

Council

Wednesday, 24 May 2023

Attendees:

Councillor Tracy Arnold, Councillor Lewis Barber, Councillor Lyn Barton, Councillor Kevin Bentley, Councillor Catherine Bickersteth, Councillor Molly Bloomfield, Councillor Michelle Burrows, Councillor Roger Buston, Councillor Mark Cory, Councillor Pam Cox, Councillor Paul Dundas, Councillor Andrew Ellis, Councillor Mark Goacher, Councillor Martin Goss, Councillor Jeremy Hagon, Councillor Dave Harris, Councillor Mike Hogg, Councillor Alison Jay, Councillor John Jowers, Councillor David King, Councillor Jocelyn Law, Councillor Darius Laws, Councillor Michael Lilley, Councillor Sue Lissimore, Councillor Andrea Luxford Vaughan, Councillor Jackie Maclean, Councillor Sam McCarthy, Councillor Sam McLean, Councillor Sara Naylor, Councillor Steph Nissen, Councillor Chris Pearson, Councillor Carl Powling, Councillor Kayleigh Rippingale, Councillor Thomas Rowe, Councillor Lee Scordis, Councillor Lesley Scott-Boutell, Councillor Fay Smalls, Councillor Paul Smith, Councillor Natalie Sommers, Councillor Michael Spindler, Councillor William Sunnucks, Councillor Leigh Tate, Councillor Martyn Warnes, Councillor Dennis Willetts, Councillor Julie Young, Councillor Tim Young

601 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Barber*, Davidson, Ellis*, Kirkby-Taylor, Lilley*, Mannion and Smithson.

* Mayor Making ceremony only.

602 Prayers

The Revered Sue Howlett opened the meeting with prayers.

The Retiring Mayor, Councillor T. Young, chaired the meeting for the items at minutes 601 – 603.

603 Election of the Mayor

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Bentley, seconded by Councillor J. Young and supported by Councillors Goss and Goacher and:-

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that Councillor Jowers be elected as Mayor of the City of Colchester for the ensuing municipal year.

Councillor Jowers took the customary oath and signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

Councillor Jowers then took the Chair and returned thanks for his election.

604 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 22 February 2023 and 23 March 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

605 Election of the Deputy Mayor

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Goss and seconded and supported by Councillors Dundas, J. Young and Goacher and:

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that Councillor Scott-Boutell be elected as Deputy Mayor of the City of Colchester for the ensuing municipal year.

Councillor Scott-Boutell then signed the declaration of acceptance of office and returned thanks for her election.

606 Vote of Thanks to the Retiring Mayor

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Scordis and seconded and supported by Councillors Dundas, Goss and Goacher and:-

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that the best thanks of the Council are due and are hereby recorded to Councillor Tim Young for the admirable manner in which he has discharged

the responsible duties of the Mayoralty during his period of office and that a transcript of this resolution under the Common Seal be furnished to him.

607 Mayor's Chaplain and Other Announcements

The Mayor announced that the theme of his Mayoralty would be “Volunteers – the heart of our communities.”

The Mayor announced that he would be supporting the following charities:-

Army Benevolent Fund
Community 360
LEPRA
Freedom Boat Adventures
Beacon House Ministries

The Mayor announced that he had appointed the Reverend Dr Amanda Elmes as his Chaplain.

608 Adjournment

RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned until 12.00 noon in the Council Chamber.

609 Have Your Say! (Council)

Angel Kalyan addressed Council pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 5(1) to ask the Leader of the Council whether there had been any progress since 22 February 2023 when she last addressed the Council, as she had heard nothing. Would the Leader meet with her as she had been denied due process and there was inconsistency between what the Monitoring Officer had told Council and what she could prove as fact.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, indicated that her concerns had been examined exhaustively by officers, by the Court and by the Ombudsman. Whilst he was sorry for the distressing set of circumstances she had

experienced, there was nothing further the Council could say in respect of her concerns. The Council could not reopen these issues. As a matter of personal courtesy he would be prepared to have a conversation but the position remained that the matter was closed.

