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Council

Minutes of a Council meeting held at 6.00 pm on Thursday, 23rd May, 2024 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Matlock, DE4 3NN.

PRESENT Councillor Steve Wain - In the Chair

Councillors: Robert Archer, Anthony Bates, John Bointon, Geoff Bond, Matt Buckler, Sue Bull, Martin Burfoot, Sue Burfoot, David Burton, Neil Buttle, David Chapman, Peter Dobbs, Nigel Norman Edwards-Walker, Steve Flitter, Marilyn Franks, Gareth Gee, Dawn Greatorex, Susan Hobson, David Hughes, Stuart Lees, Joanne Linthwaite, Laura Mellstrom, Andy Nash, Peter O'Brien, Lucy Peacock, Simon Ripton, Peter Slack, Nick Whitehead and Nick Wilton

Robert Cogings (Director of Housing), Jim Fearn (Communications & Marketing Manager), Karen Henriksen (Director of Resources), Caroline Leatherday (Business Support Manager), Helen Mitchell (Director of Corporate and Customer Services (Monitoring Officer)), Tommy Shaw (Democratic Services Team Leader), Jason Spencer (Electoral and Democratic Services Manager) and Paul Wilson (Chief Executive)

Note:

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APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor(s): Kelda Boothroyd, Dermot Murphy and Roger Shelley.

1/24 - ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THE 2024/2025 MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Nick Wilton, seconded by Councillor David Hughes and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That Councillor Steve Wain be elected Chair of the Council for the 2024/25 municipal year.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

2/24 - APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE 2024/2025 MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Bob Butcher, seconded by Councillor Dawn Greatorex and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That Councillor Lucy Peacock be elected as Vice-Chair of the Council for the 2024/2025 civic year.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

3/24 - ELECTION OF CIVIC CHAIR FOR THE 2024/2025 MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Neil Buttle, seconded by Councillor Peter Dobbs and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That Councillor Peter Slack be elected as Civic Chair of the Council for the 2024/25 civic year.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

The duly elected Civic Chair was invested with the Chain of Office and expressed his thanks to the retiring Civic Chair and Members for their vote of confidence.

4/24 - APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY CIVIC CHAIR FOR THE 2024/2025 MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Steve Flitter, seconded by Councillor Susan Hobson and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That Councillor David Chapman be elected as Deputy Civic Chair of the Council for the 2024/25 civic year.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

The duly elected Deputy Civic Chair was invested with the Chain of Office and thanked Members for their vote of confidence.

5/24 - ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE 2024/2025 MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor David Hughes, seconded by Councillor David Peter Dobbs and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That Councillor Steve Flitter be elected as Leader of the Council for the 2024/25 municipal year.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

It was then moved by Councillor Martin Burfoot, seconded by Councillor Peter O'Brien and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That Councillor Neil Buttle and Councillor Bob Butcher be elected Deputy Leaders of the Council for the 2024/25 municipal year.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

6/24 - LEADERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Steve Flitter, Leader of the Council, gave the following announcements:

“Well, it is nice to be back, as you will have heard we had a traumatic end to our holiday in Australia. Some would think it a bonus to be stranded in Dubai, but 24 hours sat on a plane, two days without sleep and thousands of people arguing, shouting and some fighting in the airport because of a sheer lack of information and communication was not my idea of bliss. And the story does not end there but I will not bore you with detail, however talking to people in the right way and showing respect, breeds respect, and that is what eased the strain we were under.

The D2 Leaders Strategic Board last Thursday was eventful, at our first meeting, it seems like the desire to chair and control the board meetings once again became an issue. Just like Ashbourne Reborn. Cllr Nigel Barker (Lab) from Northeast Derbyshire was elected much to my expectation but Cllr Barry Lewis was clearly unhappy, and after a statement that left no clarity, only confusion, as he intimidated a reduction in officer support, hosting and finance. When we came to item 7 talking about a partnership team and financial resources, it was clear that no-one could actually pin down the thoughts of the previous chair. I suggested that we accepted the creation of a support team in principle and worked on the financial aspect when the County's leader's actions had become clearer, then everyone would be aware of what was happening. I have spoken at length with Cllr Dawson and hopefully, we are to meet tomorrow to discuss a way forward.

Last year I had made it clear that the Progressive Alliance would work within the budget restraints but at the same time change the emphasis into a more open and transparent council. A council that appreciates its hard working and loyal staff, building a solid foundation for the future. Working alongside the corporate leadership team and other valued members of their teams we have now succeeded in creating a new corporate plan, that sets out our aims and objectives. We have now begun consultation on a new and exciting local plan that inspires support for rural villages, market towns and residents across the Derbyshire Dales.

