

# Annual Council



**Minutes** of the **Annual Meeting** of the **Council** held on **Tuesday 14 May 2024** at **7.00 pm** in the **Conference Chamber, West Suffolk House**, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU

Present **Councillors**

**Chair** Roger Dicker

**Vice Chair** Pat Hanlon

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

## 354. **Election of Chair of the Council for 2024 to 2025**

The outgoing Chair called for nominations for the election of Chair of the Council for the 2024 to 2025 civic year.

Councillor Victor Lukaniuk, Deputy Leader of the Council, nominated Councillor Pat Hanlon.

There being no other nominations, the nomination was put to the vote and with the vote being 57 for, none against and one abstention, the outgoing Chair

### **Declared:**

That Councillor Pat Hanlon be elected Chair of West Suffolk Council for the 2024 to 2025 civic year.

The retiring Chair acknowledged his year in office which included paying tribute to fellow councillors and officers for their support during the year. Special recognition was given to Councillor Rachel Hood and Councillor Michael Anderson for the prizes donated for awarding at the Chair's Civic Dinner held on 10 May 2024.

Before inviting Councillor Hanlon to take the chair, Councillor Dicker removed the Chain of Office and placed it on Councillor Hanlon. Councillor Hanlon then presented Councillor Dicker with his Past Chair's Badge.

The incoming Chair returned to the dais and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office before passing to the Monitoring Officer for her signature.

### **355. 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.

Councillor Hanlon then recognised the work of the retiring Chair, Councillor Roger Dicker, for his outstanding contribution and dedicated service to the Council during his term of office in 2023 to 2024.

The Chair announced the organisations he wished to support during the ensuing year, namely:

- REACH Community Projects in Haverhill, who specialised in helping people in financial crisis and hardship related issues.
- The Accessible Learning Foundation, who encouraged better and early identification of neurodivergent conditions and provided support to those living with such conditions.

### **356. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mick Bradshaw, Carol Bull, Sarah Pugh, Richard Rout, Andrew Speed and Tracy Whitehand.

### **357. Election of Vice Chair of the Council for 2024 to 2025**

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

Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of the Council, nominated Councillor Phil Wittam.

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

## **Declared:**

That Councillor Phil Wittam be elected Vice Chair of West Suffolk Council for the 2024 to 2025 civic year.

The Chair invited Councillor Wittam to come forward to the front of the dais where he placed the Chain of Office on Councillor Wittam. The incoming Vice Chair then took his seat on the dais and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office before passing to the Monitoring Officer for her signature.

### **358. 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 that he would not be making any changes to his Cabinet and therefore the following appointments remained current:

#### **Portfolio**

Deputy Leader (no portfolio)  
Families and Communities  
Governance and Regulatory  
Growth  
Housing  
Leisure  
Operations  
Planning  
Resources

#### **Member**

Councillor Victor Lukaniuk  
Councillor Donna Higgins  
Councillor Gerald Kelly  
Councillor Indy Wijenayaka  
Councillor Richard O'Driscoll  
Councillor Ian Shipp  
Councillor David Taylor  
Councillor Jim Thorndyke  
Councillor Diane Hind

The Leader placed on record his thanks to his Cabinet for their time, work and commitment to their respective roles in the last year. He then thanked all councillors for their work within their wards and on behalf of the residents they represented.

### **359. Review of political balance and appointment to committees 2024 to 2025 (Report number: AGM/WS/24/001)**

Council considered this report, which sought approval for the political balance and the allocation of seats to committees for 2024 to 2025.

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 3, 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.

The Group Leaders had reviewed the members of their group appointed to each committee and the proposed allocation of seats and substitutes to committees was attached at Appendix A to the report. The Group Leaders had also been asked to nominate which members from their group would be nominated to the seats and substitute places on the committees and the proposed appointments were attached at Appendix B.

Changes to committee appointments and substitute appointments may be required during the year and delegation to Group Leaders would allow them to notify the Monitoring Officer of any changes.

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 committees for the 2024 to 2025 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/24/001, be approved.
3. The appointment of members and substitutes on committees as per Appendix B to Report number: AGM/WS/24/001, be approved.
4. Delegation be given to Group Leaders to amend the appointed members to seats and substitutes and to notify the Monitoring Officer of any changes.

360. **Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of scrutiny committees 2024 to 2025**

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 2024 to 2025 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 2024 to 2025.

**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 2024 to 2025.

**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 2024 to 2025.

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

Councillor Cliff Waterman nominated Councillor Frank Stennett 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 Frank Stennett be elected Vice Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee for 2024 to 2025.

**361. Proposed remuneration for co-opted, non-elected, non-voting independent members of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee (Re[port number: AGM/WS/24/002)**

Council considered this report, which sought approval for proposed remuneration for co-opted, non-elected, non-voting independent members of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee.

On 25 January 2024, the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee (PASC) agreed that subject to Council approval, amendments should be made to the Constitution to enable the co-option of two non-voting non-elected independent members to be appointed to PASC as recommended by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) (Report number: PAS/WS/24/004 refers.) On 26 March 2024, the proposed changes were approved by Council following consideration by the Constitution Review Group (Report number COU/WS/24/008 refers.)

Also on 25 January 2024, and subject to Council's approval of the changes to the Constitution, PASC agreed that the Independent Remuneration Panel should be requested to consider and recommend to Council a proposed allowance payable to each co-opted independent member of PASC to cover attendance at meetings, training, conferences, seminars or other events as part of their role on the Committee.

The Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) met on 30 April 2024 for this purpose.

Having been provided with various documentation to support its deliberations, and in accordance with the co-optees' provisions prescribed in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the IRP recommended the following to Council as an appropriate level of remuneration for a co-opted, non-elected, non-voting, independent member of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee (as set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report):

- An allowance of £300 per annum plus an additional £100 'attendance' fee.
- Payment of travel expenses in accordance with section 5.3 of the current Members' Allowances Scheme.

The 'attendance' fee would cover attendance at meetings, training, conferences, seminars or other events as part of the co-optee's role on the Committee. Where such events were held in person, travel expenses may be claimed.

The rationale for the above recommendation was set out in section 2.5 of the report.

Councillor Gerald Kelly, Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory, drew relevant issues to the attention of Council. This included giving apologies on behalf of Sue Putters, Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel, as she was unable to attend the meeting on this occasion.

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

**Resolved:** That

1. The level of remuneration proposed by the Independent Remuneration Panel for co-opted, non-elected, non-voting

independent members of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, as detailed in section 2.3 of Report number: AGM/WS/24/002, be approved.

2. The proposed allowance referred to in (1) above be written into the Council's current Members' Allowances Scheme with immediate effect.
3. The proposed allowance referred to in (1) above be subject to review as part of the annual review of the Members' Allowances Scheme undertaken by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

### 362. **Suffolk Police and Crime Panel**

Council considered a narrative item, which sought approval for a proposed amendment to the terms of reference for the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel.

At its meeting on 26 January 2024, the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel recommended to the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders Group that a requirement be added at Section 5 b) of its Panel Arrangements that independent co-opted members of the Panel must live or work in Suffolk.

Suffolk authorities had subsequently been asked to approve this proposed amendment.

Councillor Cliff Waterman, Leader of the Council, drew relevant issues to the attention of 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 the proposed amendment to the Panel Arrangements for the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel to reflect that independent co-opted members of the Panel must live or work in Suffolk, be approved.

The meeting concluded at 7.25 pm

**Signed by:**

**Chair**

---