

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 29th January, 2020
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

Present: The Mayor- Councillor Simon White (Chair)

Councillors:	J. Cooper	S. Sweeney	A. Gardner
	J. Walklate	S Tagg	B. Panter
	I. Wilkes	S. Burgess	R. Wright
	G Williams	M. Stubbs	G White
	J Williams	J Tagg	J Waring
	A. Fear	P. Northcott	A. Fox-Hewitt
	T. Kearon	B. Proctor	A. Lawley
	P Waring	S. Dymond	S. Moffat
	M. Holland	T. Johnson	Mrs J Cooper
	Miss J Cooper	A. Parker	G. Burnett
	M. Reddish	S. Pickup	H. Maxfield
	K. Robinson	M. Olszewski	D.Grocott
	G. Heesom	D. Jones	G. Hutton

Officers:	David Adams	Executive Director Operational Services
	Geoff Durham	Mayor's Secretary / Member Support Officer
	Jan Willis	Interim Executive Director - Resources and Support Services and Section 151 Officer
	Martin Hamilton	Chief Executive
	Simon McEneny	Executive Director - Commercial Development & Economic Growth
	Daniel Dickinson	Head of Legal /Monitoring Officer

Also in attendance:

1. WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed Councillor David Grocott and officers: Daniel Dickinson, Denise French and Simon McEneny to their first meeting of Full Council.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors' B Johnson, Owen, Rout and Shenton.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Daniel Dickinson declared an interest in item 5 of the agenda as the report was about his role within the Council.

4. **MINUTES**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November, 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

5. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor advised Members about his Grand Charity Ball on 25th April and asked for their support at the event.

6. **DESIGNATION OF MONITORING OFFICER**

Mr Daniel Dickinson, Head of Legal and Governance declared an interest in this item and left the room during the debate.

The Leader, Councillor Simon Tagg introduced a report to designate Daniel Dickinson as the Borough Council's Monitoring Officer. Mr Dickinson had been appointed by a cross-party panel. The Leader stated that it was a very important role on the Council and was happy to recommend the appointment.

He expressed thanks to Caroline Elwood who had recently left the Council, for her work as the Interim Monitoring Officer.

Councillor Robinson seconded the appointment of Mr Dickinson stating that he was the best person for the job and agreed that the cross-party panel was a good method of recruitment.

Councillor Robinson advised that Mr Dickinson had recently attended a Public Protection Sub-Committee meeting and had asked Members to see how it was run and if anything could be done to improve the meeting.

Councillors' Proctor and Reddish thanked Caroline Elwood for her work and welcomed Mr Dickinson.

Resolved: That, in accordance with Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act, 1989, Mr Daniel Dickinson be designated as the Council's Monitoring Officer.

7. **CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The Leader introduced a report to appoint Members to the Employment Committee: Councillor Kyle Robinson and the Economy, Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee: Councillor David Grocott.

In addition, the Leader advised Members of changes that had been made to his Cabinet:

Councillor Jill Waring replaced Councillor Mark Holland as Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Heritage.

Councillor Helena Maxfield replaced Councillor Jill Waring as Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing.

Councillor Holland would replace Councillor Maxfield as member/substitute of the Council's Scrutiny Committees and was also appointed as Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group.

Councillor Robinson supported the recommendations and advised Members that he had appointed a Shadow Cabinet:

Councillor Kyle Robinson:	People and Partnerships
Councillor Sarah Pickup:	Corporate and Service Improvement
Councillor Sylvia Dymond:	Leisure, Culture and Heritage
Councillor Allison Gardner:	Environment, Recycling and Climate Change
Councillor John Williams:	Planning and Growth
Councillor Mike Stubbs:	Finance and Efficiency
Councillor Dave Jones:	Community Safety and Wellbeing.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That Councillor Kyle Robinson be appointed to the Employment Committee.
 - (ii) That Councillor David Grocott be appointed to the Economy, Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee.
 - (iii) That Councillor Mark Holland be appointed to the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillor Maxfield.
 - (iv) That Councillor Mark Holland be appointed to the Health, Wellbeing and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillor Maxfield.
 - (v) That Councillor Mark Holland be appointed As a substitute member to the Economy, Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee.

As a result of resolution (iii) above, Councillor Maxfield having been the Chair of the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee, nominations were now required for this position.

Two nominations were received:

Councillor Holland, proposed by Councillor Simon Tagg and seconded by Councillor Sweeney. Councillor Holland received 21 votes.

Councillor Stubbs, proposed by Councillor Robinson and seconded by Councillor Jones. Councillor Stubbs received 18 votes.

