

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
4 MAY 2023

Minutes of the Flintshire County Council Annual Meeting held as a hybrid meeting on Thursday, 4 May 2023 (1pm)

PRESENT: Councillor Mared Eastwood (Chair)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Bernie Attridge, 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, David Evans, Chrissy Gee, David Healey, Gladys Healey, Ian Hodge, Andy Hughes, Dave Hughes, Ray Hughes, Dennis Hutchinson, Alasdair Ibbotson, Paul Johnson, Christine Jones, Richard Jones, Simon Jones, 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

APOLOGIES: Councillors Jean Davies and Carol Ellis

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), Chief Officer (Education and Youth), Chief Officer (Streetscene and Transportation), Chief Officer (Housing and Assets), Chief Officer (Social Services), Corporate Manager (People and Organisational Development), Community & Business Protection Manager and Democratic Services team

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

2. CHAIR'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2022-23

As the outgoing Chair, Councillor Mared Eastwood presented her review of the year 2022-23.

In addition to thanking her husband and Consort Mr Tim Eastwood, her Chaplain and officers who had all supported her in the role, Councillor Eastwood paid tribute to those who had been adversely impacted by the pandemic. During her review, she highlighted a range of civic services and events at which she had been proud to represent Flintshire during her term of office. She welcomed opportunities to speak Welsh and encouraged all across the Chamber to raise awareness of the Welsh language. She also commented on fundraising activities in support of her chosen charities, including the Coastal Path walk challenge which she was currently undertaking.

In concluding her review, Councillor Eastwood also expressed her gratitude to the Chief Executive, Chief Officer (Governance), the Leader of the Council and Leader of the largest opposition group for their support in helping her to carry out her role as Chair.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023/24, INVESTITURE OF CHAIN OF OFFICE AND SIGNING OF DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Councillor Ian Roberts thanked the outgoing Chair for her work during the year and for encouraging use of the Welsh language in the Chamber. In nominating Councillor Gladys Healey as Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2023/24, he spoke about her background and was confident that she would carry out the role successfully with the support of her Consort, Councillor David Healey.

Speaking in support, Councillor Bernie Attridge seconded the proposal.

No further nominations were received.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Gladys Healey was appointed as Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2023/24. In response, Councillor Healey congratulated the outgoing Chair on her successful year and led a vote of thanks from Members. She thanked officers for their work and paid tribute to acquaintances in her community and to Lord Barry Jones and Lady Jones who were in attendance.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Gladys Healey be elected Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2023/24.

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

Councillor Mared Eastwood was presented with her retiring Chair's Badge of Office and accepted a gift on behalf of her Consort, Mr Tim Eastwood.

The Chair's Consort, Councillor David Healey, was invested with his Chain of Office.

(At this point Councillor Gladys Healey chaired the remainder of the meeting)

4. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023/24, INVESTITURE OF CHAIN OF OFFICE AND SIGNING OF DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Councillor Bernie Attridge congratulated the Chair on her appointment and wished her well. He proposed that Councillor Dennis Hutchinson be elected Vice-Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2023/24 and referred to his personal qualities and experience.

In seconding the proposal, Councillor Ian Roberts paid tribute to Councillor Hutchinson's long service in local government.

No further nominations were received.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Dennis Hutchinson was appointed as Vice-Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2023/24. In response, Councillor Hutchinson thanked Members for the honour and congratulated the Chair on her appointment.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Dennis Hutchinson be elected Vice-Chair of the Council for the municipal year 2023/24.

Councillor Hutchinson was invested with the Chain of Office by the Chair and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Chief Executive. Councillor Hutchinson's Consort, Mrs Jean Hutchinson, was invested with her Chain of Office.

5. ELECTION OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

It was proposed by Councillor Sean Bibby and seconded by Councillor Mel Buckley that Councillor Ian Roberts be appointed Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2023/24.

Councillor Bernie Attridge referred to efforts by his group to establish a leadership team with a Memorandum of Understanding. His proposal that Councillor Helen Brown be appointed Leader of the Council was seconded by Councillor Mike Peers.

No other nominations were received.

Councillor Attridge requested a recorded vote for which the requisite number of Members stood in support.

The following Councillors voted for Councillor Helen Brown:

Mike Allport, Bernie Attridge, 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, Andrew Parkhurst, Mike Peers, David Richardson, Dale Selvester, Jason Shallcross, Linda Thew, Ant Turton, Roy Wakelam and Antony Wren.

