

**MINUTES
OF A
VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL
HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2020 AT 6.00 PM**

Present: Councillors Mrs Worne (Chairman), Brooks (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Baker, Batley, Bennett, Blanchard-Cooper, Bower, Buckland, Mrs Caffyn, Mrs Catterson, Chapman, Charles, Clayden, Mrs Cooper, Cooper, Coster, Mrs Daniells, Dendle, Dixon, Edwards, Elkins, English, Mrs Erskine, Goodheart, Gunner, Mrs Hamilton, Mrs Haywood, Hughes, Huntley, Jones, Kelly, Lury, Mrs Madeley, Miss Needs, Northeast, Oliver-Redgate, Oppler, Mrs Pendleton, Purchase, Miss Rhodes, Roberts, Miss Seex, Smith, Mrs Stainton, Mrs Staniforth, Stanley, Tilbrook, Ms Thurston, Dr Walsh, Mrs Warr and Mrs Yeates

Honorary Alderman Mr Norman Dingemans was also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

[Note: The following Councillors were absent from the meeting during consideration of the matters detailed in the Minutes indicated: - Councillors Mrs Gregory, Purchase, Miss Rhodes, Mrs Staniforth and Stanley - Minute – 305 [Motion 3]; Councillors Mrs Baker, Batley, Mrs Caffyn, Chapman, Edwards, Mrs Gregory, Hughes, Mrs Madeley; Mrs Pendleton, Purchase; Miss Rhodes, Mrs Staniforth and Mrs Stainton - Minute 306 [Part – the vote] and Councillors Mrs Baker, Batley, Mrs Caffyn; Chapman, Edwards, English, Mrs Gregory, Hughes, Mrs Madeley, Mrs Pendleton, Purchase, Miss Rhodes, Mrs Staniforth and Mrs Stainton – Minute 307 [the vote] – then Councillors Mrs Baker, Batley, Mrs Caffyn, Chapman, Jones, Purchase, Mrs Staniforth, Mrs Stainton and Ms Thurston were absent for the remainder of the meeting].

302. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Councillors, representatives of the public, press and officers to the Council Meeting. A special welcome was extended to Honorary Alderman Mr Norman Dingemans.

The Chairman confirmed that as the meeting on 11 November 2020 had been adjourned at Item 9 – Motion 2 – Part A, this meeting, once the standing items covering Apologies and Interests had been covered, would commence at Item 9 [Motions] at Part B.

Full Council - 18.11.20

303. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

The Declaration of Interest Sheet set out below confirms those Members who had made a declaration of their personal interest as a Member of a Town or Parish Councillor or a West Sussex County Councillor, as confirmed in their Register of Interest as these declarations could apply to any of the issues to be discussed at the meeting.

Name	Town or Parish Council or West Sussex County Council [WSCC]
Councillor Tracy Baker	Littlehampton
Councillor Kenton Batley	Bognor Regis
Councillor Jamie Bennett	Rustington
Councillor Paul Bicknell	Angmering
Councillor Billy Blanchard-Cooper	Littlehampton
Councillor Jim Brooks	Bognor Regis
Councillor Ian Buckland	Littlehampton and WSCC
Councillor Mike Clayden	Rustington
Councillor Andy Cooper	Rustington
Councillor Alison Cooper	Rustington
Councillor Sandra Daniells	Bognor Regis
Councillor David Edwards	WSCC
Councillor Roger Elkins	Ferring and WSCC
Councillor Paul English	Felpham
Councillor Inna Erskine	Bognor Regis
Councillor Steve Goodheart	Bognor Regis
Councillor Pauline Gregory	Rustington
Councillor June Hamilton	Pagham
Councillor Shirley Haywood	Middleton-on-Sea
Councillor David Huntley	Pagham
Councillor Henry Jones	Bognor Regis
Councillor Martin Lury	Bersted
Councillor Claire Needs	Bognor Regis
Councillor Mike Northeast	Littlehampton
Councillor Francis Oppler	WSCC
Councillor Jacky Pendleton	Middleton-on-Sea and WSCC
Councillor Vicky Rhodes	Littlehampton
Councillor Emily Seex	Littlehampton
Councillor Martin Smith	Aldwick
Councillor Samantha Staniforth	Bognor Regis
Councillor Matt Stanley	Bognor Regis

Councillor Isabel Thurston	Barnham & Eastergate
Councillor James Walsh	Littlehampton and WSCC
Councillor Jeanette Warr	Bognor Regis
Councillor Amanda Worne	Yapton
Councillor Gillian Yeates	Bersted

304. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS WITH PECUNIARY/PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

There were no questions asked.

