

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 24 May 2023

Time: 7.00pm

Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Councillors: Margaret Notley (Mayor), Myla Arceno, Julie Ashley-Wren, Sandra Barr, Philip Bibby CC, Stephen Booth, Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, Jim Brown, Forhad Chowdhury, Nazmin Chowdhury, Michael Downing, Bret Facey, Alex Farquharson, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell, Chris Howells, Mason Humberstone, Graham Lawrence CC, Mrs Joan Lloyd, Conor McGrath, Andy McGuinness, Maureen McKay, Sarah Mead, Adam Mitchell CC, Robin Parker CC, Claire Parris, Ellie Plater, Loraine Rossati, Graham Snell, Simon Speller, Baroness Taylor of Stevenage, OBE, Jeannette Thomas, Carolina Veres, Anne Wells and Tom Wren

Start / End Start Time: 7.00pm
Time: End Time: 9.15pm

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

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Wendy Kerby and Lin Martin-Haugh.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES - 23 FEBRUARY 2023 AND 8 MARCH 2023**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 23 February and 8 March 2023 be approved as correct records and signed by the Mayor.

3 **ELECTION OF MAYOR**

The Mayor was saddened to hear of that former Councillor John Gardner, who had served as an SBC Member for the Roebuck Ward between 1998 and May 2023, including being Deputy Leader of the Council between 2006 and 2018, had passed away in the early hours of the day.

The Leader of the Council advised that he had known John Gardner as a friend and fellow Labour councillor for over 20 years. His passion and commitment to the Borough was amazing in terms of the Regeneration of the Town, sustainability and his work on the environment agenda and the Council's Climate Change

commitment.

The Leader advised that the Council would be considering, following liaison with John's wife Michelle at an appropriate time, a suitable and fitting memorial somewhere in the Town in tribute to John. Thoughts and prayers were with Michelle and her family at this very difficult time.

Councillor Bibby CC, Leader of the Opposition spoke of John Gardner's commitment and as a politician with conviction and passion.

Councillor Robin Parker CC, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group spoke of John's contribution to the Town and his brave fight with his recent illness. He was committed to his socialist principles and could always be relied upon to speak up for the disadvantaged.

A number of other Members spoke in tribute to former Councillor Gardner, following which the Council stood to observe a minute's silence.

The Mayor then gave a speech thanking the Council for a wonderful year in office and she recounted some of the highlights of the year, including events celebrating the King's Coronation, various concerts such as the Hertfordshire Schools Evening Gala at the Royal Albert Hall and choosing and declaring Stevenage's Friendliest Street. The Mayor also spoke about a number of events she had held throughout the year and thanked everyone that had supported the events from her Charities and local musicians, singers and dancers.

The Mayor then thanked her Mayoress, Cathy Bibby; The Deputy Mayor-Councillor Myla Arceno and her Consort John Arceno; her Chaplain the Revd Ruth Carroll; the Youth Mayor Paige Abrey; and the Council officers who had helped her throughout her year in office, particularly the Mayor's PA Tracey Frost.

She then wished the incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor every success for the coming year.

The Mayor asked for nominations for the Office of Mayor for 2023/24.

Councillor Richard Henry nominated Councillor Myla Arceno for the Office of Mayor.

The nomination was seconded by Councillor Lloyd Briscoe.

There being no other nominations, a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Myla Arceno be elected as Mayor for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

Councillor Myla Arceno then made the statutory declaration of office.

The Mayor announced that her son John Arceno would be the Mayor's Consort for 2023/24.

The Mayor thanked the Council for her election, and gave an inaugural speech, including the announcement that her chosen charities for the year would be the

Douglas Drive Day Care Centre, The Red Shed, Hertwise and Stevenage World Forum.

The Mayor Advised that it was a privilege to be given the role of Mayor and the opportunity to serve the Town and its residents. She spoke of her journey to Stevenage from the Philippines and her work in the NHS as a specialist physiotherapist in cardiac rehab.

The Mayor thanked her friends and colleagues for their support along with her supporters from the Filipino community in Stevenage and Worldwide. The mayor also thanked her husband, son and daughter for their love and encouragement.

4 **ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR**

The Mayor asked for nominations for the Office of Deputy Mayor for 2023/24.

Councillor Lorraine Rossati nominated Councillor Jim Brown. The nomination was seconded by Councillor Jeannette Thomas.

There being no other nominations, a vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Jim Brown be appointed Deputy Mayor for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

Councillor Jim Brown then made the statutory declaration of office. The Deputy Mayor announced that Penny Schenkel would be his Deputy Mayoress for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

5 **APPOINTMENT OF YOUTH MAYOR**

The outgoing Youth Mayor, Paige Abrey, thanked the outgoing Mayor, Councillors, Officers, family and friends for their support over the year. She outlined some of the highlights of her year in office and wished the incoming Youth Mayor every success in the role.