The following Councillors voted for Councillor Ian Roberts:

Sean Bibby, Chris Bithell, Gillian Brockley, Mel Buckley, Teresa Carberry, Tina Claydon, David Coggins Cogan, Geoff Collett, Paul Cunningham, Ron Davies, Chris Dolphin, Rosetta Dolphin, Mared Eastwood, David Evans, David Healey, Gladys Healey, Dave Hughes, Ray Hughes, Alasdair Ibbotson, Paul Johnson,

Christine Jones, Simon Jones, Richard Lloyd, Gina Maddison, Hilary McGuill, Ryan McKeown, Billy Mullin, Ted Palmer, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Carolyn Preece, Ian Roberts, Dan Rose, Kevin Rush, Sam Swash, Linda Thomas and Arnold Woolley.

The following Councillors abstained:
Dennis Hutchinson

On being put to the vote, Councillor Ian Roberts was appointed Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2023/24 and expressed his thanks for the honour, adding that he would continue to work with all political groups for the good of the people of Flintshire.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Ian Roberts be appointed Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2023/24.

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.

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
Christine Jones	Deputy Leader for Partnerships and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Well-being
Dave Hughes	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and the Regional Transport Strategy
Chris Bithell	Cabinet Member for Planning, Public Health and Public Protection
Billy Mullin	Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services including Health & Safety and Human Resources
Paul Johnson	Cabinet Member for Finance, Inclusion, Resilient Communities including Social Value and Procurement
Sean Bibby	Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration
David Healey	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Economy
Mared Eastwood	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture & Leisure

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 of the County Council, 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.

(i) Appointment of Committees

The Chief Officer (Governance) explained that the Constitution provided for the appointment of the committees listed in paragraph 1.01 of the report.

The recommendation was moved and seconded by Councillors Ian Roberts and Billy Mullin. On being put to the vote, this was carried.

RESOLVED:

That Council appoints the following Committees for 2022/23:

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

The Chief Officer (Governance) explained that the size of each committee must be decided at the Annual Meeting and that Council had previously agreed that the major Committees should be large enough for all political groups to be represented. Reference was made to legislative requirements relating to the size and composition of the Planning Committee, Governance & Audit Committee and Standards Committee, as detailed in 1.04 of the report.

The recommendation was moved and seconded by Councillor Ian Roberts and Billy Mullin.

Councillor Glyn Banks referred to the political balance rule which stated that a majority group was entitled to a majority upon every committee. He pointed out that where the majority group held half the seats, including the Chair, on a committee of 12, the Chair's casting vote would in effect give them overall control.

The Chief Officer advised that Council could change the size of committees after the Annual Meeting if a consensus could be reached amongst Group Leaders. He added that the political balance rule did not take account of Chairs' casting votes and said that there were a number of committees where the majority group did not have the casting vote.

In response to a question from Councillor Mike Peers, the Chief Officer advised that the Planning Strategy Group was an advisory group appointed under Executive arrangements whose role was recognised in the Constitution, therefore was not included in the list of formal decision-making bodies in the report.

Councillor Bernie Attridge proposed an amendment that Councillor Banks' request be referred to the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee so that a report could be brought back to Council. He was seconded by Councillor Richard Jones.

The amendment was accepted by Councillor Ian Roberts who requested that the matter also be discussed with Group Leaders. This became the substantive motion which was put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the size of each committee be as set out in paragraph 1.03 of the report; and
- (b) That the review of size of committees to odd numbers be referred to Group Leaders prior to the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee to enable a report back to Council.

(iii) Terms of Reference of Committees

The Chief Officer (Governance) explained that the Annual Meeting was required to decide the terms of reference of the Committees that it appointed. These were set out in the Constitution and reviewed periodically.

Councillor Bernie Attridge moved approval of the recommendation and was seconded by Councillor Richard Jones. When put to the vote, this was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the terms of reference for each Committee, as set out in the Constitution, be approved.

(iv) Political Balance

The Chief Officer (Governance) explained that at, or as soon as practicable after the Annual Meeting, the Council was required to decide the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with the Political Balance Rules contained in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 (as amended). Those rules did not apply to Cabinet or to the Standards Committee. Explanation was given on 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 recommendation was moved and seconded by Councillors Bernie Attridge and Rob Davies. On being put to the vote, this was carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That seats be allocated in accordance with political balance as set out in Appendix 1 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.