305. MOTIONS

Prior to re-introducing this item, the Chairman confirmed that she had taken advice from the Interim Monitoring Officer and would not be chairing it. The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Brooks, would assume the role of Chairman for the remaining debate on Parts B and C, if needed, for Motion 2.

Councillor Brooks then invited Councillor Gunner to present his motion. The wording of Part B is as set out below:

Part B

“That this Council has no confidence in the current administration and calls for their immediate resignation”.

It was confirmed that Councillor Dendle would second this part of the Motion.

The Interim Monitoring confirmed that before the meeting could proceed further, he had to confirm that he had had a Point Of order made known to him prior to this meeting, which he needed to explain to Councillors and then would require the Chairman to make a determination on. He explained that Councillor Oppler had brought to his attention that another authority, Lewis District Council, had gone through an identical situation to what this Council was facing through this Motion. This had occurred in June 2019 and the Interim Monitoring Officer confirmed that he had spoken with the lawyer who had supported that meeting and that decision process, earlier in the day, to obtain the background to this situation.

The Interim Monitoring Officer confirmed that he had now revisited the decision made by Full Council on 11 November 2020 which was to vote on Part B via a secret ballot and that he had circulated to all Councillors detailed legal advice regarding the decision made and based on facts as had been presented to him by the Monitoring Officer at Lewis District Council. It was explained that there was no specific caselaw that he could locate and that he had had several issues raised by Councillor Coster and other Councillors on this in terms of the right for a Councillor to request a recorded vote. The facts were explained. Firstly, there was the decision made on 11 November 2020

Full Council - 18.11.20

agreed by a majority of Councillors to conduct a secret ballot. The Interim Monitoring Officer had advised at that time his uncertainty around the legal position on the decision made. Secondly, requests had been made by some Councillors for their individual vote to be recorded. Having taken legal advice, Lewis District Council had come to a decision which was that the individual right established in the Constitution should supersede the group decision of the whole Council. The core legal issue here was that there were two positions which were competing, termed as a 'persuasive' matters not a 'binding' matter. Based on the facts before him, the Interim Monitoring Officer confirmed that he had come to a view in that case in that the Member's individual right in the Constitution should supersede the right of the majority to choose a process, in essence the Point of Order raised by Councillor Oppler. The question asked was whether the decision reached on 11 November 2020 was 'Ultra-Varese', outside of the law. The Interim Monitoring Officer confirmed that this situation was highly relevant to the decision that had been made last week because the matter sat on the same facts; same arrangements and scenarios; and so it was necessary for Councillor Brooks, as Chairman on this item, to make a determination about this matter going forward. Three options were presented to Councillor Brooks, for him to consider. Firstly, that he could invite Councillors Oppler, Gunner and Coster to speak as well as Councillor Dendle, as seconder, to gain further facts and understanding. If this was to occur, then as Chairman on this item, Councillor Brooks would then need to decide whether or not he was content that the last vote was correct and did not run contrary to a local persuasive decision; the outcome could be to then rerun that decision – which would be the vote on Part A. Secondly, the Chairman had the option to confirm that he was content with the vote passed based on the risks and explanations already provided and then could immediately proceed to Part B; or thirdly, he could ask to seek external legal advice and adjourn this vote and proceed to other business on the agenda.

Councillor Brooks considered the issues and then confirmed that he wished to proceed in continuing with Part B and to continue with the voting on this matter being by a secret ballot.

The Chairman invited Councillor Gunner to present Part B of his Motion.

Councillor Gunner provided some historical facts about Councillor Dr Wash and his journey to becoming Leader of the Council. Once becoming Leader, Councillor Dr Walsh had confirmed a list of promises which were to deal with the Local Plan and to make democracy and decision making within Arun more open and inclusive. This had not been achieved and it was pointed out that many other promises had not been achieved, such as the regeneration of Bognor Regis; the future of the Bognor Regis Town Hall; proposals to increase police visibility in the District; and to increase the amount of money available for adult day centre activities. Councillor Gunner stated that the public had public voted for one thing and they were now receiving something very different. The Council's tax-payers instead were paying for 3D stickers on pavements in Littlehampton at a cost of £14k; for an augmented reality app of 30k for web cameras; and requests to spend £600k on a new IT system; £200k on changing over to a Committee system; and much more on agency staff. The solution to this was to accept that the Council's strategic targets were not being met. What the public had voted for

was a balanced Council where the two main parties worked together. Councillor Gunner confirmed that he was in favour of creating a new unity administration where main parties come together to achieve the priorities of the electorate. He confirmed that he would be withdrawing Part C of his Motion as he did not wish to pre-determine what administration would come next. He believed that the Council could do better and could work together to deliver what residents wanted and his Group could achieve this.

