

Minutes

of the Meeting of

The Council

Tuesday, 23 May 2023

New Council Chamber

Meeting Commenced: 6.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 8.20 pm

Councillors:

Wendy Griggs (Chairperson)

Peter Crew (Vice-Chairperson)

Marc Aplin

Nigel Ashton

Mike Bell

Mike Bird

Christopher Blades

Steve Bridger

Peter Bryant

Peter Burden

Mark Canniford

Ashley Cartman

Annabelle Chard

Caritas Charles

James Clayton

Andy Cole

Jemma Coles

John Crockford-Hawley

Ciaran Cronnelly

Stuart Davies

Oliver Ellis

Catherine Gibbons

Jenna Ho Marris

Steve Hogg

Nicola Holland

Clare Hunt

Patrick Keating

Sue Mason

Hugh Malyan

Stuart McQuillan

Tom Nicholson

Ian Parker

Robert Payne

Marcia Pepperall

Bridget Petty

Terry Porter
Michael Pryke
David Shopland
Luke Smith
Timothy Snaden
Mike Solomon
Dan Thomas
Helen Thornton
Richard Tucker
Annemieke Waite
Roger Whitfield
Martin Williams
Hannah Young

Apologies: Councillor: Joe Tristram.

Officers in attendance: Jo Walker (Chief Executive), Amy Webb (Director of Corporate Services), Sheila Smith (Director of Children's Services), Hayley Verrico (Interim Director, Adults' Support and Safeguarding), Nicholas Brain (Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer), Mike Riggall (Information and ICT Security Manager and Vanessa Andrews (Marketing and Communications Manager).

Partaking via Microsoft Teams: Councillor Lisa Pilgrim

Officers: Matt Lenny (Director of Public Health), Hazel Brinton (Committee Services Manager)

COU Chairperson's Welcome

1

The outgoing Chairperson welcomed everyone to the face-to-face meeting and noted that those councillors attending via Teams would not be in attendance formally or able to vote.

COU Election of the Chairperson of the Council for the Municipal Year 2023/24

2

Motion: Moved by Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Canniford and

Resolved: that Councillor Wendy Griggs be elected Chairperson of the Council for the 2023/243 Municipal Year.

Councillor Griggs in the Chair

Councillor Griggs thanked Karin Haverson for her service as Chairperson over the previous year and invited her to address the Council.

Karin Haverson noted that it was an honour to serve the residents of her ward and represent the Council as Chairperson during the previous year. She thanked members and officers for their support and noted the challenging times faced by the Council over the previous four years but had been proud to serve in the coalition administration.

COU 3 Appointment of the Vice-Chairperson of the Council for the Municipal Year 2023/24

Motion: Moved by Councillor Crockford-Hawley, seconded by Councillor Solomon and

Resolved: that Councillor Peter Crew be appointed Vice-Chairperson of the Council for the 2023-24 Municipal Year.

The Chairperson presented Councillor Crew with the Vice-Chairperson's badge of office and presented Karin Haverson with the Past Chairperson's badge for 2022-23. Members wished Councillor Crew a Happy 80th Birthday.

COU 4 Public Participation: Simon de Lance Holmes, local resident - changes to Clevedon Sea Front

Simon de Lance-Holmes addressed members on the changes to Clevedon Sea Front. He asked for a full review of the changes made and public consultation including meetings in Clevedon as the previous consultation had taken place online due to Covid19 and some residents were not able to engage with the consultation effectively. He noted however that some aspects of the changes appear to have been successful now that they had bedded in.

COU 5 Public participation: Cathy East, local resident - changes to Clevedon Sea Front

Cathy East addressed members on the changes to Clevedon Sea Front. She believed that some of the changes posed ongoing risks to road users, pedestrians, cyclists and disabled sea front visitors. She welcomed news that engagement would take place with local residents and asked for a public meeting to take place in Clevedon.

COU 6 Public participation: Nick Wring, local business rate payer - changes to Clevedon Sea Front

Nick Wring, local business rate payer addressed the Council on Clevedon Public Realm. He thanked Cllrs Bell, Gibbons and Young for a recent meeting. He asked for the entire scheme to be reversed apart from the new 20mph speed limit and that no further changes be made until a public meeting had been held. He asked the council to reach out to both local business and residents.

