

Shadow Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Shadow Council** held on
Tuesday 12 June 2018 at 6.30 pm at the **Conference Chamber, West Suffolk House**, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU

Present: **Councillors**

Chairman Sarah Stamp

Ruth Allen	Robert Everitt	David Palmer
Chris Barker	Paula Fox	Alaric Pugh
Trevor Beckwith	Susan Glossop	Joanna Rayner
David Bowman	John Griffiths	Karen Richardson
Ruth Bowman J.P.	Wayne Hailstone	Peter Ridgwell
Sarah Broughton	Diane Hind	David Roach
Tony Brown	Beccy Hopfensperger	Nigel Roman
Carol Bull	Paul Hopfensperger	Richard Rout
John Burns	Ian Houlder	Andrew Smith
Rona Burt	Victor Lukaniuk	Andrew Speed
Louis Busuttil	Margaret Marks	Clive Springett
Mike Chester	Christine Mason	Lance Stanbury
Patrick Chung	Elaine McManus	Peter Stevens
Max Clarke	Jane Midwood	Jim Thorndyke
Terry Clements	Sara Mildmay-White	Julia Wakelam
Roger Dicker	Robin Millar	Frank Warby
Andy Drummond	David Nettleton	Patricia Warby
Stephen Edwards	Robert Nobbs	James Waters

12. **Chairman's Announcements**

Under this item, the Chairman invited Councillor John Griffiths, Leader of the Shadow Council, to speak.

Councillor Griffiths stated how it had been an honour and a privilege to have been elected Leader of the Shadow Council and he would work closely alongside Councillor James Waters, present Deputy Leader of the Shadow Council, to make West Suffolk an even better place to live, work and visit as the two councils continued in their journey towards the creation of West Suffolk Council.

He thanked councillors and staff for their contributions towards getting the Councils to this historic point in the transition process.

13. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Michael Anderson, John Bloodworth, Simon Cole, Jason Crooks, Mary Evans, Brian Harvey (Vice-Chairman), Robin Pilley, Clive Pollington and Anthony Williams.

Councillors Andrew Appleby, Simon Brown, Carol Lynch, Louise Marston, Colin Noble, Barry Robbins, Reg Silvester and Peter Thompson were also unable to attend the meeting.

14. Declarations of Interests

Members' declarations of interest are recorded under the item to which the declaration relates.

15. Public Participation

No members of the public in attendance had registered to speak.

16. Referrals Report of Recommendations from the Shadow Executive (Cabinet)

(Report No: COU/SA/18/003)

The Shadow Council considered the Referrals Report of Recommendations from the Shadow Executive (Cabinet) contained within Report No: COU/SA/18/003.

(A) Referrals from Shadow Executive (Cabinet) : 5 June 2018

1. Implementation Plan for the Creation of a New Council for West Suffolk

Approval was sought for the Implementation Plan for the Creation of a New Council for West Suffolk.

The Implementation Plan, attached as Appendix A to the Shadow Executive report, outlined the plan for transferring Forest Heath District Council's (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Council's (SEBC) functions and responsibilities to the new single district-level council for West Suffolk. It focused on the following areas:

- (a) the principles of implementation;
- (b) areas of decision making that the West Suffolk Shadow Council and West Suffolk Shadow Executive would be required to make; and
- (c) other key areas of implementation; and
- (d) programme governance.

Councillors Ruth Bowman and Carol Bull, FHDC and SEBC Portfolio Holders for Future Governance respectively, drew relevant issues to the attention of the

Shadow Council, including reiterating the five key principles outlined in the Plan which would enable the implementation of the transition to the new West Suffolk Council.

The FHDC/SEBC shared services partnership had been established for several years which had generated significant savings during that period and it was recognised that the creation of a single West Suffolk Council was about much more than the financial position. However, at the Shadow Executive meeting, it was felt that clarification should be documented within the Implementation Plan regarding the annual and total amount of savings made during FHDC and SEBC's shared services partnership.

This amendment had been made under officers' existing delegated authority and was highlighted to the Shadow Council.

Shadow Council also noted that the Shadow Executive had agreed the Central Implementation Team, as outlined in paragraph 16 of Appendix A, whose role was to assist the Shadow Executive in delivering the Implementation Plan.