Councillor Dendle then seconded Part B of the motion.

The Chairman then invited debate on Part B of the Motion.

The first to speak was Councillor Dr Walsh correcting some misstatements made by Councillor Gunner in delivering his Motion. In responding to the comments made about the Council's Budget, he confirmed that at Cabinet on 16 November 2020, it had been confirmed that the Budget was on track and not overspending. On housing, the current administration would deliver over the next couple of years over 90 new additional units to the housing stock compared to the previous administration only delivering 30 units in 10 years. The residents of Arun had delivered a majority vote in May 2019 and he had created a cross-party administration with an Independent Member chairing the Overview Select Committee, which was now chaired by a Labour Councillor; an Independent sitting on the Cabinet with a new and vital portfolio; a Conservative Member chairing the Standards Committee and the IT Working Party and so the Council already had a unity cross party administration. The previous administration had refused to webcast all Council meetings leaving the equipment left idle; this had been rectified by his administration immediately and this had been welcomed by the public especially during the pandemic months. During this time, his administration had naturally directed its energies towards coping with the demands of the pandemic; helping to secure vulnerable residents by keeping them safe and secure whilst at the same time supporting the business community with grants; and dealing with the pandemic and its social and economic issues.

Many Councillors then spoke in support of the current administration stating that it had put residents above party politics. It had had to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic which had been unprecedented and so the focus over the last 10 months had been to ensure that the residents of Arun had received the help they needed to continue living their lives and running their businesses. It was disappointing that other Councillors saw internal politics as the priority at this time. Disappointment and major concern was also expressed over some of the comments made during this debate and the debate on Part A in terms of statements made about bullying and intimidation with one Councillor requesting that a full and thorough investigation be undertaken in terms of the allegations made.

Councillors in support of Part B stated that the time had come for change to address the current failing administration. The election results of 2019 had delivered a new political landscape which was now being challenged. The culture of the Council needed to change and cross-party working was needed to address a long list of issues that were failing as the current administration was not performing and residents wished

Full Council - 18.11.20

the Council to move forward by making changes so that the Council would become more inclusive.

In support of the current administration, updates were provided on the achievements in housing and how effectively the current administration had steered the Council through the pandemic. The work programme in place in moving to a change in governance from a Cabinet to a Committee system was on track and it was recognised that this change would provide all Councillors with a greater decision-making role in Arun. It was strongly felt that the timing of this Motion was not appropriate in the middle of a global pandemic and crisis.

Councillor Dendle, as seconder to Part B, urged Councillors to support it and as Councillors had loyalty to their residents. The purpose of the Motion was to get the Council back on track for the good of the District and to form a unity administration for the benefit of the District.

Councillor Gunner, as proposer, responded to some of the points raised during the debate. He paid tribute to his Councillors and others for their passionate speeches. In terms of how the Council would move forward from here, scrutiny was being dismissed as disruption when what the public wanted was for all Councillors to work together. Should this Motion be successful, Councillor Gunner confirmed that he would form a genuine and full cross-party administration with several Cabinet posts being held by non-conservative Members. The debate on this Motion had been good natured and so showed how Councillors could disagree together in a grown-up manner. This was a model for how the Council could work together to deliver regeneration; more social housing and tackling the climate crisis.

The Interim Monitoring Officer and the Committee Services Manager provided advice in terms of how the secret ballot would be conducted. It was confirmed that the livestream of the meeting would be paused during this exercise.

The secret ballot was then launched and the result of the secret ballot on Part B was announced. This showed equal numbers voting for and against and so the Chairman was invited to use his casting vote.

The Chairman confirmed that he would be voting against Part B of the motion and so this was NOT CARRIED.

As Part B of the Motion of No Confidence had not been carried, and in view of Councillor Gunner confirming that he would be withdrawing Part C, this was immediately withdrawn.

The Chairman then called a short adjournment.

