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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES

Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber - District Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth, SG6 3JF on Thursday, 21st May, 2026 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: *Councillors: Keith Hoskins MBE (Chair), Sean Prendergast (Vice-Chair), Sadie Billing, Tina Bhartwas, Ian Albert, Daniel Allen, Amy Allen, David Barnard, Matt Barnes, Ruth Brown, Cathy Brownjohn, Val Bryant, Rhona Cameron, David Chalmers, Jon Clayden, Sam Collins, Mick Debenham, Elizabeth Dennis, Emma Fernandes, Dominic Griffiths, Steve Jarvis, Tim Johnson, Chris Lucas, Sarah Lucas, Ian Mantle, Nigel Mason, Bryony May, Caroline McDonnell, Ralph Muncer, Michael Muir, Lisa Nash, Sean Nolan, Steven Patmore, Louise Peace, Vijaiya Poopalasingham, Martin Prescott, Emma Rowe, Claire Strong, Tamsin Thomas, Tom Tyson, Paul Ward, Laura Williams, Alistair Willoughby, Stewart Willoughby, Claire Winchester, Dave Winstanley, Donna Wright and Daniel Wright-Mason.*

IN ATTENDANCE: *Isabelle Alajooz (Director - Governance and Monitoring Officer), Ian Couper (Director - Resources), Jo Dufficy (Director - Customers), Robert Filby (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Jamie Graham (Democratic Services Apprentice), Susan Le Dain (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager), Anthony Roche (Chief Executive) and Melanie Stimpson (Democratic Services Manager).*

ALSO PRESENT: *At the commencement of the meeting there were 2 members of the public.*

1 ELECTION OF THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2026/27

Audio recording – 3 minutes 15 seconds

Councillor Keith Hoskins proposed Councillor Emma Rowe to be Chair for Agenda Item 1, and this was seconded by Councillor Sadie Billing and, it was:

RESOLVED: That Councillor Emma Rowe was elected as Chair for Agenda Item 1 of the Council meeting.

Councillor Ruth Brown nominated Councillor Keith Hoskins for Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2026-27, and this was seconded by Councillor David Chalmers.

Councillor Val Bryant nominated Councillor Sadie Billing for Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2026-27, and this was seconded by Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Martin Prescott
- Councillor Sean Nolan
- Councillor Tamsin Thomas
- Councillor Daniel Allen
- Councillor Laura Williams

The following points were made as part of the debate:

- There was little point in having a debate as Members were unlikely to change their minds based on the opinions expressed.
- The Chair of the Council was one of the primary civic roles allocated each year, and the convention of the 12-month term had not been broken since the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This debate was about trying to understand why they were having a contest based on who had been put forward.
- Councillor Sadie Billing had been a diligent Vice-Chair of the Council and had two years of experience being the Chair of Letchworth Community Forum.
- It was puzzling why the established convention was not being followed.
- While Councillor Keith Hoskins had been a fantastic and well-liked Chair, this was a political manoeuvre aimed at blocking the normal convention.
- There were undertones of sexism in the motion to re-elect the Chair for another year who had not served a probationary year like the Vice-Chair, and this act was cynical and shameful.

Having been proposed and seconded, the outcome of the recorded vote to elect Councillor Sadie Billing as Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2026-27 was:

VOTE TOTALS:

YES	:	22
ABSTAIN	:	0
NO	:	0
TOTAL	:	22

THE INDIVIDUAL RESULTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

Cllr Keith Hoskins	
Cllr Ian Albert	YES
Cllr Amy Allen	YES
Cllr Daniel Allen	YES
Cllr David Barnard	
Cllr Matt Barnes	
Cllr Tina Bhartwas	
Cllr Sadie Billing	YES
Cllr Ruth Brown	
Cllr Cathy Brownjohn	YES
Cllr Val Bryant	YES
Cllr Rhona Cameron	YES
Cllr David Chalmers	
Cllr Jon Clayden	
Cllr Sam Collins	
Cllr Mick Debenham	YES
Cllr Elizabeth Dennis	YES
Cllr Emma Fernandes	YES
Cllr Dominic Griffiths	
Cllr Sarah Lucas	YES
Cllr Steve Jarvis	
Cllr Tim Johnson	
Cllr Chris Lucas	
Cllr Ian Mantle	YES
Cllr Nigel Mason	YES
Cllr Bryony May	
Cllr Caroline McDonnell	
Cllr Michael Muir	

