

Annual Meeting of the Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held in The Council Chamber, County Hall, St Annes Crescent, Lewes on Wednesday, 7 May 2014 at 2.30pm

Present:

Councillor I A Nicholson (Chair)

Councillors S Adeniji, R E Allen, G R Amy, R Blackman, C A Bowers, C J Butler, J L Carr, M P Chartier, M A Cutress, S B Davy, A Dean, D R Edmunds, I Eiloart, P L Franklin, P Gander, P F Gardiner, S J Gauntlett, D M Gray, B W Groves, J V Harris, J M Harrison-Hicks, P A Howson, A T Jones, C S Lambert, J N MacCleary, R Main, R K Maskell, E C Merry, C R O'Keeffe, S J Osborne, J V S Page, R Robertson, E E J Russell, S Saunders, H J F Sheppard, A X Smith, J Stockdale, C Sugarman, B M Warren and I J White.

Minutes

Action

1 Election of the Chair of the Council

The Chair of the Council invited the Assistant Director of Corporate Services to inform the Council of the nominations which had been received for the office of Chair of the Council.

The Assistant Director of Corporate Services reported that Councillor John Stockdale had been nominated by Councillor Osborne and that Councillor Tony Nicholson had been nominated by Councillor Blackman.

Councillor Osborne moved, and Councillor Page seconded, the motion:

"That Councillor John Stockdale be elected Chair of the District Council of Lewes until the next Annual Meeting of the Council and his successor is entitled to act as Chair."

Councillor Osborne then delivered a speech in support of her nomination of Councillor Stockdale.

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Councillor Blackman moved, and Councillor Gander seconded, the motion:

"That Councillor Tony Nicholson be elected Chair of the District Council of Lewes until the next Annual Meeting of the Council and his successor is entitled to act as Chair."

Councillor Blackman then delivered a speech in support of his nomination of Councillor Nicholson.

The election of the Chair of the Council was then put to the meeting and the vote thereon was recorded in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17 as follows:

For the Motion that Councillor John Stockdale be elected Chair of the Council:

Councillors R E Allen, G R Amy, C A Bowers, C J Butler, J L Carr, M P Chartier, M A Cutress, A Dean, I Eiloart, P F Gardiner, S J Gauntlett, D M Gray, C S Lambert, J N MacCleary, R Main, S J Osborne, J V S Page, S Saunders, J Stockdale (19).

For the Motion that Councillor Tony Nicholson be elected Chair of the Council:

Councillors S Adeniji, R Blackman, S B Davy, D R Edmunds, P L Franklin, P Gander, B W Groves, J V Harris, J M Harrison-Hicks, P A Howson, A T Jones, R K Maskell, E C Merry, I A Nicholson, C R O'Keeffe, R Robertson, E E J Russell, H J F Sheppard, A X Smith, C Sugarman, B M Warren and I J White (22).

Resolved:

1.1 That Councillor Tony Nicholson be elected Chair of the District Council of Lewes until the next Annual Meeting of the Council and his successor is entitled to act as Chair.

The Chair of the Council (Councillor Nicholson) then made and subscribed the Declaration required by law and announced that his wife Angela would be his Consort during his year of office.

Councillor Nicholson in the Chair

Councillor Saunders moved, and Councillor Blackman seconded, a vote of thanks for Councillor Chartier's work on behalf of the Council during his year of office and for the attendance of his consort Monica and the Vice-Chair of the Council, Councillor White, at engagements during the year. Councillor Chartier then gave a brief speech in response during which he highlighted some of the events that the Council had organised during his year of office. He also thanked the Officers who had provided him with support during the year and the Vice-Chair of the Council, Councillor White, and his wife Janet, who had attended several events at which Councillor Chartier had been unable to attend.

The motion was put to the meeting, 20f 15 Declared Carried, and it was

Resolved:

Accordingly.

2 Appointment of the Vice-Chair of the Council

The new Chair of the Council (Councillor Nicholson) invited the Assistant Director of Corporate Services to inform the Council of the nominations which had been received for the office of Vice-Chair of the Council.