Councillor Mrs Worne then resumed as Chairman.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Dr Walsh thanked Councillors for their support in what had been a very tight vote. He confirmed that he would continue with cross-party working and that a Budget briefing would be organised for all Councillors to inform them of all budget priorities in advance of the Budget working through the Council's decision making process which was in the spirit of continuing with cross party working.

Councillor Mrs Worne then chaired the remaining items on the agenda and asked Councillor Edwards, as the proposer to Motion 3, to present his Motion.

(Prior to the commencement of the debate on this item, Councillor Mrs Erskine declared a Personal Interest as she had a family member that made use of the Sunflower lanyard scheme. Councillor Batley also declared a Personal Interest in this item as he too had a family member that used this scheme.)

Councillor Edwards then presented his Motion. The wording of the Motion is as set out below:

"Many businesses, emergency services and local authorities have recognised the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower and I would like Arun District Council to embrace this too. Anyone with a hidden disability which does not have physical signs, including learning disabilities, lung conditions and chronic illnesses can opt to wear a Hidden Disability Sunflower to show they may require additional help, understanding or extra time to carry out an action. This symbol allows us to give them the help and understanding they may need in their day-to-day lives. I am asking the Council to support the following commitments:

- To officially recognise the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower
- To officially promote what it stands for and its importance in breaking stigma
- To help promote Hidden Disabilities Sunflower to local businesses and encourage them to formally look at recognising it
- To promote that the Council offices are Hidden Disability friendly and promote the Sunflower on its buildings so people can identify the Council as Hidden Disability friendly
- To actively promote and encourage local Town and Parish Councils and West Sussex County Council to recognise the scheme

I bring this Motion to the Council as someone who has been aware of the Sunflower Lanyard since its inception. I worked at Gatwick Airport when it was developed and had some input into the scheme as a manager within Passenger Security. Dealing with people who presented as difficult, nervous, and aggressive was a common occurrence. It was only when we dealt with the situation and discovered that the person had a hidden disability that the reason for their behaviour became apparent. So, in 2016, the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower was designed and launched when London Gatwick Airport asked, "How can we identify that one of our passengers may have a non-obvious disability?". Led by Sara Marchant, a team created a simple sunflower design

Full Council - 18.11.20

on a green background for a lanyard - a subtle but visible sign to enable airport staff to identify that the wearer (or someone with them) may require some extra help, time, or assistance when moving through the airport.

Wearing the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower discreetly indicates to people around the wearer including staff, colleagues, and health professionals that they need additional support, help or a little more time. Since its launch in 2016, it has now been adopted globally by major airports and venues and in the UK, by many supermarkets, railway and coach stations, leisure facilities, the NHS, a number of police, fire and ambulance services, and an increasing number of small and large businesses and organisations. Hidden disabilities can make people's lives particularly challenging, painful, or isolating. By wearing a sunflower lanyard, badge, or wristband someone is indicating they have a hidden disability and may find certain situations difficult or stressful, causing them to act differently.

Covid-19 has created a range of extra difficulties for people with hidden disabilities such as the wearing of face coverings in many public places. This can create complex issues for people with hidden disabilities and they may encounter stigma for not wearing a face covering despite being exempt under Government guidance.

The success of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower and the positive response it has received has increased awareness of challenges adults and children with hidden disabilities can face. Hidden Disabilities Sunflower wearers now benefit more widely from help being offered to make their daily living a little easier.

Councillor Edwards outlined that having had two Councillors confirming that they had family members already using the scheme highlighted and cemented a very good reason for suggesting the motion. He paid tribute to his former colleague for her vision and wisdom and work undertaken in making this project happen and he urged the Council to support this scheme which made such a difference to so many people for a vast amount of reasons.

Councillor Mrs Pendleton then seconded the Motion.

Debate on this motion saw overwhelming support from all Councillors who felt that this was a great scheme and would provide so much benefit to many people in the District.

Councillor Blanchard-Cooper confirmed that although he fully supported the Motion, he wished to propose a very slight amendment to it. This was to ensure that Officers and staff and Councillors of the Council would receive the appropriate training to make the motion effective. This amendment was seconded by Councillor Stanley.

In response, Councillor Edwards confirmed that he would be happy to accept this change and confirmed that it had been remiss of him to not have mentioned training for Councillors and Officers.

The Chairman then invited debate on the amendment which saw unanimous support.

The Chairman then returned to the substantive motion which received further supportive debate and suggestions on how this could be expanded through the District so that those who would benefit from the sunflower appeal would know how to access it.