Cllr Ralph Muncer	
Cllr Lisa Nash	
Cllr Sean Nolan	YES
Cllr Steven Patmore	
Cllr Louise Peace	
Cllr Vijaiya Poopalasingham	YES
Cllr Sean Prendergast	
Cllr Martin Prescott	
Cllr Emma Rowe	
Cllr Claire Strong	
Cllr Tamsin Thomas	YES
Cllr Tom Tyson	
Cllr Paul Ward	
Cllr Laura Williams	YES
Cllr Alistair Willoughby	YES
Cllr Stewart Willoughby	YES
Cllr Claire Winchester	
Cllr Dave Winstanley	YES
Cllr Donna Wright	YES
Cllr Daniel Wright-Mason	YES

Having been proposed and seconded, the outcome of the recorded vote to elect Councillor Keith Hoskins as Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2026-27 was:

VOTE TOTALS:

YES	:	24
ABSTAIN	:	0
NO	:	0
TOTAL	:	24

THE INDIVIDUAL RESULTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

Cllr Keith Hoskins	YES
Cllr Ian Albert	
Cllr Amy Allen	
Cllr Daniel Allen	
Cllr David Barnard	YES
Cllr Matt Barnes	YES
Cllr Tina Bhartwas	YES
Cllr Sadie Billing	
Cllr Ruth Brown	YES
Cllr Cathy Brownjohn	
Cllr Val Bryant	
Cllr Rhona Cameron	
Cllr David Chalmers	YES
Cllr Jon Clayden	YES
Cllr Sam Collins	YES
Cllr Mick Debenham	
Cllr Elizabeth Dennis	
Cllr Emma Fernandes	
Cllr Dominic Griffiths	YES
Cllr Sarah Lucas	
Cllr Steve Jarvis	YES
Cllr Tim Johnson	YES
Cllr Chris Lucas	YES
Cllr Ian Mantle	
Cllr Nigel Mason	

Cllr Bryony May	YES
Cllr Caroline McDonnell	YES
Cllr Michael Muir	YES
Cllr Ralph Muncer	YES
Cllr Lisa Nash	YES
Cllr Sean Nolan	
Cllr Steven Patmore	YES
Cllr Louise Peace	YES
Cllr Vijaiya Poopalasingham	
Cllr Sean Prendergast	YES
Cllr Martin Prescott	YES
Cllr Emma Rowe	
Cllr Claire Strong	
Cllr Tamsin Thomas	
Cllr Tom Tyson	YES
Cllr Paul Ward	YES
Cllr Laura Williams	
Cllr Alistair Willoughby	
Cllr Stewart Willoughby	
Cllr Claire Winchester	YES
Cllr Dave Winstanley	
Cllr Donna Wright	
Cllr Daniel Wright-Mason	

RESOLVED: That Councillor Keith Hoskins was elected as Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2026-27.

Councillor Hoskins took the Chair then read and signed the Statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took possession of the Chain of Office. Councillor Hoskins thanked the Council for his election as Chair and advised that his Consort for the year would be Cherry Lincoln.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 17 minutes 20 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clare Billing, Ruth Clifton and Joe Graziano.

3 ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2026/27

Audio recording – 17 minutes 33 seconds

Councillor Ruth Brown nominated Councillor Sean Prendergast for Vice-Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2026-27, and this was seconded by Councillor David Chalmers.

Councillor Val Bryant nominated Councillor Sadie Billing for Vice-Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2026-27, and this was seconded by Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham.

