

Annual Council



Minutes of the **Annual Meeting of Council** held on **Tuesday 23 May 2023** at **7.00 pm** in the **Conference Chamber, West Suffolk House**, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU

Present **Councillors**

Chair Mike Chester

Vice Chair John Augustine

Richard Alecock	Janne Jarvis	Marion Rushbrook
Peter Armitage	Gerald Kelly	Jools Savage
Mick Bradshaw	Rowena Lindberg	Marilyn Sayer
Sarah Broughton	Jon London	Ian Shipp
Tony Brown	Aaron Luccarini	Andrew Smith
Carol Bull	Victor Lukaniuk	David Smith
Patrick Chung	Charlie Lynch	Liz Smith
Nick Clarke	Birgitte Mager	Karen Soons
Dawn Dicker	Margaret Marks	Andrew Speed
Roger Dicker	Andrew Martin	Sarah Stamp
Andy Drummond	Joe Mason	Frank Stennett
Paul Firman	Lora-Jane Miller-	David Taylor
Susan Glossop	Jones	Jim Thorndyke
John Griffiths	Sara Mildmay-White	Julia Wakelam
Luke Halpin	Andy Neal	Don Waldron
Pat Hanlon	Sue Perry	Cliff Waterman
Donna Higgins	Sarah Pugh	Tracy Whitehand
Diane Hind	Joanna Rayner	Indy Wijenayaka
Ian Houlder	Karen Richardson	Phil Wittam
Beccy Hopfensperger	Richard Rout	Kevin Yarrow

284. **Remembrance and welcome**

Before commencing business, and as was custom and practice out of respect to late members of West Suffolk Council and the predecessor councils, all members were asked to stand and observe a minute's silence in remembrance of former St Edmundsbury Borough Councillor Paul Farmer MBE who had sadly died recently. The Chair made a statement of condolence, reflecting on the late councillor's contribution during his time on the Council.

The Chair then welcomed new and returning members to West Suffolk Council's first meeting of the new administration. He then acknowledged the work of the outgoing councillors and paid tribute to Councillor John Griffiths MBE for his 20-year leadership of the Council, acknowledging Councillor Griffiths' remarkable dedication and commitment to the role.

285. Election of Chair of the Council for 2023 to 2024

The outgoing Chair called for nominations for the election of Chair of the Council for the 2023 to 2024 civic year.

Councillor Diane Hind nominated Councillor Roger Dicker.

There being no other nominations, the nomination was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, the outgoing Chair

Declared:

That Councillor Roger Dicker be elected Chair of West Suffolk Council for the 2023 to 2024 civic year.

The retiring Chair acknowledged his year in office which included paying tribute to fellow councillors, officers and the work of the volunteers in the community. Special recognition was given to his consort; Ruth Pusterla, Personal Assistant to the Civic Office and to Councillor John Augustine, Vice Chair for 2022 to 2023.

Before inviting Councillor Dicker to take the chair, Councillor Chester removed the Chain of Office and placed it on Councillor Dicker. The incoming Chair then signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office before passing to the Monitoring Officer for her signature.

286. Chair's announcements

The Chair acknowledged his forthcoming year in office, which included thanking fellow councillors for his appointment and very much welcomed the opportunity to represent West Suffolk at events in the ensuing year.

The Chair then recognised the work of the retiring Chair, Councillor Mike Chester, for his outstanding contribution and dedicated service to the Council during his term of office in 2022 to 2023.

The Chair then presented Councillor Chester with his Past Chair's Badge.

287. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rachel Hood and Richard O'Driscoll.

Councillor Michael Anderson was also unable to attend the meeting.

288. Election of Vice Chair of the Council for 2023 to 2024

The Chair called for nominations for the election of Vice Chair for the ensuing year.

Councillor Phil Wittam nominated Councillor Pat Hanlon. The Chair sought further nominations and Councillor Margaret Marks nominated Councillor John Augustine.

There being no further nominations, a vote was taken on each nomination. With the votes being 35 votes for Councillor Pat Hanlon and 25 votes for Councillor John Augustine, and one abstention, the Chair

Declared:

That Councillor Pat Hanlon be elected Vice Chair of West Suffolk Council for the 2023 to 2024 civic year.

Before the Chair invited Councillor Hanlon to take the seat of the Vice Chair, Councillor Augustine removed the Chain of Office and placed it on Councillor Hanlon. The incoming Vice Chair then signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office before passing to the Monitoring Officer for her signature.

