

# Public Document Pack

Subject to approval at the next Full Council meeting

49

## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL HELD IN THE ARUN CIVIC CENTRE ON 15 JULY 2020 AT 6.00 PM**

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

Honorary Alderman Dingemans were 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:- Councillor Goodheart - Minute 74 to Minute 76 (Part), Councillor Oliver-Redgate – Minute 74 to Minute 77 (Part); Councillors Smith and Goodheart were absent for the vote on Minute 82; Councillor Gunner – Minute 75 (Part)].

### 74. WELCOME

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

### 75. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Mrs Baker, Mrs Caffyn, Mrs Catterson, Chapman, Charles, and Purchase and from Honorary Aldermen Mrs Goad, MBE, Mrs Morrish and Mrs Stinchcombe.

The Chairman then announced that it was with great sadness that she had to share the news that Hilary Flynn, West Sussex County Councillor, and partner of the Council's colleague and friend, Councillor John Charles, had died in the early hours of Tuesday morning. The Chairman sent the Council's heartfelt condolences and love to Councillor Charles at this tragic time and to his family and friends and stated that the whole Council was thinking of him.

Full Council - 15.07.20

## 76. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Smith declared a Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Item 9 [Financial Support to the Leisure Operating Contract] as although he was not part of the operating team, he was an employee of Freedom Leisure. Councillor Smith confirmed that he would make a request to be placed in the Waiting Room for this item [in line with Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules] and so would not take part in any of the debate or vote on this item.

Councillor Coster declared interests in the following agenda items:

- Item 11 [Standards Committee – 20 February 2020 – Minute 465 – Register of Assessments of Complaints Against Councillors as he had been involved in some of the complaints listed in this report. This was a Personal Interest.
- Item 12 [Development Control Committee – 8 January 2020 – Minute 355 [AW/237/19/PL The Former Ship Inn, Aldwick Street, Aldwick] – this was a Personal Interest
- Item 34 [Bognor Regis Regeneration Sub-Committee – 17 June 2020 in relation to Minute 6 – Update on Options for the Redevelopment of the Regis Centre Area – this was a Personal Interest as a Member of the Bognor Regis Civic Society
- Item 18 [Development Control Committee – 5 February 2020 – Minute 419 – M/80/10/PL Former Poultry Farm, Land West of Yapton Road, Middleton on Sea – this was a Pecuniary Interest and Councillor Coster confirmed that he would make a request to leave the meeting by being placed in the Waiting Room if any discussion arose on this item.

Councillor Dixon declared his Personal Interests in the following items:

- Item 17 [Bognor Regis Regeneration Sub-Committee – 4 February 2020]
- Item 26 – Cabinet – 9 March 2020 – Minute 499 (Public Realm Projects in Bognor Regis – The Sunken Gardens and Place St Maur]
- Item 34 – Bognor Regis Regeneration Sub-Committee – 17 June 2020 as he was a Member of the Bognor Regis Civic Society.

A Declaration of Interest Sheet had been circulated to the meeting setting out 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. This table is set out below:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Town or Parish Council or West Sussex County Council [WSCC]</b>
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 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 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

## 77. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chairman invited questions from members of the public who had submitted their questions in advance of the meeting in accordance with the rules of the Council's Constitution and the Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules adopted by the Council at the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 20 May 2020.

Full Council - 15.07.20

The Chairman announced that two questions had been received from the same questioner. In line with virtual meeting procedure rules, the Committee Manager read out the questions submitted on behalf of the questioner

The first question was put to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Dr Walsh to respond to. This related to the lack of progress made with the regeneration of Bognor Regis. The questioner stated that in the post-pandemic setting, the local economy of Bognor Regis would urgently require major stimulus and investment. The Council maintained an indefensible block on engagement with the Sir Richard Hotham Project which had neither logic nor advantage to justify its continuation which also risked the Council not fulfilling best consideration requirements.

