

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
14 MAY 2024

Minutes of the Flintshire County Council Annual Meeting held as a hybrid meeting on Tuesday, 14 May 2024 (11am)

PRESENT: Councillor Dennis Hutchinson (Chair)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Glyn Banks, Pam Banks, Marion Bateman, Sean Bibby, Chris Bithell, Gillian Brockley, Helen Brown, Mel Buckley, Teresa Carberry, Tina Claydon, David Coggins Cogan, Geoff Collett, Steve Copple, Bill Crease, Paul Cunningham, Rob Davies, Ron Davies, Adele Davies-Cooke, Chris Dolphin, Rosetta Dolphin, Mared Eastwood, David Evans, Chrissy Gee, David Healey, Gladys Healey Ian Hodge, Andy Hughes, Dave Hughes, Ray Hughes, Alasdair Ibbotson, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones, Richard Jones, Simon Jones, Fran Lister, Richard Lloyd, Dave Mackie, Gina Maddison, Roz Mansell, Allan Marshall, Hilary McGuill, Ryan McKeown, Billy Mullin, Debbie Owen, Ted Palmer, Andrew Parkhurst, Mike Peers, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Carolyn Preece, David Richardson, Ian Roberts, Dan Rose, Kevin Rush, Dale Selvester, Jason Shallcross, Sam Swash, Linda Thew, Linda Thomas, Ant Turton, Roy Wakelam, Arnold Woolley and Antony Wren

APOLOGY: Councillor Carol Ellis

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Chief Officer (Social Services), Chief Officer (Education and Youth), Chief Officer (Housing and Communities), Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy), Corporate Manager (People and Organisational Development), Corporate Finance Manager, Streetscene Service Manager, Democratic Services Manager and team

Guests: Lord Barry Jones and Lady Janet Jones

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

2. CHAIR'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2023-24

As the outgoing Chair, Councillor Gladys Healey presented her review of the year for 2023-24. She expressed her gratitude for being given the opportunity to carry out the role and thanked her husband and Consort Councillor David Healey, her Chaplain and officers who had all supported her. She went on to highlight fundraising achievements for her chosen charities and was grateful for the support of the Vice-Chair and his Consort during this challenging year, wishing them well for their forthcoming term of office.

3. **ELECTION OF CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024/25, INVESTITURE OF CHAIN OF OFFICE AND SIGNING OF DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Councillor Mike Peers paid tribute to the outgoing Chair for the way in which she had fulfilled her duties throughout her year in office. In nominating Councillor Dennis Hutchinson as Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2024/25, he spoke about his extensive record in local government and personal achievements, wishing him success in his new role with the support of his Consort Jeanne.

In seconding the proposal, Councillor Ian Roberts spoke in support of Councillor Hutchinson's personal qualities and took the opportunity to commend Councillor Gladys Healey for her successful year.

No further nominations were received.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Dennis Hutchinson was appointed as Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2024/25. In response, he thanked Members for the honour bestowed on him and after paying tribute to Councillor Gladys Healey for her conduct during the year, led a vote of thanks from the Chamber.

Councillor Hutchinson was invested with the Chain of Office by the retiring Chair and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Chief Executive.

Councillor Gladys Healey was presented with her retiring Chair's Badge of Office and a gift was presented to her Consort, Councillor David Healey.

The Chair's Consort, Mrs Jeanne Hutchinson, was invested with her Chain of Office.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Dennis Hutchinson be elected Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2024/25.

(At this point Councillor Dennis Hutchinson chaired the remainder of the meeting)

4. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024/25, INVESTITURE OF CHAIN OF OFFICE AND SIGNING OF DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Councillor Michelle Perfect proposed that Councillor Mel Buckley be elected Vice-Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2024/25 and commended her service in local government.

In seconding the proposal, Councillor Ian Roberts spoke in support of Councillor Buckley's personal and professional qualities, wishing her well in the role.

No further nominations were received.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Mel Buckley was appointed as Vice-Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2024/25. Councillor Buckley responded by expressing gratitude for the honour.

Councillor Buckley was invested with the Chain of Office by the Chair and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Chief Executive. Councillor Buckley's Consort, Joe Stonely, would be invested with the Chain of Office at a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Mel Buckley be elected Vice-Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2024/25.