We have addressed the needs of climate change and biodiversity as a green thread throughout our policies, and completed works on decarbonisation of our buildings. We are exploring avenues to increase social housing to meet the needs of our local communities. We have reinstated some visitor toilet facilities in the Dales hotspots and the car parking review almost complete that saw residents with an extra hour of free parking with the bonus of supporting local business. Our economic development team are continuing to support

local business not only with advice but also through UKSPF grants and other funding generated by this council. The list is endless.

So, what is in store for next year, well now comes the test of delivering the corporate plan, working hard to remain within another restricted budget that has predicted a shortfall, working with the new East Midlands Mayor to attract inward investment into the Dales, I have sent a letter to invite Claire Ward here for talks as some of her policies complement our thoughts.

Two major tasks lie ahead, and they are the Leisure and Waste contracts, not imminent but very important and detailed needing a high level of support to prepare for the future, I have asked Mr Wilson again to look at the possibility of a project manager and ways of increasing our capability and resilience for the council to prepare in good time.

There is a new sense of ease around the council and many staff are happy to stop and chat when meeting them in the corridor or when I walk into an office and this allows discussion to flow, I want every member of staff to feel free to express their views, they are part of the team.

At a recent meeting I said that, although hotly disputed by some, that to create PA working groups to work with officers to develop policy and cross-party working groups to work on more general issues was the right way to proceed, this method has been successful and brought dividends in creating an understanding in supporting action on policy. I still feel that a small number of members on a working group is more focused and becomes less of a talking shop and creates definite action.

I also have to say a few words on Traveller's. This is one of the issues we inherited from the last administration that failed in over 20 years to solve it. To the people of Matlock Bath and to Cllr Whitehead, you have our support, you and the travellers should not have to endure the problems you are facing, it may seem that we are dragging our feet, but everyone was questioning and critical, including our MP, of the criteria set for traveller sites. We set those criteria and now have to follow the process. Some sites will shortly be going out for consultation, but it does not help when misinformation is given to residents or assumptions are wrongly made. It would help if the support from all members of this council would accept that this need from the travelling community was shared across the dales and not just in one area.

It would be remiss of me if I didn't mention and congratulate colleagues in the labour and green parties for their successes in the local elections and just point out that the recent elections produced more liberal democrat councillors than the Conservatives, roll on July 4th.

I am sorry to hear that Jason Spencer is soon to leave this authority to take up a new post and I want to say that while he has been with us, he has excelled in adding value and credibility to Derbyshire Dales. Unfortunately, he won't be with us in July but I believe we have a new and experienced elections manager in place however the bar has been set at a very high level."

7/24 - VARIATION IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

It was moved by Councillor Steve Wain, seconded by Councillor Matt Buckler and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the order of business be altered to bring item 15 - Public Participation and item 16 - Amendments to the Constitution forward to be considered immediately after item 9 – Interests.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

8/24 - APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was moved by Councillor Nick Wilton, Seconded by Councillor Peter Dobbs and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the minutes of a meeting of Council held on 04 April 2024 be approved as a correct record.

Voting

28 For

00 Against

03 Abstained

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

9/24 - INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

10/24 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Philip Sunderland, local resident, spoke regarding the ongoing work of the Gypsy and Traveller Working Group and the Traveller family currently residing on a District Council owned car park in Matlock Bath.

11/24 - AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Director of Corporate and Customer Services introduced a report which detailed a series of proposals to amend the Council's Constitution to ensure that it could be brought up to date.

It was noted within the report that an accelerant for this work was the deletion of the Director of Regulatory Services post and the sharing of responsibilities to other officers in the structure. During the process of updating the Constitution to reflect this change, other minor amendments were identified and proposed to Members within this report for agreement.

The sections of the Constitution proposed for amendments were included as appendices to the report.

It was moved by Councillor Matt Buckler, seconded by Councillor Peter Dobbs and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

1. That Part 2 (Article 9) be amended to incorporate reference to Statutory Officers Group and not, Senior Management Team, in addition to removal of references to the post titled Corporate Director;
2. That Part 3 (Responsibilities for Functions) of the Constitution be amended to:-
 - a. Remove all references to the Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee and its Terms of Reference to be replaced by the D2 Strategic Leadership Board and its Terms of Reference;
 - b. Incorporate Gypsy and Travellers, Empty Homes and the Housing Allocations Policy into the Terms of Reference for Community and Environment Committee;
 - c. Remove references to the Director of Regulatory Services and share those delegations amongst other designated officers;
 - d. Make minor amendments throughout the document to ensure accuracy and clarity;
 - e. To amend the Biodiversity Sub Committee to the Biodiversity Working Group;
3. That Part 4 (Rules of Procedure) of the Constitution be amended to reflect updated rules on substitutes for Committees or Sub Committees, allowing for additional substitutes to be made available.
4. That Council endorses the Constitution Working Group to undertake a programme of work in which to refresh the Constitution and deliver upon the Council’s priority of a ‘thriving local democracy’.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

12/24 - MEMBERSHIP OF POLITICAL GROUPS, POLITICAL BALANCE AND ENTITLEMENT TO SEATS ON COMMITTEES

The Council considered a report on the updated membership of political groups on the Council, and the changes to the political balance of the authority following the district by-elections held on 22 February 2024 and the new entitlement of political groups to seats on committees for the 2024/25 municipal year.