The Leader of the Council was asked if he would now commit to a change in the current situation so that an engagement with SRHP could begin in the shortest possible time-frame. He was also asked to undertake that the Council would return to the principle of cross-subsidy as set out in the 2003 Masterplan and which had not been superseded and which clearly had been abandoned without discussion by Officers? He was also asked if he would disavow the idea of piecemeal development which was not Regeneration by any stretch of the imagination and would he pledge to Councillors and the Public that all efforts would now be made to see whether a deal beneficial to Bognor, the Council and SRHP could be reached?

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Dr Walsh, responded stating that the Council was currently determining what course of action it wished to take in respect of the Regis Centre site. He believed most people would agree that it was only prudent to consider this matter very carefully in light of the current Pandemic and how the economy is impacted.

With regard to the Sir Richard Hotham Project (SRHP) the Council had refused to support it on three separate occasions, twice in the previous administration and once during this administration. Furthermore, this administration had also made its opposition clear to any development on the Hothamton Car Park which formed part of the SRHP proposals.

Councillor Dr Walsh outlined that he appreciated that the questioner was a passionate supporter of this project, however, at this time, and in fact at no time, had the SRHP garnered the support of any administration of this Council, regardless of political colour. Councillor Dr Walsh believed this demonstrated that the Council did not believe this scheme as a package was right for Bognor Regis. Further facts and links to information were outlined as part of the response.

The same questioner then asked the Chairman of the Overview Select Committee, Councillor Northeast, if he could agree that there should be a full scrutiny of the way in which the Council had handled the application and regeneration proposals of the Sir Richard Hotham Project as an early and important item in the Committee's work cycle?

Councillor Northeast responded confirming that it was for the Members of the Overview Select Committee to determine the Committee's work programme. It was open for any Committee Member to ask the Committee that a matter be added to the work programme and the first opportunity to do so would be at the next available Committee in September 2020.

The Chairman then drew Public Question Time to a close.

*(A schedule of the full questions asked and the responses provided can be found on the Public Question Web page at: <https://www.arun.gov.uk/public-question-time>).*

78. PETITIONS

The Chairman confirmed that no Petitions had been received.

79. MINUTES

The minutes from the Annual Council Meeting held on 20 May 2020 were approved as a correct record by the Council. The Chairman confirmed that these would be signed at the earliest opportunity available to her.

80. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

As set out in the covering agenda, the Chairman confirmed that in view of the size of the agenda for this meeting, if necessary she would adjourn the meeting at a set time and if there were still many items that had not been considered, in line with Council Procedure Rule 15 [Motions without Notice] (i) to adjourn a meeting. She would propose confirming that the remaining items on the agenda would be considered at a further Council meeting to be held on 22 July 2020 at 6.00 pm.

The Chairman alerted Members to the list of engagements and events that had been attended since the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 20 May 2020, which had been emailed to Councillors recently.

The Chairman then provided an overview of the events that she had attended during the Covid-19 lockdown period.

81. URGENT MATTERS

There were no items for this meeting.

82. FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THE LEISURE OPERATING CONTRACT

*(Prior to the commencement of this item, Councillor Smith redeclared his Pecuniary Interest made at the start of the meeting. He was then placed in the Waiting Room for the duration of this item and so did not take part in the debate or vote on this item).*

Full Council - 15.07.20

The Cabinet Member for Wellbeing, Councillor Mrs Yeates, presented a report which provided an update on the current situation and options to maintain the future viability of the leisure operating contract.

Councillor Mrs Yeates reminded Members that a ten-year leisure operating contract was let to Freedom Leisure (FL) in 2016 playing a significant role in the financial prospects of the Council. This formed a vital component in the health and wellbeing of the District's community. In March 2020, the Government required all leisure facilities to close putting tremendous pressure on the leisure sector and Local Government as a whole. In response to this, the Local Government Association (LGA) lobbied the Treasury to provide support for the sector as it had done for Culture and the Arts, and the outcome of this lobbying and a proposal was awaited to provide financial support to local authorities specifically for leisure.

