

COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON

TUESDAY, 12 MAY 2020

Councillors Present: Adrian Abbs, Steve Ardagh-Walter, Phil Barnett, Jeff Beck, Dennis Benneyworth, Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Jeff Brooks, Jeff Cant, Hilary Cole, James Cole, Jeremy Cottam, Carolyne Culver, Lee Dillon, Lynne Doherty, Clive Hooker (Vice-Chairman), Gareth Hurley, Owen Jeffery, Rick Jones, Alan Law, Tony Linden, Royce Longton, Ross Mackinnon, Alan Macro, Thomas Marino, David Marsh, Steve Masters, Andy Moore, Graham Pask (Chairman), Erik Pattenden, Claire Rowles, Garth Simpson, Richard Somner, Joanne Stewart, Martha Vickers, Tony Vickers, Andrew Williamson, Keith Woodhams and Howard Woollaston

Also Present: John Ashworth (Executive Director - Place), Nick Carter (Chief Executive), Sarah Clarke (Service Director (Strategy and Governance)), Kevin Griffin (Head of Customer Services & ICT), Joseph Holmes (Executive Director - Resources) and Andy Sharp (Executive Director (People)), Moira Fraser (Democratic and Electoral Services Manager) and Phil Rumens (Digital Services Manager)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Billy Drummond, Councillor Nassar Kessell and Councillor Geoff Mayes

Councillor(s) Absent: Councillor Peter Argyle

PART I

1. Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Chairman noted that sadly the Council had recently lost two former Councillors, Councillors Audrey Appleby and David Becket. He asked Members to pause for a moment to reflect on their lives.

Councillor Phil Barnett stated that Audrey Appleby had been part of the 1991 cohort of Councillors who were a very committed special team. He stated that Audrey had been the perfect candidate to represent the people of Greenham. She was a quiet councillor in meetings but was capable of making impassioned speeches when drawn to make them. She had continued to work hard for her constituents when she ceased to be a district councillor as a member of the parish council. She would be sorely missed by her relatives, friends and all the people she represented.

Councillor Jeff Brooks commented that he had first met David Becket in 1994. He was an exceptionally hard working councillor and had been instrumental in introducing the 'twenty is plenty' campaign locally. He was the portfolio holder for highways for a number of years and was renowned for his incredible knowledge of the local road network. David was a hardworking, highly respected, public spirited man who had contributed a lot to this community. He had continued in this public life after leaving West Berkshire and had become mayor of his council when he moved to Staffordshire.

Councillor Martha Vickers stated that she had also met David when she was first elected to the Council. He was one of those councillors that was respected across the chamber by Members and also by the officers he worked with. He was also a very good cook and

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she had fond memories of the pots of soup he had prepared for the Liberal Democrat Group. He too would be sorely missed.

The Chairman reported that he had attended 71 events during the 2019/20 Municipal Year. He thanked his Vice Chairman, Councillor Clive Hooker, who had attended 18 events on behalf of residents during the year and also former Chairmen Peter Argyle and Jeff Beck who had also attended events when needed to do so.

The Chairman thanked Members, especially his Vice Chairman, for their support during the past Municipal Year. He also thanked Sarah Clarke for the support that she had given him during the year.

The Chairman thanked Members and Officers, especially those in the Community Hub, for their contributions during this unprecedented and difficult time. He also thanked all the volunteers who were working selflessly across the district.

2. **Election of the Chairman for the Municipal Year 2020/21 (C3927)**

Prior to nominations being sought for the role of Chairman for the 2020/21 Municipal Year the Leader of the Council commented that she too would like to thank staff for the professional and compassionate way they had conducted themselves during these difficult times.

Councillor Doherty stated that at this point in the meeting she would normally be standing to nominate a new Chairman of Council. However as the current Chairman had been unable to enjoy a full year of activities and with the lockdown continuing the new Chairman also not being undertake a full round of civic duties she was proposing that the current Chairman be re-elected for a further year. She also believed that in difficult times continuity was important and this proposal would assist with that.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Lynne Doherty and seconded by Councillor Graham Bridgman that Councillor Graham Pask be re-elected Chairman of the Council for the Municipal Year 2020/21. There were no further nominations.

Councillor Lynne Doherty in proposing Councillor Pask for the role of Chairman stated that in these uncertain times she could not think of anyone more experienced and suitable for the role.

Councillor Graham Bridgman stated that over the previous year Councillor Pask had proved to be a marvellous and dedicated Chairman. He had been very thorough in his preparations for Council meetings and conducted these meetings in a very fair way. He was therefore delighted to second this proposal.

RESOLVED that Councillor Graham Pask be re-elected as Chairman of Council for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

The Chairman read and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Councillor Pask thanked the Council for re-electing him and Councillors Doherty and Bridgman for their kind words.