Councillor Mrs Pendleton, as seconder to the Motion, confirmed that she was grateful to everyone for being so supportive. This was such a simple scheme to achieve but made an amazing difference to those that used it.

Councillor Edwards, as the proposer to the Motion, confirmed that he had a hidden disability and that the scheme had benefited him hugely.

The Council

RESOLVED

That the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower be embraced by Arun District Council with the Council supporting the following commitments:

- To officially recognise the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower
- To officially promote what it stands for and its importance in breaking stigma
- To help promote Hidden Disabilities Sunflower to local businesses and encourage them to formally look at recognising it
- To promote that the Council offices are Hidden Disability friendly and promote the Sunflower on its buildings so people can identify the Council as Hidden Disability friendly
- To actively promote and encourage local Town and Parish Councils and West Sussex County Council to recognise the scheme
- To ensure that Officers and Councillors of the Council receive the appropriate training to make the motion effective

The Chairman then invited Councillor Bower to present Motion 4. This is as set out below:

“Council agrees to amend the wording of the Council’s Constitution at Part 6, Section 2, Scrutiny Rule 13.4 as follows with immediate effect:

13.4. If a request for a call-in is received by the Group Head of Policy within the period between the publication of the decision and the effective date, he/she shall call-in the decision for scrutiny by the Committee. For it to be valid, the request must be:

Full Council - 18.11.20

- in writing and identify the lead Member of the call-in,
- specify the relevant decision, which is to be the subject of the call-in,
- satisfy at least one of the criteria set out in paragraph 13.8, and
- be supported by any five Members of the Council who do not have related pecuniary interests with regards to the subject of the call-in
- That the group submitting the call in request comprises EITHER members from more than one political group as defined by Section 8 of The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 OR individual members from one or more political groups as defined along with independent members who are not part of any political party or group.

Councillor Bower confirmed that this cross-party Motion was a simple motion to ensure that no Councillor would be disqualified from signing a request to Call-In either a Cabinet decision or an Individual Cabinet Member Decision. This Motion was in reaction to a recent incident where a Member had been disqualified from taking part in a Call-In request. Councillor Bower confirmed that his Motion had been drafted in consultation with the Interim Monitoring Officer and he urged Councillors to support it to allow the Constitution to be corrected and to allow the amendment to become immediately effective.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Northeast.

In debating the motion, Councillor Bennett confirmed that although he agreed with it, he was of the view that no Councillor should be excluded from taking part in a call-in and so he wished to make an amendment. The amendment is as set out below with deletions shown using ~~strike through~~ and additions shown using **bold**:

“13.4. If a request for a call-in is received by the Group Head of Policy within the period between the publication of the decision and the effective date, he/she shall call-in the decision for scrutiny by the Committee. For it to be valid, the request must be:

- in writing and identify the lead Member of the call-in,
- specify the relevant decision, which is to be the subject of the call-in,
- satisfy at least one of the criteria set out in paragraph 13.8, and
- be supported by any five Members of the Council who do not have related pecuniary interests with regards to the subject of the call-in
- That the group submitting the call in request comprises EITHER members from more than one political group as defined by Section 8 of The Local

Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 OR **it must be signed by five members, who must either come from two groups/parties, or alternatively, Members from one group plus a minimum of two Independent Councillors who are not currently Members of any political party.** ~~individual members from one or more political groups as defined along with independent members who are not part of any political party or group.~~

Councillor Mrs Haywood then seconded this amendment.

Many comments were made in response to this amendment. Although some Councillors stated that they broadly supported it, they still felt that it set an unreasonably high bar to achieve a call-in, compared to other Councils that simply set a 5 Councillor stipulation. In view of this, some Councillors opposed the amendment as it meant that you could still have a range of Councillors that would fulfil the conditions required, yet still have Independent Independent Councillors or a Councillor from one party not in a Group that would meet the current criteria.

A very lengthy discussion then took place with very similar arguments being presented.

Following further debate, Councillor Stanley then proposed that the issue be referred to the Constitution Working Party for further consideration. This was seconded by Councillor Blanchard-Cooper.

Many Councillors could not agree what the appropriate wording should be to confirm the requirements for Call-In and to ensure that no Councillor would be excluded from the process. Many were of the view that the matter should be referred to the Constitution Working Party but there was concern that this would add delay and they wished the matter to be resolved now so as to not prevent Call-Ins taking place immediately.