COU 7 Public Participation: Malcolm Simmonds, local resident - Clevedon Sea Front

Malcolm Simmonds addressed members on the subject of Clevedon Sea Front. He advised that he ran a local business which needed access from the sea front for collections and deliveries and that loading bays were being used for all day parking instead of their intended use. This resulted in his driveway being inaccessible during the day and evening. Further, he noted safety concerns with the scheme as cars, vans and cyclists regularly went the wrong way along the beach road. He asked for the scheme to be reversed.

COU 8 Public Participation: Derek Smith, local resident - Clevedon Sea Front

Derek Smith, local resident addressed the Council on changes to Clevedon Sea Front. He advised members that access to his property on the beach road had been made difficult as a result of the changes to the parking and lack of markings on the sea front road. He added that his driveway was being blocked on a daily basis resulting in conflicts with drivers parking their vehicles. He asked that parking restrictions be made clear and enforced.

COU 9 Public Participation: Dr Sophy Gretton, local resident - proposed development by Roots Allotments at Abbots Leigh

Dr Sophy Gretton addressed the Council on the proposed development by Roots Allotments at Abbots Leigh. She advised that the plan incorporated the construction of 700 allotments, permanent structures and a car park near to a Site of Special Scientific Interest. She noted that the plan was backed by a commercial venture capitalist group with no links in North Somerset. She asked that the council refuse the application for the Certificate of Lawfulness on legal grounds and require that planning permission be applied for to enable appropriate scrutiny of the proposal.

COU 10 Public Participation: Alan Rice, local resident - Renters' Reform Bill

Alan Rice addressed members on the Renters' Reform Bill. He explained that he assisted renters with problems in private rented accommodation under the title of Weston Housing Action. He noted the changes in rental practices that will be required as a result of the anticipated Renters' Reform Bill. He asked that the council took forwards a proposal for the licensing of private landlords in North Somerset.

COU 11 Public Participation: Richard Westwood, local resident - Clevedon /town Council

Richard Westwood addressed the Council on his concerns over the administration at Clevedon Town Council and the behaviour of some elected members which he believed was affecting local democracy.

COU 12 Petitions to be presented by Members (Standing Order No. 16)

None received.

COU 13 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Standing Order 37)

None declared.

COU 14 Minutes

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting of 21 February 2023 be approved as a correct record.

COU 15 Motions by Members (Standing Order No. 14)

In introducing his motion, Councillor Pryke referred to the speakers in public participation who had voiced the opposition by Clevedon residents to the changes on the sea front. He believed that the scheme required reversing as soon as possible. He welcomed the incoming Leader's comments regarding a review of the scheme but remained concerned that this would delay any changes that were required particularly considering safety concerns over some aspects of the scheme.

Motion: moved by Councillor Pryke and seconded by Councillor Smith

"This Council notes:

1. That the highways and parking changes made to Clevedon Seafront have received great condemnation from residents and businesses and continue to be extremely unpopular.
2. That Conservative candidates for the local elections held on 4th May 2023 campaigned on the basis that the seafront changes were unacceptable and if elected they would work to remove the changes that had been made.
3. The electorate of Clevedon Walton, Clevedon West and Clevedon Yeo wards voted to elect Conservative candidates who had campaigned on that basis and the elected councillors for those wards therefore now hold a mandate to call for the changes to be removed

This Council resolves:

1. That it notes the local opposition to the changes made to Clevedon Seafront highways and parking layout.
2. That the Clevedon Seafront highways and parking design should therefore be returned to its former design with the exception of retaining the one-way system, including the re-alignment of parking to face the sea, removal of textured yellow surface (to be replaced with tarmac), and the removal of bike humps and installation of appropriate signage and planters.
3. Requests the Executive and officers to make the above changes forthwith

Seven members signalled their support for a debate on the Motion.

The Chairperson called on the Executive Member for Highways and Transport to speak to the motion in the first instance.

Councillor Young asked that Councillors Pryke and Smith withdraw their motion as she believed any further changes to the sea front needed to be made with the full engagement and consultation with the local community, an understanding of the wider traffic management implications of any further tweaks, the costs involved and funding for these additional costs. She noted that the proposal in the motion had not been consulted on with Clevedon residents and appeared at odds with the national Active Travel Strategy. She added that the new partnership administration was committed to a review of the scheme to include an Independent Design Review with options for further investment. Active Travel England would also conduct a review to ensure compliance, an outcome from the engagement of local MPs with the Department for Transport. A safety review would also take place.