At the outset of the pandemic, the Chief Executive exercised his delegated power to support the Council's leisure contract with a package of measures which included deferring the operating fee due to the Council and financing the upkeep of the buildings for three months whilst they were closed. This had been reported to Cabinet on 29 April 2020. The Council now needed to agree how it would proceed to operate in the current situation.

Last week the Government announced that indoor leisure facilities and swimming pools could open from 25 July 2020. Working with FL, Officers had assessed the impact of opening the Centres over both a three and a six-month period. The assessment considered the measures that would need to be taken to make the buildings Covid-19 secure and it mitigated expenditure and income for a predicted growth in the number of customers over the period. The assessment indicated a net cost to the Council of £270,000 for a three-month period.

Based on the last three months (April to June), if the Council was to keep the centres closed, the cost would exceed £136,000. Councillor Mrs Yeates outlined that in her opinion, to pay such a sum and deny the public access to the health and wellbeing opportunities delivered by FL in the Council's superb facilities would be difficult to justify.

To put the financial benefit into perspective, last year as a Council a total of £720,800 had been received from the leisure operating contract. The social and health related value of the contract was immense as demonstrated annually to the Overview Select Committee. The risk of not supporting the contract now would be that the leisure centres would not open and in the current climate the Council would undoubtedly receive less favourable terms in any retender exercise.

Finally, Councillor Mrs Yeates confirmed she was firmly in favour of supporting the leisure operating contract, not only for the financial benefit it afforded to the Council, but for the huge health and wellbeing benefit it delivered. This was a point that should not be underestimated when many, particularly children, had been denied the opportunity to enjoy swimming, gyms and other healthy activities during the closure

period. With this in mind, Councillor Mrs Yeates urged the Council to support the recommendations which were then seconded by Councillor Dr Walsh.

The Chairman invited debate and a range of questions were asked. In terms of the total cost of the contract, would this be ring-fenced for Arun and could assurance be provided that any financial support would not be placed into a general pot of payments received from other local authorities, which would be of significant risk and concern. Councillors wanted to receive reassurance that in the event of FL receiving Government support, would the Council then receive a refund or part refund from its rescue support. Similarly, Members were keen to know what would happen to the Council's financial support if FL went into liquidation or administration.

The Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing, Councillor Mrs Yeates, outlined that the report was mostly asking for a deferral of income and proposed an extension to the existing contract making it a shortfall of income that could be picked up later on. The likely support package from Government was an ongoing and evolving situation and the report had highlighted this and more information was awaited. The Government announcement allowing leisure centres to reopen on 25 July 2020 was a target that FL was working hard to achieve. It was explained that there would still be a cost to the Council if the leisure centres were not able to reopen and this cost had already been incurred as set out in Recommendation C of the report.

The Director of Services provided further clarification. She explained that the recommendations proposed the deferral of the monthly payment that the Council received from the Contract with this being repaid to the Council over the remaining life of the Contract, which would be extended, so this could not be treated as a financial loss. In terms of the supplementary estimates of £270,000 and £136,000 all other Councils were in the process of agreeing support to their leisure operators in recognition of the unprecedented pandemic situation. This support would allow the leisure centres to reopen and serve the community. In examining FL's finances, their situation could be confirmed as being 'stable' and there was no suggestion, that FL would be going into administration or liquidation. Members were reminded that FL paid the Council for this Contract, apart from money currently being paid to them to allow them to reopen. The measures proposed had been put into place whilst the Council awaited guidance on the likely subsidy that would be paid to this sector from Government, this was a national problem not one that was specific to this Council.

A further question was asked about the £180,000 interest free loan to cover the cost of furloughed employees and whether this would be repaid to the Council once FL had received any form of Government grant. Some Councillors confirmed that they were interested to know of the support that other authorities were providing to their leisure operating contracts, especially FL. There were 19 other authorities that had contracts with FL and details were requested in terms of how many other Councils were supporting FL in similar ways. The Cabinet Member for Wellbeing confirmed that the £180,000 loan had not been taken up by FL and so this sum did not need to be repaid. In terms of the support being provided by other Councils, this was an ongoing situation and was dependent upon individual circumstances and contract arrangements.