Having been invited to speak, Lord Barry Jones paid tributes to the outgoing and incoming Chairs.

5. ELECTION OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Councillor Paul Johnson spoke in support of his nomination for Councillor Ian Roberts as Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2024/25. His comments were echoed by Councillor Chris Dolphin who seconded the motion.

Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson explained his reasons for being unable to support the nomination and his decision to form a new political group, calling upon the other groups to work together constructively.

Councillor Helen Brown's nomination for Councillor Richard Jones as Leader of the Council was seconded by Councillor Mike Peers.

In respect of further nominations, Councillor Gillian Brockley proposed Councillor Carolyn Preece and was seconded by Councillor Ibbotson.

Councillor David Coggins Cogan's nomination for Councillor Andrew Parkhurst was seconded by Councillor Carolyn Preece.

No further nominations were received.

Councillors Coggins Cogan and Sean Bibby both requested a recorded vote on the four nominations, for which the requisite number of Members stood in support.

The following voted for Councillor Richard Jones:

Councillors: Mike Allport, Glyn Banks, Pam Banks, Marion Bateman, Helen Brown, Steve Copple, Bill Crease, Rob Davies, Adele Davies-Cooke, Chrissy Gee, Ian Hodge, Andy Hughes, Richard Jones, Dave Mackie, Roz Mansell, Allan Marshall, Debbie Owen, Mike Peers, David Richardson, Dale Selvester, Jason Shallcross, Linda Thew, Ant Turton, Roy Wakelam and Antony Wren.

The following voted for Councillor Andrew Parkhurst:
Councillors: David Coggins Cogan and Andrew Parkhurst

The following voted for Councillor Carolyn Preece:
Councillors: Gillian Brockley, Alasdair Ibbotson, Carolyn Preece, Dan Rose and Sam Swash

The following voted for Councillor Ian Roberts:
Councillors: Sean Bibby, Chris Bithell, Mel Buckley, Teresa Carberry, Tina Claydon, Geoff Collett, Paul Cunningham, Ron Davies, Chris Dolphin, Rosetta Dolphin, Mared Eastwood, David Evans, David Healey, Gladys Healey, Dave Hughes, Ray Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones, Simon Jones, Fran Lister, Richard Lloyd, Gina Maddison, Hilary McGill, Ryan McKeown, Billy Mullin, Ted Palmer, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Ian Roberts, Kevin Rush, Linda Thomas and Arnold Woolley.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Ian Roberts was appointed Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2024/25.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Ian Roberts be appointed Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2024/25.

6. APPOINTMENT OF THE CABINET BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

In accordance with the Constitution, Councillor Ian Roberts set out his choice of Councillors to serve on the Cabinet. He clarified that he would assume responsibility for Leisure until the current situation was resolved. He went on to thank Councillor Billy Mullin for his years of service on Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

That the choice of Councillors to serve on the Cabinet and their portfolios detailed below, be noted.

Cabinet Member	Portfolio
Ian Roberts	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Leisure
Christine Jones	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Well-being
Dave Hughes	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transport
Chris Bithell	Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection
Paul Johnson	Cabinet Member for Finance and Social Value
Sean Bibby	Cabinet Member for Housing
David Healey	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy

Mared Eastwood	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language and Culture
Linda Thomas	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

7. **CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES INCLUDING COMMITTEES**

The Council considered the report of the Chief Officer (Governance) which dealt with matters that required decision at the Annual Meeting, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 1.1 (vii) - (xiv). The report also dealt with the appointment of other Committees and Chairs and other issues such as allocation of seats under political balance. The report was split into sections, each one dealing with one decision that needed to be made and the relevant issues for consideration.

Councillor Ian Roberts moved recommendations 1, 2 and 3 (subject to a review of the Terms of Reference for the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the name and responsibilities of the Climate Change Committee). The motion was seconded by Councillor Ted Palmer and on being put to the vote, was carried.