In response to a question from Councillor Trevor Beckwith regarding the transfer of heritage assets to the new West Suffolk Council and whether there was an inventory for the paintings etc, including those stored at West Stow, and whether this was available to see, Shadow Council was informed that Councillor Beckwith would be provided with a written response following the meeting. This would subsequently be provided for all Members' perusal.

On the motion of Councillor Ruth Bowman, seconded by Councillor Carol Bull, and duly carried it was

RESOLVED:

That the Implementation Plan attached at Appendix A to Report No: EXC/SA/18/001, be agreed.

17. West Suffolk Council: Councillor Remuneration

(Report No: COU/SA/18/004)

The Shadow Council considered the above report, which sought approval for proposals to developing a Members' remuneration scheme for the new West Suffolk Council.

The West Suffolk (Local Government Changes) Order 2018 required the Shadow Council to formulate a Scheme of Members' Allowances. This Scheme would then be recommended to the new West Suffolk Council to adopt when it would begin to meet after 1 April 2019.

Councillors Ruth Bowman and Carol Bull, FHDC and SEBC Portfolio Holders for Future Governance respectively, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Shadow Council, including that the supporting case for proposing a future council size of 64 Members highlighted the need to continue to build on the existing Families and Communities Strategy, which emphasised the role of councillors as community leaders and enablers.

The future Scheme of Members' Allowances for West Suffolk would be set against this backdrop; but would also need to bear in mind the evolving nature of an entirely new Council, whereby committee and leadership roles subject to Special Responsibility Allowances were to be defined, and public expectations on the levels of remuneration that were appropriate for democratically elected individuals.

Before adopting any Scheme of Allowances, the Shadow Council was required to form an Independent Panel, which would prepare recommendations on the level of remuneration, allowances and expenses for Councillors. A minimum of three persons must sit on the Panel and the remit and requirements of that Panel was summarised in Section 3 of the report, which included appointing a non-voting advisor to the Panel who would act as a conduit between officers, elected Members and the Panel. The process for appointing Panel members was set out in Section 4 of the report, which included the formation of a Selection Panel, which would comprise the existing Forest Heath District and St Edmundsbury Borough Councils' Portfolio Holders for Future Governance, a Member who was not part of the majority political group; a West Suffolk Director; the interim Monitoring Officer and the Shadow Council's independent persons (on the condition that they did not wish to be members of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP).)

Attached to the report were the following appendices:

Appendix A: Proposed Terms of Reference for the IRP

Appendix B: Person Specification for IRP members

Appendix C: Person Specification for the Panel advisor

Councillor Ruth Bowman then explained that Councillor David Nettleton had put himself forward as the non-majority group Member to sit on the Selection Panel for the IRP and that she wished to correct a minor typographical error in Recommendation (2) listed in the report. The second recommendation would therefore now be amended to read:

'That the West Suffolk Shadow Council nominates Councillor David Nettleton as a Member who is not part of the majority group, to serve on the Selection Panel for the Independent Remuneration Panel.'

Councillor Ruth Bowman proposed approval of Recommendations (1) and (3) contained in the report, together with the amended Recommendation (2) above. This proposal was duly seconded by Councillor Carol Bull.

During the debate Councillor David Nettleton proposed an amendment to the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the IRP, which was duly seconded by Councillor Julia Wakelam. Whilst acknowledging that the IRP was required by legislation to comprise a minimum of three members, he did not agree that the West Suffolk IRP should comprise "up to four members..." as defined in the proposed ToR. Councillor Nettleton reasoned that the Selection Panel should be able to sensibly decide a reasonable number to comprise the IRP, particularly if it was difficult to select a maximum of four suitable candidates from an exceptional pool of applicants.

The relevant sentence in the ToR at Appendix A would therefore be amended to read:

*"The panel shall be made up of ~~up to four~~ **a minimum of three** members appointed by a selection process to be agreed by the Council."*

A debate was held on the amendment and upon being put to the vote was carried. The amendment was therefore incorporated into the substantive motion so that Recommendation (3) read:

'That the West Suffolk Shadow Council agrees the terms of reference for the Independent Remuneration Panel in Appendix A to Report No: COU/SA/18/004, as amended to incorporate the following revision to the section entitled 'Membership of the Panel':

The panel shall be made up of a minimum of three members appointed by a selection process to be agreed by the Council.'

