

Annual Council
22 May 2023

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual meeting of the WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL held on Monday 22 May 2023 at 7.30 pm in the Hawthorne Theatre, Campus West, Welwyn Garden City, Herts..

PRESENT: Councillors P.Shah (Mayor)
F.Marsh (Deputy Mayor)

M.Birleson, S.Bonfante, J.Boulton, S.Boulton,
J.Broach, L.Chesterman, J.Cragg, L.Crofton,
H.Goldwater, S.Goldwater, B.Fitzsimon, G.Ganney,
R.Grewal, A.Hellyer, M.Holloway, D.Jones, S.Kasumu,
T.Kingsbury, J.Lake, R.Lass, S.McNamara,
G.Michaelides, T.Mitchinson, G.Moore, L.Musk, A.Nix,
N.Pace, D.Panter, R.Platt, J.Quinton, T.Rowse,
B.Sarson, A.Scott, M.Siewniak, J.Skoczylas, P.Smith,
C.Stanbury, S.Thusu, F.Thomson, K.Thorpe, R.Trigg,
S.Tunstall, F.Wachuku, C.Watson, J.Weston and
P.Zukowskyj

OFFICIALS Chief Executive (K.Ng)
PRESENT: Assistant Director (Legal and Governance) (S.Chughtai)
Governance Services Manager (C.Cade)
Member and Mayor Liaison Officer (S.Houghton)
Democratic Services Assistant (V.Mistry)

ALSO Canon Norbert Fernandes, Canon of Westminster Cathedral, Parish
PRESENT: Priest of Welwyn Garden City Catholic Churches, Chair of Christian
Leaders' Group of Welwyn Garden City, Catholic Dean of Stevenage
and Member of Hertfordshire Interfaith Forum led the Council in prayer.

Welcome:

The retiring Mayor welcomed the newly elected Councillors to the Council. The new Councillors are:

Helena Goldwater, Simon Goldwater, Rose Grewal, Adrienne Nix, Astrid Scott and Cathy Watson.

1. ELECTION OF MAYOR

Nominations were invited for the election of the Mayor of the Borough of Welwyn Hatfield for the Municipal Year 2023/24.

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It was moved and seconded by Councillors L. Chesterman and P. Zukowskyj that Councillor P.Shah be elected. The retiring Mayor then asked if there were any other nominations. No alternative nominations were received.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor P.Shah be elected Mayor of the Borough of Welwyn Hatfield for the Municipal Year 2023/24.

The retiring Mayor presented the Borough Civic Awards for 2023 in partnership with Urbaser and the University of Hertfordshire.

The retiring Mayor presented the Borough Civic Awards to the following people:

- Justin Burgess in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Welwyn Hatfield community and JOCA charity.
- Rhianna Russell in recognition of the outstanding success she had achieved representing Welwyn & District Bowls Club and England
- Michael Nash in recognition of the work he had undertaken for 65 years to different Football Clubs in the Welwyn Hatfield Borough.

The retiring Mayor invited Mark Lancaster, Contract Manager, Welwyn Hatfield, Urbaser to present the Urbaser Environmental award to Sarah Marsh. Sarah had been nominated for the award by her colleagues and the local community for her outstanding work designing and developing Danesbury Fernery.

The retiring Mayor invited G.Ward, Dean of Students, to present the University of Hertfordshire young person award to Julide Hasan who had made a fantastic contribution to pro bono work in the community as well as being a third-year student undertaking her final year of studies. Julide had also worked in the University of Hertfordshire law clinic alongside studying for her law degree. Julide volunteered in the law clinic and enabled members of the public to obtain one off legal advice in a range of areas, including employment, family and housing law, working in pairs with a lawyer supervising them, much of the work requires students to be proactive, organising meetings, carrying out legal research and preparing documents.

The retiring Mayor, on behalf of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, thanked both Urbaser and the University of Hertfordshire for their support as sponsors of the civic awards.

The retiring Mayor spoke about her time as Mayor of Welwyn Hatfield.

The retiring Mayor reported that she had raised ££22,000 for her charity, Welwyn Hatfield Women's Refuge, during her year of office, The Mayor presented a cheque to representatives of her charity.

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The retiring Mayor thanked Mr Fitzsimon for his continued support during days out and late evenings attending events and meetings.

The retiring Mayor thanked Councillor colleagues for their help and support over the last seven years, including attending Charity events.

The retiring Mayor thanked Councillor G.Ganney as her Deputy for her support during the year and presented her with a gift.

The retiring Mayor thanked S.Houghton, Member and Mayor Liaison Officer for her help during the year and presented her with a gift.

The retiring Mayor then vacated the Chair which was taken by Councillor P.Shah.

Councillor P.Shah made the formal Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Mayor.

The Mayor thanked Councillors L.Chesterman and P.Zukowskyj for nominating him and expressed that it will be an honour to serve the community as the Mayor of Welwyn Hatfield Borough.