(i) **Appointment of Committees**

RESOLVED:

That Council appoints the following Committees for 2024/25:

Appeals Committee
Climate Change Committee
Clwyd Pension Fund Committee
Constitution and Democratic Services Committee
Governance & Audit Committee
Grievance Committee
Grievance Appeals Committee
Investigation and Disciplinary Committee
Joint Governance Committee (for Pensions)
Licensing Committee
Overview & Scrutiny Committees as follows:

- Community & Housing
- Corporate Resources
- Education, Youth & Culture
- Environment & Economy
- Social & Healthcare

Planning Committee
Standards Committee

(ii) **Determination of the size of Committees**

RESOLVED:

That the size of each Committee be as set out in paragraph 1.03 of the report.

(iii) Terms of Reference of Committees

RESOLVED:

That the Terms of Reference for each Committee be approved, as set out in the Constitution, subject to a review of the Terms of Reference for the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Climate Change Committee.

At this point, there was an adjournment to consider changes to political balance due to the formation of the new political group. Upon reconvening, the Chief Officer (Governance) suggested a change in the order of items as the appointment of Committee Chairs would help to inform Political Balance on which two revised options were shared. On being put to the vote, this was agreed.

(iv) Appointment of Chairs of Standing Committees

The Chief Officer (Governance) explained that Committee Chairs were appointed by different bodies as set out in paragraph 1.17, noting restrictions on eligibility. Whilst Overview & Scrutiny Committees were chosen by the political groups based on the strength of the various groups and which had seats on the Cabinet, Council was required to appoint Chairs for five of the Committees.

For Chair of the Climate Change Committee, Councillor Helen Brown's nomination for Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson was duly seconded as was Councillor David Healey's nomination for Councillor Geoff Collett.

Councillor David Healey suggested that the review of the Terms of Reference give more focus to the protection of nature through diversity.

A recorded vote was requested to which the requisite number of Members stood in support.

The following voted for Councillor Collett:

Councillors: Sean Bibby, Chris Bithell, Mel Buckley, Teresa Carberry, Tina Claydon, Geoff Collett, Paul Cunningham, Ron Davies, Chris Dolphin, Rosetta Dolphin, Mared Eastwood, David Evans, David Healey, Gladys Healey, Dave Hughes, Ray Hughes, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones, Simon Jones, Fran Lister, Richard Lloyd, Gina Maddison, Hilary McGuill, Ryan McKeown, Billy Mullin, Ted Palmer, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Ian Roberts, Kevin Rush and Linda Thomas.

The following voted for Councillor Ibbotson:

Councillors: Mike Allport, Glyn Banks, Pam Banks, Marion Bateman, Gillian Brockley, Helen Brown, David Coggins Cogan, Steve Copple, Bill Crease, Rob Davies, Adele Davies-Cooke, Chrissy Gee, Ian Hodge, Andy Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Alasdair Ibbotson, Richard Jones, Dave Mackie, Roz Mansell, Allan Marshall, Debbie Owen, Andrew Parkhurst, Mike Peers, Carolyn Preece, David Richardson, Dan Rose, Dale Selvester, Jason Shallcross, Sam Swash, Linda Thew, Ant Turton, Roy Wakelam and Antony Wren.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Ibbotson was appointed Chair of the Climate Change Committee.

For Chair of the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee, Councillor David Coggins Cogan's nomination for Councillor Dan Rose was duly seconded as was Councillor Sean Bibby's nomination for Councillor Ted Palmer. A recorded vote was requested to which the requisite number of Members stood in support.

The following voted for Councillor Palmer:

Councillors: Sean Bibby, Chris Bithell, Mel Buckley, Teresa Carberry, Tina Claydon, Geoff Collett, Paul Cunningham, Ron Davies, Chris Dolphin, Rosetta Dolphin, Mared Eastwood, David Evans, David Healey, Gladys Healey, Dave Hughes, Ray Hughes, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones, Simon Jones, Fran Lister, Richard Lloyd, Gina Maddison, Hilary McGuill, Ryan McKeown, Billy Mullin, Ted Palmer, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Ian Roberts, Kevin Rush and Linda Thomas.

The following voted for Councillor Rose:

Councillors: Mike Allport, Glyn Banks, Pam Banks, Marion Bateman, Gillian Brockley, Helen Brown, David Coggins Cogan, Steve Copple, Bill Crease, Rob Davies, Adele Davies-Cooke, Chrissy Gee, Ian Hodge, Andy Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Alasdair Ibbotson, Richard Jones, Dave Mackie, Roz Mansell, Allan Marshall, Debbie Owen, Andrew Parkhurst, Mike Peers, Carolyn Preece, Dan Rose, Dale Selvester, Jason Shallcross, Sam Swash, Linda Thew, Ant Turton, Roy Wakelam and Antony Wren.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Rose was appointed Chair of the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee.

For Chair of the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee, Councillor Helen Brown's nomination for Councillor Rob Davies was seconded by Councillor Mike Peers. There were no further nominations and on being put to the vote, this was carried.

For Chair of the Licensing Committee, Councillor Ibbotson's nomination for Councillor Peers was duly seconded as was Councillor Sean Bibby's nomination for Councillor Rosetta Dolphin. A recorded vote was requested to which the requisite number of Members stood in support.

The following voted for Councillor Peers:

Councillors: Mike Allport, Glyn Banks, Pam Banks, Marion Bateman, Gillian Brockley, Helen Brown, David Coggins Cogan, Steve Copple, Bill Crease, Rob Davies, Adele Davies-Cooke, Chrissy Gee, Ian Hodge, Andy Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Alasdair Ibbotson, Richard Jones, Dave Mackie, Roz Mansell, Allan Marshall, Debbie Owen, Andrew Parkhurst, Mike Peers, Carolyn Preece, Dan Rose, Dale Selvester, Jason Shallcross, Sam Swash, Linda Thew, Ant Turton, Roy Wakelam and Antony Wren.

The following voted for Councillor Rosetta Dolphin:

Councillors: Sean Bibby, Chris Bithell, Mel Buckley, Teresa Carberry, Tina Claydon, Geoff Collett, Paul Cunningham, Ron Davies, Chris Dolphin, Rosetta Dolphin, Mared Eastwood, David Evans, David Healey, Gladys Healey,

Dave Hughes, Ray Hughes, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones, Simon Jones, Fran Lister, Richard Lloyd, Gina Maddison, Hilary McGuill, Ryan McKeown, Billy Mullin, Ted Palmer, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Ian Roberts, Kevin Rush and Linda Thomas.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Mike Peers was appointed Chair of the Licensing Committee.

For Chair of the Planning Committee, Councillor Richard Jones nominated Councillor Richard Lloyd. There were no further nominations and on being put to the vote, this was carried.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Chairs of the following Committees be appointed (noting any restrictions on eligibility):

- Climate Change Committee - Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson
- Clwyd Pension Fund Committee - Councillor Dan Rose
- Constitution & Democratic Services Committee - Councillor Rob Davies
- Licensing Committee - Councillor Mike Peers
- Planning Committee - Councillor Richard Lloyd

(b) That the Grievance Committee, the Grievance Appeals Committee and Investigation & Disciplinary Committee should each appoint their own Chair from amongst their respective memberships.

(v) **Political Balance**

The report set out the basis of the statutory requirement for allocating committee seats to political groups as well as separating out the 'employment' committees to ensure that smaller groups were not disadvantaged; a practice which required specific agreement from all Members. The rules did not apply to Cabinet or Standards Committee.

The Chief Officer (Governance) referred to the two additional options which had been circulated and advised that option 5 did not align with the Committee Chairs determined in the previous item. His recommendation that the second (untitled) option be adopted was put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

(a) That seats be allocated in accordance with political balance as set out in the revised spreadsheet and the rules on membership of the Committees as set out within the report; and

(b) That the seats on the Grievance, Grievance Appeals and Investigation and Disciplinary Committees be allocated to give a broad political spread of membership.

(vi) Appointment of Chairs of Overview & Scrutiny Committees

The Chief Officer (Governance) explained the requirements for the appointment of Chairs of Overview & Scrutiny Committee taking into account the strength of the various political groups and those with seats on Cabinet. In conclusion, the Labour and Independent groups were each entitled to two seats and the newly formed Flintshire People's Voice group were entitled to one seat.

Councillor Richard Jones proposed that the Independent group retain the Chairs of Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee. He also proposed that the Flintshire People's Voice group nominate the Chair of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee, with the Labour group nominating chairs for the two remaining committees. This was duly seconded and on being put to the vote, was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the Chairs of Overview & Scrutiny Committees be allocated as follows:

Overview & Scrutiny Committee:	Group to choose Chair:
Community & Housing	Independent
Corporate Resources	Independent
Education, Youth & Culture	Labour
Environment & Economy	Labour
Social & Healthcare	Flintshire People's Voice

(vii) Approval of the Constitution

The Chief Officer (Governance) sought approval of the Constitution which detailed the Council's functions and was kept under rolling review.

On being put to the vote, the recommendation was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the rules, procedures, delegations and codes/protocols within the Constitution be approved.

(viii) Nominations to Internal Bodies

The existing Scheme of Delegation provided for an Appointments Committee for first and second tier officers comprising seven Members. This was not a standing Committee and was convened when required by seeking nominations from Group Leaders.

Councillor Marion Bateman moved approval of the recommendation and was seconded by Councillor Roy Wakelam. On being put to the vote, this was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the make-up of the Appointments Committee be approved.

(ix) Standards Committee

The Chief Officer explained the composition of the Standards Committee, including the three County Councillors who had been appointed until April 2027. As Councillor Andrew Parkhurst had stood down from the Committee, nominations were sought to replace him for the remainder of this term.

Councillor Helen Brown proposed that Councillor Ian Hodge be appointed. This was seconded by Councillor Richard Jones and on put to the vote, was carried.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Ian Hodge be appointed as a third Councillor to serve on the Standards Committee for the remainder of this term.

(x) Appointments to Outside Bodies

As appointments had been made at the 2022 Annual Meeting for the whole Council term, approval was sought for delegated authority to be given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with Group Leaders, to make any amendments to appointments to outside bodies, as required.

The recommendation was put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

That Council delegates authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with Group Leaders, to make any amendments to appointments to outside bodies as required.

8. CORPORATE PARENTING CHARTER: 'A PROMISE FOR WALES'

As Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor Christine Jones presented the Corporate Parenting Charter, launched by Welsh Government to ensure that services for care-experienced children and young people in Wales were underpinned by empowerment, equality, non-discrimination, participation, and accountability and protection. Members were asked to reaffirm their collective responsibility as 'corporate parents' by adopting the Charter, with a commitment to engage with children and young people to measure organisational success and commitment to the Charter.

The recommendations were moved and seconded by Councillors Richard Jones and Chris Bithell.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Flintshire County Council signs 'the pledge' and adopts the Corporate Parenting Charter: 'A Promise for Wales'; and
- (b) That the Children's Services Forum take a lead in measuring organisational success and commitment to the Corporate Parenting Charter.

9. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

The Chief Officer (Governance) presented the schedule of meetings for 2024/25 following consultation. There were a number of conventions which had been adopted to avoid meeting clashes and accommodate Members' wishes where possible. An additional recommendation for dates/times to be changed in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Democratic Services Manager in consultation with the Committee Chair would help to build in flexibility.

As Chair of the Planning Committee, Councillor Richard Lloyd requested that the site visits scheduled for 27 August and meeting on 28 August be moved to 2 September and 4 September respectively. He also asked whether Planning Committee meetings could revert back to 1pm on days where there was no scheduled meeting in the morning. He was seconded by Councillor Mike Peers.

Councillor Richard Jones asked that the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings on 16 January and 13 February 2025 be moved to the following days (Friday mornings) due to other meetings scheduled in the afternoons. He suggested that Members of that Committee may wish to consider regular Friday slots to avoid meeting clashes.

Other Members spoke in support of removing the convention to hold committee meetings on designated days which would allow flexibility to the diary.

The Chief Officer clarified the proposed changes which would be progressed by the Democratic Services Manager and team.

On that basis, the changes were put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the draft Schedule of Meetings for 2024/25 be approved subject to the following changes:
 - To remove the requirement for committee meetings to be held on designated days.
 - To move the August dates for Planning Committee to the following week.
 - To change the start time of Planning Committee meetings to 1pm where there are no morning meetings scheduled.
 - To move the January and February 2025 dates of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee to the Friday mornings.

- (b) That the Democratic Services Manager be given delegated authority, in conjunction with the relevant Committee Chair, to amend the Schedule of Meetings in exceptional circumstances.

10. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were five members of the public present at the start of the meeting.

(The meeting started at 11am and ended at 2.55pm)

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Chair