Full Council - 15.07.20

In response, Councillors asked if the Council had had complete and open access to FL's accounts and had reviewed auditor reports? It was confirmed that FL had agreed to open book accounting and quarterly reconciliation and accounts had been fully scrutinised by the Council's Section 151 Officer.

Although some Councillors confirmed that they fully supported leisure and the benefits that it brought to the District, it was stated that it had to be accepted that there was significant financial risk attached to the proposed support to be given to FL, which could not be ignored or underestimated. What would happen if this rescue package did not work and more emergency funding was requested? Where was the evidence that many other Councils were taking similar action? The report outlined that only four other Councils had confirmed continued support. Was the Council providing this rescue package prematurely and had it asked FL to use its own cash reserves.

The Director of Services reassured Councillors that the Council had fully investigated FL's level of balances and that its reserves policy had been fully reviewed by the Council's Section 151 Officer. Officers had worked extremely closely with the company to ensure that levels of protection that the Council would expect were in place. Other Councils had also made similar decisions. Councillors were reminded that should the support package proposed not be approved, the Council's leisure centres would not reopen on 25 July 2020.

In continuing the debate on this item, various Points of Orders and Points of Personal Explanation were put forward. These covered concerns over the level of risk attached in agreeing the recommendations and the need for the Council to protect the finances of the District.

There was support for the recommendations from Councillors who felt that the provision of health and leisure facilities was so key to residents across the District, this had to be a priority albeit that this came at a cost. FL was a leading provider in leisure facilities and the support package on offer was vital to keep the District's centres open for business. Councillors were reminded that there was just one reason for this measure and that this was down to the world-wide Pandemic. Due to the vertical drop in income for leisure operators, other partner Councils were having to follow similar courses of action. Councillors were also reminded that if the Council was faced with having to retender the leisure contract, then it faced the real risk of not being able to secure a similar contract whereby the operator paid money to the Council.

The point was made that the Council was making a significant financial contribution and so it was only right that Councillors were reassured and received the answers to the questions and concerns raised.

Councillor Dr Walsh, as seconder to the recommendations, asked those Councillors who had expressed concern at the support package proposed to outline some alternative options as to do nothing was not feasible. He reminded Councillors of the financial value of the Contract that still had 7.5 years left to run, providing sufficient time to recoup the bailing out support proposed. He urged Councillors to support the

recommendations which would allow the Council's leisure centres to reopen and as it was recognised that leisure activities were an essential part of the community's health and wellbeing. If the recommendations were not supported, it was very possible that the District's leisure facilities would not reopen for possibly 12 months or before a new contract could be re-procured. In such a situation, the Council would run the risk of losing all of the money paid to date. The recommendations protected the investments that the Council had put into the Arun Leisure Centre and the Littlehampton Wave to date.

A request was made that the named vote undertaken on this item be recorded.

Those voting for the recommendations were Councillors Batley, Bennett, Bicknell, Blanchard-Cooper, Bower, Brooks, Buckland, Mrs Cooper, Cooper, Coster, Mrs Daniells, Dendle, Dixon, Edwards, Elkins, Mrs Gregory, Gunner, Mrs Hamilton, Mrs Haywood, Hughes, Huntley, Jones, Kelly, Lury, Mrs Madeley, Miss Needs, Northeast, Oliver-Redgate, Oppler, Mrs Pendleton, Roberts, Miss Seex, Mrs Staniforth, Stanley, Tilbrook, Ma Thurston, Dr Walsh, Mrs Warr, Mrs Worne and Mrs Yeates (41). No Councillors voted against the recommendations. Councillors Clayden, English and Miss Rhodes abstained from voting (3).