Having been proposed and seconded, the outcome of the recorded vote to elect Councillor Sadie Billing as Vice-Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2026-27 was:

VOTE TOTALS:

YES	:	22
ABSTAIN	:	0
NO	:	0
TOTAL	:	22

THE INDIVIDUAL RESULTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

Cllr Keith Hoskins	
Cllr Ian Albert	YES
Cllr Amy Allen	YES
Cllr Daniel Allen	YES
Cllr David Barnard	
Cllr Matt Barnes	
Cllr Tina Bhartwas	
Cllr Sadie Billing	YES
Cllr Ruth Brown	
Cllr Cathy Brownjohn	YES
Cllr Val Bryant	YES
Cllr Rhona Cameron	YES
Cllr David Chalmers	
Cllr Jon Clayden	
Cllr Sam Collins	
Cllr Mick Debenham	YES
Cllr Elizabeth Dennis	YES
Cllr Emma Fernandes	YES
Cllr Dominic Griffiths	
Cllr Sarah Lucas	YES
Cllr Steve Jarvis	
Cllr Tim Johnson	
Cllr Chris Lucas	
Cllr Ian Mantle	YES
Cllr Nigel Mason	YES
Cllr Bryony May	
Cllr Caroline McDonnell	
Cllr Michael Muir	
Cllr Ralph Muncer	
Cllr Lisa Nash	
Cllr Sean Nolan	YES
Cllr Steven Patmore	
Cllr Louise Peace	
Cllr Vijaiya Poopalasingham	YES
Cllr Sean Prendergast	
Cllr Martin Prescott	
Cllr Emma Rowe	
Cllr Claire Strong	
Cllr Tamsin Thomas	YES
Cllr Tom Tyson	
Cllr Paul Ward	
Cllr Laura Williams	YES
Cllr Alistair Willoughby	YES
Cllr Stewart Willoughby	YES
Cllr Claire Winchester	
Cllr Dave Winstanley	YES
Cllr Donna Wright	YES
Cllr Daniel Wright-Mason	YES

Having been proposed and seconded, the outcome of the recorded vote to elect Councillor Sean Prendergast as Vice-Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2026-27 was:

Thursday, 21st May, 2026

VOTE TOTALS:

YES	:	24
ABSTAIN	:	0
NO	:	0
TOTAL	:	24

THE INDIVIDUAL RESULTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

Cllr Keith Hoskins	YES
Cllr Ian Albert	
Cllr Amy Allen	
Cllr Daniel Allen	
Cllr David Barnard	YES
Cllr Matt Barnes	YES
Cllr Tina Bhartwas	YES
Cllr Sadie Billing	
Cllr Ruth Brown	YES
Cllr Cathy Brownjohn	
Cllr Val Bryant	
Cllr Rhona Cameron	
Cllr David Chalmers	YES
Cllr Jon Clayden	YES
Cllr Sam Collins	YES
Cllr Mick Debenham	
Cllr Elizabeth Dennis	
Cllr Emma Fernandes	
Cllr Dominic Griffiths	YES
Cllr Sarah Lucas	
Cllr Steve Jarvis	YES
Cllr Tim Johnson	YES
Cllr Chris Lucas	YES
Cllr Ian Mantle	
Cllr Nigel Mason	
Cllr Bryony May	YES
Cllr Caroline McDonnell	YES
Cllr Michael Muir	YES
Cllr Ralph Muncer	YES
Cllr Lisa Nash	YES
Cllr Sean Nolan	
Cllr Steven Patmore	YES
Cllr Louise Peace	YES
Cllr Vijaiya Poopalasingham	
Cllr Sean Prendergast	YES
Cllr Martin Prescott	YES
Cllr Emma Rowe	
Cllr Claire Strong	
Cllr Tamsin Thomas	
Cllr Tom Tyson	YES
Cllr Paul Ward	YES
Cllr Laura Williams	
Cllr Alistair Willoughby	
Cllr Stewart Willoughby	
Cllr Claire Winchester	YES
Cllr Dave Winstanley	
Cllr Donna Wright	
Cllr Daniel Wright-Mason	

RESOLVED: That Councillor Sean Prendergast was elected as Vice-Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2026/27.

Councillor Prendergast then read and signed the Statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took possession of the Chain of Office. Councillor Prendergast thanked the Council for his election as Vice-Chair and advised that his Consort for the year would be Joanne Collins.

4 MINUTES - 23 APRIL 2026

Audio Recording – 24 minutes 1 second

Councillor Keith Hoskins, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Ruth Brown seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 23 April 2026 were approved as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chair.

