

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES

Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices,
Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City
on Thursday, 11th July, 2019 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Jean Green (Chairman), Terry Tyler (Vice-Chairman), Ian Albert, Daniel Allen, Kate Aspinwall, Clare Billing, Judi Billing, John Bishop, Ruth Brown, Val Bryant, Paul Clark, Sam Collins, George Davies, Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg, Morgan Derbyshire, Gary Grindal, Simon Harwood, Terry Hone, Keith Hoskins, Mike Hughson, Tony Hunter, Steve Jarvis, David Levett, Ian Mantle, Jim McNally, Ian Moody, Gerald Morris, Michael Muir, Lisa Nash, Sue Ngwala, Sam North, Helen Oliver, Sean Prendergast, Mike Rice, Adem Ruggiero-Cakir, Deepak Sangha, Carol Stanier, Martin Stears-Handscomb, Claire Strong, Kay Tart, Richard Thake and Tom Tyson

IN ATTENDANCE: Anthony Roche (Deputy Chief Executive), Gavin Ramtohal (Legal Commercial Team Manager), Melanie Stimpson (Democratic Services Manager), Reuben Ayavoo (Policy and Community Engagement Manager) and Hilary Dineen (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager)

ALSO PRESENT: At the commencement of the meeting approximately 10 members of the public.

22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio Recording – 39 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Barnard, Bill Davidson, Steve Deakin-Davies, Faye Frost, Ben Lewis, Val Shanley and Michael Weeks.

23 MINUTES - 21 MAY 2019

Audio recording – 1 minute 19 seconds

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Stears-Handscomb, seconded by Councillor Paul Clark and

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 21 May 2019 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

24 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 1 minute 45 seconds

There was no other business notified.

25 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 1 minute 51 seconds

(1) **Audio Recording**

The Chairman advised that, in accordance with Council policy the meeting was being audio recorded. Members of the public and the press were able to use their devices to film/photograph, or do a sound recording of the meeting, but were requested to inform the Chairman to enable those present to be informed. The Chairman further requested that flash and sound notifications should be disabled.

(2) **Past Chairman Presentation**

The Chairman thanked Councillor John Bishop for his work as Chairman of the Council for 2018/19. She advised that he had represented the Council at many events throughout the year and supported his chosen charity Stand By Me Bereavement.

The Chairman made a presentation to Councillor Bishop as a token of appreciation, on behalf of both past and present Members and invited him to say a few words.

Councillor John Bishop thanked the Chairman and the Council for his gift. He stated that being Chairman was a magnificent job with the opportunity to meet so many people giving back to the community. He had enjoyed his year as Chairman of the Council and had raised £2,350 for his chosen charity Stand By Me Bereavement.

Councillor Bishop made a presentation of a cheque to Mr Wadsworth from Stand By Me Bereavement.

Mr Wadsworth thanked Councillor Bishop for supporting the charity. Stand By Me provided group sessions of support for children and young people who had been bereaved and they worked exclusively in North Herts and Stevenage. It was only with donations such as this that they could continue.

The Chairman proposed, Councillor Stears-Handscorn seconded and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Council place on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to Councillor John Bishop for his services as Chairman of the Council during the past year.

(3) **Nicholas Moss OBE**

The Chairman advised that she had the pleasure of informing Council that Nicholas Moss, NHDC Independent Person for the Standards Committee, had been awarded an OBE in the Queens Honours List and offered congratulations.

Councillor Judi Billing, as Chairman of the Standards Committee, paid tribute to the work that Mr Moss had undertaken in the community, in his professional life as a member of the judiciary and for North Hertfordshire District Council as an Independent Person, guiding the Members and the Standards Committee. She thanked him for the work he had undertaken so far at the Council and congratulated him on his award.

Councillor Mike Rice, former Chairman of the Standards Committee, paid tribute to Mr Moss. He had enjoyed working with Mr Moss who guided, corrected and made sure the right path was taken and without that support it would have been a poorer place. He thanked him for the work he had undertaken so far for North Herts District Council and congratulated him on his award.

The Chairman presented Mr Moss with a token gift in recognition of his award.

Mr Moss thanked the Council for the gift and the kind words.