The Council therefore

RESOLVED – That

- (1) Approval be given to extend the Letter of Variation (Supplier Relief due to COVID-19) to defer the net monthly payment obligations (£66,000) for the remainder of the financial year (to March 2021) and extend the contract expiry date by a further six months to 31 March 2027;
- (2) Approval be given for a supplementary estimate for a sum up to £270,000 (Band D equivalent of £4.38) is made available to support the Council's leisure operating contract for an initial three months and the impact is reported to Cabinet in September;
- (3) Approval be given for a supplementary estimate for a sum of £136,300 (Band D equivalent of £2.19) to regularise the s138 notice reported to Cabinet on 29 April 2020 to reimburse £45,436 per month to Freedom Leisure, subject to open book accounting, to cover the costs associated with the upkeep of the buildings during the period of closure; and
- (4) Authority is given to the Group Head of Wellbeing to apply for and receive support funding that may from time to time become available to support leisure and cultural services affected by COVID-19.

Full Council - 15.07.20

83. CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY - 29 JUNE 2020

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Yeates, presented the Minutes from the meeting of the Constitution Working Party held on 29 June 2020.

Councillor Mrs Yeates alerted Members to the first set of recommendations at Minute 5 [Proposed Constitutional Update to Part 6 – Other Procedure Rules – Section 6 – Standing Orders Relating to Purchasing, Procurement, Contracts and Disposals] which she duly proposed. The recommendations were then seconded by Councillor Mrs Gregory.

In considering the recommendations, a request was made that all references to the EU in the Constitution would be updated. An assurance was made that the ongoing review of the Constitution would action this request.

The Council

RESOLVED – That

- (1) the proposed changes to the Constitution at Part 6 Procedure Rules (Other) Section 6 Purchasing, Procurement, Contracts and Disposals as set out in Appendix 1, to be attached to the minutes to be approved;
- (2) Part 4 (Officer Scheme of Delegation) Section 3 (Group Heads) Paragraph 2.1 of the Constitution is updated to allow the Group Head of Corporate Support to approve the use of Framework Agreements and Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS); and
- (3) The interim Monitoring Officer be authorised to make any further consequential changes to the Constitution.

Councillor Mrs Yeates then alerted Members to the next set of recommendations at Minute 6 [Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules] which sought approval to make further adjustments to amend the virtual meeting procedure rules to allow for public participation at Full Council and Cabinet meetings and meetings of the Development Control Committee. The recommendations also proposed changes to the substitution arrangements for meetings. The recommendations were seconded by Councillor Mrs Gregory.

In considering the recommendations, a request was made to introduce Public Question Time for the Bognor Regis and Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-Committees as it had been understood that that this was forming part of the review of the Constitution. This request was proposed by Councillor Brooks and was then seconded by Councillor English.

In debating this proposal, it was outlined that currently in the Constitution, Public Question Time only applied to the Cabinet and Full Council and so this proposal should not be treated as an amendment. As it was a complete change to current policy, it was

suggested that the request be considered by the Constitution Working Party as it formed a complete change to the Public Question Time Rules already in place. This statement was supported by the Interim Monitoring Officer. Having received, this advice, Councillor Brooks confirmed that he was happy to withdraw the proposal as long as the matter be reviewed by the Constitution Working Party.

As part of the continuing debate, several Points of Order were put forward and further questions asked.

The Council

#### RESOLVED

The following changes be made to the Council's virtual meeting procedure rules at Section 5 of the Constitution as follows:

- (1) Rule 10 – Substitution – Rule 10.1 being amended to 10.00 am on the day of the meeting for all meetings;
- (2) Rule 12 – Public Question Time – removal of Rule 12.2 as reinstating the public to ask questions in person and Rule 12.3 being amended so that if a question is asked in person, the questioner has the right to ask a supplementary
- (3) Rule 13 – Public Speaking at the Development Control Committee – Rules 13.1 and 13.2 being amended to allow the public and Ward Members to speak in public.

*(During the course of the discussion on this item, Councillor Brooks declared a Personal Interest as Vice-Chairman of the Bognor Regis Regeneration Sub-Committee)*

During this item, the Chairman called a short adjournment for a comfort break.

Councillor Mrs Yeates referred Members to a long list of recommendations at Minute 7 (Constitution Review – Update) which she formally proposed. The recommendations were seconded by Councillor Mrs Gregory.