610 Delegations made by the Leader of the Council

RESOLVED that the Deputy Leader of the Council, the appointment of Cabinet members, and the allocation of responsibility for Portfolios, as determined by the Leader of the Council and as set out in the Supplementary Information for this meeting, be noted.

611 Appointment of Panels, Committees and Sub-Committees

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the number of seats, group representation and membership of the Governance and Audit Committee, Licensing Committee, Planning Committee, Policy Panel and Scrutiny Panel (including the Crime and Disorder Committee) for the ensuing municipal year be as set out in the Supplementary Information for this meeting.
- (ii) In accordance with the provisions of section 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the appointments to the Environment and Sustainability Panel and Local Plan Committee for the ensuing municipal year shall not be on a Group basis and the membership be as set out in the Supplementary Information for this meeting
- (iii) That the membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel be as set out in the Supplementary Information for this meeting.

612 Honorary Alderman Eligibility Criteria

Alderman Lewis addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 5(1) and offered her congratulations to the Mayor. Honorary Alderman met regularly to discuss civic matters informally. This saved time in decision making and

helped prevent misunderstandings. However, this proposal had not been subject to the normal processes with a report submitted without any informal debate beforehand. Whilst it was suggested that all Group Leaders were in support this was not the case. The Alderman Group had voted 10 to one against the proposal. Comparisons with our authorities were irrelevant as no two authorities had the same criteria. The proposals would create a two tier system and put issues of heritage and tradition into the political arena. The Alderman vote in February had been disregarded and Aldermen requested that Council support their views to keep such issues out of the political arena.

The High Steward, Alderman Sir Bob Russell, addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 5(1) and offered his congratulations to the Mayor. He was the first Mayor who had previously been Chair of Essex County Council and Mayor of West Mersea Town Council. This proposal had been sprung on Honorary Alderman who had not been shown respect. The proposal stemmed from a desire to award Honorary Alderman status on former Councillor Turrell, but there had been no discussion on the issue before a report was submitted to the Alderman Group in February. That the proposal was taken forward with such little support amongst Honorary Alderman showed a lack of respect and courtesy. The vote had been tied at Governance and Audit Committee. The claim that this would bring consistency with Essex County Council was not true as they did not operate a 16 year criteria. The City Council's processes predated Essex County Councils so there was no reason to follow them. The other examples given related to Council's in Hertfordshire so were of limited relevance. Council should take its own decisions and any Councillors who respected tradition should vote against the proposal.

Alderman Higgins addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 5(1) and offered her congratulations to the Mayor. She had tried to raise the matter informally. The current criteria had been in place for a considerable period and rules and criteria could change over time. The point of the Alderman system was to recognise service. Former Councillor Turrell had served as Leader of the Council for six years, which deserved recognition. Essex County Council had changed their criteria and she had been a beneficiary of that.

Councillor Smith moved the motion and requested that separate votes be taken on the eligibility criteria contained in the recommendation, firstly on criteria (i) and (ii) together, and then a separate vote on criteria (iii). The Mayor indicated he was content with this proposal.

On being put to the vote the voting was as follows:—

Criteria (i) and (ii) were approved (TWENTY ONE voted FOR and EIGHTEEN voted AGAINST).

Criteria (iii) was not approved (SEVENTEEN voted FOR and TWENTY THREE voted AGAINST).

613 Code of Conduct Complaint

RESOLVED that the recommendations contained in draft minute 365 of the Governance and Audit Sub Committee meeting of 30 March 2023 be approved and adopted.

614 Adoption of the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUS) that the Council makes the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan following its approval at referendum.

615 Authorisation of Absence from Council and Committee meetings

The Mayor indicated that this report had been withdrawn.

616 Motion of Thanks

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUS) that the Council recorded its grateful thanks to former Councillors Chapman, Chuah, Coleman, Fox, Leatherdale, Moore, B. Oxford, G. Oxford and Wood for the public service rendered by them to the City during their period of office as a Councillor and instructs that a transcript of this resolution be furnished to them under the Common Seal as a permanent record of the appreciation of the Council.

The Mayor invited newly elected Councillors Dundas, Moffat, Powling, Rowe, Smalls and Sommers to introduce themselves to Council.