It was then moved by Councillor Sandra Barr, seconded by Councillor Mason Humberstone and **RESOLVED** that Ella Lacey be elected as Youth Mayor for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

Ella Lacey then signed the declaration of office. In her acceptance speech, the new Youth Mayor thanked the Council for her election. She further thanked the outgoing Youth Mayor and outlined a number of initiatives that she hoped to be involved with during the year. She then announced that Anisa Mathew would be her Deputy Youth Mayor for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

6 **BOROUGH COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2023**

The Council considered a report that detailed the results of the Borough Council Elections that were held on 4 May 2023.

The Leader in moving the report paid tribute to the outgoing Councillors, John Gardner, Liz Harrington Teresa Callaghan and Adrian Brown and welcomed the

newly elected Councillors Mason Humberstone, Forhad Chowdhury, Ellie Plater and Carolina Veres.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Jackie Hollywell was pleased that the public had continued to show confidence in the Council and that it was encouraging to see greater diversity in the Council following the elections.

Thanks were given to Matt Partridge (Returning Officer), Luke Fattorusso, the Elections Team and all SBC staff who supported before and during the day for the excellent and huge amount of work carried out behind the scenes ensuring the smooth running of the Election process.

It was moved by Councillor Henry, seconded by Councillor Hollywell and **RESOLVED** that the results of the Stevenage Borough Council Elections 2023 be noted.

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

The Chief Executive advised that the Leader of the Opposition would be Councillor Phil Bibby CC and that Councillor Bret Facey would be his Deputy.

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

The Chief Executive advised the Council that Councillors Richard Henry, 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 Jeannette Thomas, Bret Facey and Stephen Booth 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 (9 Labour & Co-operative Group, 3 Conservative Group, 2 Liberal Democrat Group)
 - Community Select Committee* (Appendix B) – 10 Members (6 Labour &

Co-operative Group, 3 Conservative Group, 1 Liberal Democrat Group)

- Environment and Economy Select Committee* (Appendix C) – 11 Members (7 Labour & Co-operative Group, 2 Conservative Group, 2 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Planning & Development Committee* (Appendix D) – 14 Members (9 Labour & Co-operative Group, 3 Conservative Group, 2 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Licensing Committee (Appendix E) – 14 Members (8 Labour & Co-operative Group, 4 Conservative Group, 2 Liberal Democrat Group)
- General Purposes Committee* (Appendix F) – 14 Members (8 Labour & Co-operative Group, 4 Conservative Group, 2 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Appointments Committee* (Appendix G) - 8 Members (5 Labour & Co-operative Group, 2 Conservative Group, 1 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Standards Committee* (Appendix H) – 8 Members (5 Labour & Co-operative Group, 2 Conservative Group, 1 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Audit Committee* (Appendix I) – 10 Members (6 Labour & Co-operative Group, 2 Conservative Group, 2 Liberal Democrat Group) + 1 Co-opted non-elected member
- Statement of Accounts Committee* (Appendix J) – 8 Members (5 Labour & Co-operative Group, 2 Conservative Group, 1 Liberal Democrat Group)
- Joint Consultative Committee* (Appendix K) – 3 Members (2 Labour & Co-operative 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 below, be noted:

Councillor Richard Henry – Leader, Regeneration, Communication and Strategic Partnerships

Councillor Jeannette Thomas – Deputy Leader, Housing and Housing Development

Councillor Sandra Barr –Co-operative Council and Neighbourhood Communities

Councillor Lloyd Briscoe – Economy and Transport

Councillor Jackie Hollywell – Community Safety and Equalities

Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd – Resources and Transformation

Councillor Loraine Rossati – Culture, Leisure and Information Technology

Councillor Simon Speller – Environment and Performance

3. That the various Executive bodies appointed by the Leader, detailed in Paragraph 4.3 of the report and the relevant Terms of Reference for each body set out in Appendix L to the report, be noted.
4. That the dates for Council meetings for the Municipal Year 2023/24, as shown at Paragraph 4.6 of the report, be approved, and that the calendar of formal meetings shown at Appendix M to the report, be noted.
5. That the amendment to Standing Order 10(a) Council Tax and Budget Setting Debate, as set out in paragraph 4.10 of the report be approved.

10

APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

Details of the individuals nominated to serve on each Committee, together with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of those Committees, where stated, had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Chief Executive advised that in relation to the membership of the Environment and Economy Select Committee, Councillor Julie Ashley-Wren had been added as a member in error and should be removed from the list.

Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd moved and Councillor Claire Parris seconded the appointment of Committees. Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd moved and Councillor Jeannette Thomas seconded the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs to the Committees.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the membership of Committees, together with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs, where detailed, are appointed for 2023/24 Municipal Year as follows:

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 Members (9-3-2)

Councillors – L Martin-Haugh (Chair), P Bibby, CC (Vice-Chair), S Booth, R Broom, J Brown, F Chowdhury, M Downing, B. Facey, C McGrath, S Mead, M Notley, R Parker CC, C Veres and A Wells.

COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE

10 Members (6-3-1):

Councillors – S Mead (Chair), A Farquharson (Vice-Chair), J Ashley-Wren, F Chowdhury, J Duncan, M Humberstone, W Kerby, C McGrath, E Plater and C Veres.

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE

11 Members (7-2-2):

Councillors – R Broom (Chair), A Mitchell, CC (Vice-Chair), J Brown, B Facey, C McGrath, C McGuinness, S Mead, C Parris E Plater, G Snell and S Taylor OBE,CC.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

14 Members (9-3-2)

Councillors – M Downing (Chair), C Parris (Vice-Chair), J Ashley-Wren, R Broom, F Chowdhury, N Chowdhury, C Howells, G Lawrence CC, M McKay, A Mitchell CC, E Plater, G Snell C Veres and A Wells.

Substitutes - P Bibby CC
A Farquharson
A McGuinness
T Wren
+ 5 Labour substitutes (tba)

LICENSING COMMITTEE

14 Members (8-4-2)

Councillors – C Parris (Chair), S Barr, N Chowdhury, M Downing, J Duncan, C Howells, G Lawrence CC, Mrs J Lloyd, L Martin-Haugh, M McKay, M Notley, G Snell, A Wells and T Wren.

Substitutes - P Bibby CC
S Booth
W Kerby
A McGuinness
+ 4 Labour substitutes (tba)

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

14 Members (8-4-2)

Councillors – C Parris (Chair), S Barr, N Chowdhury, M Downing, J Duncan, C Howells, G Lawrence CC, Mrs J Lloyd, L Martin-Haugh, M McKay, M Notley, G Snell, A Wells and T Wren.

Substitutes - P Bibby CC
S Booth
W Kerby
A McGuinness
+ 4 Labour substitutes (tba)

APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

8 Members (5-2-1)

Councillors – S Barr, P Bibby CC, B Facey, R Henry, J Hollywell, R Parker CC, S Speller and J Thomas.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

8 Members (5-2-1)

Councillors – Mrs J Lloyd (Chairman), P Bibby CC, L Martin-Haugh, M Notley, L Rossati, S Speller, J Thomas 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 – M McKay (Chair), S Booth, L Briscoe, R Broom, N Chowdhury, A Farquharson, G Lawrence CC, S Taylor OBE, CC, C Veres and T Wren.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

8 Members (5-2-1)
Councillors – Mrs J Lloyd (Chairman), P Bibby CC, J Hollywell, M Humberstone, S Mead, A Mitchell CC, L Rossati and G Snell.

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

3 Members (2-1-0)
Councillors – Richard Henry (Employer Side Chair), P Bibby CC and A Wells.

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 by Councillor Mrs J Lloyd, seconded by Councillor Thomas 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 for Environment and Performance

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

EAST OF ENGLAND REGIONAL PLANNING - Portfolio Holder for Environment and
Performance

HERTS WASTE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP - Portfolio Holder for Environment
and Performance

HERTFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD – The Leader of the Council

HERTFORDSHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING AND POLICY GROUP -
Portfolio Holder for Environment and Performance

HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL AUTHORITIES LEADERS GROUP - The Leader of the
Council

HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP – The Leader of the
Council

HERTFORDSHIRE CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERSHIP -
Portfolio Holder for Environment and Performance

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION - The Leader of the Council

SOSAFE PARTNERSHIP - Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, and Equalities

STEVENAGE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP - Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, and Equalities

SOSTEVENAGE PARTNERSHIP - The Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader

STEVENAGE DEVELOPMENT BOARD - The Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader

AGE CONCERN STEVENAGE – Jeannette Thomas

BEDWELL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Conor McGrath

CHELLS MANOR COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION - Andy McGuinness

CROSSROADS CARE – Anne Wells

DOUGLAS DRIVE SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOCIATION – Maureen McKay

HOME-START STEVENAGE – Rob Broom

KADOMA LINK ASSOCIATION - Graham Snell and Margaret Notley

LIVING ROOM PROJECT - Jackie Hollywell

OLD STEVENAGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Loraine 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 – Rob Broom

STEVENAGE COMMUNITY TRUST – Sandra Barr and Maureen McKay

STEVENAGE CREDIT UNION LIMITED – Joan Lloyd

SPRUSE – Lin Martin-Haugh

HAVEN FIRST – Mason Humberstone

STEVENAGE/AUTUN/INGELHEIM ASSOCIATION – Sandra Barr and Simon Speller

STEVENAGE WORLD FORUM FOR ETHNIC COMMUNITIES – Forhad Chowdhury

and Mason Humberstone

SYMONDS GREEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Jackie Hollywell

TIMEBRIDGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION – Tom Wren

TURN THE TIDE – Nazmin Chowdhury

EAST OF ENGLAND LGA IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY PANEL - Richard Henry

HCC HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - Maureen McKay

LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION UNIT – Jim Brown

LUTON AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE – Loraine Rossati

CHAIR