In debating the recommendations, concern was expressed over the proposed membership size of the new Service Committees. Councillor Bower confirmed that he had difficulty in accepting the Committee sizes being recommended, as they had to be based upon the political balance of the Council and so should be determined next May before the Annual Meeting of the Council. He therefore proposed an amendment to Recommendation (2) which was that this matter be referred back to the Constitution Working Party for further review. This amendment was seconded by Councillor Gunner.

Full Council - 15.07.20

The Chief Executive was invited to comment. He reminded Members of the tight timetable in place to complete this review in time to implement the change in governance structure from a Cabinet to a Committee system in May 2021. Any delay in implementing decisions ran the risk of this review not being completed in time, especially in terms of the challenges that the Council was facing as a result of Covid-19.

The Interim Monitoring Officer was asked to give advice in relation to Councillor Bower's amendment. She confirmed that this did not form a valid amendment to Recommendation 2 as it consisted more than a slight change to what was being proposed. In response, Councillor Bower confirmed that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15 d) he proposed to refer the matter to an appropriate body or individual, this being the Constitution Working Party, to allow Committee size to be properly determined. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Cooper.

In debating this proposal, there were Councillors who spoke against it as they were of the view that the issue of Committee size had been thoroughly considered at the Working Party and should not be linked with proportionality. The review of the Constitution needed to work to its very tight timetable to ensure that a revised Constitution was in place for May 2021.

As part of the continuing debate on this item, various Points of order were put forward and statements were made.

Those speaking against the Motion, outlined that it was totally acceptable to set Committee size at this stage in the review and as part of process in changing the Council's governance structure. The issue of proportionality was separate and would be looked at by the Monitoring Officer ahead of the Annual Council Meeting in 2021. It was essential to agree Committee size now to keep to the schedule of work for this review on track.

Those speaking in support of the Motion could not understand why the need to confirm the size of the new Committees was being rushed through. The Committee size of 9 for the Corporate Policy and Performance Committee was felt to be too small and did not provide a good cross representation of Members representing the District. There was also concern expressed that the two Regeneration Sub-Committees would be disbanded under the new structure and reassurance was requested that this would not be the case.

Following further lengthy debate and Points of Order raised, Councillor Dr Walsh proposed a Motion without Notice that the question be now put and this was seconded by Councillor Dixon. The Chairman continued with the item and invited Councillor Cooper to speak as seconder to the Motion.

Councillor Cooper outlined that as a Member of the Constitution Working Party, he had questioned the Chief Executive on what the consequences would be if some aspects of the review slipped. The response provided had been that there was time for further review as most sections of the Constitution would be brought before Full Council

in November 2020. The issue of Committee size was a minor detail and so did not need to be rushed through. Councillor Cooper's main concern was inclusivity which could not be achieved with memberships of 9 or 11.

Councillor Bower, as proposer of the Motion, confirmed that at no point did the discussion at the Working Party justify why Committee size needed to be confirmed now. He believed that the entire District needed to be properly represented on all of the new Service Committees.

On the Motion to defer the matter back to the Constitution Working Party being put to the vote, this was NOT CARRIED.

The Chairman invited debate on the substantive recommendations.

Concern was expressed over the proposal to have an 8 weekly cycle of meetings, it was felt that this would not work. Comments were made that the idea behind the new Committee structure was to give back-bench Councillors more say on how the Council was run. What was being proposed would only reduce back-bencher's capabilities and would close down Councillor involvement. Other Councillors argued against this viewpoint.

Questions were again asked about the future of the two Regeneration Sub-Committees. The Chief Executive confirmed that this had not yet been determined by the Working Party. Each of the Service Committees could establish their own Sub-Committees to work on specific service areas. In response to comments made on adopting an 8 weekly cycle of meetings, this proposal had been based upon the amount of agenda items covered over recent years. The Council currently operated an 8 weekly cycle of meetings.