The Assistant Director of Corporate Services reported that Councillor Julie Carr had been nominated by Councillor Osborne and that Councillor Ruth O'Keeffe had been nominated by Councillor Blackman.

Councillor Osborne moved, and Councillor Saunders seconded, the motion:

"That Councillor Julie Carr be appointed Vice-Chair of the District Council of Lewes until immediately after the election of a Chair at the next Annual Meeting of the Council."

Councillor Osborne then delivered a speech in support of her nomination of Councillor Carr.

Councillor Blackman moved, and Councillor Smith seconded, the motion:

"That Councillor Ruth O'Keeffe be appointed Vice-Chair of the District Council of Lewes until immediately after the election of a Chair at the next Annual Meeting of the Council."

Councillor Blackman then delivered a speech in support of his nomination of Councillor O'Keeffe.

The appointment of the Vice-Chair of the Council was then put to the meeting and the vote thereon was recorded in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17 as follows:

For the Motion that Councillor Julie Carr be appointed Vice-Chair of the Council:

Councillors R E Allen, G R Amy, C A Bowers, C J Butler, J L Carr, M P Chartier, M A Cutress, A Dean, I Eiloart, P F Gardiner, S J Gauntlett, D M Gray, C S Lambert, J N MacCleary, R Main, S J Osborne, J V S Page, S Saunders, J Stockdale (19).

For the Motion that Councillor Ruth O'Keeffe be appointed Vice-Chair of the Council:

Councillors S Adeniji, R Blackman, S B Davy, D R Edmunds, P L Franklin, P Gander, B W Groves, J V Harris, J M Harrison-Hicks, P A Howson, A T Jones, R K Maskell, E C Merry, I A Nicholson, C R O'Keeffe, R Robertson, E E J Russell, H J F Sheppard, A X Smith, C Sugarman, B M Warren and I J White (22)?age 3 of 15

Resolved:

2.1 That Councillor Ruth O'Keeffe be appointed Vice-Chair of the District Council of Lewes until immediately after the election of a Chair at the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

CMT

The Vice-Chair of the Council (Councillor O'Keeffe) then made and subscribed the Declaration required by law.

To Receive any Announcements From the Chair of the Council, Leader of the Council, Members of the Cabinet or the Chief Executive

(i) Urgent Items

The Chair advised that it had been agreed that, in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the Recommendation of the Cabinet at its meeting held on 24 April 2014 as set out in Minute 150 relating to the Lewes District Local Plan – Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document: Focussed Amendments, which was circulated to all Members of the Council on 2 May 2014 under cover of Council Document B, and Report numbers 70/14 and 71/14 relating to Appointments which were circulated to all Members of the Council on 2 May 2014 under cover of Council Document B, be considered as matters of urgency in order that decisions thereon could be taken based on the most up to date information which was available.

(ii) Chair of the Council's Engagements

The Council received the list of the previous Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council's engagements carried out since the Meeting of the Council held on 26 February 2014.

4 Petitions

The Chair received a petition jointly from Mr Ian Linton and Councillor O'Keeffe which contained 1949 signatures from both on-line and paper based petitions. It called on the Scrutiny Committee to review the background and legitimacy of the Council's vote on "Special Expenses – Paying for Open Spaces" as the petitioners considered the procedure used to be deeply flawed.

Mr Linton addressed the Council on the subject matter of the petition and the number of signatures.

As the petition contained 1,500 or more signatures, in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme, as set out in Part 6 of its Constitution, it would be debated by the Council at its next meeting on 17 July 2014 as an individual Agenda Item.

DF

5 Questions to the Leader of the Council

Questioner Question/Response

Councillor Saunders

Question:

With regard to information received by Councillor Saunders relating to the success of the recent Lewes District Business Awards evening and the lack of ticket sales for it, how much did the Awards evening cost particularly in light of the cost savings that the Council was having to make and following a comment by Councillor Nicholson that the Council was playing "fast and loose" with its money?

