

MINUTES of the ANNUAL meeting of the COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 13 MAY 2014

Present: Councillor G Jones (Chairman)

Councillors R Adams, G A Allman, R D Bayliss, R Blunt, A Bridges, J Bridges, N Clarke, P Clayfield, J Cotterill, J G Coxon, D De Lacy, D Everitt, J Geary, T Gillard, J Hault, D Howe, P Hyde, R Johnson, C Large, J Legrys, L Massey, C Meynell, T J Pendleton, V Richichi, J Ruff, N J Rushton, A C Saffell, S Sheahan, N Smith, A V Smith MBE, M Specht, L Spence, D J Stevenson, R Woodward and M B Wyatt

Officers: Mr S Bambrick, Mr R Bowmer, Ms C E Fisher, Mrs M Meredith, Mrs M Phillips and Miss E Warhurst

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Holland and T Neilson.

Councillor J Legrys requested that it be noted in the minutes that Councillor T Neilson's employer, TNT, had refused to release him to allow him to attend the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor S Sheahan declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in item 13 – Appointment of Representatives on Community Bodies, having been appointed to various bodies as a Member of Leicestershire County Council, including the Highways Forum, Minorca Surface Mine Site Liaison Committee, New Albion Revised Liaison Committee and Redbank Manufacturing Liaison Committee.

3. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor G Jones said a few words regarding his year as Chairman of the Council. He thanked all Members for their support over the last 12 months. He stated that he had come into the role with a dark cloud over him but had come through this with the help and support of friends and Members from both sides of the Chamber. He thanked Members for making his role easy. He thanked Councillor R Blunt for proposing him and all Members for voting for him. He particularly praised Angela Bexton and Judith Peace for their support during his year as Chairman. He also praised his Consort Amalia for jumping into the fray. He presented his Consort with a bouquet of flowers as a small token of his appreciation.

Councillor J Legrys referred to the personal difficulties Councillor G Jones had experienced in the last year and felt that he had shown true grit to be able to bear his personal loss with good wisdom. He thanked him for his neutrality as Chairman and for pushing the Council forward. He wished him the best of luck in the future.

Councillor M Specht referred to the personal devastation Councillor G Jones had faced 12 months ago. He added that it was positive that he had been able to step into the breach and take on the role as Chairman. He thanked him on behalf of all Members and officers.

Councillor R Blunt wanted to congratulate Councillor G Jones on an incredible year of highs and lows. He added that he had known he would be a great Chairman and suspected that he would miss the role as he had been a great credit to the Council. He commended Amalia who had been fantastic at the Green Footprints awards.

Nominations were sought for the Chairman for the ensuing municipal year.

Chairman's initials

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt that Councillor G A Allman be appointed as Chairman of the Council for 2014/15. He stated that Councillor G A Allman had also faced a difficult year and he was pleased to see him here in fine health and ready to take on the role.

The motion was seconded by Councillor A V Smith.

Upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor G A Allman be appointed Chairman of the Council for 2014/15.

Councillor G A Allman then took the Chair and the retiring Chairman invested him with the Chain of Office. The Chairman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

The Chairman thanked Members for their kind words and for electing him as Chairman.

The Chairman presented his Consort with her Chain of Office.

The Chairman presented Councillor G Jones with his past Chairman's badge. He stated that Councillor G Jones had had a remarkable year in office under great personal stress, devoting and focussing his energies, passion and vast experience to the good of the Council. He proposed a vote of thanks for the retiring Chairman.

4. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

It was moved by Councillor A V Smith, seconded by Councillor M Specht and

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor J Bridges be appointed as Deputy Chairman of the Council for 2014/15.

The Chairman invested Councillor J Bridges with the Chain of Office. The Deputy Chairman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor J Bridges stated that he knew Councillor G A Allman would do a sterling job as Chairman. He added that Councillor G Jones had done a fantastic job this year as not only had he dealt with his problems, he had led the way for all Members in the way he had represented the Council and delivering for the whole of the District.

5. APPOINTMENT OF LEADER

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor R Blunt be appointed as the Leader of the Council for 2014/15.