Following the recent elections, the political balance of the Council was:

Name of Group	Designated Leader	Number of Members
Conservative	Councillor Hobson	10
Green Party	Councillor Buttle	4
Labour and Councillor O'Brien	Councillor Butcher	8
Liberal Democrat	Councillor Flitter	12

It was moved by Councillor Peter Dobbs, seconded by Councillor Peter O'Brien and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

1. That the operation of four political groups on the Council and the detail of their designated Leaders be noted:
 - (a) Conservative Group – Councillor Susan Hobson

- (b) Green Party Group – Councillor Neil Buttle
 - (c) Labour and Councillor O'Brien Group – Councillor Bob Butcher
 - (d) Liberal Democrat Group – Councillor Steve Flitter
2. That special responsibility allowances be paid in accordance with the Members Allowances Scheme at Part 6 of the Constitution.
 3. That the Council notes, and agrees, the entitlement of the membership of the political groups and that such entitlements have been reflected in the allocations to Committees.
 4. That Council considers nominations and appoints Members to serve on the:
 - (a) Joint ICT Committee
 - (b) D2 Strategic Leadership Board.
 5. That Council appoints Members to serve on Working Groups for the following purposes:
 - (a) Constitution Working Group (6 Members)
 - (b) Climate Change Working Group (6 Members)
 - (c) Gypsy and Traveller Working Group (4 Members)
 - (d) Biodiversity Working Group (6 Members)
 - (e) Car Park Working Group (6 Members)
 - (f) Waste and Recycling Working Group (4 Members)

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

13/24 - SCHEDULE OF NOMINATIONS TO COMMITTEES

The Council considered the appointment of Members to serve on Committees for the 2024/2025 municipal year in accordance with each political group's entitlement.

It was moved by Councillor Joanne Linthwaite, seconded by Councillor Nick Whitehead and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

1. That the Councillors be appointed to serve on the Committees of the Council in accordance with the nominations of the political groups as set out in appendix 1 to these minutes.
2. That authority be delegated to the Director of Corporate and Customer Services to appoint Councillors to the remaining available positions on Committees, in consultation with political group leaders and the Chair of the Council, and in accordance with the previously agreed entitlement to seats.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

14/24 - APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS 2024/25

The Council considered a report which set out the appointments to the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair to the various decision making bodies for the 2024/2025 municipal year.

It was moved by Councillor Peter Dobbs, seconded by Councillor Dawn Greatorex and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the following appointments be made to the positions of Committee Chair and Vice-Chair until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

Committee/Decision Making Body	Chair	Vice-Chair
Community & Environment	Martin Burfoot	Peter O'Brien
Governance & Resources	Nick Wilton	Neil Buttle
Scrutiny	David Hughes	Peter Slack
Planning	David Burton and Peter O'Brien	Sue Burfoot
Licensing & Appeals	Steve Wain	Dawn Greatorex

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

15/24 - CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN THE 2024/25 MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Council received a report to approve the Calendar of Meetings for the 2024/2025 municipal year attached at Appendix 3 to these minutes. It was noted that this had been edited following publication of the agenda due to the announcement of a General Election and the Council therefore entering the pre-election period.

It was moved by Councillor Nick Whitehead, seconded by Councillor David Hughes and

RESOLVED

That the Calendar of Meetings for the 2024/2025 municipal year be approved.

Voting:

29 For
00 Against
02 Abstentions

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

16/24 - APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES FOR THE 2024/25 MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Council considered a report which reviewed the Council's affiliations with outside bodies and invited nominations to act as the Council's representatives.

The Schedule, attached at Appendix 2, gave the full list of outside bodies that required the Council's consideration. The Council was asked to consider its nominations and any changes it wished to make to those currently in place.

The list of approved conferences and recommended representation was tabled in paragraph 2.3 of the report, which was submitted to confer approved duty status and cover Member attendance.

It was moved by Councillor David Hughes, seconded by Councillor Neil Buttle and

RESOLVED (unanimously)

1. That the list of outside bodies identified in Appendix 2 be approved.
2. That the position of organisations where no indemnity insurance currently exists be noted accordingly.
3. That the Members identified in the schedule be appointed to the relevant outside body to serve until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.
4. That the list of Conferences for 2024/25 be approved.
5. That authority be delegated to the Director of Corporate and Customer Services in consultation with the Chief Executive and Directors, where relevant, to determine requests for attendance at other conferences based on the relevance of the subject matter and to the availability of finance.

The Chair declared the motion **CARRIED**.

Meeting Closed: 7.20 pm

Chair