5 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 24 minutes 50 seconds

(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 reminded Members about the requirements to update their Register of Interests if a change in personal circumstances had occurred.

(7) The Chair thanked Faith Churchill, the Chair's Secretary, and announced that a bouquet would be sent in recognition of her hard work and support over the past year.

(8) The Chair reminded Members to respond to the survey circulated to all Members following Member Development Week and advised that Committee Services would contact Members who been unable to attend compulsory or required training.

(9) The Chair encouraged Members to add their favourite places in North Herts to the map outside the Council Chamber as part of the 'Love North Herts' campaign.

6 NOTING THE APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET FOR 2026/27 (INCLUDING SPECIAL INTEREST MEMBER CHAMPIONS)

Audio recording – 28 minutes 18 seconds

The Chair advised that the final version of Appendix 1 to the report had been provided in the supplementary document pack entitled 'Supplementary Documents – Final'.

The Chair invited the Leader of the Council, Councillor Val Bryant, to move the report entitled 'Noting the Appointment of the Deputy Leader of the Council and Members of the Cabinet for 2026/27 (Including Special Interest Member Champions)'.

Councillor Val Bryant proposed and Councillor Sean Nolan seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED:

(1) That the appointment of the Deputy Leader of the Council for the Civic Year 2026/27 was noted as Councillor Sean Nolan.

(2) That the Members appointed as Executive Members of the Cabinet for 2026/27 and the areas for which they will be responsible, as detailed in Appendix 1, published as a supplement, was noted.

(3) That the Special Interest Member Champions for 2026/27, their purpose and role, as detailed in Appendix 1, published as a supplement, was noted.

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 and 2.3 for information purposes.

7 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES, JOINT COMMITTEES AND PANELS FOR 2026/27

Audio recording – 30 minutes 9 seconds

The Chair advised that recommendation 2.1 and 2.2 would be considered individually, followed by consideration of recommendations 2.3 and 2.4 together.

Councillor Val Bryant proposed recommendation 2.1 in the report, and this was seconded by Councillor Sean Nolan and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That for 2026/27, the seats allocated to each political group on those Committees to which Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 applies, and those to which it does not apply, as set out in Appendix 1, published as a supplement, as amended, were noted.

Councillor Nigel Mason proposed recommendation 2.2 in the report with an amendment to increase the number of substitute Members for each Political Group by 1 on the Planning Control Committee only, and this was seconded by Councillor Ruth Brown and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: For the Planning Control Committee only, that the number of Substitute Members for each Political Group be increased by 1.

The Group Leaders were invited by the Chair to appoint Members to the remaining vacancies.

Councillor Val Bryant confirmed Councillor Daniel Allen as Substitute on Planning Control Committee.

Councillor Ruth Brown confirmed that they would advise the Proper Officer of the remaining appointments at a later date.

Councillor Ralph Muncer confirmed:

- Councillor Steven Patmore as Substitute on Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Councillor Michael Muir as Substitute on Planning Control Committee.
- Councillor Steven Patmore as Substitute on Employment Committee.
- That they would advise the Proper Officer of the remaining appointments at a later date.

The Chair invited Councillor Val Bryant, Leader of the Council to move the report entitled 'Appointment of Members of Committees, Joint Committees and Panels for 2026/27'.

Councillor Val Bryant proposed recommendations 2.3 and 2.4 in the report and this was seconded by Councillor Sean Nolan and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED:

(1) That for 2026/27, Members were appointed to the various Committees and other bodies in accordance with the wishes of the political groups, as detailed in Appendix 2, published as a supplement, as amended, with the addition of:

- Councillor Daniel Allen as Substitute on Planning Control Committee.
- Councillor Steven Patmore as Substitute on Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Councillor Michael Muir as Substitute on Planning Control Committee.
- Councillor Steven Patmore as Substitute on Employment Committee.

(2) That for 2026/2027, each political Group Leader was appointed to the Constitutional and Governance Working Group, as detailed in paragraph 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 2026/27

Audio recording – 36 minutes 14 seconds

The Chair noted that the Labour Group Leader had advised of the following appointments, subsequent to those published:

- Councillor Val Bryant as Chair of Employment Committee.
- Councillor Ian Albert as Vice-Chair of Employment Committee.

