

# STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

## COUNCIL MINUTES

**Date: Wednesday, 26 May 2021**

**Time: 7.00pm**

**Place: Main Auditorium, Gordon Craig Theatre, Lytton Way, Stevenage**

**Present:** Councillors: Sandra Barr (Mayor 2021/22), Myla Arceno, Julie Ashley-Wren, Doug Bainbridge, Philip Bibby CC, Stephen Booth, Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, Adrian Brown, Jim Brown, Teresa Callaghan, Matt Creasey, Michael Downing, John Duncan, Alex Farquharson, Michelle Gardner, Jody Hanafin, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell, Chris Howells, Wendy Kerby, Graham Lawrence, Nick Leech, Mrs Joan Lloyd, Lin Martin-Haugh, Andy McGuinness, Maureen McKay, Sarah Mead, Adam Mitchell CC, Margaret Notley, Robin Parker CC, Claire Parris, Loraine Rossati, Graham Snell, Simon Speller, Sharon Taylor OBE CC, Jeannette Thomas and Tom Wren.

**Start / End**      Start Time:    7.00pm  
**Time:**            End Time:      8.45pm

### **1      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Gardner, Liz Harrington, Lizzy Kelly and Alderman Ann Webb.

There were no declarations of interest.

The Mayor then welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly those new Members who had been elected at the recent elections.

At this juncture, the outgoing Mayor spoke about his year in office which had been severely affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The Mayor thanked all those who had been a great support to him during this unique and challenging year including Fairlands Valley Spartans, Cycling UK, Tracey Frost the Mayor's PA, Alissa Crew the Youth Mayor, Michelle Gardner Deputy Mayor and Penny Schenkel the Mayoress.

The Mayor said goodbye to former Councillors Laurie Chester, Dave Cullen, John Lloyd and John Mead who did not stand for election this time as well as former Councillor Michelle Gardner, his deputy Mayor.

The Mayor also said goodbye and thankyou to SBC Members Services Officers, Maureen Nicholson, Mary Cherry and Jackie Cansick the Constitutional Services Manager who would be retiring during the year.

Finally the Mayor wished all the best to Councillor Barr, the incoming Mayor.

On behalf of Members, the Leader of the Council thanked the outgoing Mayor for his year in office and his commitment to the role and the Town.

The Mayor then asked for tributes to His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh and Baroness Shirley Williams, who was a Freeman of Stevenage, as well as the many thousands of victims of the Pandemic.

A number of tributes were given. Councillor Sharon Taylor led the tributes to the Duke of Edinburgh and spoke about the loyal support he had given during his life of service to the Queen and country. A number of other Members spoke about the Duke's commitment to the Queen and the great legacy of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

Members then spoke about the sad loss of Shirley Williams who was a Freeman of Stevenage and had always maintained her links with the Town.

A number of members then spoke about the devastating impact of the Pandemic and the tragic number of lives lost as a result of Covid-19. Tributes were also paid to the Emergency Services and Key Workers for their roles throughout the Pandemic.

Following the tributes, Council stood and observed a moment's silence in remembrance.

## **2 MINUTES - 24 FEBRUARY 2021**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 February 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

## **3 ELECTION OF MAYOR**

The Mayor asked for nominations for the Office of Mayor for 2021/22.

Councillor Sharon Taylor OBE CC nominated Councillor Sandra Barr for the Office of Mayor. Councillor Taylor spoke about Councillor Barr's love of Stevenage, her voluntary work with many groups and in particular her role as Chair of the Governors at Larwood Academy Trust, a special school for children with complex Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues. Councillor Barr also had a great passion for performing arts especially in the area of dance and she was particularly proud when Stevenage was chosen to host the semi-finals at the Gordon Craig Theatre of the All England Dance Championships.

The nomination was seconded by Councillor Claire Parris.

There being no other nominations, a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Sandra Barr be elected as Mayor for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

Councillor Sandra Barr then made the statutory declaration of office.

The Mayor announced that her daughter, Louisa Barr would be the Mayoress for 2021/22.

In her speech the Mayor thanked all of those who would be supporting her through the year in particular her husband who had given up his opportunity to be Mayor's Consort to care for their disabled son.