Response (by Councillor Blackman, Leader of the Council): The cost of staging the Awards evening formed part of an overall budget for economic initiatives. However, Councillor Blackman would arrange for a written response to be sent to Councillor Saunders in respect of his question.

DBSD

Councillor Osborne Question:

Councillor Blackman had recently indicated that possible uses for Lewes House, Lewes, and School Hill House, Lewes, could include their use as a boutique style hotel or leasing them as a boutique style training hotel.

When was Councillor Blackman intending to work up fully costed proposals and when was he intending to conduct the promised consultation and with whom – was it with the whole District, just Lewes, all Members of the Council or just the Cabinet?

Response (by Councillor Blackman, Leader of the Council): The idea that both buildings be used as a boutique style hotel combined with a boutique style training hotel formed part of the same suggestion. However, Councillor Blackman would arrange for a written response to be sent to Councillor Osborne in respect of her question which would also set out details of the overall proposal.

DBSD

Councillor Bowers Question:

In light of the impending investigation by the Council's internal auditors relating to allegations in respect of Councillor Blackman's involvement with proposed improvements to Seaford Constitutional Club, what additional responsibilities and involvement would the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Smith, have relating to the Council's day to day work in the event that the Leader of the Council's position became untenable?

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Response (at the request of Councillor Blackman, the

Questioner **Question/Response**

response was given by the Assistant Director of Corporate Services):

The Assistant Director of Corporate Services responded that the Council's internal audit process should be left to (to take its course. It was currently premature to make any note) other comment.

DCS

6 **Ward Issues**

Ward issues were raised by Councillors on the following subjects:

Councillor/Ward	Ward Issue Concerning	
Councillor Chartier – Lewes Castle Ward	A board had been erected outside Lewes House, Lewes, which indicated that the building contained office space which was available for letting, an issue about which most Councillors had not been notified.	
	Suggested action to be taken by the Council: That, in future, all Members of the Council be notified of such similar action prior to it being taken in order that they can be aware of the situation and therefore be able to respond to constituents queries in respect of such matters.	DCS
Councillor Butler – Newhaven Denton and Meeching Ward	Eric Pickles had announced a new grant in the sum of £410million for council services which put people first. It allowed flexible use of capital following asset disposal.	
	Councillor Butler welcomed the Council's provision of £900k which was to be used towards a new community fire station in Newhaven.	
	Suggested action to be taken by the Council: That the Council investigate the eligibility of a capital bid to the fund which, on the face of it, looked attractive to the Council, and submit an application for it if appropriate.	DSD
Councillor Saunders – Newhaven Valley Ward	Councillor Saunders had been contacted on several occasions by members of the public, shopkeepers and traders in Newhaven in respect of the blatant abuse pacygrept traffic and parking restrictions in Newhaven High Street which forbid through traffic	

Councillor/Ward	Ward Issue Concerning	
	and parking on the pedestrianised High Street except for loading and deliveries. However, it had become a regular practice for the public, and significantly taxis, to both drive through and park indiscriminately in loading bays and on pavements which could result in serious injury or death to those who used those areas. Suggested action to be taken by the Council: That the Council investigate who was responsible for policing and enforcing the regulations and work with that authority to rectify the reckless and belligerent disregard for the rules that were in place for the protection of public safety. Furthermore, that the Licencing Committee write to the taxi business which was based in Newhaven High Street and insist that the conditions imposed on its licence were adhered to for which no provision was permitted for parking on that High Street.	DSD
Councillor Saunders – Newhaven Valley Ward	On behalf of traders in Newhaven, the Chamber of Commerce and residents, Councillor Saunders drew attention to the appalling state of the roads and pavements in Newhaven High Street where weeds and litter had been allowed to grow and build-up. Suggested action to be taken by the Council: That, following the introduction of Special Expenses for which the people of Newhaven paid more for the upkeep of their open spaces, the areas referred to above be cleaned and brought up to the standard that appear to be enjoyed by adjacent towns in the District.	DSD

7 Recommendations from Cabinet

Reserved Item

The Leader of the Council moved, and Councillor Robertson seconded, the motion that the recommendation of Cabinet held on 24 April 2014 contained in Minute 150 relating to the Lewes District Local Plan – Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document: Focussed Amendments, be received and adopted.

