



# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## COUNCIL MEETING

16 January 2020

7.00 pm – 8.15 pm

Council Chamber, Ebley Mill, Stroud

# 3

### Minutes

#### Membership

Martin Baxendale	P	Nick Hurst	P	Nigel Prenter	P
Dorcas Binns	A	George James	P	Skeena Rathor	A
Catherine Braun	P	Julie Job	P	Sue Reed	A
Chris Brine	P	Haydn Jones	P	Mark Reeves	P
Miranda Clifton	P	John Jones	P	Steve Robinson*	P
Nigel Cooper	P	Norman Kay	P	Mattie Ross	P
Doina Cornell	P	Darren Loftus	A	Tom Skinner	P
Gordon Craig	A	Stephen Lydon	P	Nigel Studdert-Kennedy	A
Rachel Curley	P	John Marjoram	P	Haydn Sutton	P
Stephen Davies	P	Phil McAsey	A	Brian Tipper	P
Paul Denney	P	Karen McKeown	A	Chas Townley	P
Jim Dewey	P	Jenny Miles	P	Jessica Tomblin	P
Jonathan Edmunds	A	Dave Mossman	A	Ken Tucker	P
Chas Fellows	A	Gill Oxley	A	Martin Whiteside	P
Colin Fryer	P	Keith Pearson	P	Tim Williams	P
Lindsey Green	P	Simon Pickering	P	Tom Williams	P
Trevor Hall	A	Gary Powell**	P	Debbie Young	P

\*\*Chair \*Vice-Chair P = Present A = Absent

(This was an additional meeting to the published civic timetable because the reports were not ready for the December meeting because of the General Election.)

#### Officers in Attendance

Chief Executive

Democratic Services & Elections Manager

Democratic Services & Elections Officer

Interim Head of Legal Services and  
Monitoring Officer

#### CL.045 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Binns, Craig, Edmunds, Fellows, Hall, Loftus, McAsey, McKeown, Mossman, Oxley, Rathor, Reed and Studdert-Kennedy.

#### CL.046 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

**CL.047      MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** That the minutes of the Council's meeting held on 19 December 2019 are confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**CL.048      ANNOUNCEMENTS****Leader**

A Local Transport Plan (Draft for Consultation) was launched at Shire Hall today and stakeholder consultation events are scheduled to be held throughout the county. More details are in the Members' Weekly update.

All Members and Officers were invited to attend a remembrance event on Monday, 27 January 2020 in the Council Chamber at 1.30 pm dedicated to the remembrance of those who had suffered in The Holocaust, and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur. The Holocaust Memorial Day 2020 marks 75 years since the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and the 25th anniversary of the genocide in Bosnia.

**Chief Executive**

The timetable for the elections for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire, all District Councillors and all Parish and Town Councillors was outlined.

All of the four Strategic Directors had now been appointed:-

Andrew Cummings - Strategic Director of Resources  
 Caron Starkey - Strategic Director of Change and Transformation  
 Brendan Cleere - Strategic Director of Place, and  
 Keith Gerrard - Strategic Director of Communities who starts on 2 March 2020.

**CL.049      PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were none.

**CL.050      REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICT, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS 2019**

Councillor Cornell, the Leader presented the very detailed report which outlined changes following the consultation. The changes would take effect on the electoral register from 1 February 2020. This was seconded by Councillor Whiteside.

The following responses were given to Members' questions:-

- The number of Polling Stations could not be reduced any further because the Council had to have a polling station for each parish ward. In the General Election there were 88 polling stations and in May there would be 104.
- A briefing with the election agents takes place when the rules are explained and after each election feedback was also given and taken on board.
- There could be over 500 nominations for the election of Town and Parish Councillors and therefore the nomination period had been extended by a week.

- A letter with the Council's recommendations following the Community Governance Review had been sent to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and no response had been received yet.
- The final version of Appendix A would be amended to move the text regarding 47 properties at Gunhouse Lane from the Rodborough Ward to the Brimscombe and Thrupp (Division 1) Ward.

When put to the vote, the Motion was unanimously carried.

- RESOLVED 1. To approve the schedule of polling districts and polling places 2020.**
- 2. To authorise the Democratic Services and Elections Manager to make necessary amendments to the register of electors.**
  - 3. To delegate responsibility to the Returning Officer to make any further polling place and polling station changes as necessary.**

**CL.051      APPOINTMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL (IRP)**

The Leader stated that the Council would be sharing the IRP members with Gloucester City Council who were not reviewing their Members' allowance scheme. These positions were not paid but expenses would be reimbursed. A survey would be sent to all Members and an invitation for all Members to have an opportunity to meet with the IRP. The Members' allowances that were paid by other Councils of a similar size to Stroud would be compared for benchmarking.

Following the review, the IRP's report for adoption of the new Scheme of Allowances would be presented to a future meeting of Council after April; the date would be flexible.

The report was seconded by Councillor Townley.

Councillor Davies confirmed he would like to be involved in the review.

In response to a question from Councillor Kay, the Leader confirmed that the IRP would not be reviewing allowances for Town/Parish Council's only for our Council. Councillor Lydon suggested that the Council look at other measures to assist people who may wish to become a Councillor but have barriers eg a young family.

When put to the vote, the Motion was unanimously carried.

- RESOLVED 1. To establish an Independent Remuneration Panel.**
- 2. That the following be appointed to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a period of three years:**
    - Mrs Wynn Bartlett**
    - Mr Stewart Dove**
    - Mr Jason Jones and**
    - Mr Graham Russell**

**CL.052      MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

There were none.

Councillor Pickering left the Council Chamber.

**CL.053      MOTION REGARDING DYING TO WORK CHARTER**

Councillor Fryer read out the Charter. The Motion was seconded by Councillor Cornell.

In response to a question, Councillor Fryer said that the Charter was good practice and if adopted would send out a message to the public and employees. He confirmed that he had not had discussions with the Council's Human Resources or Officers in Legal, that he could not see why in future contractors with the Council could not be included.

The Chief Executive confirmed that Councillor Fryer had not had discussions with Human Resources but that the Charter matched what the Council already did in practice. Those employees who had unfortunately been diagnosed with a terminal illness were supported by Human Resources and their work colleagues. Each case was looked at on an individual case by case basis. This care formed part of the Terms and Conditions of Employment within the Council's Staff Handbook.

During debate Members supported the Motion. Councillor Brine requested a recorded vote which was unanimously agreed by Members.

Councillor Pearson stated that the Charter should reflect the Council's policy that had been evidenced.

In summing up Councillor Cornell stated that the Charter would respect those individuals who are affected and confirmed that Councillor Hall would have proposed the Motion but was away. Gloucestershire County Council adopted the Charter in September 2019 and had also been adopted by other Council's. It was important that we also adopted the Charter.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001, a recorded vote was taken, the results of which are as follows:-

**FOR 37 votes, AGAINST 0 votes, ABSENTION 0 votes**

Martin Baxendale	George James	Mattie Ross
Catherine Braun	Julie Job	Tom Skinner
Chris Brine	Haydn Jones	Haydn Sutton
Miranda Clifton	John Jones	Brian Tipper
Nigel Cooper	Norman Kay	Chas Townley
Doina Cornell	Stephen Lydon	Jessica Tomblin
Rachel Curley	John Marjoram	Ken Tucker
Stephen Davies	Jenny Miles	Martin Whiteside
Paul Denney	Keith Pearson	Tim Williams
Jim Dewey	Gary Powell**	Tom Williams
Colin Fryer	Nigel Prenter	Debbie Young
Lindsey Green	Mark Reeves	
Nick Hurst	Steve Robinson*	

- RESOLVED 1. To review sick pay and sickness absence procedures and include a specific statement that they will not dismiss any person with a terminal diagnosis because of their condition.**
- 2. To ensure that that they have an Employee Assistance Programme that has the capacity and competency to provide support to any person with a terminal illness, including access to counselling and financial advice.**

3. To provide training to line managers and all HR staff on dealing with terminal illness, including how to discuss future plans with any worker who has a diagnosis of a terminal illness, and on what adaptations to work arrangements that may be necessary.
4. To adopt the Dying to Work Charter\* and notify all employees that they have made the commitments contained in it.