The Chair invited the Leader of the Council, Councillor Val Bryant, to move the report entitled 'Appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees for 2026/27'.

Councillor Val Bryant proposed and Councillor Sean Nolan seconded the recommendations in the report.

Councillor Claire Strong advised that Councillor Sean Nolan had been proposed as Vice-Chair of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee but was not a Member of the Committee itself.

The Chair advised that there was a vacancy for the Vice-Chair of Joint Staff Consultative Committee.

Councillor Keith Hoskins proposed Councillor Claire Strong for Vice-Chair of Joint Staff Consultative Committee for the Civic Year 2026-27, and this was seconded by Councillor Val Bryant and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees (except Community Forums) for 2026/27 be appointed in accordance with the details set out in Appendix 1 to the report, published as a supplement, with the addition of:

- Councillor Val Bryant as Chair of Employment Committee.
- Councillor Ian Albert as Vice-Chair of Employment Committee.
- Councillor Claire Strong as Vice-Chair of Joint Staff Consultative Committee.

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

9 EXTENSION OF APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

Audio recording – 39 minutes 56 seconds

The Director – Resources presented the report entitled 'Extension of Appointment of Independent Member of Finance, Audit and Risk Committee' and advised that:

- John Cannon had been the Independent Member of Finance, Audit and Risk Committee for almost 4 years.
- With Local Government Reorganisation taking place in less than 2 years, they should extend his appointment for this time as he had made a positive contribution to the committee and the effort involved with recruiting and training a new independent member would not be a good use of time.

Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham proposed and Councillor Ralph Muncer seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That John Cannon's appointment as the Independent Member for the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee was extended until 31st March 2028.

REASON FOR DECISION: John Cannon was appointed as the Independent Member for Finance, Audit and Risk (FAR) Committee in July 2022, for a period of 4 years. The request to extend his appointment reflects the positive contribution that he has made and is the practical option with the Local Government Reorganisation timeline of April 2028. It is also in line with CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) best practice.

10 ADJOURNMENT

Audio recording – 41 minutes 29 seconds

The meeting of the Annual Council was adjourned at 20:13 to allow meetings of each Community Forum to convene to elect Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Community Forums for the Civic Year, following which, there was a comfort break.

The meeting reconvened at 20:31.

N.B. During the break, Councillor Lisa Nash left the Council Chamber and did not return.

11 KEY DECISIONS - ANNUAL REPORT ON CASES OF SPECIAL URGENCY

Audio recording – 59 minutes 28 seconds

The Chair invited the Leader of the Council, Councillor Val Bryant to move the report entitled 'Key Decisions – Annual Report on Cases of Special Urgency'.

Councillor Val Bryant proposed and Councillor Sean Nolan seconded and, following a vote, it was:

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").

12 APPROVE A PROGRAMME OF ORDINARY MEETINGS FOR THE COUNCIL FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2026/27

Audio recording – 1 hour 0 minutes 45 seconds

The Chair invited the Leader of the Council to move the report entitled 'Approve a Programme of Ordinary Meetings for the Council for the Civic Year 2026/27'.

In response to a question from Councillor Ruth Brown, the Committee, Member & Scrutiny Manager advised that:

- Six meetings of the Cabinet Panel on the Environment were required to be scheduled to meet constitutional requirements and to line up with the cycle of Cabinet meetings.
- However, as Members were aware, six meetings had rarely been required in previous years, therefore, the meeting scheduled for 17 March 2027 would be cancelled to avoid clashing with the Standards Committee meeting on the same day.

Councillor Val Bryant proposed and Councillor Ralph Muncer seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Calendar of Meetings for 2026/27, as attached as Appendix 1, was approved.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

(1) To enable Members to agree a programme of ordinary meeting of the Council for 2026/27.

(2) To enable Members to agree the Calendar of Meetings for 2026/27.