Councillor Gardiner moved, and Councillor Jones seconded, an amendment as follows:

"That the recommendation of Cabinet held on 24 April 2014 contained in Minute 150 relating to the Lewes District Local Plan – Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document: Focussed Amendments, be received and adopted subject to the amendment of:

(a) The opening sentence of Core Policy 12 to read:

"The local planning authority will seek to reduce the impact and extent of flooding and damage from slope failure."; and

(b) Paragraph 7 of Core Policy 12 to read:

"Preventing development on unstable areas of coastline and areas at risk of erosion and slope failure, such as those identified in the South Downs Shoreline Management Plan."

The amendment was put to the meeting, <u>Declared Carried</u>.

The substantive motion was put to the meeting, <u>Declared Carried</u>, and it was

Resolved:

7.1 Accordingly.

DBSD

8 Appointments

The Leader of the Council reported that he had appointed the following Councillors to be members of the Cabinet with the following portfolios:

Individual Areas of Responsibility	Councillors
Strategic Overview, Regeneration,	R Blackman (Leader of the Council)
Equalities, Business, Economic	
Development and Tourism	
Planning	A T Jones
Corporate Services	A X Smith
Health and Environment	I A Nicholson
Waste and Recycling	P L Franklin

The Leader of the Council then moved, and Councillor Robertson seconded, the motion that the recommendations contained in Report Nos 70/14 and 71/14 on pages 5 to 10 and 13 to 16 of Council Document B, be approved.

The motion was put to the meeting, Declared Carried, and it was

Resolved:

8.1 That it be noted that the following Councillors had been appointed as members of the Cabinet with the following portfolios:

Individual Areas of Responsibility Councillors

Strategic Overview, Regeneration, R Blackman (Leader of the Council) Equalities, Business, Economic

Development and Tourism

Planning A T Jones
Corporate Services A X Smith
Health and Environment I A Nicholson
Waste and Recycling P L Franklin

8.2 That it be noted that, as a matter of law, the power to appoint the Deputy Leader rests with the Leader of the Council who had appointed Councillor A X Smith to that role;

CMT

8.3 That the membership of Committees etc for the municipal year 2014/2015, based on the political structure and the political balance as set out in Appendix B to Report No 70/14 and taking account of the adjustments referred to in that Report, be as follows:

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Proportionality is shown as Liberal Democrat – Conservative – UKIP – Independent:

Audit and Standards Membership 7 (3-4-0-0) **Committee**

I Eiloart (Chair) E C Merry
M P Chartier J V Harris
S J Gauntlett E E J Russell

C Sugarman

(plus up to 3 co-opted, non-voting Town/Parish Council members – participation restricted to Standards matters)

Devolution Committee Membership 7 (4-3-0-0)

P F Gardiner J M Harrison-Hicks

D Gray A X Smith C S Lambert B M Warren

VACANT (Lib Dem

seat)

Employment Membership 5 (3-2-0-0) **Committee**

D Gray VACANT (Chair) (Cons S J Gauntlett seat – must be Cabinet

VACANT (Lib Dem Member) seat) A X Smith

Licensing Committee Membership 10 (4-4-1-1)

J Stockdale (Chair) J M Harrison-Hicks P A Howson VACANT R Robertson (Ind seat)

M A Cutress B M Warren S J Gauntlett P Gander

Planning Applications Membership 11 (5-5-0-1)

Committee

R Main (Vice-Chair) S B Davy (Chair) VACANT R E Allen VACANT (Cons seat) (Ind seat)

A Dean J V Harris
J Stockdale A T Jones
P F Gardiner H J F Sheppard

Scrutiny Committee Membership 11 (5-5-1-0)