(4) Chairman's Chosen Charity

The Chairman announced that her chosen charity for this year was Parkinsons UK North Herts and Stevenage Branch

(5) Declarations of Interest

The Chairman reminded Members that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and the nature of any interest declared was required to be notified to the Chairman at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members who declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest had to withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members who declared a Declarable Interest, who wished to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', had to declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then leave the room before the debate and vote.

(6) Register of Interests Forms

The Chairman advised that a number of Members had yet to complete their online Register of Interests form.

Anyone having difficulty in doing so were requested to contact the Committee, Member and Scrutiny team for support .

(7) Rules of Debate

The Chairman reminded Members that, in accordance with the Constitution, no speech was to exceed five minutes without the consent of the Chairman.

(8) Refreshments

The Chairman invited all Councillors to refreshments after the meeting in Committee Rooms 2/3.

(9) Additional Item of Business

The Chairman advised that she had agreed to an additional Item of business, the Nomination of a Representative to Bedford and River Ivel Internal Drainage Board, which was as a result of a recommendation made at the Annual Council meeting.

26 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 20 minutes 23 seconds

There were no presentations or public participation.

27 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

Audio recording – 20 minutes 31 seconds

Item Referred from Cabinet: 27 June 2019 – Modern Day Slavery Transparency Statement & Charter Against Modern Slavery

The Executive Member for Community Engagement presented the referral from Cabinet together with the report considered by Cabinet and the associated appendices. It was noted that one aspect discussed by the Cabinet related to the training aspect of the Charter and that all forms of training delivery should be considered so as not to be as restrictive. Council were supportive that all forms of training including that referred to in the Charter be considered.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor David Levett;
- Councillor Richard Thake

It was moved by Councillor Judi Billing, seconded by Councillor Sam North and

RESOLVED:

- (1) That paragraph 1 of the Charter Against Modern Slavery be amended to read:
“Train its corporate procurement team to understand modern slavery through appropriate training on Ethical Procurement and Supply.”;
- (2) That, subject to (1) above, the Council agrees to adopt the Charter Against Modern Slavery as attached as Appendix C to the report..

REASON FOR DECISION: To adopt the Charter Against Modern Slavery.

Audio recording 27 minutes 41 seconds

Item Referred from Cabinet: 27 June 2019 – Co-Operative Councils Innovation Network

The Leader of the Council presented the referral from Cabinet together with the report considered by Cabinet and the associated appendix.

The following Members took part in the debate and asked questions:

- Councillor Mike Rice;
- Councillor Daniel Allen;
- Councillor David Levett;

It was moved by Councillor Martin Stears-Handscorn, seconded by Councillor Paul Clark and

RESOLVED:

- (1) That North Hertfordshire District Council become a full member of the Co-Operative Councils Innovation Network and adopt the networks co-operative values;
- (2) That North Hertfordshire District Council be a Co-operative Council.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: The Labour and Co-operative group of North Hertfordshire are currently associate members of the Co-operative Councils Innovation network. With the recent change in administration, the Leader of the Council seeks to make the Council a full member of the Network.

Audio recording – 38 minutes 42 seconds

Item Referred from Finance, Audit and Risk Committee: 3 June 2019 – Finance, Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report

Councillor Kate Aspinwall, Chairman of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, presented the referral from that Committee together with the report that had been considered

The following Members took part in the debate and asked questions:

- Councillor Terry Hone.

It was moved by Councillor Kate Aspinwall, seconded by Councillor Terry Hone and

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee 2018/2019 be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To comply with the requirements of the Council's Constitution.

Audio recording – 41 minutes 23 seconds

Item Referred from Cabinet: 11 June 2019 – Revenue Budget Outturn 2018/19

The Executive Member for Finance and IT presented the referral from Cabinet together with the report.

It was moved by Councillor Ian Albert, seconded by Councillor Sam North and

RESOLVED: That Council approves the net transfer to earmarked reserves, as identified in table 8 of the submitted report, of £1.504million.

REASON FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) Members are able to monitor, make adjustments within the overall budgetary framework and request appropriate action of Services who do not meet the budget targets set as part of the Corporate Business Planning process.
- (2) Changes to the Council's balances are monitored and approved.