- Resolved:** That Councillor Holland be appointed as Chair of the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee.

8. STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Leader, Councillor Simon Tagg submitted a report which provided an update to Members on the activities and decisions of the Cabinet, together with the Forward Plan.

The Statement was taken a paragraph at a time to allow for questions to be asked.

Paragraph 2.1:

Councillor Stubbs asked about the leadership roles for the Town Deals.

The Leader advised that Newcastle was one of only two Councils in the country with two town deal propositions. In respect of the Town Deals for this Council, the Leader would be take the position on the Kidsgrove Board and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Sweeney would take the position on the Newcastle under Lyme Board. The Chair's position would be taken by someone from the private sector.

Councillor Robinson asked if the Town Deal for Newcastle-under-Lyme covered the surrounding villages. The Leader advised that the Town Deal for Kidsgrove covered all of the Kidsgrove wards and similarly, all urban Borough wards were covered by the Newcastle Town Deal.

Councillor Fear asked how much money had been received by the Council already in relation to this. The Leader advised that almost half a million pounds had already been received. There was a mechanism in place to get more funding in and this, in turn would be used to bring in even more funding.

Councillor Stubbs asked the officers to clarify what status the Boards took, in that were they classed as a committee of the Council or an Outside Body?

Officers replied that at present they were interim Boards and were partnership boards guiding the preparation of the bids and ensuring that stakeholders had a voice. The Council was the controlling body and controlled the funds. Mr Dickinson advised that they were not committees of the Council and in the absence of specific provision in the constitution, the task of appointing council members to the boards fell to Cabinet.

Councillor Burnett fully supported the Boards stating that Kidsgrove had needed an injection of money for a long time.

The Leader advised that a written answer would be supplied to Councillor Stubbs.

Paragraph 2.2:

Councillor Olszewski asked how many charging points the £780,000 of funding would provide, where the points would be located and also, how many electric cars there were in the Borough.

The Leader stated that the main priority was for taxis. The chargers would be located in public car parks and officers were currently working on the plans.

Councillor John Cooper asked if the Leader thought that the chargers would become obsolete in the future with the advancement of technology.

The Leader advised that the chargers would have multiple connectors to help to future proof the technology.

Paragraph 3.1:

Councillor Julie Cooper asked how many rough sleepers there were currently in the Borough.

Councillor Helena Maxfield stated that £45,000 funding had been made available to help to solve the rough sleeping issue. Currently there were four rough sleepers in the town centre and their safety needed to be ensured. There were outreach workers and the funding would enhance the help.

Councillor Jill Waring the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing added that she had been out with the outreach team at 4.45am one morning last week. One man insisted that he did not want help but was told where he could get a hot meal at the Salvation Army on a Tuesday and Thursday. There, people could also see a chiropodist, hairdresser and get help with appointments and accommodation.

Councillor Waring was pleased about the additional funding which would help to build an excellent service. More outreach workers were needed and more housing made available.

Councillor Robinson asked what work was being done to tackle modern slavery stating that there was a lot of aggressive begging in the town and people were being dropped off in a morning and collected later in the day. This could be an indication of people being abused and used and if this was the case it needed to be taken seriously. Councillor Robinson asked if the police were aware of this. Councillor Waring advised that last week seven arrests were made.

Paragraph 3.2:

Councillor Robinson stated that the Kidsgrove Sports Centre Community Group had done an excellent job and some great ideas were coming forward. The Leader was asked if, with the lighter nights approaching, more activities could be put on whilst waiting for the Sports Centre to reopen.

Councillor Paul Waring stated that he had been encouraged by the SCAPE scheme and felt that it was an efficient way of dealing with major projects.

Members stated that this was an exciting time for Kidsgrove. A meeting was due to be held to review the final plans.

The Leader thanked everyone for their positive comments stating that it was a wonderful testament to the Community moving forward.

Paragraph 3.3:

Councillor Burnett stated that the Council would be investing £70,000 per year over the next three years for the Debt, Benefit and Advice Service even though it is a non-statutory service and asked if it was value for money.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Efficiency stated that the service would address any issues and was the right thing for the people of Newcastle.

Paragraph 3.4:

Councillor Heesom stated that it would be great for worthy individuals to be recognised.

Members felt that this would be a great opportunity to commend deserving people.

Councillor Robinson stated that the scheme had the support of the Labour Group and that he would be putting forward names of community champions.

The Leader stated that this was a great scheme for the Borough to have and advised Members of the different categories. Sponsors would be sought for each of the award categories.

The scheme would be in partnership with the Sentinel.

Resolved: That the Statement of the Leader of the Council be received and noted.

9. REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Written reports had been submitted for the Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee and the Health, Wellbeing and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee.

A verbal update was given for the Economy, Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee by the Chair, Councillor Gary White.

Councillor White stated that the Committee was extremely busy and had looked at climate change mitigation with a Task and Finish Group yet to be set up. The Town Centre Car Parking Strategy had also been discussed as had the Market and Anti-Social Behaviour.

Strategic Guidance of Overview and Scrutiny Committees has been considered and was accepted as written.

It had been agreed to set up a Task and Finish Group for Walley's Quarry. Dates needed to be agreed and specific environmental training for Members plus a site visit needed to take place. The Environment Agency had come on board but a response was still awaited from Red Industries.

Resolved: That the reports be received.

10. REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEES

A written report had been submitted for the Audit and Standards Committee.

Verbal updates were given by the Chairs of the Planning Committee and Licensing and Public Protection Committee.

Councillor Fear advised that the Committee had met on its regular cycle and they had been well attended. Simeon Manley was thanked for his work as the Interim Head of Planning and welcomed the new Head, Shawn Fleet.

There were some enforcement matters that the Committee were keeping a close eye on.

Councillor Olszewski advised that the Committee had only met once since last Council. The Fees and Charges for 20/21 relating to scrap metal dealers, gambling and sexual entertainment licences had been reviewed and agreed as had the taxi fees and charges for 20/21.

Members of the Committee had agreed to review officer delegations and a report would be taken to the next Committee.

Resolved: That the reports be received.

11. **MOTIONS OF MEMBERS**

A Motion was received on Brexit, proposed by Councillor Fear and seconded by Councillor Holland.

Councillor Fear spoke on the Motion stating that he was delighted to be bringing it to Council. He had campaigned for Brexit all along and added that this country had been a beacon to the rest of Europe.

Members debated the Motion asking the Leader to write to the Prime Minister thanking him for his swift action and requesting that the residents, businesses and partners in the Borough should all benefit from promised funds to promote prosperity and improve infrastructure.

An amendment to the Motion was tabled at the meeting, proposed by Councillor Kyle Robinson and seconded by Councillor Dave Jones:

Add after item 4

5. That the Economy, Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee monitor the impact of the government's 'Shared Prosperity Fund' as follows:

- (i) As a standing agenda item, receives regular updates about the impact of loss of EU funding and how this is mitigated by the Shared Prosperity Fund.*
- (ii) As part of the regular reporting to Council, update Members on its progress.*

The amendment was debated and was not accepted by Councillor Fear.

Councillor Robinson stated that he did not want to thank the Prime Minister for delivering Brexit.

The Leader stated that he supported Brexit and would be more than happy to write to the Prime Minister as requested in the Motion.

A vote was taken on the amendment. The amendment was not agreed.

Following further debate, Councillor Fox-Hewitt stated that he wanted to support the Motion but felt that a change to the wording in the Motion was required:

Under the Council asks the Leader to write...

Number two, replace the word 'request' with 'demand' and to insert the word 'Borough' before residents.

These amendments were seconded by Councillor Kearon.

Councillor Fear stated that he would accept inserting the word Borough but would not accept replacing 'request' with 'demand'.

A vote was taken on the second amendment. The amendment was not agreed.

Councillor Holland requested that the Motion be voted upon as printed stating that a 'shopping list' for the Borough would be sent to the Government.

The original Motion was therefore voted upon and was carried.

The following Members requested that their votes in support of the Motion be recorded:

Councillors: Dymond, Jones, Moffatt, Robinson, Wilkes and John Williams.

12. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Question 1:

Councillor Jenny Cooper asked the Leader would write a letter to the Chairman of Staffordshire County Council's Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee to request a referral to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care of the decisions made by the North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body last week.

The Leader stated that he would do this.

Councillor Cooper asked if the Leader would also write to the local MP's

The Leader agreed to do this also, adding that Aaron Bell would be meeting with the CCG later that week.

Question 2:

Councillor Parker asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Efficiency for an update on progress made in replacing the pay and display machines in the town centre that had recently been vandalised.

Councillor Sweeney stated that there had been a spate of vandalism a few months ago on the Midway, School Street and Windsor Street and the work would be completed later this week and work was underway to replace machines in other areas.

Councillor Parker asked if any more had been damaged since or if it had been a one-off?

Councillor Sweeney stated that King Street car park had also been targeted and the machines there need replacing.

13. RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

14. STANDING ORDER 18 - URGENT BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Business.

COUNCILLORSIMON WHITE
Chair

Meeting concluded at 9.07 pm