

# NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Gernon Road,  
Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3JF  
on Thursday, 25th May, 2023 at 7.30 pm

### 1 ELECTION OF A CHAIR OF COUNCIL FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2023/2024

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Daniel Allen be elected as Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2023/24.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council places on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to Councillor Sam North for his service as Chair of the Council during the past year and also to his Consort Councillor Raj Bhakar for her help and support during his term of office.

### 2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Barnard, Raj Bhakar, Terry Tyler, Tamsin Thomas, Juan Cowell and Ian Moody.

### 3 ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2023/2024

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Chris Lucas be elected as Vice-Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2023/24.

### 4 MINUTES - 18 APRIL 2023

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 18 April 2023 be taken as read and approved as a true record of proceedings.

### 5 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (2) The Chair reminded Members that the Council has declared a Climate Emergency. This was a serious decision and means that, as this was an emergency, all of us, Officers and Members had that in mind as we carried out our various roles and tasks for the benefit of our District. More details were included in the agenda front sheet.
- (3) The Chair reminded Members to make declarations of interest before an item, the detailed reminder about his and speaking rights was set out under the Chair's Announcements in the Agenda.
- (4) The Chair welcomed and congratulated the newly elected Members following the elections on 4 May: Councillors Dominic Griffiths, Dave Winstanley, Daniel Wright-Mason, Mick Debenham, Bryony May, Dan Marsh, Cathy Brownjohn, Matt Barnes and Louise Peace.
- (5) The Chair congratulated those Councillors successfully re-elected; Councillors Michael Muir, David Barnard, Sean Prendergast, Keith Hoskins, Steve Jarvis, Gerald Morris and Tom Tyson.
- (6) The Chair thanked former Councillors George Davies, Adem Ruggiero-Cakir, Sam North, Tony Hunter and Carol Stanier, who did not stand for re-election.

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- (7) The Chair thanked former Councillors Morgan Derbyshire and Jean Green who were unsuccessful in being re-elected.
- (8) The Chair reminded new and returning Members to complete their Register of Interest forms online by 2 June 2023.
- (9) The Chair reminded Members, Agents and Election Candidates to complete the post-Election survey by 31 May 2023.
- (10) The Chair reminded Members to complete and return their elections expenses by 1 June 2023 for Town and Parish elections and 9 June 2023 for District Council elections.
- (11) The Chair advised that the normal procedure rules in respect of debate and times to speak would apply.
- (12) The Chair advised that his charities for the Civic Year 2023/24 would be Feed Up Warm up and Resolve.
- (13) The Chair offered thanks to Penny Copestake, Chair's Secretary, on behalf of former Chair Sam North, and announced that a gift of flowers had been arranged in recognition of her hard work and support.
- (14) The Chair congratulated James Lovegrove, the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager on his upcoming wedding.

## **6 DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTION RESULTS (INCLUDING ALL POLLS) - 4 MAY 2023**

**RESOLVED:** That the report of the Returning Officer regarding the results of the District Council elections, Town and Parish Council elections be noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To inform Members of the results of the District Council elections, Town and Parish Council elections.

## **7 APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER OF COUNCIL, MEMBERS OF THE CABINET AND DEPUTY EXECUTIVE MEMBERS FOR 2023/24**

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the appointment of the Deputy Leader of the Council for the Civic Year 2023/24 be noted.
- (2) That the Members to be appointed as Executive Members of the Cabinet for 2023/24 and the areas for which they will be responsible as detailed in Appendix A be noted.
- (3) That the Members to be appointed as Deputy Executive Members for 2023/24 and the areas for which they will act as Deputy Executive Member as detailed at Appendix A be noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To comply with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 and Sections 4.8.1 (a) (vii), 5.2, 5.3.4 and 5.6 of the Council's Constitution.

