

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 May 2021 at 7.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr N Hedges – Chairman

Cllr L Fear – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr H Allen, Cllr L Allison, Cllr M Anderson, Cllr S C Anderson, Cllr M Andrews, Cllr J Bagwell, Cllr S Baron, Cllr S Bartlett, Cllr J Beesley, Cllr D Borthwick, Cllr P Broadhead, Cllr M F Brooke, Cllr D Brown, Cllr S Bull, Cllr R Burton, Cllr D Butler, Cllr D Butt, Cllr J J Butt, Cllr E Coope, Cllr M Cox, Cllr M Davies, Cllr N Decent, Cllr L Dedman, Cllr B Dion, Cllr B Dove, Cllr B Dunlop, Cllr M Earl, Cllr J Edwards, Cllr L-J Evans, Cllr G Farquhar, Cllr D Farr, Cllr A Filer, Cllr S Gabriel, Cllr N C Geary, Cllr M Greene, Cllr N Greene, Cllr A Hadley, Cllr M Haines, Cllr P R A Hall, Cllr N Hedges, Cllr P Hilliard, Cllr M Howell, Cllr M Iyengar, Cllr C Johnson, Cllr T Johnson, Cllr A Jones, Cllr J Kelly, Cllr D Kelsey, Cllr R Lawton, Cllr M Le Poidevin, Cllr L Lewis, Cllr R Maidment, Cllr S McCormack, Cllr D Mellor, Cllr P Miles, Cllr S Moore, Cllr L Northover, Cllr T O'Neill, Cllr S Phillips, Cllr M Phipps, Cllr K Rampton, Cllr Dr F Rice, Cllr V Ricketts, Cllr C Rigby, Cllr R Rocca, Cllr M Robson, Cllr V Slade, Cllr A M Stribley, Cllr T Trent, Cllr M White, Cllr L Williams and Cllr K Wilson

88. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors N Brooks and C Matthews.

89. Result of the By-Elections and welcome to new Councillors

Councillor Flagg welcomed Councillors Sean Gabriel and Vanessa Ricketts who had been elected to the Canford Heath and Commons wards respectively following the by-elections.

90. Declarations of Interests

No declarations of interest were received for this meeting.

91. Election of Chairman of the Council

Nominations were received as follows:

- Councillor David Flagg – proposed by Councillor Lesley Dedman and seconded by Councillor Simon Bull.
- Councillor Nigel Hedges – proposed by Councillor Jackie Edwards and Seconded by Councillor Karen Rampton

The proposers and seconders commented on the reasons for the above nominations and the nominees' ability to fulfil the role. A secret ballot was undertaken in accordance with the Constitution. The Chief Executive reported on the outcome of the ballot as follows:

- Councillor David Flagg 33
- Councillor Nigel Hedges 41

No abstentions were recorded.

RESOLVED that Councillor Nigel Hedges be elected as Chairman of the Council until the next Annual Council meeting.

Councillor Hedges made the declaration of acceptance of office.

"I Councillor Nigel Hedges having been elected to the office of Chairman of BCP Council declare that I take that office upon myself and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of it according to the best of my judgement and ability."

Councillor Hedges reported that it was an honour and thanked Councillors for being elected Chairman and paid tribute to Councillor Flagg. Councillor Dedman proposed a vote of thanks to the outgoing Chairman, Councillor Flagg.

92. Election of Vice-Chairman of the Council

Nominations were received as follows:

- Councillor Kieron Wilson – proposed by Councillor Rigby and seconded by Councillor Vikki Slade.
- Councillor Laurence Fear – proposed by Councillor David Kelsey and seconded by Councillor Mark Anderson.

The proposers and seconders commented on their reasons for the above nominations and the nominees' ability to fulfil the role. The nominees outlined why they should be elected Vice-Chairman. A secret ballot was undertaken in accordance with the Constitution. The Chief Executive reported on the outcome of the ballot as follows:

- Councillor Kieron Wilson 34
- Councillor Laurence Fear 40

No abstentions were recorded.

RESOLVED that Councillor Laurence Fear be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council until the next Annual Council meeting.

Councillor Fear made the declaration of acceptance of office.

"I Councillor Laurence Fear having been elected to the office of Vice-Chairman of BCP Council declare that I take that office upon myself, and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of it according to the best of my judgement and ability."

93. Review of the political balance of the Council, the allocation of seats on Committees to each Political Group, appointment of Councillors to Committees and appointments to Outside Bodies

The Leader of the Council presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Council was asked to consider and approve the review of the political balance of the Council, the allocation of seats on Committees to each political group, the appointment of Councillors on Committees and appointments to outside bodies as part of the annual review and following the outcome of the by-elections on 6 May 2021. The detailed calculations relating to the above were included in Appendix A to the report which had been circulated to each Councillor.

The Leader of the Council moved the recommendations in the report and Appendix A circulated to all Members of the Council subject to Councillor Steve Baron being replaced with Councillor Daniel Butt on the Standards Committee and Councillor Stephen Bartlett being removed as a member of the Lower Central Gardens Trust Board. Councillor Broadhead seconded the proposal and reserved the right to speak later in the debate.