In discussing the motion, members voiced concern over the wording and its intention particularly in respect of consultation and engagement with the local community. Reference was made to the need for a commitment to engage and listen with the legitimate concerns of residents; to identifying the good aspects of the changes; the need to have practical and affordable changes that enjoyed wide spread support; the fact that the proposed reversal was uncostered; that due to Covid19 the public consultation had not been conducted with the entire population of Clevedon and there had been no public meeting; the need to find ways to make better use of and share public spaces and that good community engagement meant creating a safe environment for all sides to put their views.

Councillor Bell apologised to the residents and businesses of Clevedon and stated that the council had not set out with the intention of alienating the community with the Clevedon Sea Front Scheme. He promised a real commitment to engage with residents and businesses before any further changes were made. He noted that complaints about policy decisions should be directed at elected members who should be held to account and not officers.

In light of the assurances given by Councillor Bell, Councillors Pryke and Smith agreed to withdraw the motion.

COU 16 Election of the Leader of the Council for a four-year term, 2023/24 - 2026/27

Motion: Moved by Councillor Gibbons, seconded by Councillor Keating and

Resolved: that Councillor Bell be elected Leader of the Council for the four-year term 2023-24 to 2026-27.

COU 17 Political Balance for the Municipal Year 2023/24

The Assistant Director Legal & Governance reported on the current political balance as follows -

Conservative Party and Independents Group 15: Liberal Democrats and Independents Group 12: Labour Group 10: Green Group 7: Portishead Independent Group 4: Independent Group 2.

Resolved: that the political balance, as reported, be noted and approved as required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

COU 18 Leaders and Deputy Leaders of the Political Groups for the Municipal Year 2023-24

The Assistant Director Legal and Governance reported the Leaders and Deputy Leaders of the Political Groups for 2023-24 as follows -

Conservative Party and Independents Group: Councillor Nigel Ashton, Councillor Peter Bryant

Liberal Democrats and Independents Group: Councillor Mike Bell, Councillor Jemma Coles

Labour Group: Councillor Catherine Gibbons, Councillor Hannah Young
Green Group: Councillor Bridget Petty, Councillor Stuart McQuillan

Portishead Independent Group: Councillor Roger Whitfield, Councillor Nicola Holland

Independent Group: Councillor Steve Bridger, Councillor Steve Hogg

**COU
19 Chairperson's announcements**

The Chairperson expressed her thanks to members and officers for their work over the previous 4 years. She welcomed new and returning members and expressed the wish to be addressed as Madam Chairman in formal settings. She noted her role was to promote events in North Somerset and to raise the area's profile so she would be pleased to attend any events to further this.

**COU
20 Leader's announcements**

The Leader expressed his thanks to the two leaders of the previous administration: former Councillor Don Davies and Councillor Steve Bridger. He acknowledged the honour and responsibility of leading the Council and noted the significant challenges faced by the administration of the previous four years. He asked for the Council's thanks and gratitude to be passed on by Group Leaders to former members for their years of service.

**COU
21 Chief Executive's announcements**

The Chief Executive echoed officers' thanks to former members of the Council and reiterated her welcome to all new and returning members.

**COU
22 The Council's Constitution**

The Assistant Director, Legal and Governance advised members that the Council's Constitution was updated last year following recommendations from the Audit Committee and himself and was available on the website and via the members' resources pages of the intranet. He advised that the only changes he was aware of were to two Policy & Scrutiny Panels – Place and Partnerships, Corporate Organisation and Overview/Management being replaced by Placemaking and Economy Policy and Scrutiny Panel with a remit for regeneration, planning and heritage, parking and tourism and economic development and Transport, Climate and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Panel with a remit for external partnerships, corporate organisation, climate emergency, highways and transport, waste and the environment and recreational and community services.

In discussing the constitutional arrangements for the following year, he proposed that the existing arrangements for committees and panels other than the changes noted above be continued.

Motion: Moved by Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Gibbons and

Resolved: that the latest version of the Constitution 2021 (amended May 2022) be approved and adopted.

**COU
23** **Constitutional appointments etc.**

The Leader announced there would be nine members of the Executive including himself. He announced the members of the Executive, along with their indicative portfolios as follows:

Leader of the Council: Councillor Mike Bell

Deputy Leader of the Council and executive member for children's services, families and life-long learning – Councillor Catherine Gibbons

Executive Member for climate, waste and sustainability – Councillor Annemieke Waite

Executive Member for homes and health – Councillor Jenna Ho Marris

Executive Member for highways and transport – Councillor Hannah Young

Executive Member for adult services and stronger communities – Councillor Roger Whitfield

Executive Member for safety in the community – Councillor James Clayton

Executive Member for spatial planning, placemaking and economy – Councillor Mark Canniford

Executive Member for culture and leisure – Cllr Mike Solomon

The Leader further announced that the following Chairpersons be appointed for the 2023-24 municipal year and that Vice-Chairpersons would be appointed by each of the committees and panels at their first meetings. The remaining committees/bodies not dealt with would appoint their own Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson at their first meetings. The existing arrangements for committees and panels would be continued except for the changes to two panels as noted in the minute COU22.