## **8 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES, JOINT COMMITTEES AND PANELS FOR 2023/24**

**RESOLVED:**

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- (1) That, for 2023/24, the seats allocated to each political party on the Committees to which Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 applies and the seats allocated to each political party on the bodies to which Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 does not apply, as set out in Appendix A to this report, be noted as amended.
- (2) That, for 2023/24, Members be appointed to the various Committees and other bodies in accordance with the wishes of the individual political groups, as detailed in Appendix B to this report. With the following amendments: Councillor Dominic Griffiths to become a member of the Standards Committee, Councillor Ruth Brown to become a member of the Council Tax Setting Committee, Councillor Ruth Brown to be removed as a substitute of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee, Councillor Ruth Brown to become a substitute of the Cabinet Panel on the Environment, Councillor Ian Mantle to become a substitute of the Planning Control Committee and Councillor Keith Hoskins to become a substitute of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To comply with the provisions of Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

## **9 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES FOR 2023/24**

**RESOLVED:** That the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees (except Area Forums) for 2023/24 be appointed in accordance with the details set out in Appendix A to the report, as amended, with the inclusion that Councillor Ian Albert be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Standards Committee.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To comply with the provisions of Standing Order 4.8.1(a)(ix) of the Council's Constitution.

## **10 ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting of the Annual Council was adjourned at 20:05 to allow meetings of each Area Forum to convene to elect Chairs and Vice-Chairs for the Civic Year.

The meeting of the Annual Council reconvened at 20:16.

## **11 KEY DECISIONS - LEADER'S ANNUAL REPORT ON CASES OF SPECIAL URGENCY**

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted with the amended date.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To comply with Regulation 19 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 ("the Regulations").

## **12 SCHEDULE OF COUNCIL MEETINGS 2023/24**

**RESOLVED:** That the Calendar of Meetings for 2023/24, as attached as Appendix A, be approved.

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

- (1) To enable Members to agree a programme of ordinary meetings of the Council for 2023/24.
- (2) To enable Members to agree the Calendar of meetings for 2023/24

## **13 NOMINATION OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER BODIES FOR 2023/24**

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the list of nominations of representatives on Outside Organisations and Other Bodies for 2023/24, as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved, with confirmation that:
  - a) The Council's representative to Baldock Community Forum Community Interest Company be Councillor Alistair Willoughby.
  - b) The Council's representatives to Baldock Town Twinning Association be Councillors Alistair Willoughby and Juan Cowell.
  - c) The Council's representatives to Baldock United Almshouses Charities be Councillors Michael Muir, Michael Weeks and Alistair Willoughby;
  - d) The Council's representatives to Citizens Advice North Herts be Councillors Louise Peace, Daniel Marsh and Simon Bloxham.
  - e) The Council's representatives to Letchworth Civic Trust be Councillors Phil Weeder and Daniel Allen.
  - f) The Council's representative to Letchworth Garden City BID be Councillor Daniel Allen;
  - g) The Council's representative to London Luton Airport Consultative Committee be Councillor Steve Jarvis;
  - h) The Council's representative to Police and Crime Panel be Councillor Alistair Willoughby.
  - i) The Council's representative to Royston Old People's Day Centre Committee (Royston Old Barn) be Councillor Cathy Brownjohn.
  - j) The Council's representative to Royston Town Twinning Association be Councillor Cathy Brownjohn.
- (2) That Political Group Leaders notify the Democratic Services Manager of nominations to the remaining vacancies or any changes to the existing representatives on outside organisations.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To comply with the provisions of Standing Order 4.8.1(b)(iv) and (v) of the Council's Constitution

**14 NOTICE OF URGENT MOTION**

**RESOLVED:** That Council:

- (1) At the discretion of all current members, remove councillor addresses from the Councillor directory (but maintain the entry in the Declaration of Pecuniary Interests until such time as legislative change is effected);
- (2) Adopt the default position that councillors opt in, rather than opt out, of having their addresses published on the Councillor Directory;
- (3) Write to the local Members of Parliament to ask them to support the LGA's Debate Not Hate campaign;
- (4) Write to the Government to ask them to work with the LGA to develop and implement a plan to address abuse and intimidation of all politicians;
- (5) Work with MPs and the LGA to bring about legislative change giving councillors and their families the same protection as MPs;
- (6) Ensure the council has a clear reporting mechanism which councillors can use to monitor and record incidents of harassment and abuse of councillors, officers, staff and contractors;

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- (7) Regularly review the support available to councillors in relation to abuse and intimidation and councillor safety;
- (8) Work with the local police to ensure there is a clear and joined-up mechanism for reporting threats and other concerns about the safety of councillors and their families and discuss the need to take a preventative approach that accounts for the specific risks that councillors face, as they do with other high-risk individuals, like MPs;
- (9) Take a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of councillors, officers, staff and contractors working with us. Where such occurs, this Council will robustly condemn acts of intimidation and violence against our staff, contractors and councillors.