#### **CL.054      MOTION TO ADOPT PARENTAL LEAVE**

Councillor Curley outlined the above Motion, which had been seconded by Councillor Lydon and thanked the Monitoring Officer for his assistance in revising the resolution. By adopting the Motion it was hoped that it would encourage women, who are currently under represented to be involved in becoming a Councillor. As a Council we want to encourage younger Councillors to put themselves forward and to continue as Councillors when they had a young family. The Constitution Working Group could consider looking at parental leave.

Members asked questions if a Member took a period of 6 months off, and they were the only representative in that ward their electorate would suffer and arrangements for cover would need to be put into place. The possibility of substitutes on Committees was also discussed and a balance of gender.

Councillor Whiteside suggested that the Constitution Working Group look at the following:-

- Parental leave
- Substitution
- Parents coming back to cover Council duties
- The timing of meetings

Councillor Townley suggested that management arrangements are put into place when there was only one Member representing their ward.

Councillor Brine reminded Members that it was not all about attending Council meetings, there was also case work and representing constituents.

The Leader stated that she supported the Motion and the barriers from standing as a Councillor needed to be examined.

Councillor Young suggested that the Constitution Working Group look at childcare, which was also supported by other Members with young families.

Councillor Lydon suggested that the Constitution Working Group look at other good practices carried out by other local authorities.

In summing up, Councillor Curley thanked Members for their comments which would give the Constitution Working Group a basis to work on. How the extra 6 months could be agreed and keep in touch days over the extended period needed also to be included within that work.

Councillor Pearson stated that there was already provision in the Council's Constitution for childcare.

#### **RESOLVED To note:**

1. That analysis of the 2019 Local Election results by the Fawcett Society found that only 35% of councillors in England are women, up 1% since 2018;
2. As of October 2019, 27 councils have passed the LGA Labour Group's Parental Leave policy, and an additional 9 councils have their own parental leave policy in place;
3. In 2019, the LGA co-produced the 21st Century Councils Equalities Toolkit with MHCLG. The toolkit recommends that councils adopt a parental leave policy, and they link to the LGA Labour's Parental Leave policy as a model to adopt;
4. That the role of a councillor should be open to all, regardless of their background, and that introducing a parental leave policy is a step towards encouraging a wider range of people to become councillors, and is also a step to encourage existing councillors who may want to start a family to remain as councillors;
5. That parental leave must apply to parents regardless of their gender, and that it should also cover adoption leave to support those parents who choose to adopt.

- RESOLVED**
1. That it supports the principle of a parental leave policy to give all Councillors an entitlement to parental leave after a birth or adoption and to ensure that councillors with children and other caring commitments are supported as appropriate.
  2. The Constitution Working Group should be tasked with developing a parental leave policy for approval at a future Council meeting taking into account the parental leave policy drafted by the LGA Labour Group's Women's Taskforce and, where there is an impact on members allowances to consult with the Independent Remuneration Panel as required.
  3. That as part of its deliberation of the draft policy, the Constitutional Working Group, in conjunction with Human Resources, will consider the LGA/MHCLG toolkit ([https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/11.152\\_Equalities\\_toolkit\\_v06.pdf](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/11.152_Equalities_toolkit_v06.pdf)) to consider the Council's existing practices and report to Council at the same meeting in which the draft policy is proposed for adoption.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

Chair