He stated that he would continue to act in a fair manner. He thanked his family, especially his wife Hilary, for their support over the past year and also thanked the Vice Chairman's wife Christine for her contribution.

Councillor Pask also thanked his Vice Chairman, Councillor Clive Hooker, for the support he had given to the Chairman over the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

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3. **Appointment of Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2020/21 (C3928)**

The Chairman stated that he would like to nominate Councillor Clive Hooker for the position of Vice-Chairman of Council for the Municipal Year 2020/21. The nomination was seconded by Councillor Lynne Doherty. There were no further nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman.

Councillor Pask stated that Councillor Hooker had been a tower of strength during the past year and had stood in for him at a number of events when he had been unable to attend them.

Councillor Doherty stated that, had the circumstances been different, she would have had no hesitation to nominate Councillor Hooker for the role of Chairman this year. For the reasons previously stated, and because she would have liked him to enjoy a full year of civic duties, she was happy to propose that he be re-appointed as the Vice Chairman for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED that Councillor Clive Hooker be re-appointed as Vice-Chairman of Council for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

The Vice-Chairman read and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Councillor Hooker thanked the Council for electing him and Councillors Pask and Doherty for their kind words. He stated that he would do his utmost to fulfil the role to the best of his ability. He also thanked his wife Christine for allowing him to undertake the role.

4. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 03 March 2020 and the extraordinary meeting held on the 29 April 2020 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the inclusion of the following amendments:

03 March 2020 minutes, Item 55, Revenue Budget 2020/21, page 13 of the to follow pack, the third paragraph from the bottom of the page

Insert 'Councillors Lynne Doherty and Graham Bridgman supported the proposal made by Councillor Dillon.' (*Councillor Bridgman confirmed that the Constitution Review Task Group had already looked at the issue of voting on recommendations set out in amendments as individual items.*)

03 March 2020 minutes, Item 58a Notices of Motion, page 16 of the to follow pack

It be noted that the Motion relating to vehicle idling zones would be referred to the Transport Advisory Group and not the Environment Advisory Group for consideration.

5. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

6. **Appointment of the Executive by the Leader of the Council for the 2020/21 Municipal Year (C3929)**

The Leader announced the composition of the Executive for the 2020/21 Municipal Year. She explained that she had decided to continue to only appoint eight additional colleagues to the Executive.

The Leader explained that Councillor Rick Jones would be stepping down from the Executive and she thanked him for his immense contribution and thoughtful calm influence since joining the Executive.

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Portfolio	Member
Leader of Council and District Strategy and Communications	Lynne Doherty
Deputy Leader of Council and Adult Social Care	Graham Bridgman
Children, Young People and Education	Dominic Boeck
Environment	Steve Ardagh-Walter
Finance and Economic Development	Ross Mackinnon
Internal Governance	Jo Stewart
Planning and Housing	Hilary Cole
Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture	Howard Woollaston
Transport and Countryside	Richard Somner

Councillor Lee Dillon welcomed Councillor Jo Stewart to the front bench. He also thanked Councillor Jones for his contribution and his calm demeanour, and dignified and professional manner in dealing with contentious issues.

Councillor Graham Bridgman also commented that Councillor Jones had been a stalwart of the Executive. Councillor Bridgman also paid tribute to Councillor Lynne Doherty for the huge amount of work she had undertaken on the Council's response to the Covid crisis. He commented that both Councillor Doherty and the Chief Executive had undertaken an astonish amount of work.

Councillor Jones stated that he would also like to pay tribute to Councillor Doherty's superb leadership in dealing with this crisis. He thanked the Council for the kind words.

7. **Appointment and Allocation of Seats on Committees for the 2020/21 Municipal Year (C3930)**

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 8) concerning the appointment and allocation of seats on Committees for the next Municipal Year and sought to agree the Council's Policy Framework for 2020/21 as set out in paragraph 6.1 of the Supporting information.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Lynne Doherty and seconded by Councillor Lee Dillon:

That the Council

1. "notes that under Paragraph 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, notice has been received that the Members set out in paragraph 1.1 of the Supporting Information are to be regarded as Members of the Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Green Party Groups respectively.
2. agrees to the appointment of the various Committees and to the number of places on each as set out in paragraph 2.2 of the Supporting Information. (Table A) .