Audio recording – 49 minutes 14 seconds

Item Referred from Cabinet: 11 June 2019 – Annual Treasury Management Review 2018/19

The Executive Member for Finance and IT, presented the referral from Cabinet together with the report and associated appendix.

It was moved by Councillor Ian Albert, seconded by Councillor Sam North and

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Treasury Report for 2018/19 be noted;
- (2) That the actual 2018/19 prudential and treasury indicators be approved.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To ensure the Council's continued compliance with both the CIPFA code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Local Government Act 2003, and that the Council manages its exposure to interest and capital risk.

28 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Audio recording – 53 minutes 5 seconds

The Legal Commercial Team Manager presented the report.

The following Members entered into the debate and asked questions:

- Councillor David Levett;
- Councillor Jim McNally;
- Councillor Judi Billing.

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Stears-Handscomb, seconded by Councillor Paul Clark and

RESOLVED: That Full Council approves the amendments to the Constitution set out in paragraphs 8.1-8.3 and notes Executive delegations as per 8.5-8.6 of the submitted report.

REASONS FOR DECISION: To meet the requests of the new administration.

29 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME AMENDMENT 2019-20

Audio recording – 59 minutes 8 seconds

The Leader of the Council presented the report together with associated appendices.

The Legal Commercial Team Manager advised of a further amendment that Paragraph 2 of Section 9 of the proposed Scheme be deleted as follows:

'A claim in respect of annual registration as Data Controller will be paid when accompanied by a receipt for payment of the fee.'

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that Council should decide whether the proposed amendments to the Special Responsibility Allowances should be made retrospectively

It was proposed by Councillor Martin Stears-Handscomb, seconded by Councillor Paul Clark that the proposed scheme with the advised amendments be adopted and

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Council agrees the amendments to the Scheme of Allowances as set out in Appendix B of the submitted report, subject to the deletion of the following paragraph:

'A claim in respect of annual registration as Data Controller will be paid when accompanied by a receipt for payment of the fee.'

- (2) The amendment in respect of allowances for the Leader of the Council and Executive Members be applied retrospectively from 22 May 2019.

REASON FOR DECISION: To meet the requests of the new administration.

30 NOMINATION OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER BODIES FOR 2019/20 - BEDFORD AND RIVER IVEL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Audio Recording – 1 hour 4 minutes 1 second

The Democratic Services Manager called for nominations for a representative on the Bedford and River Ivel Internal Drainage Board.

It was proposed by Councillor Paul Clark and seconded by Councillor Martin Stears-Handscomb that Councillor Steve Jarvis be the nominated representative.

There being no further nominations Councillor Steve Jarvis was nominated as the NHDC representative to the Bedford and River Ivel Internal Drainage Board.

31 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

Audio recording – 1 hour 5 minutes 40 seconds

There were no questions from Members

32 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Audio recording – 1 hour 5 minutes 44 seconds

In accordance with Standing Order 4.8.12 the following motion was submitted:

It was moved by Councillor Sam Collins and seconded by Councillor Tom Tyson that:

“The Council undertakes to only lease or purchase Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (including Electric Vehicles and Plug in Hybrids PHEVs) when the replacement of any council owned or leased vehicle is due. This also includes any company cars used by officers.

The Council also undertakes to encourage all of its contractors to adopt similar measures.”

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor David Levett;
- Councillor Steve Jarvis;
- Councillor Richard Thake;

Councillor Steve Jarvis proposed an amendment to the motion that:

“That the implementation of these undertakings shall be subject to agreement by the Cabinet.”

Councillor Sam Collins, the proposer of the motion accepted the proposed amendment.

RESOLVED:

- (1) The Council undertakes to only lease or purchase Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (including Electric Vehicles and Plug in Hybrids PHEVs) when the replacement of any council owned or leased vehicle is due. This also includes any company cars used by officers;
- (2) The Council also undertakes to encourage all of its contractors to adopt similar measures;
- (3) That the implementation of these undertakings shall be subject to agreement by the Cabinet.

Thursday, 11th July, 2019

The meeting closed at 8.47 pm

Chairman