S J Osborne (Chair) J M Harrison-Hicks D R Edmunds

A Dean I White
P F Gardiner J V Harris
S J Gauntlett E C Merry
J Stockdale E E J Russell

8.4 That the following Working Party be re-appointed in order to continue the business for which it was originally established:

Housing Working Membership 7 (3-4-0-0)

Party

M P Chartier I A Nicholson or S J Osborne R Blackman* (Chair)

S Saunders P Gander F C Merry

E C Merry S B Davy

(*The relevant portfolio holder dependent on subject matter for consideration at each meeting)

8.5 That the following Panels/Working Party be no longer appointed for the reasons set out below:

Complaints Panels (complaints process has been streamlined with the relevant Lead and/or Ward Councillors being consulted by the Chief Officer as part of the investigation of Stage 2 complaints, in line with Local Government Ombudsman best practice and customer

feedback); and

Constitution Working Party (business concluded).

8.6 That the nominations for the appointment of Chairs, as indicated above, be approved and that the remaining Chairs be appointed at the first meetings of the bodies concerned;

CMT

8.7 That the appointment of representatives to serve on outside and joint bodies be as set out below:

Outside Body (annual appointment unless otherwise stated)	Representative(s)
3VA Board (Voluntary Action Lewes)	C R O'Keeffe
Action in Rural Sussex	H J F Sheppard
Age UK East Sussex Governing Body	J V Harris
	E E J Russell (sub)
Asham Literary Endowment Trust (Rep appointed for 3 years, expires 2017)	M P Chartier
Chailey Common Nature Reserve Management Committee	S B Davy H J F Sheppard
(2 reps – I place offered to Chailey Common Freeholders)	ттот оперрага
Citizens' Advice Bureaux, Lewes & Seaford	J V S Page
Coastal West Sussex and Greater Brighton Strategic Planning Board	A T Jones
(Rep should be Cabinet Member for Planning)	
Community Safety Partnership	A X Smith (Chair)
(2 reps – 1 should be Cabinet Member whose portfolio includes Communities)	S J Osborne
Community Transport for the Lewes Area Limited Management Committee	R Robertson
Court of the University of Sussex	R Blackman
(Rep should be Leader of the Council)	Chief Executive
East Sussex Flood Risk Panel	A T Jones
East Sussex Gypsy and Travellers Forum	S B Davy
(2 reps)	I Eiloart
East Sussex Health and Well-Being Board	I A Nicholson
East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	E C Merry
(Rep cannot be member of Cabinet)	
East Sussex Rural Partnership	I White

Outside Body	Representative(s)
(annual appointment unless otherwise stated)	
East Sussex Strategic Partnership	R Blackman
(Rep should be Leader of the Council)	
English Heritage – Heritage Champion	R E Allen
Greater Brighton Economic Board:	
Board member	R Blackman
(Rep should be Leader of the Council)	
Independent Call-in Panel member	
(1 rep and 1 appointed sub – rep and sub cannot be on the Board or involved in decision being called-in)	S J Osborne S J Gauntlett (sub)
Joint Portfolio Holders Strategic Planning Group	A T Jones
(Rep should be Cabinet Member for Planning)	
Lewes Conservation Area Advisory Group	M P Chartier
(1 rep and 1 appointed sub)	J Stockdale (sub)
Lewes Joint Parking Board	R Blackman
(2 reps)	I Eiloart
Lewes Town Partnership	J Stockdale
Local Government Association: • General Assembly (Rep should be Leader of the Council)	R Blackman
Coastal Issues Special Interest Group	R E Allen
District Councils' Network	J M Harrison-Hicks
(1 rep and 1 appointed sub)	J V Harris (sub)
Rural Services Network/SPARSE	R Blackman
(Rep should be Leader of the Council)	
Seaford Community Partnership	S Adeniji
Seaford Head Local Nature Reserve	I A Nicholson
Management Committee (2 reps)	P L Franklin
South Downs National Park Authority	A T Jones
(Rep appointed for 4 years, expires 2015)	
South East England Councils	I A Nicholson
(1 rep and 1 appointed sub – rep and sub should be Cabinet Members)	A X Smith (sub)
Sussex Community Foundation	R Blackman
(Rep should be Leader of the Council)	
Sussex County Playing Fields Association	H J F Sheppard
Sussex Downs and Low Weald LEADER Local Action Group	H J F Sheppard
Sussex Police and Crime Panel	A X Smith
(1 rep and 1 appointed sub) Page 12 of 15	S J Osborne (sub)