Following further debate Councillor Oppler proposed that the “question now be put” and this was seconded by Councillor Bennett.

On the advice of the Interim Monitoring Officer, the Chairman invited Councillor Bower to comment as proposer to the original Motion.

Following many Points of Orders being raised, Councillor Bower then confirmed that he was withdrawing the Motion.

The Chairman then invited Councillor Blanchard-Cooper to present Motion 5. The wording of this Motion is as set out below:

Full Council - 18.11.20

Littlehampton Seafront

This Council hereby instructs officers to investigate the costs and potential delivery timescales associated with delivering the “2017 Littlehampton Regeneration – Seafront” and further instructs officers to prepare a report to Cabinet, outlining potential timescales for delivery and funding options.

Councillor Blanchard-Cooper then confirmed that he wished to withdraw this Motion and Motion 6 and that he would liaise with the Chief Executive to establish how they could be progressed.

306. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Dr Walsh, presented a report which sought the Council’s approval to adopt a written disciplinary procedure for employees which communicated the organisation’s rules and the process to be followed, when dealing with employee misconduct.

It was outlined that this disciplinary procedure had been written in line with the ACAS Code of Practice and if approved, would be made available to all employees.

As with all of the Council’s employment policies, this procedure would be subject to regular review and had recently been updated to provide greater clarification for employees and to ensure ease of use. UNISON had been consulted on the contents and it was agreed at the Joint Consultative Meeting held on 23 September 2020, that the Disciplinary Procedure should be brought to Full Council for formal adoption.

Councillor Dr Walsh therefore formally proposed the adoption of this procedure and this was then seconded by Councillor Oppler.

The Council

RESOLVED

- (1) The Disciplinary Procedure for Employees be formally approved and adopted; and
- (2) The Group Head of Corporate Support be authorised to make any further consequential changes to the Policy.

307. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2021/22

The Council received a report from the Chief Executive which proposed arrangements for the Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22. The calendar set out meetings under the new Committee Structure which would take effect from May 2021 and was proposed by Councillor Dr Walsh and seconded by Councillor Oppler.

Various concerns were raised in debating the calendar. Firstly, questions were asked as to why no meetings of the two Regeneration Sub-Committees had been scheduled. Although it was understood that these no longer existed under the new Committee structure, it had been implied that they would be re-established as part of the new Committee system and so reassurance was sought that meetings of these two Sub-Committees would be placed into the calendar.

Further comments were made about the need to avoid holding meetings in all school holidays including half term dates and the need to avoid the Party Conference Weeks in late summer/early autumn.

Following further discussion,

The Council

RESOLVED

That the Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22 be approved.

308. CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY - 12 OCTOBER 2020

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Yeates, presented the Minutes from the meeting of the Constitution Working Party held on 12 October 2020.

Councillor Mrs Yeates alerted Members to the first of a series of recommendations at Minute 19 [Proposed Constitutional Changes – Update of Standing Orders Relating to Financial Procedures] which she formally proposed. The recommendations were then seconded by Councillor Bennett.

In debating these recommendations, Councillor Roberts raised concerns in relation to Recommendation (2) which was seeking authority for the Monitoring Officer to make any further consequential amendments. It was his view that all amendments to the Constitution needed to be approved by Full Council and so he proposed an amendment to Recommendation (2) that such consequential amendments be considered by Full Council. This amendment was seconded by Councillor Dendle.

Debate on this amendment then took place and the Interim Monitoring Officer was asked to provide advice. He confirmed that Recommendation (2) was a standard mechanism used to make very trivial or dominimes changes to the Constitution, these were often changes to Officer names; changing paragraph numbers or page numbers.

This advice was not accepted by Councillor Roberts who stated that he could still not accept such changes being made by an Officer without Full Council approval.

Following further debate, Councillor Oppler proposed that “the question now be put” and this was seconded by Councillor Dixon.

Following further long debate, the Chairman proposed a short adjournment.

Full Council - 18.11.20

Following further Points of Order raised and Points of Clarification, and having received advice from the Interim Monitoring Officer, the Chairman requested that the vote on the amendment to Recommendation (2) take place.

On this amendment being put to the vote, it was declared LOST.

The Chairman then confirmed that she was adjourning the meeting until Thursday, 26 November 2020 at 6.00 pm. That meeting would consider the remaining items on the agenda published for 11 November 2020.

(The meeting concluded at 11.07 pm).