

**MINUTES  
OF A  
MEETING OF THE ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD IN THE ARUN CIVIC CENTRE  
ON 18 MAY 2022 at 6.00 PM**

Present: Councillors Brooks (Chair), Staniforth (Vice-Chair), Baker, Batley, Bennett, Bicknell, Blanchard-Cooper, Bower, Buckland, Caffyn, Chapman, Chace, Clayden, Mrs Cooper, Cooper, Coster, Dendle, Dixon, Edwards, Elkins, Mrs English, English, Goodheart, Gregory, Gunner, Hamilton, Haywood, Huntley, Kelly, Lury, Madeley, Needs, Oliver-Redgate, Oppler, Pendleton, Purchase, Rhodes, Roberts, Seex, Stainton, Stanley, Tilbrook, Thurston, Walsh, Warr, Worne and Yeates.

1. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Councillors, representatives of the public, press and officers to the Annual Meeting of the Council.

The Chair announced that the Leader of the Council, Councillor Gunner, was delayed in attending this meeting due to being stuck in traffic behind what had been a serious car accident. The Chair therefore asked Council to approve an adjournment to delay the start of the meeting by 15 minutes.

As there was some disapproval expressed vocally, a recorded vote on the proposal to adjourn the start of the meeting for 15 minutes was requested.

Those voting for the adjournment were Councillors Baker, Bicknell, Bower, Caffyn, Chace, Chapman, Clayden, Mrs Cooper, Cooper, Dendle, Edwards, Elkins, Mrs English, English, Goodheart, Kelly, Madeley, Oliver-Redgate, Pendleton, Rhodes, Roberts, Seex, Stainton and Staniforth [24]. Those Voting against were Councillors Batley, Bennett, Blanchard-Cooper, Buckland, Coster, Dixon, Gregory, Hamilton, Haywood, Huntley, Jones, Lury, Needs, Oppler, Purchase, Stanley, Tilbrook, Thurston, Walsh, Warr, Worne and Yeates [ 22]. Councillor Brooks abstained from voting.

The request to adjourn the meeting was therefore CARRIED.

The Chair then confirmed that the meeting would be adjourned for 15 minutes.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Catterson, Charles, Hughes and Northeast and from Honorary Aldermen, Mrs Stinchcombe and Mr Dingemans.

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**3. CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA**

The Chair confirmed that he wished to propose a change to the Order of the Agenda to bring forward the items of Declarations of Interest; Minutes and Urgent Items which, due to a system error, had been positioned wrongly in the agenda.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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.

| <b>Name</b>                       | <b>Town or Parish Council or West Sussex County Council [WSCC]</b> |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 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 David Chace            | Littlehampton  |
| Councillor Mike Clayden           | Rustington   |
| Councillor Andy Cooper            | Rustington   |
| Councillor Alison Cooper          | Rustington and WSCC  |
| Councillor Sandra Daniells        | Bognor Regis   |
| Councillor Roger Elkins           | Ferring and WSCC   |
| Councillor Paul English           | Felpham  |
| 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                |

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

5. MINUTES

The Chair confirmed that the minutes from the Full Council Meeting held on 11 May 2022 were not ready to present to this meeting for approval and so they would be presented to the next meeting of Full Council on 13 July 2022.

Councillor Walsh asked to receive assurance that these minutes would be written to indicate that the meeting was adjourned and not completed.

It was confirmed that the Minutes would record what happened at that meeting.

6. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair confirmed that there were no urgent items for this meeting.

7. RETIRING CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair provided a summary of his year highlighting that, as had been the case with the previous two Chairs, Covid-19 had heavily impacted his year. He reminded Members of the changes that had occurred in moving from a Cabinet to a Committee form of governance with huge constitutional implications which the Council was still resolving. During all of this, the Chair had worked with two different Chief Executive Officers, two different legal advisers; and many staff members taking on new roles.

The Chair then thanked the Council's Officer team and his Vice-Chair, Councillor Staniforth, for their assistance and support during this immense period of change.

As Covid-19 had limited opportunities for fundraising for the two previous Chairs, the Chair reminded Members that he had made a commitment to raise money for all of the charities nominated since 2019. The Chair had chosen to support youth music; Councillor Worne had appointed PASCO (Parent and Carers Support Organisation); and Councillor Warr had appointed The Snowdrop Trust.