The Council

RESOLVED – That

(1) The amendments made to the Committee structure, as set out in Appendix 1, attached to these minutes, be approved and as set out below:

**Corporate Policy and Performance to lead on:**

- Budget preparation and monitoring
- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Capital Strategy (rather than Corporate Support)
- Major emergency response (regular updates on emergency planning to continue to report into the Environment and Neighbourhood Services Committee)

**Corporate Support**

- Extending the reference to Elections to cover electoral reviews to reflect that this Committee will take over the functions of the Electoral Review Sub-Committee

Full Council - 15.07.20

**Full Council**

- Clarifying current constitutional requirements that the Council will lead on all constitutional changes through reports from the Constitution Working Party

**Audit & Governance Committee**

- Removing Constitution as the Constitution Working Party will continue and will feed direct into Full Council

(2) the size of the Corporate Policy and Performance Committee be 9; the size of all other remaining Committees, including Regulatory Committees be 11, apart from the Development Control Committee, the decision on its membership size being deferred until the outcome of the independent planning review and recommendations for any change were known;

(3) the frequency of meetings for the new Committee structure be as set out below:

- Corporate Policy and Performance – one meeting a cycle (= 5 meetings per year)
- Corporate Support – quarterly (= 4 in a year)
- Planning policy – one meeting per cycle (= 5 meetings per year)
- Residential and Wellbeing Services – one meeting per cycle (= 5 meetings per year)
- Environment & Neighbourhood Services – one meeting per cycle (= 5 meetings per year)
- Economic – quarterly (= 4 times a year)
- Full Council – 5 meetings per year plus one Special Council for the Budget
- Audit & Governance would be reviewed further in the future
- All other regulatory Committees to remain as they are

(4) the appointment of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Committees follow current rules with these being made at the Annual Council Meeting.

84. STANDARDS COMMITTEE - 20 FEBRUARY 2020

*(At the commencement of this item, Councillor Coster redeclared his Personal Interest made at the start of the meeting).*

Various Points of Order were then made over the conduct of the meeting.

The then Chairman, Councillor English, presented the Minutes from the meeting of Standards held on 20 February 2020.

Councillor English alerted Members to recommendations at Minute 464 [Appointment of Two Additional Independent Persons to the Standards Committee] and confirmed that he needed to make a very small amendment to Recommendations (3) and (4). The changes to these recommendations have been set out below with deletions shown using ~~strikethrough~~ and additions shown using **bold**:

Recommendation (3) – subject to the appointments being confirmed at (1) and (2) above, ~~the Group Head of Council Advice & Monitoring Officer~~ **the Interim Monitoring Officer** be authorised to confirm the appointment terms to John Cooke and Sandra Prail; and

Recommendation (4) – the Standards Committee review any extensions to these terms of office in ~~January~~ **April** 2021 and then report back to Full Council.

Councillor Bennett then duly proposed the amendments to these recommendations.

On the amendments being put to the named vote, they were declared CARRIED.

The Council then returned to the substantive recommendations and

RESOLVED - That

- (1) John Cooke is appointed as an Independent Person to the Standards Committee for an initial term of office of one year from the date of the Full Council decision;
- (2) Sandra Prail is appointed as an Independent Person to the Standards Committee for an initial term of office of one year from the date of the Full Council decision;
- (3) Subject to the appointments being confirmed at (1) and (2) above, the Interim Monitoring Officer be authorised to confirm the appointment terms to John Cooke and Sandra Prail; and
- (4) The Standards Committee review any extension to these terms of office in April 2021 and then report back to Full Council.

The Chairman then proposed a Motion without Notice to adjourn the meeting allowing agenda items 12 to 42 to be considered on 22 July 2020 at 6.00 pm. Councillor Brooks then seconded this motion.

On the motion being put to the named vote it was declared CARRIED.

Subject to approval at the next Full Council meeting

64

Full Council - 15.07.20

The Council

RESOLVED

That the meeting be adjourned to 22 July 2020 with a commencement time of 6.00 pm which would consider items 12 to 44 of the agenda published for 15 July 2020.

(The meeting concluded at 10.00 pm)