The Mayor also thanked Barbara Fitzsimon for all of the excellent work she did during her time as Mayor. The Mayor presented her with the Past Mayor's Medal and album of her time in office.

The Group Leaders expressed their thanks to the retiring Mayor for her service and dedication in her year as Mayor of the Borough.

2. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR

The Mayor invited nominations for the appointment of the Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2023/24.

It was moved and seconded by Councillors P.Zukowskyj and L.Chesterman that Councillor F.Marsh be appointed. The Mayor, then asked if there were any other nominations. There being no other nominations, it was

RESOLVED:

That Councillor F.Marsh be appointed Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2023/24.

Councillor F.Marsh made the formal Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Deputy Mayor.

The Deputy Mayor thanked Councillors P.Zukowskyj and L.Chesterman for the nomination. The Deputy Mayor said it will be an honour to serve the people of Welwyn Hatfield by assisting the Mayor in this office.

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3. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J.Bond.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the special meeting of the Council held on 24 March 2023 were approved as a correct record and noted by the Mayor.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS

Councillors S.Boulton, T.Kingsbury, F.Thomson S.Thusu and P.Zukowskyj declared non-pecuniary interests in items on the Agenda as appropriate as Members of Hertfordshire County Council.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made the following announcements:-

6.1. Mayor's Charity

The Mayor announced that during his Mayoral year, he will support two extremely worthwhile local charities, the Hatfield Food Bank and New Zion Christian Fellowship Food Bank in Welwyn Garden City.

6.2. Councillors No Longer Serving

On behalf of the Council the Mayor expressed thanks to former Councillors L. Brandon, C. Juggins, B. Fitzsimon, J. Ranshaw, D. Richardson and T. Travell.

6.3. Siobhan Elam

The Mayor informed the council of the news that former councillor Siobhan Elam sadly passed away two weeks prior to the recent election. Ms Elam had been a councillor for Handside Ward for 2017 to 2022.

The Group Leaders paid tribute to Siobham Elam highlighting her enthusiasm, commitment to the borough and integrity.

The Council sent its condolences to her friends and family.

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

Report of the Assistant Director (Legal and Governance) on the Annual Report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to its work. The report illustrated the work of the Committee and its Task and Finish Panels during the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

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Councillor G.Michaelides expressed thanks to the members of the Committee and its Task and Finish Panels for the work they did, and also the officers for their support throughout the year and move for the council to approve the report

The report was moved and seconded by Councillors G.Michaelides and M.Holloway and

RESOLVED:

Council noted the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2022/23.

8. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL REPORT

Report of the Assistant Director (Legal and Governance) provided a brief overview of member development during the previous municipal year.

The report was moved and seconded by Councillors T.Kingsbury and D.Jones and

RESOLVED:

- (1) Note the Member Development Annual Report.
- (2) Note the training sessions held and the need to evaluate the effectiveness of virtual meetings and use of virtual platforms to deliver Member training sessions.
- (3) Note the objectives as being to assist Members in carrying out their roles efficiently, and to maintain the highest standard of elected Members in carrying out their responsibilities to the Council and the communities they serve.

9. REVIEW OF POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY

The Mayor called on the Council to approve the review of political proportionality of Member appointments to Committees and changes to the allocation of seats.

The report was moved and seconded by Councillors P.Zukowskyj and L.Chesterman and

RESOLVED:

That the review of political proportionality of Member appointments to Committees, as set out in the schedule to the report, be approved.

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10. APPOINTMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, CABINET AND COMMITTEES 2023/24

The Council agreed that Councillor P.Zukowskyj be appointed as Leader of the Council.

The Council noted the appointments made by Councillor P.Zukowskyj to the Cabinet.

Councillor L.Chesterman - Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member, Housing

Councillor S.Bonfante - Executive Member, Environment

Councillor J.Broach - Executive Member, Governance

Councillor M.Holloway - Executive Member, Community

Councillor D.Jones - Executive Member, Resources

Councillor J.Quinton - Executive Member, Planning

The Council received the Appointment of Committees and Amendment to Substitution Procedures report.

The report was moved and seconded by Councillors P.Zukowskyj and L.Chesterman and

RESOLVED:

(1) The appointments to non-executive committees for 2023/24; and

(2) The constitution be amended, as set out in paragraph 3.4 of the report.

11. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Council received appointments of representatives on outside bodies.

The Leader of the Council proposed that all the nominations from the joint administration are agreed, and that the Conservative nominations for Ludwick Family Club, Harwood Hill JMI & Nursery, and Watchlytes JMI are agreed.

The nominations were moved and seconded by Councillors P.Zukowskyj and L.Chesterman and

RESOLVED:

The appointments of Members to serve as the Council's representatives on outside bodies, as set on in Agenda item 11, be approved.

12. ATTENDANCES

Attendances by Members at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees and Panels during the Municipal Year 2022/23 were included in Agenda Item 12.

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RESOLVED:

The number of attendances by Members at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees and Panels during the Municipal Year 2022/23.

Meeting ended at 8.29pm