Councillor R Blunt thanked Members for their support for another year. He looked forward to the election in the coming year.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman stated that the coming Civic year would bring its own challenges and would culminate with the Local Government and General Elections. He pledged to serve the Council with pragmatism to all elected Members, officers and staff. He added that he considered it an honour to hold this post as a figurehead for the community and to act as

Chairman's initials

the first citizen of the district. He personally thanked elected Members from all groups, officers and staff for their good wishes and support during his recent health problems.

The Chairman announced that his nominated charities for the forthcoming year were the Royal British Legion and Bowel Cancer Research.

The Chairman presented Councillor R Woodward with a certificate of long service having completed twenty one years as a serving member of the Council.

Councillor R Woodward congratulated Councillor G A Allman on his appointment as Chairman. He stated that he truly appreciated the long service award and commented that the time had passed quickly. He reflected on his service to the Whitwick and Thringstone wards. He added that he had enjoyed a good rapport with all officers and Members on the opposite side of the Chamber despite political differences. He thanked all Members for the award which was something he would always treasure.

Councillor M Specht said a few words about Councillor R Woodward, who had been his mentor when he was a young man, and whom he had known for 48 years. He stated that he had always been outspoken and very focussed. He expressed sincere congratulations.

Councillor J Legrys stated that it was a pity that his group Leader was not able to be present to make this speech for someone who held the group together as secretary and who acted as a mentor to many Members. He added that Councillor R Woodward worked tirelessly in his ward, for the Council and as branch secretary. He commended Councillor R Woodward for the good work he had done for the North West Leicestershire branch and for the Council.

Councillor R Blunt stated that he would sum up Councillor R Woodward as a Labour stalwart with humour and passion, but also with kindness. He added that he remembered those who had showed kindness when his group were in opposition, and he thanked Councillor R Woodward for having always been kind and polite.

7. LEADER'S AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader of the Council, Councillor R Blunt announced the appointments and delegations of executive functions for the forthcoming municipal year as follows:

Deputy Leader and Community Services Portfolio Holder - Councillor Alison Smith
Housing Portfolio Holder - Councillor Roger Bayliss

Regeneration and Planning Portfolio Holder - Councillor Trevor Pendleton

Corporate Portfolio Holder - Councillor Nick Rushton

Business Portfolio Holder - Councillor Tony Gillard

As in previous years the Executive responsibilities will be delegated to the Cabinet to take decisions collectively.

Councillor R Blunt thanked all Members for their work and recognised the commitment required by Cabinet Members in respect of their Portfolio areas.

On behalf of the Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor J Legrys announced the Shadow Cabinet as follows:

Leader – Councillor T Neilson

Chairman's initials

Deputy Leader, Planning and the Local Plan - Councillor J Legrys

Housing - Councillor J Ruff

Community and Wellbeing – Councillor S Sheahan

Environment and Enforcement - Councillor N Clarke

Corporate - Councillor D De Lacy

Business and Regeneration and Gypsies and Travellers lead - Councillor J Geary

He wished all Members well in the coming year which would be difficult due to the local elections. He acknowledged however that the due processes and scrutiny needed to continue throughout.

Councillor A V Smith gave an update on the meeting requested by Councillor P Hyde in respect of the Licensing agenda to discuss with the Police their approach to providing evidence. She advised that the Police had met with Licensing officers in April and the importance of providing appropriate evidence was discussed. She advised that the next Licensing Committee would take place in June and an interactive session was planned as in the previous year. She added that the Police had been invited to attend this meeting and it would be useful to allow this to take place before deciding what further action was necessary. She thanked Councillor P Hyde for his interest in the matter.

8. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Justin Crawford of 63 Adam Morris Way, Coalville, put the following question to Councillor T J Pendleton:

“Basketball Court, Lillehammer Drive, Coalville:

- How long will the games area be closed because me and my friends have nowhere to play ball games
- How will the Council talk to me and my friends about what happens next to make sure it's right for us”

Councillor T J Pendleton gave the following response:

“I would like to start by thanking Justin for asking these questions and for coming here tonight.

Justin, I will answer your questions directly but I do need to explain the issues briefly for everyone here tonight.