The Chair was happy to report that he had raised some funds to support all three of these charities and that he was hopeful that he would be able to organise a special event soon to raise more funds for these valuable causes.

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Finally, the Chair outlined that as Covid-19 restrictions had started to ease, it had been a privilege to have represented the Council at a range of local events where he had met many dedicated members of the community and these were briefly explained. He gave special praise to his Personal Assistant, Helen Perry, who had assisted him with the arrangements in attending these events.

Finally, the Chair wished Littlehampton Football Club success in their history making match which would be taking place on Sunday at Wembley which he would be attending with the Mayor of Littlehampton and many other Councillors supporting the club.

#### 8. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL FOR 2022/2023

The Chair reminded Members that Councillor Staniforth had been nominated for the position of Chair of the Council for 2022-2023 at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 19 May 2021.

He therefore proposed to proceed in confirming this appointment by going straight to the vote.

Councillor Walsh raised a Point of Order stating that the Constitution specified that the Chair of the Council should be elected by the Annual Meeting of the Council. Notwithstanding that the Council had indicated who it wanted this to be a year ago, the Constitution made the provision that the election should be carried out at the Annual Meeting of the Council.

Councillor Walsh stated that he wished to propose an alternative candidate which was Councillor Jeanette Warr. This was seconded by Councillor Dixon. Councillor Walsh also requested that the voting on this proposal be undertaken by secret ballot.

The Interim Group Head of Law & Governance explained to Members the process that would be followed in undertaking the secret ballot. The secret ballot to be undertaken would ask Members to confirm their preferred candidate which was either to be Councillor Staniforth or Councillor Warr. The process to be followed was confirmed by the Chief Executive.

A secret ballot was then undertaken with the counting of the votes being scrutinised by the Chief Executive.

The Chair announced the results of the secret ballot which were:

- Councillor Staniforth – 24 votes
- Councillor Warr – 23 votes
- There had been one abstention

The Council

RESOLVED

That Councillor Samantha-Jayne Staniforth be elected as Chair of the Council for 2022-2023.

Councillor Staniforth then made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

9. VOTE OF THANKS TO RETIRING CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL

Councillor Staniforth outlined that normally, at this point in the meeting, the retiring Chair would be presented with the Past Chair's Badge. Sadly, for tonight, the badge had not arrived in time and so arrangements would be made for Councillor Brooks to receive this at a later date.

Words of thanks were then echoed by Councillor Gunner, as Leader of the Council; Councillor Walsh, as Leader of the Opposition and Liberal Democrat Group; Councillor Dixon on behalf of the Independent Group; Councillor Goodheart on behalf of the Arun Independent Group; and Councillor Thurston on behalf of the Green Group.

Councillor Worne, as Chair of the Council for 2020-2021, also expressed her thanks to Councillor Brooks for when he was her Vice-Chair.

Finally, the new Chair formally extended her thanks to Councillor Brooks, stating how much she had enjoyed working with him over the last year.

10. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL AND CHAIR ELECT FOR 2022-2023

The Chair firstly reminded Members that Councillor Alison Cooper had been nominated as Vice-Chair of the Council for 2022-23 and nominated as Chair-Elect for 2023-24 at the meeting of Full Council held on 9 March 2022.

The Chair therefore proposed to proceed in confirming this appointment by going straight to the vote.

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Before this could happen, Councillor Stanley stated that he wished to make another nomination for the position of Vice-Chair of the Council and that his nominated candidate was Councillor Oppler. Councillor Stanley made a request for a secret ballot to be undertaken to confirm the outcome of this appointment. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Thurston.

A secret ballot was then undertaken with the counting of the votes being scrutinised by the Chief Executive.

The Chair announced the results of the secret ballot which were:

- Councillor Cooper – 25 votes
- Councillor Oppler – 23 votes
- There were no abstentions

The Council

RESOLVED

That Councillor Alison Cooper be elected as Chair of the Council for 2022-2023 and Chair Elect for 2023-2024.

Councillor Cooper then made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

11. NEW CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair confirmed that she had no announcements to make at this time.

