 giving the composition of political groups.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

#### **CL.9 Appointment of Committees**

The Council was requested to make appointments to the various Committees of the Council for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

The Leader reported that discussions had taken place prior to the meeting between himself, the Chief Executive and Councillor Morgan as Leader of the Opposition Group regarding Committee appointments. The Leader advised that it was hoped the Council would appoint all Committee Chairs, Vice-Chairs and memberships en bloc.

It was then Proposed and Seconded that the Committee appointments as circulated be approved.

**RESOLVED that Council:**

- a) **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;**
- b) **Appoint Councillors, Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs to serve on the Council’s Committees for a term of office expiring at the next Annual Meeting of the Council.**

**Record of Voting - for 33, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 1.**

Note:

Appointments were made as follows:

**Planning and Licensing Committee**

**Chair:** Ray Brassington

**Vice-Chair:** Julia Judd

<b>Liberal Democrats (6)</b>	<b>Conservative (4)</b>	<b>Non-Grouped (1)</b>
Ray Brassington	Stephen Hirst	Andrew Maclean
Dilys Neill	Sue Jepson	
Patrick Coleman	Julia Judd	
Gary Selwyn	Steve Trotter	
Juliet Layton		
Clive Webster		

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Chair:** Stephen Andrews

**Vice-Chair:** Gary Selwyn

Liberal Democrats (5)	Conservative (4)	Non-Grouped (1)
Claire Bloomer	Stephen Andrews	Nikki Ind
Patrick Coleman	Gina Blomefield	
Roly Hughes	Richard Norris	
Gary Selwyn	Ray Theodoulou	
Nigel Robbins		

#### Audit Committee

**Chair:** Patrick Coleman

**Vice-Chair:** Nigel Robbins

Liberal Democrats (4)	Conservative (3)	Non-Grouped (0)
Patrick Coleman	Stephen Andrews	
Mark Harris	Tony Berry	
Nick Maunder	Ray Theodoulou	
Nigel Robbins		

#### **CL.10 Appointment to the Independent Remuneration Panel**

The Council was requested to appoint Mr. Richard Blamey to be a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel following the resignation of Panel Member Mr. Simon Harper and to request the Panel to carry out a review of Councillor allowances.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and explained that Members' Allowances were a politically controversial topic and the matter had last been debated by the Council in May 2019, following a review by the IRP in 2018. He added that it had been three years since the last review and that there had been much change within the Council since then. He added that Mr. Blamey had great deal of experience in working on IRPs and asked Council to note the £250 that would be paid to each of the three Panel Members as a one-off payment as remuneration for their work in undertaking the review.

Councillor Morgan explained that whilst his Group had no objection to the report, the Group did not feel the time was correct given the Council's current recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Councillor Spivey seconded the proposals and advised that the recommendations supported previous decisions by the Council and would enable a full debate of Members' allowances at the Council meeting in September 2021 at which the report of the IRP would be presented.

**RESOLVED that, the Council:**

- A.) Appoints Mr. Richard Blamey as the third member of the Independent Remuneration Panel with immediate effect;**
- B.) asks the Independent Remuneration Panel to carry out a review of Councillor allowances and bring a report back to Council by September 2021;**
- C.) authorises a one off payment of £250 to be paid to all members of the Independent Remuneration Panel.**

**Record of Voting - for 33, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 1.**

#### **CL.11 Appointment of the Interim Monitoring Officer**

The Council was requested to appoint an interim Monitoring Officer in accordance with statutory requirements.

The Chief Executive introduced the report and explained that the appointment of an Interim Monitoring Officer would enable the Council's Senior Management Team to better understand what management was required for the Council going forward to deliver on the 2019 Corporate Plan.

The Leader proposed the recommendations and in doing so, thanked previous Interim Monitoring Officer Pat Arran for his work with the Council. The Deputy Leader then seconded the proposition.

Councillor Theodoulou questioned the decision to appoint a further Monitoring Officer on an interim basis and questioned why a decision was not being made to appoint a full-time Officer. In response, the Chief Executive explained that once a review of senior management requirements had been undertaken, the expectation was that a Monitoring Officer would be appointed on a permanent, full-time basis.

**RESOLVED that, in accordance with Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council confirm the appointment of Angela Claridge, as the Council's interim Monitoring Officer until such time a permanent appointment has been made.**

**Record of Voting - for 33, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 1.**

#### **CL.12 Funding and Contract Changes to support BEIS Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme**

A report was presented to Council to seek contingency funding to support the installation of carbon reduction measures in the Council's buildings as part of the BEIS decarbonisation scheme and to seek delegated authority to negotiate a contract variation with the Council's leisure provider, SLM, to ensure requirements of grant funding are met.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning introduced the report and highlighted various aspects, including the need for the Council to act quickly to ensure appropriate and timely delegation to Officers. She then proposed the recommendations to Council for approval.

The Deputy Leader seconded the recommendations and explained that the timescales for the Scheme were very tight and highlighted that if the deadline of 30 September 2021 was not met, then the Council would need to fund the Scheme itself.

Councillor Cunningham questioned the risk of funding failing to be secured for the Scheme. In response, the Deputy Chief Executive in her role as the Council's Chief Finance Officer responded that the Chief Executive and herself had been lobbying the Local Government Association and the local MP, alongside other authorities, in the hope of an extended deadline being agreed to by BEIS. They also advised that the contingency fund was being funded from a re-allocation of the Council's Capital Programme.

Councillors commented that the item was first considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 1 March 2021 and at which point seven key actions had been identified. In response, the Chief Executive confirmed that he received regular updates in relation to the project's direction and that he was confident these actions had been undertaken.

Other Councillors highlighted that regardless of whether the Council was successful in acquiring the funding, the environment could not wait and therefore action needed to be undertaken urgently.

Councillor Coxcoon was invited to address the Council again and echoed the comments that action needed to be undertaken urgently and urged the Council to support the recommendations.

**RESOLVED that Council:**

- A) proceed with the planned decarbonisation installation noting the financial risks surrounding withdrawal of funding should delivery fail to meet the grant funding completion deadline;**
- B) allocate a contingency sum of £120,000 (12.5% of works capital costs) to support delivery and avoid unnecessary delays if costs exceed initial estimates and grant funding provided - any expenditure of this contingency to be agreed by the Deputy Chief Executive/Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance;**
- C) Reallocate £120,000 in the Capital Programme from the £980,000 available for "Acquisition of a Strategic site at Moreton-in-Marsh" to the contingency for the decarbonisation scheme;**
- D) Note that a variation to the SLM leisure services contract is necessary to enable utility costs to be paid by the Council and agrees that management fees payable to the Council are adjusted accordingly.**

**Record of Voting - for 33, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 1.**

**CL.13 Next meeting - Wednesday 14 July 2021, 6.00pm**

The Meeting commenced at 2.00pm and closed at 3.37pm

Council  
26 May 2021

Chair

(END)

Unconfirmed