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3. agrees to the allocation of seats to the Political Groups in accordance with section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1989 as set out in paragraph 3.3 of the Supporting Information. (Table B)
4. agrees that the number of substitutes on Committees and Commissions be as set out in paragraph 4.1 of the Supporting Information (Table C).
5. agrees that in respect of the District and Area Planning Committees, the substitute Members are all drawn from Members representing wards within the Committee's area who are not appointed to the Committee. Where substitutes attend the District Planning meeting they need to be drawn from the same Area Planning meeting as the Member they are substituting for.
6. the appointment of Members to the Committees as set out in Appendix A and notes the appointments set out in Appendix B which are in accordance with the wishes of the Political Groups.
7. in accordance with Regulation 4, Schedule 3 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 as amended, agrees that the Council's Policy Framework for 2020/21 be as set out in paragraph 6.1 of the Supporting Information and that any appropriate amendments be made to the Council's Constitution (Paragraph 2.5.2) should this be necessary.
8. in accordance with Regulation 5, Schedule 4 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, approves that all other plans, policies and strategies requiring approval and not included in the approved Policy Framework be delegated to the Council's Executive.
9. notes that Paragraph 2.6.5 of Article 6, setting out the Executive Portfolios, will be amended to reflect any changes made by the Leader of the Council at the Annual Council meeting.
10. agrees to the appointment of two non-voting co-opted Parish/Town Councillors be made to the Governance and Ethics Committee namely: Barry Dickens and Jane Langford. That Lourdes Cottam and Roger Hunneman be appointed as substitute non-voting co-opted Parish/Town Councillors to the Governance and Ethics Committee.
11. Agrees to re-appoint three Independent Persons namely Lindsey Appleton, James Rees and Mike Wall.
12. notes the membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board as set out in Appendix A.
13. delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer to make any changes required to the Constitution as a result of the changes to the number of Members of the Council and following the appointments to Committees."

Councillor Doherty in introducing the annual report noted that both Table A and B in the report needed to be amended to reflect that eleven Members would be appointed to the District Planning Committee and not nine. Councillor Doherty also noted that in Appendix A Councillor James Cole should be the Council's appointed representative on the Joint

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Public Protection Committee and that Councillor Graham Bridgman should be the substitute.

Councillor Lee Dillon commented that he was happy to second the report. He would however like to comment that on the makeup of the Public Protection Partnership Committee. He noted that all the Members appointed to it, from West Berkshire, Bracknell Forest and Wokingham Borough Council, were Conservative Members and he hoped that the Constitution could be revisited to allow some opposition members to be appointed to it

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

8. **Appointments to Outside Bodies (C3877)**

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 9) concerning West Berkshire Council's nominations to the following outside bodies:

- Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
- Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel
- Local Government Association General Assembly

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Graham Bridgman and seconded by Councillor Jeff Brooks:

"That the Council agree the following representatives for the 2020/21 Municipal Year:

- Royal Berkshire Fire Authority – Councillors Dennis Benneyworth (Conservative), Garth Simpson (Conservative), Tony Linden (Conservative), Jeff Brooks (Liberal Democrat)
- Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel - Councillor Claire Rowles (Conservative)
- Local Government Association General Assembly - Lynne Doherty (Conservative), Graham Bridgman (Conservative), Dominic Boeck (Conservative), Lee Dillon (Liberal Democrat)

Councillor Bridgman in introducing the item noted that paragraph 4.1 should be amended to read 'The majority of these appointments were made via Individual Decision in June 2019.'

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

9. **Monitoring Officer's Annual Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee - 2020/21 (C3687)**

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 10) which provided an update on local and national issues relating to ethical standards and brought to the attention of Members any complaints or other problems within West Berkshire.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Howard Woollaston and seconded by Councillor Jeff Beck:

That the Council:

"notes the content of the report and agrees that that the report be circulated to all Parish/Town Councils in the District for information."

Councillor Woollaston commented that the key finding was that ethical standards were good in West Berkshire. He thanked the Independent Persons for their ongoing hard work.

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Councillor Beck commented that the report had been looked at in great detail by the Governance and Ethics Committee when they had met on the 27 April 2020 and they had voted unanimously to agree that the report should be considered by full Council.

Councillor Carolyn Culver noted that on page 55 of the paperwork it was noted that the number of complaints had increased and reference was then made to the cohort of new Members and she queried what the implication was. The Monitoring Officer commented that there had been a similar spike in the number of complaints in 2015 after the election. Officers were therefore looking to see if the training provided to Members needed to be changed in anyway to address this issue.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

10. **Licensing Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Licensing Committee has not met since the last Council meeting.

11. **Personnel Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Personnel Committee had met on the 24th April 2020.

12. **Governance and Ethics Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Governance and Ethics Committee had met on 27 April 2020.

13. **District Planning Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the District Planning Committee had met on 04th March 2020.

14. **Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission had not met.

15. **Joint Public Protection Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Joint Public Protection Committee had not met.

(The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and closed at 8.14 pm)



CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

10 September 2020