12. APPOINTMENT OF THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Councillor Pendleton formally proposed the appointment of Councillor Gunner to be Leader of Arun District Council. The proposal was then seconded by Councillor Bower.

Councillor Stanley formally proposed the appointment of Councillor Walsh to be Leader of the Council. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Dixon. Councillor Stanley made a request for a secret ballot to be undertaken to confirm the outcome of this appointment.

A Point of Order was raised by Councillor Gunner asking if it could be established where in the Constitution a secret ballot was stipulated for this appointment.

The Interim Group Head of Law & Governance provided advice. Following several Point of Orders raised, Councillor Bennet then proposed a Motion without Notice to suspend Council Procedure Rules to allow a secret ballot on this appointment to take place. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Coster.

The Chair then announced that she would proceed to a vote via a show of hands as to whether a secret ballot would be conducted for this appointment. The outcome of this vote was that a secret ballot would take place.

A secret ballot was then undertaken with the counting of the votes being scrutinised by the Chief Executive.

The Chair announced the results of the secret ballot which were:

- Councillor Gunner – 25 votes
- Councillor Walsh – 23 votes
- There were no abstentions

The Council

RESOLVED

That Councillor Gunner be appointed Leader of Arun District Council.

Councillor Gunner then formally proposed that Councillor Jacky Pendleton be appointed Deputy Leader of the Council and this was seconded by Councillor Bower.

The Council

RESOLVED

That Councillor Jacky Pendleton be appointed as Deputy Leader of the Council.

### 13. APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES

The Interim Group Head of Law & Governance presented this report confirming that the Council was required by Legislation to annually review its proportionality in terms of allocation of seats to Committees.

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As there had been no changes during the last Municipal Year, no further changes had been required since the comprehensive review undertaken in May 2021. The Council was being asked to approve the Appointments to Committees, to include the Chair and Vice-Chair of Committees, as had been set out in the appendix provided with the report.

Councillor Gunner, as Leader of the Council, in proposing the appointment to Committees, confirmed that in light of this evening's events, he would be making some amendments to the appointment to Committees, which have been set out below:

- Councillor Alison Cooper would replace Councillor Gregory as Vice-Chair of the Housing & Wellbeing Committee;
- Councillor Pendleton would replace Councillor Staniforth on the Environment Committee
- Councillor Chace would become the Vice-Chair of the Environment Committee, replacing Councillor Staniforth
- Councillor Pendleton would replace Councillor Staniforth on the Economy Committee
- Councillor Edwards would replace Councillor Lury as Vice-Chair on the Planning Committee
- Councillor Roberts would replace Councillor Staniforth on the Licensing Committee
- Councillor Roberts would replace Councillor Blanchard-Cooper as Chair of the Licensing Committee
- Councillor Paul English would replace Councillor Tilbrook as Chair of the Standards Committee
- Councillor Kelly would replace Councillor Paul English as Vice-Chair of the Standards Committee

Councillor Pendleton then seconded these amendments.

The Council

RESOLVED – That

- (1) It be noted that there were no changes to the entitlement of political groups and non-aligned Councillors to seat on Committees, Working Parties/Panels based on proportionality rules; and
- (2) Approval be given to the appointments to Committees, Working Parties and Panels for 2022-2023, as amended at the meeting, together with the confirmation of the Chair and Vice-Chair where relevant, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.



14. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Interim Group Head of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer presented this report setting out the proposed nominations to representations to Outside Bodies for 2022/2023.

Councillor Madeley requested an amendment to the nomination for the St Mary's Community Centre Management Committee stating that the nomination should be Councillor Stainton and not herself.

Councillor Gunner then proposed the recommendations, as amended, which were then seconded by Councillor Pendleton.

The Council

RESOLVED

That the schedule of Appointments of Representatives to Outside Bodies for 2022/23, as amended at the meeting be approved.

15. APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLOR DIRECTORS OF ANY COUNCIL OWNED PROPERTIES

The Chair confirmed that there were no appointments to confirm.

16. APPOINTMENT OF OTHER GROUP LEADERS

The Council noted the appointment of the other Group Leaders.

(The meeting concluded at 7.44 pm)