289. Election of the Leader of the Council

The Chair called for nominations for the election of the Leader of the Council.

At this point, Councillor Nick Clarke, Leader of the Conservative Group, requested whether it was possible for a recorded vote to be taken on any nominations put forward for the election of the Leader.

The Chair duly invited the Monitoring Officer to set out the position. As the request to seek a recorded vote on nominations for the election of the Leader did not accord with Council Procedure Rule 13.6, 'Voting on appointments', contained in Part 4 of the Constitution, it would be necessary to suspend the Council Procedure Rules if it were the wish of the Council to proceed with a recorded vote on this appointment.

Councillor Nick Clarke proposed that in accordance with paragraph 19.1 of the Council Procedure Rules of Part 4 of the Constitution, Council Procedure Rules be suspended to allow a recorded vote to be taken on the nominations put forward for the election of Leader of the Council. Councillor Clarke explained his reasons for the proposal. In addition to other views expressed, he felt it would promote greater openness and transparency if members were to clearly state the councillor they wished to be their new leader and for this to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The proposal was duly seconded by Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of the Progressive Alliance Grouping, who responded to the views expressed by Councillor Clarke and also felt that in the interests of promoting openness and transparency, supported the motion to suspend the procedure rules to allow a recorded vote to be taken on the election of leader.

On the motion of Councillor Clarke, duly seconded by Councillor Waterman, it was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

Resolved

That, in accordance with paragraph 19.1 of the Council Procedure Rules of Part 4 of the Constitution, Council Procedure Rules be suspended to allow a recorded vote to be taken on the nominations put forward for the election of Leader of the Council. Normal Council Procedure Rules will resume immediately prior to the recorded vote being taken on the item.

Councillor Victor Lukaniuk, Leader of the Independents, nominated Councillor Cliff Waterman for the election of Leader of the Council. Councillor Andrew Smith, Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group, nominated Councillor Nick Clarke. No other nominations were received.

As previously requested by Councillor Nick Clarke, the nominations were put to a recorded vote. Each member was asked to clearly state whether they were voting for Councillor Waterman, Councillor Clarke or abstaining from the vote. The outcome was recorded as follows:

For Councillor Cliff Waterman:

Councillors Richard Alecock, Peter Armitage, Mick Bradshaw, Tony Brown, Dawn Dicker, Roger Dicker, Paul Firman, Luke Halpin, Pat Hanlon, Donna Higgins, Diane Hind, Janne Jarvis, Gerald Kelly, Rowena Lindberg, Jon London, Aaron Luccarini, Victor Lukaniuk, Andrew Martin, Lora-Jane Miller-Jones, Andy Neal, Sue Perry, Jools Savage, Marilyn Sayer, Ian Shipp, David Smith, Liz Smith, Frank Stennett, David Taylor, Jim Thorndyke, Julia Wakelam, Don Waldron, Cliff Waterman, Tracy Whitehead, Indy Wijenayaka, Phil Wittam and Kevin Yarrow.

For Councillor Nick Clarke

John Augustine, Sarah Broughton, Carol Bull, Mike Chester, Patrick Chung, Nick Clarke, Andy Drummond, Susan Glossop, John Griffiths, Beccy Hopfensperger, Ian Houlder, Charlie Lynch, Birgitte Mager, Margaret Marks, Joe Mason, Sara Mildmay-White, Sarah Pugh, Joanna Rayner, Karen Richardson, Richard Rout, Marion Rushbrook, Andrew Smith, Andrew Speed, Karen Soons and Sarah Stamp.

Abstentions

None

Once the process for the recorded vote had been completed, the Chair announced that normal Council Procedure Rules now applied.

With 36 votes for Councillor Waterman and 25 votes for Councillor Clarke, the Chair,

Declared:

That Councillor Cliff Waterman be elected Leader of West Suffolk Council until the next post-election Annual Meeting of Council unless determined before then.

290. **Appointment of Cabinet members**

The Chair called upon Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of the Council to make his announcements, which included the opportunity to announce his Deputy Leader, Cabinet and their respective portfolios.

Councillor Waterman duly announced the following appointments and their respective portfolios:

Portfolio	Member
Deputy Leader (no portfolio)	Councillor Victor Lukaniuk
Families and Communities	Councillor Donna Higgins
Governance and Regulatory Growth	Councillor Gerald Kelly
Housing	Councillor Indy Wijenayaka
Leisure	Councillor Richard O'Driscoll
Operations	Councillor Ian Shipp
Planning	Councillor David Taylor
Resources	Councillor Jim Thorndyke
	Councillor Diane Hind

291. **Review of political balance and appointment to committees 2023 to 2024 (Report number: AGM/WS/23/001)**

Council considered this report, which sought approval for the political balance and the allocation of seats to committees for 2023 to 2024.

Members confirmed that they had received copies of the report which had been tabled before them shortly before the start of the meeting.

Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of the Council, drew relevant issues to the attention of Council, including that the Constitution required that at each Annual Meeting, Council would decide which committees to establish for the municipal year; the size and terms of reference for those committees; the allocation of seats and substitutes to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules; and to receive or arrange the delegation of nominations and appointment of councillors to serve on each committee.

Committees and the terms of reference for those committees were included in Part 3b, section 2 of the Council's Constitution. A link to this could be found within paragraph 2.1 of the report.

Following careful consideration of the rules on calculating political balance, Council was requested to approve the number of seats and terms of reference for the committees.

On the motion of Councillor Waterman, duly seconded by Councillor Diane Hind, it was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

Resolved: That

1. The committees for the 2023 to 2024 municipal year and the terms of reference for those committees as per the West Suffolk

Council Constitution, Part 3b, section 2: "Responsibility for Council (non-executive) Functions", be approved.

2. The political balance and allocation of seats and substitutes on committees as per Appendix A to Report number: AGM/WS/23/001, be approved.
3. Delegation be given to Group Leaders to nominate members from their Groups to seats and as substitutes on committees.

292. **Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of scrutiny committees: 2023 to 2024**

The next item of business was the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny and Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committees for the 2023 to 2024 municipal year.

a. Appointment of Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Cliff Waterman nominated Councillor Sarah Broughton as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

There being no other nominations, the nomination was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, the Chair

Declared:

That Councillor Sarah Broughton be elected Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2023 to 2024.

b. Appointment of Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Cliff Waterman nominated Councillor Marion Rushbrook as Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

There being no other nominations, the nomination was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, the Chair

Declared:

That Councillor Marion Rushbrook be elected Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2023 to 2024.

c. Appointment of Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Cliff Waterman nominated Councillor Peter Armitage as Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee.

There being no other nominations, the nomination was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, the Chair

Declared:

That Councillor Peter Armitage be elected Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for 2023 to 2024.

d. Appointment of Vice Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Cliff Waterman nominated Councillor Andy Neal as Vice Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee.

There being no other nominations, the nomination was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, the Chair

Declared:

That Councillor Andy Neal be elected Vice Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for 2023 to 2024.

293. Review of representation on outside bodies (Report number: AGM/WS/23/002)

Council considered this report, which sought approval for various member appointments to represent the Council on outside bodies in 2023 to 2024.

Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of the Council, drew relevant issues to the attention of Council, including that the Constitution required that at each Annual Meeting, the Council reviewed its representations on outside bodies.

Attached as Appendix A to the report, was the current list of outside bodies, which set out the detail of the organisation, the meeting information (where known) and the required representation.

An ongoing review of the list was undertaken to ensure the outside bodies had the correct representation to best suit their requirements. In the circumstances, it may be subject to change.

Section 2.4 provided a number of proposals and principles for members to consider in respect of the proposed process for appointing appropriate representation to the relevant outside body. This section included a proposal to ensure representation on outside bodies continued to be reviewed so that it remained helpful and effective to have representation from the Council.

On the motion of Councillor Waterman, duly seconded by Councillor Victor Lukaniuk, it was put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was

Resolved: That

1. The Monitoring Officer be given delegated authority to appoint the Council's representatives on outside bodies, in accordance with the nominations put forward by Group Leaders.

2. Where no representative is nominated, the Monitoring Officer be given delegated authority to seek nominations from other bodies and individuals to be approved by Council in due course.
3. It be noted that where the outside organisation is discharging executive functions, or the Council is an observer on an organisation, these appointments will be undertaken by Cabinet.
4. It be noted that it is intended to continue to review representation on outside bodies to ensure that it remains beneficial for the organisation and for the Council.
5. It be noted that appointments to the Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee will be made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

(Councillor Peter Armitage left the meeting during the consideration of this item.)

The meeting concluded at 7.45 pm

Signed by:

Chair