The Council approved a housing development on the old Coalville Tec/Stephensons College site in 2005 and as part of the scheme it approved a Multi Use Games Area. The games area was the last part of the development to be completed and it started to be used in January 2013.

Since its opening the Council has been receiving regular complaints from the surrounding neighbours of the games area and the Police have received over 58 reports of Anti Social Behaviour.

I must say at this point that in many cases it is alleged the poor behaviour came from young adults who did not live on the estate. I also must say the games area has been used by residents and children on many occasions without any Anti-Social Behaviour.

However, some of the issues are unavoidable as they are caused by the design of the games area which creates high levels of noise from normal ball games activity and also from balls leaving the court and entering/damaging neighbouring property.

The District Council, the Police and the County Council have tried various things to reduce the Anti Social Behaviour including attendance from the County Council's Impact Team and by increasing the police presence.

The games area is currently owned and maintained by Barratts as part of the housing development.

The Council did attend a meeting on 17 March between Barratts and the surrounding neighbours to hear about the issues they were having.

Following the meeting a letter was received from the Police outlining their views and also from Barratts requesting a temporary closure to the games area to give respite from the anti-social behaviour issues for the surrounding neighbours.

The Council in response agreed the following;

- Temporary closure of the games area through fencing it off, to provide immediate respite for the surrounding neighbours. This action had the full support of the Police and the local ward members.
- Agreement for the fencing to remain for a maximum of 6 months providing a planning application is received by 4 June detailing proposals for the future use of the area.
- If no application is received by this date the Council reserves its right to consider action against Barratts for breach of the legal agreement to provide the facility.

The Council has not yet received an application from Barratts with any proposals for the future use of the area.

If an application is received by the Council normal planning consultation processes will be followed but in addition the Council will arrange a separate meeting with the young people to explain the application, its proposals and listen to their views.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Councillor Legrys for raising the matter with the Council through his locality work and supporting the Council in seeking to resolve the anti social behaviour issues.

Justin, I did say that I would answer your questions directly and thank you for your patience whilst I explained the background to this issue.

So Question 1) – How long will the games area remain closed?

It will be closed for up to 6 months (until mid October) that is if we receive some proposals by 4 June. If we don't receive any proposals we will meet to decide what to do next. The proposals may include changes to the games area or moving the games area somewhere else but we don't know yet.

Which leads me to your Question 2) – How will we talk to you and your friends about what happens next?

We will contact you and your friends (through your parents) and we will arrange to meet you to explain and discuss any proposals which we are waiting for. We don't have any at the moment but when we do, you will be hearing from us again and you can then tell us what you think of them.

Finally, I would again like to thank you Justin for asking the questions, for listening tonight and for coming along to our meeting, thank you”.

9. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were no questions received.

10. PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

11. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2014.

It was moved by Councillor J Bridges, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

12. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND GROUPS, ELECTION OF CHAIRMEN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMEN

The Chairman referred Members to the nominations as set out in the additional papers circulated at the meeting.

It was moved by Councillor G A Allman, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

RESOLVED THAT:

- a) The appointments to the Committees and Groups as set out in the additional papers be agreed.
- b) The Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of the Committees and Groups as set out in the additional papers be agreed.

13. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON COMMUNITY BODIES

The Chairman referred Members to the nominations as set out in the additional papers.

Councillor D Everitt withdrew the following nominations:

Councillor R Adams for the Bardon Hill Quarries Liaison Committee
Councillor P Hyde for the Cliffe Hill Quarry Liaison Committee

Councillor T Gillard thanked Councillor D Everitt for his efforts in negotiating the nominations.

It was moved by Councillor G A Allman, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

Chairman's initials

RESOLVED THAT:

Representatives be appointed to the community bodies as set out in the additional papers, subject to the withdrawn nominations above.

14. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2014/2015

It was moved by Councillor G A Allman, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

RESOLVED THAT:

The schedule of meetings for 2014/2015 be approved.

15. MEMBER CONDUCT ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

Councillor N J Rushton presented the report to Members.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

The Member Conduct Annual Report 2013/14 be received and endorsed.

16. URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET IN QUARTER 4 2013/14

Councillor R Blunt presented the report to Members.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor A V Smith and

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.13 pm