Councillor Hilliard expressed his disappointment that the Leader's proposal had not been presented at the Group Leaders meeting on Monday and that it had only been circulated earlier that afternoon which had given limited opportunity to discuss and agree a way forward. He indicated that the proposal meant that Christchurch Independents had reduced representation on the Planning Committee and the administration continued to have control of two main Overview and Scrutiny Committees. He suggested that the Poole Independents swap their new seat on the Planning Committee with Christchurch Independents new seat on the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Hadley agreed with the comments made by Councillor Hilliard and expressed his concerns regarding the late circulation and detail of the documents. He reported that he was not supportive of the proposals relating to Outside Bodies which did not take account of the allocation to the Poole independents.

A Member raised a point of order in respect of dealing with amendments. The Chief Executive reported that a formal amendment had not yet been made. Members questioned the accuracy of the information contained in Appendix A to the report and the approach taken by the Leader of the Council in respect of the proposals he had presented. The Head of Democratic Services reported that Table 3 reflected the current memberships on each of the Committees. Members were advised that Table 2 reflected the changes in the political balance and the allocation of seats to political groups it would then be for the political group leaders to notify Democratic Services of their representatives on Committees and Boards. Councillors were informed that the only exception which the Leader of the Council had addressed in his proposal was the change to the unaligned members in relation to the Standards Committee.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that he was willing to accommodate the suggestion made by Councillor Hilliard in his proposal and that he had asked the Groups to provide such minor amendments. Councillor Farquhar referred to the suggestion he had made for the Labour Group to retain the seat on the Appeals Committee and that the proposed seat on the Planning Committee be allocated to another Group. This suggestion was not supported by the Leader of the Council. A Member wanted to correct a statement on the timings for the submission of the proposal from the Leader of Council and reported on the change to a political group that had not been announced until yesterday afternoon which necessitated changes. He provided clarification that the majority of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees were not in the control of the administration the proposal would result in only one of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees having a majority of Conservative Members.

Members sought clarification on how the proposals would be dealt with which were confirmed as follows:-

Table 3 Councillor Baron would be replaced with Councillor Daniel Butt on Standards Committee

Table 4 Councillor Bartlett would be removed from the Lower Central Gardens Trust Board and the seat allocated to the Poole Independents

The Poole Independents swap their new seat on the Planning Committee with Christchurch Independents new seat on the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Head of Democratic Services clarified that in relation to Table 4 there was still an imbalance with a deficit of one seat for Poole Independents and an additional seat for the Bournemouth Independents and Greens. Following further questions, the Head of Democratic Services clarified that Table 3 did not reflect the numbers in Table 2 as updates from Groups had not been received whilst reporting that the appointment of unaligned Members to Committees must be agreed by Council.

The meeting was adjourned from 20:10 to 20:38

In respect of the outside bodies the Leader of the Council proposed that the Bournemouth Independent and Greens seat on the Dorset Police and Crime Panel be allocated to the Poole Independents. This was seconded by Councillor Philip Broadhead

Councillor Rigby expressed his disappointment at the above proposal and that the Group had a seat on the Lower Central Gardens Trust Board which was currently not meeting. His comments were echoed by Councillor Hadley. Councillor Farquhar also registered his disappointment at the approach taken by the Leader of the Council in respect of the proposals for the political balance of the Council and the allocation of seats on Committees.

Councillor Broadhead having reserved his right to speak seconded the proposal set out by Cllr Mellor.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the revised political balance of the Council, as set out in Appendix A, Table 1 be approved.**
- (b) the allocation of seats to each political group as set out in Appendix A, Table 2 be approved subject to the Christchurch Independents retaining 2 seats on the Planning Committee and the Poole Independents retaining a seat on the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- (c) the appointment of Councillors to Committees be approved subject to Councillor Steve Baron being replaced by Councillor Daniel Butt on the Standards Committee and Group Leaders advising of any changes in membership to reflect the decision taken in respect of the allocation of seats set out in (b) above.**
- (d) the allocation of seats to each political group on the outside bodies as detailed in Appendix A, Table 4, be approved subject to the seat on the Dorset Police and Crime Panel held by the Bournemouth Independents and Greens and the seat on the Lower Central Gardens Trust Board currently filled by an unaligned Member being allocated to the Poole Independents and the Group Leaders advise the proper officer of their representatives.**
- (e) That subject to (d) above Councillor Stephen Bartlett be removed from the Lower Central Gardens Trust Board.**

Voting:

(a) – (c) For – 41, Against – 31, Abstentions - 2

(d) For – 43, Against – 14, Abstentions - 17

(e) Agreed

Councillor Farquhar wished to be recorded as voting against (a) - (c) and abstaining from (e)

The Chairman reported that the next Ordinary meeting of the Council currently scheduled for 2 June 2021 would now be rescheduled to 22 June 2021 at 7 pm following the Government's proposals to lift further Covid restrictions on 21 June 2021.

The meeting ended at 8.51 pm

CHAIRMAN