The Mayor announced that her three charities for the year would be Leyden House, Stevenage Day Centre for adults with learning disabilities, and Larwood Academy School, a special school for children with severe emotional, behavioural and mental health issues and the third the first ever Stevenage Festival of Dance.

#### **4 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR**

The Mayor asked for nominations for the Office of Deputy Mayor for 2021/22.

Councillor Sharon Taylor nominated Councillor Margaret Notley. Councillor Taylor highlighted Councillor Notley's work and in particular her commitment to the Symonds Green Community Centre.

The nomination was seconded by Councillor Phil Bibby.

There being no other nominations, a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Margaret Notley be appointed Deputy Mayor for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

Councillor Margaret Notley then made the statutory declaration of office. The Deputy Mayor announced that Cathy Bibby would be her Deputy Consort for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

#### **5 APPOINTMENT OF YOUTH MAYOR**

The outgoing Youth Mayor, Alissa Crew, thanked the outgoing Mayor, Councillors, Council Officers, family and friends for their support over the year. She highlighted her work with the Youth Council and how they had found new ways of working and engaging, despite the Government restrictions due to the Pandemic including handing out activity packs to children of some key workers and also taking part in Remembrance Sunday.

Councillor Richard Henry congratulated the outgoing Youth Mayor for her achievements during the year despite being affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Council was informed that following an election, the Youth Council had nominated Eden Searle as the 2021/22 Youth Mayor.

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that Eden Searle be elected as Youth Mayor for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

Eden Searle then signed the declaration of office. In her acceptance speech, the Youth Mayor stated that she was proud to be the new Youth Mayor and would

ensure the door was open to encourage more young people in the Town to join the Youth Council. She also spoke about her passion for the Scouting movement.

Members congratulated Eden Searle on her appointment.

## **6 BOROUGH COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2021**

Council considered a report that detailed the results of the Borough Council Elections that were held on 6 May 2021.

The Leader in moving the report, thanked Matt Partridge (Returning Officer), Luke Fattorusso (Local Land Charges and Electoral Services Manager) and the Elections Team for the excellent and smooth management of the Election process particularly with the additional complications as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. She also thanked the Stevenage public for coming out to vote during a difficult time. Councillor Taylor congratulated all those Councillors successful in winning or retaining their seats. She also thanked those retiring Councillors for their service and commitment to the Council including Laurie Chester, Dave Cullen, John Lloyd and John Mead.

Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd seconded the report.

Councillor Robin Parker CC and Councillor Phil Bibby CC both thanked the Returning Officer and the Elections Team for the efficient running of these complicated elections.

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the results of the Stevenage Borough Council Elections 2021 be noted.

## **7 APPOINTMENT OF LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**

The Chief Executive advised that where the 'Labour Group' had been quoted in paperwork it should read 'Labour and Co-operative Group'.

The Chief Executive then advised that the Leader of the Opposition would be Councillor Phil Bibby CC and that Councillor Graham Lawrence CC would be his deputy.

## **8 APPOINTMENT OF LEADERS AND DEPUTY LEADERS OF THE POLITICAL GROUPS ON THE COUNCIL**

The Chief Executive advised the Council that Councillors Sharon Taylor OBE CC, Phil Bibby CC and Robin Parker CC had been appointed as Leaders of the Labour and Co-operative, Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups respectively. It was noted that Councillors Mrs Joan Lloyd, Graham Lawrence CC and Andy McGuinness would be Deputy Leaders of the Labour and Co-operative, Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups respectively.

## 9 CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

Council considered various matters relating to the Member level decision making structure of the Council and the Council's constitution for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED**:

1. That the Terms of Reference, as detailed in the appendices to the report; and the size and political composition for the following bodies that form the non-Executive Member level decision making structure of the Council be approved subject to the rules of proportionality where appropriate for 100 Committee places where applicable (relevant Committees are identified thus\*) -

