

PROCEEDINGS

A meeting of the Lancaster City Council was held remotely at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 30 September 2020, when the following Members were present:-

Malcolm Thomas (Mayor)	Joan Jackson (Deputy Mayor)
Tony Anderson	Paul Anderton
Richard Austen-Baker	Mandy Bannon
Stephie Barber	Phillip Black
Alan Biddulph	Dave Brookes
Abbott Bryning	Keith Budden
Roger Cleet	Tim Dant
Roger Dennison	Gina Dowding
Adrian Duggan	Merv Evans
Kevin Frea	Andrew Gardiner
Mike Greenall	June Greenwell
Mel Guilding	Tim Hamilton-Cox
Janice Hanson	Colin Hartley
Tricia Heath	Caroline Jackson
Debbie Jenkins	Mandy King
Geoff Knight	Sarah Knight
Erica Lewis	Cary Matthews
Abi Mills	Jack O'Dwyer-Henry
Jean Parr	Faye Penny
Joyce Pritchard	Robert Redfern
John Reynolds	Oliver Robinson
Stewart Scothern	Alistair Sinclair
Sandra Thornberry	Katie Whearty
David Whitaker	Anne Whitehead
David Whitworth	John Wild
Jason Wood	Peter Yates
Joanna Young	

45 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Darren Clifford, Jake Goodwin and Paul Stubbins.

(Councillor Lucie Carrington is on parental leave.)

46 MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Redfern, seconded by Councillor Guiding and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2020 be accepted as a correct record.

It was noted that the minutes would be signed by the Mayor when the minute book was available.

47 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Mayor reminded Councillors that the Monitoring Officer had circulated a briefing note on interests with regard to item 9, the Exploration of Local Government Reform and Devolution (minute 51 refers). It was noted that the Monitoring Officer had granted a dispensation to all Members with regard to allowances in respect of matters relating to Local Government Reform and Devolution for a period of 4 years. The Mayor assumed that those members who were also County Councillors would also be making a declaration of their County Council membership.

Councillor Erica Lewis confirmed her interest as a County Councillor. Councillor Gardiner also confirmed his interest as a County Councillor. No further declarations of interest were made at this point.

48 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11

The Mayor advised that no questions had been received from members of the public in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 11.

49 PETITIONS AND ADDRESSES

The Mayor informed Members that no petitions or requests to address Council had been received from members of the public.

50 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader presented her report updating Members on the local situation with COVID -19 and various other issues since her last report to Council. She then responded to several questions from Councillors.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

51 EXPLORATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM AND DEVOLUTION

Council considered a report of the Chief Executive to provide an update on the current

position relating to local government reform and devolution. The report also recommended that the council should proceed to develop a high-level case for a unitary option for the Morecambe Bay area, to ensure that this option could be considered by government.

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and responded to questions from Councillors, before proposing:

“That the recommendations, as set out in the report, be approved.”

Councillor Young seconded the proposition.

A lengthy debate followed.

At the conclusion of the debate a roll call vote was taken. A request for a recorded vote was made in accordance with Council procedure Rule 19.4.

The votes were recorded as follows:

For: Councillors Anderson, Anderton, Bannon, Biddulph, Black, Brookes, Bryning, Cleet, Dennison, Dowding, Evans, Frea, Greenall, Greenwell, Hamilton-Cox, Hanson, Hartley, Heath, Jackson (Caroline), Jenkins, King, Knight (Geoff), Knight (Sarah), Lewis, Matthews, Mills, O'Dwyer-Henry, Parr, Penny, Pritchard, Redfern, Reynolds, Robinson, Sinclair, Thornberry, Whearty, Whitaker, Whitehead, Wood and Young (40).

Against: Councillors Austen-Baker, Barber, Budden, Duggan, Gardiner, Guilding, Jackson (Joan), Scothern, Whitworth, Wild and Yates (11).

Abstentions: Councillors Dant and Thomas (2).

Resolved:-

That Council:

- (1) Notes the current position on local government reform and devolution;
- (2) Authorises the Leader and Chief Executive to work with South Lakeland District Council and Barrow Borough Council to explore local government reform and devolution, including the development of a high-level case for a new unitary council for the area comprising the three districts;
- (3) Notes that the high-level case will be brought back to Cabinet and Council for agreement, prior to submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government;
- (4) Notes that the Secretary of State may then invite the Council to put forward a formal proposal which will be subject to future Cabinet and Council agreement.

52 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT 2019/20

Councillor Whitehead, portfolio holder for Finance, presented the Annual Treasury Management Outturn report for 2019/20.

The report was for information and noting. Councillor Whitehead and the Chief Finance Officer responded to questions put by Councillors.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

53 ELECTORAL REVIEW - ARRANGEMENTS FOR MAKING SUBMISSIONS TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report seeking a decision on whether a response on behalf of the Council should be made to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to any or each of their consultations during the electoral review of Lancaster City Council, or whether responses would be best left to individual Councillors and/or Political Groups.