The debate continued on the substantive motion. In response to a question, Shadow Council was informed that the proposed independent advisor to the IRP would receive an allowance of £100 per meeting attended, plus travelling expenses of up to 45p per mile, which was the same as would be received by panel members, as outlined in the proposed Terms of Reference.

The substantive motion was then put to the vote, was duly carried and it was

RESOLVED:

That:

- (1) the process for appointing members of the West Suffolk Independent Remuneration Panel, as set out in paragraph 4.1 of Report No: COU/SA/18/004, be agreed;
- (2) Councillor David Nettleton be nominated as a Member who is not part of the majority group, to serve on the Selection Panel for the Independent Remuneration Panel; and
- (3) the terms of reference for the Independent Remuneration Panel in Appendix A to Report No: COU/SA/18/004, be agreed, as amended to incorporate the following revision to the section entitled 'Membership of the Panel':

'The panel shall be made up of a minimum of three members appointed by a selection process to be agreed by the Council.'

(Councillor David Roach joined the meeting at 6.46 pm during the consideration of this item.)

18. **Civic Leadership Review**

(Report No: COU/SA/18/005)

The Shadow Council considered the above report, which sought approval for the proposed Terms of Reference (ToR) for a working group which would be tasked with reviewing the future of Civic Leadership within West Suffolk.

In April 2018, Forest Heath District (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Councils' (SEBC) Leaders announced that a specific working group would be established to review the future of Civic Leadership in West Suffolk.

Councillors Carol Bull and Ruth Bowman, SEBC and FHDC Portfolio Holders for Future Governance respectively, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Shadow Council, including that Civic Leadership was wider than one individual and was concerned with how:

- residents engaged with and understood the Council;
- the Council demonstrated the support for its communities right across the new district area;
- the Council encouraged civic pride in its area and promoted local democracy; and
- Civic Leadership supported the aims and ambitions of the Council.

The proposed new Civic Leadership Working Group would help advise the Council on the priorities for its future Civic Leadership, and evaluate how the Council should reward and recognise the outstanding contributions that individuals and organisations made to civic life within West Suffolk. Specific focus would be given to matters summarised in paragraph 1.3 of the report.

Subject to the views of the Working Group on how their work should progress, it was envisaged that the review should be concluded by autumn 2018, with a report subsequently being presented to the Shadow Council on their findings.

The composition of the Working Group was set out in the proposed ToR. Membership would be appointed following this meeting under the existing delegated authority of the interim Monitoring Officer, on the nominations of the existing FHDC and SEBC Group Leaders.

Councillor Carol Bull proposed approval of the recommendation contained in the report. This proposal was duly seconded by Councillor Ruth Bowman.

During the debate, Councillor Trevor Beckwith proposed an amendment to the Terms of Reference, attached as Appendix A to the report, in respect of the proposed composition of the Working Group. Where it had specified that at least one member of the Group each from FHDC and SEBC must be a former Chairman or Mayor (as applicable), Councillor Beckwith wished to also specify that at least one member of the Group each from FHDC and SEBC must not be a former Chairman or Mayor (as applicable). This amendment to the substantive motion was duly seconded by Councillor Paul Hopfensperger; however, upon being put to the vote, the amendment was defeated.

The majority of Members present supported the proposed remit and Terms of Reference of the Civic Leadership Working Group, recognising the need to engage with the public and other stakeholders about civic life and its relevance and importance to the community, whilst promoting the brand of West Suffolk.

In response to questions from Councillor Terry Clements regarding the operation of the Future Governance Steering Group; and from Councillor David Nettleton regarding the procedural rules and voting mechanism should a proposal to apply for Borough Status be presented to a meeting of the Shadow Council in due course; the Shadow Council was informed that written responses would be provided following the meeting. These would subsequently be provided for all Members' perusal.

The substantive motion was then put to the vote, was duly carried and it was

RESOLVED:

That the terms of reference for the Civic Leadership Working Group, attached as Appendix A to Report No: COU/SA/18/005, be approved.

19. **Urgent Questions on Notice**

No urgent questions on notice had been received.

The Meeting concluded at 7.16 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