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee\* (Appendix A) – 14 Members (8 Labour Group, 4 Conservative Group, 2 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Community Select Committee\* (Appendix B) – 10 Members (6 Labour Group, 3 Conservative Group, 1 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Environment and Economy Select Committee\* (Appendix C) – 11 Members (6 Labour Group, 3 Conservative Group, 2 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Planning & Development Committee\* (Appendix D) – 14 Members (8 Labour Group, 4 Conservative Group, 2 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Licensing Committee (Appendix E) – 14 Members (8 Labour Group, 4 Conservative Group, 2 Liberal Democrat Group)
- General Purposes Committee\* (Appendix F) – 14 Members (8 Labour Group, 4 Conservative Group, 2 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Appointments Committee\* (Appendix G) - 8 Members (5 Labour Group, 2 Conservative Group, 1 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Standards Committee\* (Appendix H) – 8 Members (5 Labour Group, 2 Conservative Group, 1 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Audit Committee\* (Appendix I) – 10 Members (6 Labour Group, 2 Conservative Group, 2 Liberal Democrat Group) + 1 Co-opted non-elected member
- Statement of Accounts Committee\* (Appendix J) – 8 Members (5 Labour Group, 2 Conservative Group, 1 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Joint Consultative Committee\* (Appendix K) – 3 Members (2 Labour Group, 1 Conservative Group)

\* Indicates where those bodies covered by the rules of proportionality for the purposes of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups), Regulations 1990 – total Committee places being 100

- 2 That the membership of the Executive and the individual Portfolios, as set out at paragraph 4.2 of the report, be noted.
- 3 That the various Executive bodies appointed by the Leader, detailed in paragraph 4.3 of the report, be noted. The relevant Terms of Reference for each body are shown at Appendix L.
- 4 That the dates for Council meetings for the Municipal Year, as shown at paragraph 4.6 of the report be approved and that the calendar of formal meetings shown at Appendix M be noted.
- 5 That the recommended amendments to Standing Orders concerning the Council Tax and Budget setting Council meeting, as referred to in paragraphs 4.10 – 4.11 of this report, be approved.
- 6 That the Constitution be amended to make reference to the Hertfordshire Growth Board Joint Committee and the Hertfordshire Growth Board Joint Scrutiny Committee as approved by Council on 16 December 2020.
- 7 That it be noted that the Regulations that allowed for remote meetings have now expired and that all formal meetings are to revert to being 'in person'.

## 10 APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

Details of the individuals nominated to serve on each Committee had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Membership was noted, subject to Councillor John Gardner being replaced by Councillor Sharon Taylor on the Statement of Accounts Committee. Members voted on the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs where these had been quoted.

Councillor Sharon Taylor OBE CC moved the appointments of Chairs and Vice-Chairs and Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd seconded the nominations.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the membership of Committees, together with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs, where detailed, are appointed for 2021/22 Municipal Year as follows:

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 Members (8-4-2)

Councillors – L Martin-Haugh (Chair), P Bibby, CC (Vice-Chair), M Arceno, A Brown, M Downing, A Farquharson, C Howells, W Kerby, A McGuinness, S Mead, R Parker CC, C Parris, L Rossati and S Speller.

#### COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE

10 Members (6-3-1):

Councillors – S Mead (Chair), M Notley (Vice-Chair), M Arceno, S Booth, M Creasey, J Duncan, A Farquharson, L Harrington, C Parris and S Speller.

#### ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE

11 Members (6-3-2):

Councillors – M Downing (Chair), A Mitchell, CC (Vice-Chair), J Ashley-Wren, D Bainbridge, S Booth, A Brown, W Kerby, M McKay, S Mead, C Parris and S Speller.

#### PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

14 Members (8-4-2)

Councillors – S Speller (Chair), M McKay (Vice-Chair), D Bainbridge, M Arceno, A Brown, T Callaghan, M Creasey, M Downing, J Hanafin, G Lawrence CC, Mrs J Lloyd, A Mitchell CC, G Snell and T Wren.

#### LICENSING COMMITTEE

14 Members (8-4-2)

Councillors – M McKay (Chair), D Bainbridge, R Broom, A Brown, J Hanafin, L Harrington, L Kelly, G Lawrence CC, A McGuinness, L Martin-Haugh, M Notley, C Parris, L Rossati and G Snell.

#### GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

14 Members (8-4-2)

Councillors – M McKay (Chair), D Bainbridge, R Broom, A Brown, J Hanafin, L Harrington, L Kelly, G Lawrence CC, A McGuinness, L Martin-Haugh, M Notley, C Parris, L Rossati and G Snell.

#### APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

8 Members (5-2-1)

Councillors – P Bibby, CC, T Callaghan, L Martin-Haugh, G Lawrence, CC, R Parker, CC, L Rossati, S Taylor, OBE, CC and J Thomas.

#### STANDARDS COMMITTEE

8 Members (5-2-1)

Councillors – P Bibby CC, R Broom, T Callaghan, R Henry, L Kelly, Mrs J Lloyd, M Notley and T Wren.

Independent Person who must be consulted on alleged breaches to the Code of Conduct – Dr. Robert Cawley

#### AUDIT COMMITTEE

10 Members (6-2-2) + 1 Independent co-opted Member (G Gibbs)

Councillors – T Callaghan (Chair), M Arceno, J Ashley-Wren, S Booth, J Gardner, G Lawrence CC, N Leech, M McKay, C Parris and L Rossati.

#### STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

8 Members (5-2-1)

Councillors – Mrs J Lloyd (Chair), P Bibby CC, J Hollywell, S Mead, A Mitchell

**11 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

Council considered a list of individuals nominated to serve on Outside Bodies which had been circulated before the meeting.

It was moved, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the following individuals are appointed to represent the Council on the various bodies detailed below for one year, unless otherwise stated:

COUNCIL FOR THE PROTECTION OF RURAL ENGLAND THE  
HERTFORDSHIRE SOCIETY - Portfolio Holder Environment and Regeneration

EAST OF ENGLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION - The Leader of the  
Council

EAST OF ENGLAND REGIONAL PLANNING - Portfolio Holder Environment and  
Regeneration

HCC JOINT WASTE MANAGEMENT GROUP - Portfolio Holder Environment and  
Regeneration

HERTFORDSHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING AND POLICY GROUP -  
Portfolio Holder Environment and Regeneration, Substitute (TBC)

HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL AUTHORITIES LEADERS GROUP - The Leader of the  
Council

HERTFORDSHIRE SUSTAINABILITY FORUM STEERING GROUP - Portfolio  
Holder Environment and Regeneration

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION - The Leader of the Council

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY GROUP (COMMUNITY SAFETY) - Portfolio Holder  
Communities, Community Safety and Equalities

SOSTEVENAGE PARTNERSHIP - The Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader

STEVENAGE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP - Portfolio Holder  
Communities (including Safer Communities) and Equalities

AGE CONCERN STEVENAGE – Jeannette Thomas

BEDWELL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION - Liz Harrington

CHELLS MANOR COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION - Andy McGuinness

CROSSROADS CARE - John Gardner



DOUGLAS DRIVE SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOCIATION – Maureen Mckay  
HOME-START STEVENAGE - John Gardner  
KADOMA LINK ASSOCIATION - Graham Snell and John Gardner  
LIVING ROOM PROJECT - Jackie Hollywell  
OLD STEVENAGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Lou Rossati  
OVAL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION - Lloyd Briscoe  
PIN GREEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION - Jeannette Thomas  
SHEPHALL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Simon Speller  
ST NICHOLAS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION - Sandra Barr  
STEVENAGE CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU - Michael Downing  
STEVENAGE COMMUNITY TRUST - Richard Henry and Maureen McKay  
STEVENAGE CREDIT UNION LIMITED – Sharon Taylor  
STEVENAGE FURNITURE RECYCLING SCHEME – Sarah Mead  
STEVENAGE HAVEN - Rob Broom  
STEVENAGE/AUTUN/INGELHEIM ASSOCIATION - Richard Henry and Simon Speller  
STEVENAGE WORLD FORUM FOR ETHNIC COMMUNITIES - John Gardner  
SYMONDS GREEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Jackie Hollywell  
TIMEBRIDGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Tom Wren  
TURN THE TIDE - Lizzy Kelly  
EAST OF ENGLAND LGA IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY PANEL - Richard Henry  
HCC HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - Maureen McKay  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION UNIT – Lou Rossati  
LUTON AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE - John Gardner

**MAYOR**