Councillor Frea presented the report and responded to questions.

Councillor Frea proposed Option b) set out in the report, seconded by Councillor Wood:-

“That the Council Business Committee be given delegated authority to consider and approve submissions to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on behalf of the Council, both on council size and on warding patterns, and on any other matter that may arise in the course of the review.”

After a short debate, with indications that some Councillors would wish to vote against the proposition, a roll-call vote was taken. With 24 Councillors voting ‘for’ the motion, 23 ‘against’ and six abstentions, the Mayor declared the proposition carried.

Resolved:

That the Council Business Committee be given delegated authority to consider and approve submissions to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on behalf of the Council, both on council size and on warding patterns, and on any other matter that may arise in the course of the review.

54 ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS

Council considered a report of the Head of Democratic Services advising Members of the calculations relating to the allocation of seats in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Councillor Reynolds, formerly a Labour Group member, had recently become an independent Councillor unaligned to any group on the Council. The change required a re-calculation.

Councillor O’Dwyer-Henry proposed, seconded by Councillor Wood:

“That the recommendation as set out in the report, be approved.”

There was no debate, nor or any indications to speak or vote against the proposition, therefore it was clearly carried.

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act, 1989 and Part 4 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations, 1990, the City Council approves the calculations and allocation of seats set out in the report, including the adjustment set out in paragraph 5 of the report, whereby the Labour group pass a seat to the Green group.

55 COUNCILLORS' BASIC ALLOWANCE

Councillor Frea introduced a report recommending that the basic allowance for Councillors be increased by 2.75% backdated to 1 April 2020, in line with the pay award to employees.

The recommendation was in accordance with the resolution made by Council following the last review of the Councillors' Allowances Scheme in 2018/19 that Councillors' basic allowance be increased, year on year, in line with Employee Pay Awards. However the resolution had included the words 'unless Council votes against an increase' therefore the issue had been brought back to Council for a vote.

Councillor Frea proposed that the recommendation be approved, seconded by Councillor Dant. A roll-call vote was taken as the proposition did not appear to be unanimous. However, with many voting for, few against and several abstentions, the proposition was clearly carried.

Resolved:

That the basic allowance for Councillors be increased by 2.75%, in line with the pay award to employees of 2.75%, backdated to 1 April 2020, in accordance with the resolution made by Council following the last review of the Councillors' Allowances Scheme in 2018/19.

56 APPOINTMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL MEMBER

Council considered a report of the Head of Democratic Services Manager to enable Council to make an appointment to the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) following a further recruitment exercise.

It was noted in the report that the Panel had not been quorate for some time, however if the appointment was made, then the Council would have the minimum membership (three) to meet and be quorate. Mr Ryan Hyde was recommended to Council for appointment.

Councillor Wood moved, seconded by Councillor Guilding:

"(1) That Mr Ryan Hyde be appointed to the City Council's Independent Remuneration Panel."

There was no debate on the proposal. With no one indicating that they wished to speak or vote against the motion, the Mayor declared the proposition clearly carried.

Resolved:

(1) That Mr Ryan Hyde be appointed to the City Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.

57 EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS

Council noted a report of the Director of Corporate Services setting out a recent change made by the Leader to her Cabinet portfolio holders. Councillor Whitehead had again taken responsibility for Finance, the portfolio formerly held by Councillor Reynolds.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

58 APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Mayor explained that, constitutionally, there was no requirement for formal proposing and voting on appointments and changes to committee memberships mid-year as long as these were put in writing to Democratic Services, however changes would still be reported to Council.

Since the last meeting of Council the Labour group had made two changes, replacing Councillor Whitehead on two Committees. Councillor Whitehead's place on the Budget and Performance Panel had been taken up by Councillor King and her seat on the Audit Committee had been filled by Councillor Whearty.

For the adjustment required by the recalculation of political balance (minute 54 refers) the Labour group had informed Democratic Services that they wished to give up Councillor Whearty's seat on the Appeals Committee and that Councillor Whearty would now become a substitute member on that Committee. The Green Group had not yet decided who to appoint to the Appeals Committee and agreed to let Democratic Services know in due course.

Finally, the Mayor reported that the Labour Group had informed Democratic Services that Councillor O'Dwyer-Henry would become a named substitute on the Council Business Committee, in place of Councillor Reynolds.

59 QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12

The Mayor advised Councillors that no questions on notice had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 12.

60 MINUTES OF CABINET

Council considered the Cabinet minutes of the meetings held on 14 July and 17 August 2020. No questions were raised.

Resolved:

That the minutes be noted.

Mayor

(The meeting finished at 7.40 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these minutes,
please contact Debbie Chambers, Democratic Services - email dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk**