

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Full Council** broadcast from the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark NG24 1BY on Tuesday, 4 May 2021 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R Crowe (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs P Rainbow (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor R Blaney, Councillor L Brailsford, Councillor L Brazier, Councillor M Brock, Councillor Mrs B Brooks, Councillor Mrs I Brown, Councillor M Brown, Councillor S Carlton, Councillor M Cope, Councillor Mrs R Crowe, Councillor D Cumberlandidge, Councillor Mrs L Dales, Councillor Mrs M Dobson, Councillor K Girling, Councillor L Goff, Councillor P Harris, Councillor Mrs R Holloway, Councillor Mrs L Hurst, Councillor R Jackson, Councillor B Loughton, Councillor J Lee, Councillor D Lloyd, Councillor Mrs S Michael, Councillor N Mison, Councillor N Mitchell, Councillor P Peacock, Councillor Mrs S Saddington, Councillor M Skinner, Councillor T Smith, Councillor I Walker, Councillor K Walker, Councillor T Wendels and Councillor Mrs Y Woodhead

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Mrs K Arnold and Councillor R White

This meeting was held remotely, in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police & Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police & Crime Panel Meetings) (England & Wales) Regulations 2020.

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL FOR 2021/22

Councillor Mrs S Michael moved and Councillor B Loughton seconded that Councillor Mrs P Rainbow be elected Chairman of Newark & Sherwood District Council for the 2021/22 municipal year.

AGREED (unanimously) that Councillor Mrs P Rainbow be elected Chairman of Newark & Sherwood District Council for the 2021/22 municipal year.

(Councillor Mrs P Rainbow signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and received the Chain of Office from the Retiring Chairman).

2 PRESENTATION OF PAST CHAIRMAN'S BADGE

Councillor Mrs P Rainbow presented the past Chairman's badge to Councillor R Crowe and thanked him for the way he had carried out his duties as Chairman of the District in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

(As the newly elected Chairman, Councillor Mrs P Rainbow took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting).

3 MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 9 MARCH 2021

AGREED that that minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2021 be approved as a

correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS AND AS TO THE PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest and the Council noted the interests previously declared by Members in Agenda Item No. 15 – Minutes for Noting.

5 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTENTIONS TO RECORD THE MEETING

Other than the Council recording in accordance with usual practice, there were no declarations of intention to record the meeting. The Chairman advised that the meeting was being streamed live.

6 COMMUNICATIONS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE MAY WISH TO LAY BEFORE THE COUNCIL

Councillor Mrs P Rainbow as the newly elected Chairman, advised that her Consort for the year would be Mr Andrew Rainbow and her chosen charity was Citizen's Advice.

7 DEFERRING CONSIDERATION OF THE POLITICAL COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL AND THE APPOINTMENTS FOR 2021/22

The Council considered the report of the Chief Executive concerning the current position in respect of the political composition of the Council with two vacancies, and the current position in respect of holding remote meetings which was due to end on 9 May 2021. Given the current vacancies and having brought this meeting forward to enable it to be held in a remote manner, the report proposed deferral of the annual meeting business, namely the allocation of seats to political groups and the appointments to Committees etc. until the next scheduled Council Meeting to be held on 13 July 2021.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Council:

- (a) note the current position in respect of remote meetings; and
- (b) defer the political composition of the Council and annual appointments until the next meeting, scheduled to be held on Tuesday 13 July 2021 and carry forward the existing appointments until that date.

8 GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Council considered the report of the Chief Executive which set out proposals and options for taking forward new governance arrangements for the Council following the conclusion of the governance review. It was proposed that the Council move to a Leader and Cabinet system of governance, properly shaped and designed to meet the Council's needs and reflective of our local circumstances. This proposal had been endorsed by the Councillors' Commission who considered governance arrangements

at their meeting held on 28 April 2021. It was suggested that a small working party of members be appointed to formulate the details of the new governance model for consideration and approval by Full Council at its meeting in December 2021, with the new system of working to be implemented with effect from May 2022.

AGREED (with 31 votes for, 3 against and 1 abstention) that the Council:

- (a) resolve to adopt a Leader and Cabinet style of governance, with implementation to take effect from May 2022; and
- (b) appoint a small working group of Members, tasked with formulating the detail of how the new governance arrangements should operate, with the aim of reporting back to Full Council on 14 December 2021, for its consideration and approval. The Working Group to comprise of:

Leader of the Council;
Deputy Leader of the Council;
Chairman of the Councillors' Commission;
Leader or representative of the Main Opposition Group; and
Two further representatives from the Majority Group.

9 PLANNING SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Council considered the report of the Director - Governance & Organisational Development which sought approval for amendments to the Planning Scheme of Delegation. It was noted that some revisions were made to the Scheme of Delegation in late 2019 with the aim of reducing the number of applications referred to the Planning Committee for consideration. It was agreed that a review of those changes would take place 12 months after implementation. This review had now been completed and the findings considered by the Planning Committee and the Councillors' Commission. The findings had led to these further proposed changes, the aim of which were to achieve a better balance between the volume of applications being referred to the Planning Committee and Members having the confidence that the arrangements enabled them to sufficiently represent their ward.

The proposed changes to the Scheme of Delegation were set out in the report and the proposed drafting amendments were set out in an appendix to the report. The proposed changes had been recommended for approval by the Councillors' Commission.

AGREED (with 34 votes for and 1 against) that the amendments to the Planning Scheme of Delegation set out in the appendix to the report be approved.

10 NOTICE OF MOTION

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 13.1, Councillor P. Harris moved and Councillor M. Brock seconded a motion to the following effect:

"Many of Newark and Sherwood's Councillors live quite a distance from Newark. For some it is an hour's round trip to attend a committee meeting. It isn't always easy,

particularly during winter time, to attend all the meetings because of inclement weather and work commitments. There are meetings in the morning, afternoon and evening with some time inbetween. That time is not wasted if Members are able to attend remotely from home.

Newark & Sherwood District Council has declared a climate emergency, and by attending meetings via Teams or Zoom we are not driving and using non-renewable resources, but are cutting down on our carbon footprint – a priority of this Council. Virtual meetings have saved the Council a considerable amount of money during this financial year, for example, travel expenses have been very much reduced. As we are facing a significant short fall in funding for the foreseeable future any saving is helpful.

Councillors wish to attend the District Council committees but are also keen to attend meetings of the Parish Councils within their wards. Some are also County Councillors and inevitably there is often a clash of dates. This means that Councillors have to choose which to attend. The result is less engagement with the District Council, or the County Council or the Parish Councils. Having remote meetings means that Councillors can more easily attend most of the meetings, to the advantage of all the Councils.

The engagement of the public and press has also generally increased (the exception probably being the Planning Committee). The level of reporting about Council business has increased as physical meetings no longer attracted the local press due to cutbacks in their staff. For some Councillors who have work commitments, mobility issues or are carers remote meetings have been easier for them to attend. This may well help to attract a wider age range of potential Councillors in future elections.

This Council would like to have the flexibility to hold remote and physical meetings. We recognise that some meetings are better dealt with physically and we also recognise that perhaps a hybrid model could also work successfully.

Councillor Blaney proposed, and Councillor Lloyd seconded an amendment to reflect the recent dismissal of the appeal hearing and updated the proposed actions of the Council accordingly.

This Council:

1. Notes the recent High Court judgement on on-line and hybrid council meetings.
2. Welcomes the Government's clear wish to give Councils the option to hold meetings on-line and its current Call for Evidence, to which this Council has responded already through the Councillors' Commission; and
3. Writes to its two Members of Parliament asking for their continued support for this flexible approach to Council meetings."

Given the recent announcements by the Government in respect of remote meetings and High Court judgement, points 1 to 3 above were agreed as wording to replace the original motion text, which were supported by the proposer and seconder.

The motion, on being put to the vote was declared carried unanimously.

- 11 MINUTES FOR NOTING
- 11a POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE - 1 APRIL 2021
- 11b PLANNING COMMITTEE - 2 MARCH 2021 AND 30 MARCH 2021
- 11c TRUSTEE BOARD OF THE GILSTRAP AND WILLIAM EDWARD KNIGHT CHARITY - 4 MARCH 2021
- 11d LEISURE & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE - 16 MARCH 2021
- 11e HOMES & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE - 15 MARCH 2021
- 11f ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - 24 MARCH 2021

Minute No. 116 - Open Space Assessment and Strategy

Councillor P Harris asked if Members had been given the opportunity to sense check the findings of the assessment.

Councillor K Girling advised that the assessment had been sent to parish councils for a sense check, but he would confirm the position in respect of Members.

- 11g GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2021
- 11h LICENSING COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2021
- 11i SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE - 23 MARCH 2021

Meeting closed at 7.43 pm.

Chairman