Adult Services and Housing Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Chairperson – Councillor Dan Thomas

Children and Young Peoples Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Chairperson – Councillor Joe Tristram

Health and Overview Scrutiny Panel

Chairperson – Councillor Helen Thornton

Transport Climate and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Chairman – Councillor Steve Bridger

Placemaking and Economy Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Chairperson – Councillor John Crockford-Hawley

Audit Committee

Chairperson – Councillor Patrick Keating

Licensing Committee

Chairperson – Councillor Stuart Davies

Planning and Regulatory Committee

Chairperson – Councillor Hugh Malyan

Public Rights of Way sub-Committee

Chairperson – Councillor Tim Snaden

Joint Safety and Consultative Committee

Chairperson – Councillor Richard Tucker

Employment Committee

Chairperson – Ciaran Cronnelly

COU 24 Municipal Calendar 2023/24

The Assistant Director Legal and Governance suggested that with the two changes to scrutiny panels that the dates allocated to the Place Panel be taken up by the Placemaking and Economy Panel and the dates allocated to the PCOM Panel be taken up by the Transport, Climate and Communities Panel.

Motion: Moved by Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor McQuillan and

Resolved:

(1) that the draft Municipal Calendar for 2023-24 as attached to the report be approved with the exception that the dates allocated to the Place Panel be taken up by the Placemaking and Economy Panel and the dates allocated to the PCOM Panel be taken up by the Transport, Climate and Communities Panel and

(2) that the Leader of the Council be authorised to approve any amendments not dealt with elsewhere as necessary.

COU 25 Appointments to Outside Bodies 2023/24 (Council)

Councillor Bell informed members that the updated schedule had been circulated to all members earlier that day and published on the council's website.

A member asked if the Council could not also make the necessary appointments to the Joint Internal Drainage Board rather than the Executive as in an election year, the outside body concerned ceased to be able to function until the politically balanced appointments were made at the first meeting of the Executive. The council's solicitor explained that this was not possible legally as the functions of the Executive could not be undertaken by the Council, but he would look to see whether it was possible to extend the term of the existing appointments made by the Council to the Joint Internal Drainage Board until the first meeting of the Executive after an election.

Motion: Moved by Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Gibbons and

Resolved:

1) that the following nominations be made to the Avon Fire Authority and to the Police and Crime Panel for a four-year term, in accordance with political balance:

Avon Fire Authority

Councillor Thomas (Green)
Councillor Williams (Conservative)
Councillor Payne (Liberal Democrat)
Councillor Tucker (Labour)

Police and Crime Panel

Councillor Crew (Conservative)
Councillor Hogg (Independent); and

(2) that the remaining outside body appointments be as the schedule published as a supplementary report with nominations to vacancies to be confirmed in due course

COU 26 Forward Plan dated 3 May 2023

The Leader presented the forward plan.

Resolved: that the Forward Plan be noted

COU 27 Reports of the Policy/Overview and Scrutiny Panels

None.

COU 28 Corporate Parenting Report

None.

COU 29 Question Time (Standing Order No.18)

Oral questions were directed to members concerned and the summary notes and topics involved are contained in Appendix 1.

COU 30 Reports and matters referred from the Executive - dated 8 February 2023

None.

COU 31 Reports and matters referred from the Policy/Overview and Scrutiny Panels other than those dealt with elsewhere on this agenda

None.

COU 32 Reports and matters referred from the other Committees other than those dealt with elsewhere on this agenda

None.

COU 33 Reports on joint arrangements and external organisations and questions relating thereto

(2) Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel

Councillor Crew reported that a recent meeting had discussed the subject of re-offending. The police and education and training services had set up a team to teach and train those leaving prison to support them in not re-offending. One office was already operating in Bristol, and another would open shortly in Worle. Additionally, the police anticipated being at full strength by the following month with funding for an additional 80 officers. Councillor Crew thanked former Councillor Richard Westwood with whom he had worked closely and well on the Police and Crime Panel.

COU 34 Urgent business permitted by the Local Government Act 1972 (if any)

None.

Chairperson
