

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY,
KIDDERMINSTER

17TH MAY 2023 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: P Dyke (Chairman), J Aston, E Bourne, B Brookes, J F Byng, L Carroll, V Caulfield, G Connolly, N J Desmond, R Drew, K Gale, N Gale, J Griffiths, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M J Hart, K Henderson, D Little, N Martin, M McDonnell, D Morehead, F M Oborski MBE, T L Onslow, M Rayner, C Rogers, D Ross, D Russell, A Sutton, L Whitehouse and P W M Young.

C.01 Prayers

Prayers were said by Rev Jason Borlase, Vicar, Kidderminster Baptist Church.

C.02 Election of Chairman

Councillor C Rogers was nominated as Chairman. This was moved by Councillor M Hart and seconded by Councillor T Onslow.

Decision: Councillor C Rogers be elected as Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2023-2024.

C.03 Chairman – Investiture and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

After being invested with his Chain of Office, Councillor C Rogers made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chairman.

C.04 Chairman’s Response

The Chairman thanked members for his appointment. He said it was a great honour to be in the position and would do his best to help everybody. He announced that his chosen charity for the municipal year was Midlands Air Ambulance.

C.05 Retiring Chairman

On behalf of the political groups Conservative Group, Councillor M Hart, Independent and Green Group, Councillor M Rayner, Labour Group, Councillor L Whitehouse and Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor F

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Oborski MBE, thanked the retiring Chairman for his contribution to the role during his term of office.

C.06 Election of Vice-Chairman

Councillor P Harrison nominated Councillor J Byng as Vice-Chairman. This was seconded by Councillor I Hardiman.

Decision: Councillor J Byng be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2023-2024.

C.07 Vice-Chairman – Investiture and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

After being invested with his Badge of Office, Councillor J Byng made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

C.08 Election of Leader of the Council

Council considered a report from the Chief Executive which asked members to elect a Leader of the Council for the period to the annual general meeting following the ordinary elections in 2027, in accordance with section 91 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Council's constitution.

Councillor I Hardiman proposed Councillor M Hart for the position of Leader of the Council. The proposal was seconded by Councillor D Ross.

There were no other nominations and following a unanimous vote Councillor M Hart was elected as Leader of the Council.

Decision: Council elected Councillor M Hart as the Leader of the Council for the period to the annual general meeting of the Council following the next ordinary elections in May 2027.

C.09 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: H E Dyke, S Miah and N Wilson.

C.10 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

C.11 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C.12 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

C.13 Chairman's Communications

The Council received a list of functions attended by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman since the Council's last meeting.

C.14 Leader of the Council Announcements

The Leader of the Council thanked members for supporting his election as Leader for the next four years. He referred members to his tabled report. He confirmed the appointment of Councillor Kevin Gale and Councillor Alan Sutton as Armed Forces Champions and also announced the members whom he had appointed to serve with him in the Cabinet.

C.15 Political and Constitutional Structures 2023-2024

Council considered a report from the Solicitor to the Council on the proposed political and constitutional structures for the municipal year 2023-2024.

The Leader presented the report and formally moved the full suite of recommendations as set out in the report for approval. Councillor I Hardiman seconded the proposals.

Upon a vote, the recommendations were agreed.

Decision: Council:

- 1.1 Agreed the revisions to the Constitution as set out in Appendix 1.**
- 1.2 Approved the proposed Political Management Structure of committees for 2023/2024 as set out in Appendix 2.**
- 1.3 Agreed the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees as contained in Appendix 3.**
- 1.4 Adopted the Municipal Calendar as set out in Appendix 4.**
- 1.5 Agreed the revised table of political balance in Appendix 5.**
- 1.6 Agreed the appointments to outside bodies as set out in Appendix 6.**
- 1.7 Agreed that the Planning Code of Good Practice as set out in Appendix 7 be adopted and added to the Constitution as Part 22.**

- 1.8 Authorised the Solicitor to the Council to settle any outstanding details relating to the political structures and to make changes as necessary to the Council's Constitution to give effect to the Council's decisions and any other revisions necessary to reflect needs or circumstances.**

C.16 Members' Annual Activity Reports and Attendance 2022-2023

Council received the schedule of Members' Annual Reports giving details of their activities in their role as District Councillors for the 2022-2023 municipal year and a record of Members' attendance for the 2022-2023 municipal year.

Decision: The reports and attendance be noted.

C.17 Annual Reports for the Municipal Year 2022-2023

- (a) Cabinet**
- (b) Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
- (c) Ethics & Standards Committee**

Council received the annual reports from the previous Leader of the Council, and the previous Chairmen of both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Ethics and Standards Committee.

Decision: The annual reports for Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Ethics & Standards Committee be noted.

C.18 Independent Remuneration Panel

Council received a report from the Chief Executive which sought agreement to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to recommend any amendments to the scheme of allowances to be paid to Members for the municipal year 2023/24 and for subsequent years.

Councillor P Dyke formally moved the recommendations for approval.

The Leader seconded the proposals and spoke about the importance of having an independent panel with the necessary wealth of experience required to sit on the panel and gave a brief summary of the timeline.

Upon a vote, the recommendations were carried unanimously.

Decision: Council;

- 1.1 AUTHORISED the Solicitor to Council to convene an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) at the earliest opportunity, after seeking expressions of interest in serving from suitably qualified persons who are independent of the**

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Council and having consulted Group Leaders prior to making appointments to the Panel;

- 1.2 REQUESTED the IRP to report back no later than the Council's meeting in September 2023 with recommendations for the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2023/24 (which would take effect from 9 May 2023) and should include an uprating mechanism that would apply for the years commencing 1 April 2024, 1 April 2025, 1 April 2026 and 1 April 2027.**

C.19 Questions

No questions were received by the deadline.

C.20 Motions Submitted Under Standing Orders

No motions were received by the deadline.

C.21 Emergency Motions submitted under Standing Orders

There were no emergency motions.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 6.51pm.

The meeting is available for viewing on the Council's website
<https://wyreforestdc.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcasts>