



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 21st MAY 2024

PRESENT: Councillor J Harper (Mayor), Councillors D Maycock, C Adams, N Arkney, C Bain, B Clarke, L Clarke, M Clarke, G Coates, M Couchman, C Dean, M Bailey, R Claymore, T Clements, S Daniels, S Doyle, D Foster, H Hadley, T Jay, R Kingstone, K Norchi, J Oates, P Pallett, B Price, P Turner, L Smith, S Smith, N Statham, M Summers, J Wadrup, A Wells and L Wood

The following officers were present: Stephen Gabriel (Chief Executive), Nicola Hesketh (Monitoring Officer), Tracey Pointon (Legal Admin & Democratic Services Manager), Leanne Costello (Senior Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer) and Laura Sandland (Democratic and Executive Support Officer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

2 MAYOR'S CADET

Sea Cadet Daniels Hayes was inaugurated as the Mayor's Cadet for 2024/2025

3 TO ELECT A MAYOR

Councillor G Coates was Nominated as Mayor.

(Moved by Councillor S Daniels and seconded by Councillor M Couchman)

Councillor Gareth Coates was declared Mayor of Tamworth 2024/25

The Mayor, Councillor G Coates moved a motion to extend a vote of thanks for the outgoing Mayor Councillor John Harper, this motion was seconded by Cllr J Wadrup.

4 TO ELECT A DEPUTY MAYOR

Councillor C Bain was nominated for the office of Deputy Mayor.

(Moved by Councillor C Dean and seconded by Councillor L Wood)

Councillor C Bain was elected Deputy Mayor of Tamworth 2024/25

5 TO ELECT THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Councillor C Dean was nominated as Leader of the Council.

(Moved by Councillor D Foster and seconded by Councillor N Statham)

Councillor D Dean was elected Leader of the Council

6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J Oates declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item number 20 and stated that he would leave the meeting for the item.

7 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE TWO PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Mayor highlighted that minute number 95 of the minutes of 19th of March should read:

1. The council commits to doing and sends officers to explore options for future delivery of a town centre location.

On this basis, the minutes of the meeting held on 19th March and 11th March 2024 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor T Jay and seconded by Councillor C Dean)

8 TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR, LEADER, MEMBERS OF THE CABINET OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Mayor of Tamworth, Councillor G Coates made the following announcement

First let me welcome the new councillors to council, I hope you enjoy your time on the council whatever roles you have over the next few years. To the returning councillors, hello again and I thank you for all the advice and support you gave me in my first 12 months as a councillor. I would like to see the same olive branch that was given to me, also give to the new councillors.

As many previous Mayors have said in the past, it is a great honour and privilege to be in this position. So, thank you to the councillors that have elected me as Mayor of Tamworth for the next 12 Months.

I was asked what I would like to do and accomplish in the next 12 months as Mayor, asking for the Assembly room to put Die Hard back on at Christmas time wasn't the correct answer apparently.

So as there are no local borough elections at the end of my time as Mayor, I would hope and like to see all in this chamber working 100% for the residents of Tamworth, not using local issues to make political statements that only benefit them and not the residents of our town. Let's show the people of Tamworth that we are listening to them and working for them.

As you can tell I like my food, and I know we have a lot of food festivals in the town, I feel it would be nice if we could hold one in the town centre not on the castle grounds but around the market areas. Encouraging more people to spend time in our town centre.

I also want to promote all the positive things that Tamworth has to offer, from the events, businesses and local charities that do great work in our communities. Tamworth has so much to offer not just to the residents but the rest of the country. Tamworth FC now in the National League, making Tamworth an away day destination to a larger group of football fans. We have the Tamworth Town ale Trail that takes you around many great pubs we have in the town,

I will be promoting other businesses around Tamworth, as a councillor not only should we be sharing the many events that happen in Tamworth but the many and varied businesses that we have here.

Finally, a BIG thank you to my wife Sally, my daughters Alex and Katie, who have supported so much with their help and also the residents of Spital ward who voted for me in 2023, which has now led me today becoming Tamworth's 143rd Mayor.

The Leader of the Council made the following announcement,

I would like to start by congratulating you - and wishing you and Sally an enjoyable and successful year as Tamworth's first citizens. I know you will be a fabulous ambassador for our town.

Thank you also to John Harper for the work you have done over the last year. And we wish John and Maureen well in your retirement from civic duties. I hope you will take some time for yourself now John and we look forward to seeing you both around the town.

I would like to express my thanks to the those former Cllrs not here today whether they retired or were unsuccessful on 2 May, it is important to acknowledge the contribution you have all made over what has for some been 20 years' service. Your experience will be missed.

Also, congratulations to our new Chief Executive, Stephen Gabriel as he attends his first Annual Council meeting. We look forward to working with you as we all move towards improving the town and the quality of services we provide.

So, my next thanks and probably most important go to the people of Tamworth who have put their trust in our local labour party to lead the town through what are, we know, going to be some difficult, challenging times. We are committed to living up to the faith people have shown in us. We feel honoured to be given the opportunity to serve our Town.

We have been listening to local people and they want change. As we lead the Council going forward, we will continue to listen and put the needs and views of the local people at the heart of everything we do, making sure your voices are heard.

The last year has been interesting with its challenges and successes. We had an amazing set of results on 2 May and we now have an opportunity after 20 years to make real different to the lives of local people, here in Tamworth. We take over at a challenging time for the country and our Town. As a result of 14 years of national Tory government, local authorities find themselves with extremely tight budgets.

But whatever the reason for our current situation we need to work together, all the councillors in this room, working hard for all the people of Tamworth. Our residents, businesses and other stakeholders.

And I feel for most of the last year we have worked well together, as I said at the beginning of last year, our group is here to make a difference and we will not oppose things for the sake of it. As we take over control of the council, we still want to work collegiately with everyone, whatever party. We all want what is best for Tamworth, that's why we're here.

Because it is going to be really challenging over the next few years, we must remain focused on our job and why we all came into politics. It's about listening to people of Tamworth and delivering better, more responsive services for them, having ambition for our town and a vision to improve things for everyone. And making sure we bring people with us on that journey. It's not about our own importance or status as councillors and our own egos.

In order to achieve the change, we want we will need to work with a variety of different partners, whether they be businesses, local community groups, charities and other authorities, BUT, most importantly the people of Tamworth.

We will do things differently and make different choices. We will bring a new collaborative and co-operative politics to Tamworth, for the benefit of everyone. We want to bring our Town together for a fresh start.

We also want to bring change to the way we do politics here in Tamworth. People are not impressed with the Punch and Judy style of party politics that we see at prime minister's questions.

We all need to be the grown-ups. We need to work as collaboratively and co-operatively with everyone as much as possible, and that includes everyone in this room. So, where we agree with other parties on specific issues, we will work with them for the common good.

This last year has shown most of us want the same outcome. But we have different ways of achieving it and different priorities. Some people will call me naive, but I believe we can work more constructively together and do things

differently here in Tamworth, especially if our focus is always putting the town first. So, I want to be positive about the future despite the challenges we face.

And as we go forward our priorities will continue to be the issues the voters elected us on:

- Providing face to face services for local people
- Investing in creating a vibrant, regenerated town centre.
- Cleaning up our streets and cracking down on fly tipping - making sure there are no forgotten areas or estates.
- Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour
- Supporting people with the costing of living in whatever way we can

We are ambitious for our own Town's future. We can and will deliver the fresh start Tamworth deserves. And we will ensure that wherever possible, everyone is informed and feels included.

I would like to finish on a personal note. In acknowledging the role, I take on today I could not let it pass without paying tribute to my friend and mentor, the late Terry Dix who is the reason I became a councillor back in 2001. Terry always gave me the confidence and support to believe in myself. And I owe this success to him. Thank you, Terry.

Thank you for allowing me to speak Mr Mayor, I look forward to the year ahead. The hard work starts now.

9 QUESTION TIME:

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC NO. 1

Under Procedure Rule No 10, Ron Brown, of Tamworth will ask the Leader of the Labour Party, Councillor C Dean, the following question:-

By which date will this new controlling Group publish its own itemised Plan, including measurement criteria and delivery timescales, for changing things for the better?

Answer:-

As you can imagine we are still in the transition stage with Labour only taking control this evening, but as I have said earlier in my address to the council we will be giving priority to the pledges that we were elected on. We know that people want to see change that was reflected in the voting on 2nd May. But it would be wrong of me to put any timescales on projects at this time we will need to meet with officers to find a way forward to implement the changes we all want. But I can confirm that our group as already had meetings start this process and we will work with officers to develop the Corporate Plan.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC NO. 2

Under Procedure Rule No 10, Ron Brown, of Tamworth will ask the Leader of the Labour Party, Councillor C Dean, the following question:-

Does the majority Group have any plan to migrate the Public Survey Process of various Council-controlled topics away from inbound, unpublished, posted, or emailed opinions and towards public examination and dialogue on Social Media, such as Facebook, where very many more opinions can be expected?

Answer:-

Thank you for your question again.

We engage with customers in many ways, formal surveys are just one way we understand how people feel, but we also engage with people face to face such as through our tenants' groups and councillors through their surgeries and by talking to people when they attend our events, shows, and receive a direct service from us.

Council services closely monitor information and comments on social media to shape how services are delivered, and we also use these to shape communications going forward. For example, people were sharing they didn't know enough about what's happening in the town centre, so we've installed information on our hoarding, increased information on social media and shared information with the local press.

Council services are delivering the priorities of the administration, and now I and my new cabinet are here as a new administration, and we will shape new priorities for staff to deliver. I and my fellow councillors welcome feedback to us from residents; we use this information to make decisions about council services.

Supplementary

What are the timescales envisaged for our Council to actually begin polling resident's opinions using social media so that all can be seen participated in and measured in terms of both the Council's and residents' satisfaction with respect to time.

Answer

I can say that this is something we have talked about a lot as a group about the transparency about how we get information out to members of the public so it will be something I will be taking up with our communications team and we will look to go forward to see what else that we can do if there are any other ways that we should be engaging with people. But I will go back to my original statement that tonight is the start, I can't give you any time frames and what we will do and how we will do things. Social media changes all the time so we will look at how the best ways that we can get our message out and engage people because we are very keen that the engagement is there.

10 APPOINTMENT OF CABINET AND ALLOCATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Membership of Cabinet for 2024/2025 was received and circulated as below:

| Name | Cabinet role |
|----------------------|---|
| Carol Dean | Leader and Operations, Finance and Cost of Living. |
| Dave Foster | Deputy Leader and Environmental Sustainability, Waste and Recycling |
| Nova Arkney | Infrastructure, Heritage and Local Economy |
| Ben Clarke | Housing, Homelessness & Planning |
| Sarah Daniels | Cooperative Council, Community Partnerships and Anti-Social Behaviour |
| Lewis Smith | People Services, Engagement and Leisure |

11 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

Membership of Committees for 2024/2025 is as follows:

Cabinet
Councillors

C Dean
D Foster

B Clarke
N Arkney
S Daniels
L Smith

Appointments and Staffing Committee

Councillors

C Dean
N Arkney
B Clarke
T Jay
J Oates

Audit and Governance Committee

Councillors

C Adams
C Bain
M Couchman
A Wells
P Turner
S Doyle
J Wadrup

Planning Committee

Councillors

L Wood
C Adams
M Clarke
G Coates
D Foster
K Norchi
P Pallett
L Smith
R Claymore
S Smith
P Turner
M Summers
R Kingstone

Licensing Committee

Councillors

B Price
C Bain
B Clarke

L Clarke
M Clarke
S Daniels
P Pallet
N Statham
L Wood
M Summers
S Smith
T Clements
J Wadrup

Nominations & Grants

Councillors

A Wells
N Arkney
C Bain
C Dean
R Claymore
T Clements
M Bailey

Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Scrutiny Committee

Councillors

M Couchman
C Adams
L Clarke
M Clarke
N Statham
L Wood
B Price
M Bailey
J Oates

Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Councillors

S Smith
G Coates
M Couchman
H Hadley
K Norchi
A Wells
B Price
T Jay
M Summers

Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Councillors

C Bain
H Hadley
P Pallett
N Statham
A Wells
R Claymore
M Bailey
P Turner
S Doyle

Chief Officer Conduct Committee

Councillors

D Foster
L Clarke
K Norchi
T Clements
R Kingstone

Statutory Officer Conduct Committee

Councillors

M Clarke
H Hadley
D Foster
T Clements
R Kingstone

(Moved by Councillor C Dean and Seconded by Councillor T Jay)

12 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Appointments and Staffing Committee

Councillor Carol Dean

Audit and Governance Committee

Councillor Craig Adams

Licensing Committee

Councillor Ben Price

Planning Committee

Councillor Lee Wood

Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Samuel Smith

Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Chris Bain

Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Scrutiny Committee

Marion Couchman

Nominations & Grants Committee

Andy Wells

Chief Officer Conduct Committee

Dave Foster

Statutory Officer Conduct Committee

Margaret Clarke

(Moved en Bloc by Councillor C Dean and seconded by Councillor B Clarke)

13 APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

| Outside Body | Name |
|--|---|
| Birmingham LEP | Andy Wells |
| Building Control Shared Service Board | Ben Clarke |
| Citizens Advice Mid Mercia Management Committee | Pat Pallet Carol Dean |
| Civil Emergency Committee | Carol Dean Dave Foster Ben Clarke |
| Corporate Parenting Panel | Sarah Daniels |
| Destination Tamworth | Nova Arkney Margaret Clarke |
| Dorcas Management Committee | Andy Wells |
| Friends of Wiggington Park | Pat Pallett Marion Couchman |
| Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership - Joint Scrutiny Membership | Sarah Daniels |
| Health & Safety Shared Service Board | Chris Bain |
| High Rise Social Club | Nat Statham Lee Wood |
| Local Government Association, General Assembly | Carol Dean |
| Rawlett Trust | Gareth Coates |
| Sons of Rest | Ken Norchi |
| St Peters Church Management Committee | Marion Couchman |
| Staffordshire County Council - Health & Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee | Chris Bain |
| Staffordshire Joint Waste Management Board | Dave Foster |
| Staffordshire Pension Fund Governance - Consultative Forum | Carol Dean |
| Staffordshire Planning Forum | Ben Clarke Lee Wood |
| Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner Panel | Carol Dean |
| Stoke-On-Trent & Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership | Carol Dean |
| Stoke-On-Trent & Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership Scrutiny Panel | Carol Dean |
| Support Staffordshire | Sarah Daniels Helen Hadley |
| Tamworth Cornerstone Housing Association | Carol Dean Nat Statham |
| Tamworth Municipal Charities | Gareth Coates Sarah Daniels |
| Tamworth Strategic Partnership | Carol Dean |
| Tamworth Twinning Association | Lewis Smith Sarah Daniels Margaret Clarke |
| Waste Management Shared Service Board | Dave Foster Gareth Coates |
| West Midlands Combined Authority - Housing & Land Delivery Board | Ben Clarke |
| West Midlands Combined Authority Audit & Risk Assurance Committee | Carol Dean |
| West Midlands Combined Authority Board | Carol Dean Dave Foster |
| West Midlands Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel (WMCA) | Carol Dean |

(Moved by Councillor C Dean and seconded by Councillor T Jay)

14 THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS) (MEETINGS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION REGULATIONS) 2012

The Leader of the Council informed members that The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) Regulations 2012 specifies and requires inter alia under Regulation 19 that the executive leader must submit a report on a regular basis to Council containing details of particulars of each urgent executive decision together with a summary of the matters in respect of which the decision was made.

Resolved: that Council

Endorsed the Annual Executive Arrangements Report.

(Moved by Councillor C Dean and seconded by Councillor L Wood)

15 ANNUAL REPORT OF AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE 2023-24

Annual Report of Audit & Governance Committee 2023-24 was presented to Council.

Resolved that Council:

Endorsed the annual Report of the Audit & Governance committee 2023-2024

(Moved by Councillor B Price and seconded by Councillor L Smith)

16 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES 2023-24

The Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committees 2023-24 was presented to full Council. The report updated Council on the activities of the Corporate Scrutiny, the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny and Infrastructure Safety & Growth Scrutiny Committees over the year 2023/24.

Resolved that Council:

Endorsed the recommendations as set out in each of the attached annual reports, appendices 2-4.

(Moved by Councillor C Dean and seconded by Councillor C Bain)

17 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS - 2024-25

The Calendar of Meetings for 2024/25 was received and circulated at the meeting.

Resolved that Members:

Accepted the Calendar of Meetings for 2024/2025

(Moved by Councillor C Dean and seconded by Councillor L Wood)

18 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider excluding the Press and Public from the meeting by passing the following resolution:-

“That in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meeting and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, and Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public” At the time this agenda is published no representations have been received that this part of the meeting should be open to the public.”

At the time this agenda is published no representations have been received that this part of the meeting should be open to the public.

(Moved by Councillor B Price and seconded by Councillor L Smith)

19 NOMINATION RECEIVED - HONORARY FREEMAN OF THE BOROUGH (INDIVIDUAL)

Report of the Chairman of the Nominations and Grants Committee, to ask council to consider the Nomination received, considered, and supported by the Nominations and Grants Committee.

Resolved that Council:

1. considered the recommendation from the Nominations and Grants Committee and;
2. Agreed that the Nomination was worthy of an award under

S249 of the Local Government Act 1972;

(Moved by Councillor T Jay and seconded by Councillor T Clements)

A motion was moved that the nomination should include a second person who was also rendered worthy of the award

(Moved by Councillor R Kingstone and seconded by Councillor S Doyle)

This motion was agreed by a unanimous vote.

20 NOMINATION FOR HONORARY ALDERMAN

Councillor J Oates declared a non-pecuniary interest and left the meeting.

Report of the Chair of the Nominations and Grants Committee to ask council to consider the nomination received, considered, and supported by the Nominations and Grants Committee.

Resolved that Council:

1. Considered the Nomination and;
2. Agreed that the Nomination is worthy of an award under S249 of the Local Government Act 1972

(Moved by Councillor T Jay and seconded by Councillor T Clements)

The Mayor

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