

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

Held remotely via MS Teams

5th May 2021 commencing at 6:30 p.m.

Present:

Councillor Bilbie (Chairman)

Councillor Bannister (Vice Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs Ackerley, Bateman, Beadle, Dr Bremner, Mrs Burrell, Champion, Dann, Dunton, Elliott, Fosker, Frenchman, Galton, Golding, Graves, Hallam, Hollick, James, Johnson, King, Knowles, Liquorish, Mahal, Modha, Nunn, Mrs Page, Rickman, Mrs Robinson, Sarfas, Mrs Simpson, Whelband & Mrs Wood.

Officers: N. Proudfoot, L. Elliott, V. Wenham, D. Atkinson, C. Mason, J. Smith, S. Green, S. Hamilton, N. Kwasa

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the officers who were supporting the meeting in person and remotely. He highlighted the procedures for the smooth running of the meeting, including the process by which Members could vote electronically.

1) ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 2021/2022

Nominations were invited for the election of Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Bilbie was nominated by Councillor King and seconded by Councillor Hallam. It was noted that given the unique circumstances of the pandemic, which has limited civic events, that Councillor Bilbie was being nominated for a second continuous year in order that he might have further opportunities to represent the Council as civic Chairman.

There being no other nominations, it was therefore;

RESOLVED that Councillor Stephen Bilbie be elected Chairman of the Council for the 2021/22 year.

2) INVESTITURE OF CHAIRMAN AND DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Councillor Bilbie made and subscribed to the Statutory Declaration of Office and thanked Members for his re-appointment. He then took the Chair.

3) ELECTION OF VICE- CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 2021/2022

Nominations were invited for the election of Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Neil Bannister was nominated by Councillor King and seconded by Councillor Hallam.

There being no other nominations, it was therefore;

RESOLVED that Councillor Neil Bannister be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council for the 2021/22 year.

4) INVESTITURE OF VICE- CHAIRMAN AND DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Councillor Bannister made and subscribed to the Statutory Declaration of Office and thanked Members for his re-appointment.

5) APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF COUNCIL ON 20 MAY 2019

It was moved by Councillor King, seconded by Councillor Hallam and;

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council held on 20 May 2019 be agreed as a true and correct record.

6) CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman congratulated Councillor Bannister on his appointment as Vice-Chairman of the Council and announced that:

- His chaplain duties for the year will continue to be carried out by The Reverend Canon Philip O'Reilly.
- During the year he hopes to hold charity events to raise awareness and funds for his chosen charity Vista, which has been working with people with sight loss and their families for over 160 years in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
- The Council would raise the Armed Forces Flag at a ceremony on Monday 21 June 2021. It was not known if a ceremony would be held.

7) TO RECEIVE AN OFFICER'S REPORT ON THE ROTA OF MEETINGS MAY 2021 - MAY 2022

Members received and considered the draft Rota of Meetings for May 2021 - May 2022. Councillor King moved that the proposed rota of meetings be adopted and implemented. This was seconded by Councillor Bateman.

Following discussion of the reduction in Planning Committee and full Council meetings in the proposed rota, Councillor Knowles moved an amendment to the motion in that the number of meetings of the full Council be increased from four to eight and the number of Planning Committee meetings be increased to 12, the specific dates of which to be delegated to Director - Law and Governance to consider when would be most appropriate. This was seconded by Councillor James. A vote was taken on the motion as amended to determine if it should become the substantive motion. The vote was lost.

Councillor Knowles requested that officers provide details on the number of planning applications which the Authority receives each year, as well as the number dealt with under officer delegation and the number that went to committee. The Director - Planning and Regeneration confirmed he would collate this information and provide it to Members.

The original motion as moved by Councillor King, that the proposed rota of meetings be adopted and implemented, was taken to the vote. It was therefore;

RESOLVED that the Draft Rota of Meetings, May 2021 – June 2022 be adopted and implemented.

8) TO DECIDE THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS FOR THE YEAR 2021/2022 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLITICAL BALANCE RULES UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING ACT 1989

Members received and considered the report on Political Balance Calculations and Appointment Allocations. It was moved by Councillor King and seconded by Councillor Knowles to agree the allocation of seats as detailed in the report. The motion was taken to the vote and it was therefore;

RESOLVED unanimously that the allocation of seats as detailed in the report are agreed.

Following the vote, it was confirmed by the Director – Law and Governance that Chairmanships would be agreed at the first meeting in the municipal year of each Committee or Panel.

9) TO APPOINT THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION, SCRUTINY PANELS, THE AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE AND OTHER SUCH COMMITTEES OR PANELS AS THE COUNCIL CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE TO DEAL WITH MATTERS WHICH ARE NEITHER RESERVED TO COUNCIL NOR ARE EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS (AS SET OUT IN SECTION B OF PART 3 OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION)

Members received and considered the report on appointments to Committees and Panels. It was moved by Councillor King and seconded by Councillor Whelband to agree the appointments as detailed in the report. The motion was taken to the vote and it was therefore;

RESOLVED that the appointments to Committees and Panels as detailed in the report are agreed.

10) TO APPOINT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION FOR THE YEAR 2021/2022

Members considered the appointment of the Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission for the year 2021/2022. It was moved by Councillor King to appoint Councillor Mrs Rosita Page and this was seconded by Councillor Hallam.

There were no further nominations, and it was therefore;

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Rosita Page was appointed as the Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission for the year 2021/2022.

Councillor Mrs Page thanked the Chairman and the Committee.

11) TO RECEIVE AN OFFICER'S REPORT ON THE APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Members received and considered the report on the appointment of representatives on outside bodies. It was moved by Councillor King to make appointments to the Outside Bodies as detailed in Appendix A to the report. This was seconded by Councillor Nunn. The motion was taken to the vote and it was therefore;

RESOLVED that:

i) those representing the Council on outside bodies over the past year be thanked for their work on behalf of the Council;

ii) nominations to the vacancies on Outside Bodies (which are not Executive appointments) be considered and appointments made;

and

iii) in the absence of nominations, the Chief Executive be given delegated authority to fill the vacancies in consultation with the Political Group Leaders.

12) TO RECEIVE AN OFFICER'S REPORT ON THE APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS

Cllr Dann introduced the report and moved the recommendation that the Council appoint the following independent persons as listed in the report, for a term of four years until Annual Council in May 2025;

Mr Michael Gibson, Mr Gordon Grimes, Mr Richard Gough, Mr Michael Pearson, Mr Laurence Faulkner and Mr Mark Shaw.

Councillor Nunn questioned why the list was not more diverse and Members discussed the need going forward to encourage applications from a more diverse range of the community, including promoting the training and education offered to fulfil the roles. The Director – Law and Governance detailed how the recruitment and selection process takes place. She confirmed that the Council would need to appoint at this meeting in order to be legally compliant but that a further recruitment process could be initiated in due course if Members were minded as there is no limit on the number of independent persons appointed. She noted that she would revisit the selection process and bring a further report to Members at a future date.

Councillor Bateman seconded the motion and it was taken to a vote. It was therefore;

RESOLVED that the Council appoint the independent persons listed in paragraph 2.1 of the report for the term of office of four years until annual council in May 2025.

There were no further items. The meeting ended at 19.42.