

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, 22nd May, 2025 at 7.30 pm**

1 ELECTION OF THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2025-26

RESOLVED: That Councillor Keith Hoskins was elected as Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2025-26.

RESOLVED: That the Council placed on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to Councillor Clare Billing for her service as Chair of the Council during the past year and also to her Consort Elizabeth Leonard for her help and support during her term of office.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clare Billing, Claire Strong, Paul Ward, Dominic Griffiths, Caroline McDonnell, Tamsin Thomas and Tim Johnson.

3 ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2025-26

RESOLVED: That Councillor Sadie Billing was elected as Vice-Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2025-26.

4 MINUTES - 27 FEBRUARY 2025

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 27 February 2025 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

5 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be recorded.
- (2) The Chair reminded Members that the Council had declared both a Climate Emergency and an Ecological Emergency. These are serious decisions, and mean 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.
- (3) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.
- (4) The Chair advised that the normal procedure rules in respect of debate and times to speak will apply.
- (5) The Chair advised that 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution did not apply to this meeting. A comfort break would be held at an appropriate time, should proceedings continue at length.
- (6) The Chair congratulated all Councillors from across Hertfordshire who were successful in their election to the County Council in the recent elections. Specifically at North Herts, he congratulated Councillors Ian Albert, Tina Bhartwas, Alistair Willoughby, Ruth Brown, Steve Jarvis, Sean Prendergast, Chris Lucas, Ralph Muncer and David Barnard on their successful election or re-election.

- (7) The Chair reminded Members to complete their Register of Interest forms by the 31 May 2025.
- (8) The Chair reminded Members to complete their election expenses by 6 June 2025.
- (9) The Chair reminded Members to complete the post-election survey from the Electoral Services Team by 31 May 2025.
- (10) On behalf of the former Chair, Cllr Clare Billing, the Chair confirmed the amount raised for her chosen charity, Sands, during the Civic Year 2024-25 and advised that a representative from Sands would be invited to a future meeting of Full Council to be presented with a cheque.
- (11) The Chair offered thanks to Penny Copestake, Chair's Secretary, on behalf of the former Chair, Councillor Clare Billing, and announced that a bouquet would be sent in recognition of her hard work and support. The Chair wished Penny a very happy and well-deserved retirement.
- (12) The Chair advised Members that the Director – Place would be retiring shortly after 35 years at the Council and wished him a long and enjoyable retirement.
- (13) The Chair advised Members that the Director – Governance would be retiring shortly and wished her a long and happy retirement.

6 APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER OF COUNCIL AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the appointment of the Deputy Leader of the Council for the Civic Year 2025/26 was noted as Councillor Val Bryant.
- (2) That the Members appointed as Executive Members of the Cabinet for 2025/26 and the areas for which they will be responsible, as detailed in Appendix A, published as a supplement, was noted (and that appropriate amendments to section 14 and the constitution generally, was made to reflect those appointments).
- (3) That the Special Interest Member Champions for 2025/26, their purpose and role, as detailed in Appendix A, published as a supplement, was noted.
- (4) That the respective Group Leaders were appointed as the Learning and Development Champions for 2025/26, as outlined in paragraph 8.6.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To comply with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 and Sections 4.8.1 (a) (vii), 5.2 and 5.3.4 of the Council's Constitution.2.3 for information purposes.

7 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES, JOINT COMMITTEES AND PANELS FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED:

- (1) That, for 2025/26, the seats allocated to each political group 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 of the report, provided as a supplement, as amended, was noted.

(2) That, for 2025/26, Members were 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, provided as a supplement, as amended, with the addition of:

- Councillor Tina Bhartwas as Substitute on the Planning Control Committee

(3) That, for 2025/26, each political group leader was appointed to the Community Governance Review Working Group, as detailed in 8.6 of the report.

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

8 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES FOR 2025/26

RESOLVED: That the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees (except Community Forums) for 2025/26 be appointed in accordance with the details set out in Appendix A to the report, provided as a supplement, as amended, with the addition of:

- Councillor Claire Winchester as the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Councillor Jon Clayden as the Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Councillor Emma Fernandes as the Vice-Chair of the Planning Control Committee
- Councillor Keith Hoskins as the Chair of the Employment Committee.

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

9 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of the Annual Council was adjourned at 20:33 to allow meetings of each Community Forum to convene to elect Chairs and Vice-Chairs for the Civic Year.

The meeting of the Annual Council reconvened at 20:41.

10 KEY DECISIONS - LEADER'S ANNUAL REPORT ON CASES OF SPECIAL URGENCY

RESOLVED: That the report was noted.

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

11 APPROVE A PROGRAMME OF ORDINARY MEETINGS FOR THE COUNCIL FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2025/26

RESOLVED: That the Calendar of Meetings for 2025/26, as attached as Appendix A, was approved.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable Members to agree a programme of ordinary meetings of the Council for 2025/26.

12 **NOMINATION OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER BODIES FOR 2025/26**

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the list of nominations of representatives on Outside Organisations and Other Bodies for 2025/26, as set out in Appendix A to the report, provided as a supplement, was approved, as amended, with the exception of the Howard Garden Social and Daycare Centre, with confirmation that:
- The Council's representatives to Baldock Community Association be Councillors Alistair Willoughby, Stewart Willoughby and Emma Rowe.
 - The Council's representatives to Baldock United Almshouses Charity be Councillors Alistair Willoughby, Stewart Willoughby, Rhona Cameran and Emma Rowe.
 - The Council's representatives to Citizens Advice North Herts be Councillors Tina Bhartwas, Bryony May and Vijaiya Poopalasingham.
 - The Council's representatives to Grange Fellowship Community Association be Councillors Tina Bhartwas, Emma Fernandes and Ian Mantle.
 - The Council's representative to Hertfordshire Health Scrutiny Committee be Councillor Jon Clayden and the Substitute representative be Councillor Tina Bhartwas.
 - The Council's representatives to Hitchin Educational Foundation be Councillors Keith Hoskins, Donna Wright, Claire Strong, Ian Albert and Daniel Wright-Mason (as per the appointments made at the Annual Council meeting in 2024 which in respect of this body is a 4 year term of office).
 - The Council's representatives to Jackmans Community Association be Councillors Tamsin Thomas, Sadie Billing and Mick Debenham.
 - The Council's representatives to Letchworth Civic Trust be Councillors Tina Bhartwas, Emma Fernandes and Daniel Allen.
 - The Council's representative to London Luton Airport Consultative Committee be Councillor Emma Fernandes.
- (2) That Political Group Leaders would notify the Democratic Services Manager of nominations to the remaining vacancies or any changes to the existing representatives on outside organisations.

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