Outside Body	Representative(s)
(annual appointment unless otherwise stated)	
Wave Trust Leisure Board	C R O'Keeffe
West Sussex Joint Planning Board	A T Jones
(Rep should be Cabinet Member for Planning)	

Joint Body (annual appointment unless otherwise stated)	Proportionality (where appropriate) LibDem-Con-UKIP-Ind (see Report No 70/14)	Representative(s)
Housing Consultative Panel (4 reps and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing as ex-officio member)	4 (2 - 2 - 0 - 0)	A Dean S Saunders P Gander C Sugarman (plus I A Nicholson, Cabinet Member for Health and Environment, ex officio)
Landport Bottom Management Committee (4 reps)	4 (1 - 2 - 1 becomes 2 - 0 - 1 - 1, see paragraph 19 of Report No 70/14)	M P Chartier M A Cutress D R Edmunds C R O'Keeffe
Planning Service User Group (3 reps – 1 should be Cabinet Member for Planning)	3 (1 - 2 - 0 - 0)	P F Gardiner A T Jones J V Harris

9 Substitute Members

The Leader of the Council moved, and Councillor Jones seconded, the motion that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, all members of the Council be appointed to the "approved list" of members appointed to act as substitute members.

The motion was put to the meeting, <u>Declared Carried</u>, and it was

Resolved:

9.1 Accordingly.

CMT

10 Reporting Back on Meetings of Outside Bodies

Councillor Jones provided feedback on meetings which he had attended as the Council's representatives on the East Sussex Planning Members Group as follows:

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Councillor Outside Body

Councillor Jones

East Sussex Planning Members Group

Councillor Jones referred to an oral Report that he had made to Cabinet at its meeting on 24 April 2014 in respect of the London Plan which had been discussed by the East Sussex Planning Members Group at its meeting on 2 April 2014.

At the Group's meeting it had been reported that there was an implication of the potential undersupply of housing in London and that, in instances where an authority was influenced by the London housing market, it would be required to provide more housing even if it could meet its own objectively assessed need and there was no un-met need from an adjoining authority.

Further to the discussions on the Plan at the meeting on 2 April and, subsequently, at the meeting of the Coastal West Sussex and Greater Brighton Strategic Planning Group on 3 April 2014, and following consultation from the Brighton and Gatwick Diamond Authorities, there was broad agreement that a firm response on a pan Sussex basis would give the greatest influence on the matter. Such response was centered on:

- The need for a more robust mechanism through which London co-operated with local authorities across the South East; and
- 2. The need for London to do more to meet the projected shortfall in housing supply.

Councillor Jones reported to Council that representatives of the Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities Group, the East Sussex Local Authorities Group and the Coastal West Sussex and Greater Brighton Joint Planning Board had written such response and had subsequently sent an additional response to the Mayor of London which indicated that. as the Plan was approaching its submission stage, any comments were sought as formal representations on the proposed further alterations to the Plan. The representatives believed that such issues and concerns could only be addressed by closer working and by a more widely considered evidence base which included the testing of alternatives. They raised questions as to the soundness of the proposed alterations and the representatives wished to reserve the right to be heard before the appointed in spector in examination of the Plan.

<u>Councillor</u> <u>Outside Body</u>

Resolved:

95.1 That the oral Report relating to the additional response of the East Sussex Planning Members Group in respect of the London Plan, be received and noted.

The meeting ended at 3.34pm.

I A Nicholson Chair