13 NOMINATION OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER BODIES FOR 2026/27

Audio recording – 1 hour 2 minutes 53 seconds

The Chair advised that the final version of Appendix 1 to the report had been published in the supplementary document pack entitled 'Supplementary Documents – Final'.

The Chair advised of the following nominations to those published in Appendix 1:

- Councillor Val Bryant to the King George V Playing Fields User Group.

- Councillor Elizabeth Dennis to the substitute position on the Hertfordshire Health Scrutiny Committee.

The Group Leaders were invited by the Chair to nominate Members to the remaining vacancies.

Councillor Ruth Brown confirmed the withdrawal of Councillor Tina Bhartwas as nominee to the Letchworth Civic Trust, and that this vacancy would be advised to the Proper Officer at a later date.

Councillor Ralph Muncer confirmed the nomination of Councillor Michael Muir as a representative for the Baldock Youth and Community Association.

In response to points raised by Councillor Emma Rowe and Councillor Alistair Willougby, the Chair requested the withdrawal of this nomination until clarification could be provided on the membership of Councillor Muir on the previous trust, and the nomination was withdrawn by Councillor Muncer.

Councillor Val Bryant confirmed Councillor Rhona Cameron would replace Councillor Alistair Willoughby as the Council's representative on the Baldock Town Twinning Association.

The Chair invited the Leader of the Council, Councillor Val Bryant to move the report entitled 'Nomination of Representatives on Outside Organisations and Other Bodies for 2026/27', as amended.

Councillor Val Bryant proposed, as amended, the uncontested nominations in Appendix 1 be approved and, this was seconded by Councillor Sean Nolan.

Votes were subsequently conducted on each contested nomination, as highlighted in Appendix 1 of the report and the results recorded for these contested positions are included as below:

RESOLVED:

(1) That the list of nominations of representatives on Outside Organisations and Other Bodies for 2026/2027, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, published as a supplement, was approved, as amended, with confirmation that:

- The Council's representatives to the Baldock Town Twinning Association be Councillors Rhona Cameron and Stewart Willoughby.
- The Council's substitute representative to the Hertfordshire Health Scrutiny Committee be Councillor Elizabeth Dennis.
- The Council's remaining vacant representative on the King George V Playing Fields User Group be Councillor Val Bryant.
- The Council's representative to the London Luton Airport Consultative Committee be Councillor Emma Fernandes.
- The Council's representative to Survivors Against Domestic Abuse (SADA) be Councillor Elizabeth Dennis.
- Councillor Tina Bhartwas be removed as the Council's representative on the Letchworth Civic Trust.

(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. Note the one remaining vacancy being on the Baldock Youth and Community Association.

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

14 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Audio recording – 1 hour 13 minutes 8 seconds

Councillor Keith Hoskins proposed and Councillor Sean Prendergast seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following report will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

15 APPROVAL OF POTENTIAL EXIT PAYMENT - PART 2

N.B. This item was considered in restricted session and therefore no recordings were available.

N.B. Councillor Dominic Griffiths left the Chamber at 21.01 and did not return.

Councillor Sean Nolan, as Executive Member for Customers, presented the report entitled 'Approval of Potential Exit Payment – Part 2'.

Councillor Sean Nolan proposed and Councillor Val Bryant seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the information in the Part 2 report was considered when reaching the Part 1 decision.

REASON FOR DECISION: To ensure that, if required, following the completion of consultation and redeployment processes, the Council has complied with the approval process as set out in the Constitution and the Pay Policy Statement for any exit payment that exceeds the limit applied (£100,000).

16 APPROVAL OF POTENTIAL EXIT PAYMENT - PART 1

Audio recording – 1 hour 43 minutes 17 seconds

Councillor Sean Nolan, as Executive Member for Customers, presented the report and proposed the recommendations as set out in the report. This was seconded by Councillor Val Bryant and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED:

(1) That Council approved the payment of the exit payment, if required, the details of which were set out in the Part 2 report.

(2) That Council used the General Fund reserve to fund the cost.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To ensure that, if required, following the completion of consultation and redeployment processes, the Council has complied with the approval process as set out in the Constitution and the Pay Policy Statement for any exit payment that exceeds the limit applied (£100,000).

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

Chair

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