(v) Determination of Groups to appoint Overview & Scrutiny Chairs

The Chief Officer (Governance) explained that the Chairs of Overview & Scrutiny Committees were chosen by the political groups based on the strength of the various groups and which had seats on the Cabinet. Table 2 of the political balance calculation appended to the report provided a basic indication of entitlement to Overview & Scrutiny Chairs based on the sizes of political groups and those with Cabinet seats.

In response to Members' comments, it was clarified that entitlement for the Labour and Liberal Democratic groups had been rounded down to the nearest whole number as they had seats on the Cabinet. In conclusion, the Labour and Independent groups were each entitled to nominate two Chairs and the Eagle group was entitled to nominate one Chair.

Councillor Bernie Attridge proposed that the Independent group nominate Chairs for the Community & Housing and Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committees, the Labour group nominate Chairs for the Education, Youth & Culture and Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committees and that the Eagle

group nominate the Chair of the Social & Healthcare Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

In seconding the proposal, Councillor Ian Roberts advised that the Labour group nominations were Councillor Teresa Carberry as Chair of the Education, Youth & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Councillor Dave Evans as Chair of the Environment & Economy Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

On being put to the vote, the recommendation 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 (Councillor Teresa Carberry)
Environment & Economy	Labour (Councillor David Evans)
Social & Healthcare	Eagle

(vi) Appointment of Chairs of Standing Committees

The Chief Officer (Governance) explained that Committee Chairs were appointed by different bodies, some of which were subject to restrictions, as set out in paragraph 1.19 of the report.

Councillor Bernie Attridge proposed the following nominations, which were seconded by Councillor Helen Brown:

- that Councillor Allan Marshall be appointed as Chair of the Climate Change Committee;
- that Councillor Ted Palmer be appointed as Chair of the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee;
- that Councillor Rob Davies be appointed as Chair of the Constitution and Democratic Services Committee;
- that Councillor Marion Bateman be appointed as Chair of the Licensing Committee; and
- that Councillor Richard Lloyd be appointed as Chair of Planning Committee.

Councillor Ian Roberts proposed an amendment to the above and put forward the following nominations which were seconded by Councillor Paul Johnson:

- that Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson be appointed as Chair of the Climate Change Committee; and
- that Councillor Rosetta Dolphin be appointed as Chair of Licensing Committee.

As no further nominations were received, a vote was taken on each of the nominations in turn. On being put to the vote, the following Chairs were appointed:

Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson - Climate Change Committee
Councillor Rosetta Dolphin - Licensing Committee
Councillor Richard Lloyd - Planning Committee
Councillor Rob Davies - Constitution & Democratic Services Committee
Councillor Ted Palmer - Clwyd Pension Fund Committee

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 Ted Palmer
 - Constitution & Democratic Services Committee - Councillor Rob Davies
 - Licensing Committee - Councillor Rosetta Dolphin
 - Planning Committee - Councillor Richard Lloyd
- (b) That the Grievance Committee, the Grievance Appeals Committee and Investigation & Disciplinary Committee should each appoint its own Chair from amongst its membership.

(vii) Approval of the Constitution

The Chief Officer (Governance) explained that the Constitution was based on a national model which was updated in 2022. As required, adoption of the updated model had been approved at the meeting preceding the Annual Meeting.

Councillor Bernie Attridge moved approval of the recommendation in the report which was seconded by Councillor Paul Johnson. On being put to the vote, this 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. In the past it had been usual for Committee Members to be drawn from all groups, albeit not formally politically balanced, including the relevant Cabinet Member.

Councillor Bernie Attridge moved approval of the recommendation and was seconded by Councillor Paul Cunningham. 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 last year for a five year term and were able to serve a maximum of two terms.

The recommendation, as moved and seconded by Councillors Bernie Attridge and Ian Roberts, was put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

That the three Councillors already appointed to serve on the Standards Committee for this term be noted.

(x) Appointments to Outside Bodies

The Chief Officer advised that the Council could nominate Councillors to serve on different bodies such as the Fire Authority, Police and Crime Panel plus local charities and organisations (collectively called “outside bodies”). Appointments were made at the last Annual Meeting for the whole Council term. Delegated authority was given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with Group Leaders, to make any amendments to those appointments as required.

Councillor Bernie Attridge sought clarity on the approval of appointments to the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and proposed that two seats be allocated to the Labour group and two seats to the Independent group.

An amendment was moved by Councillor Ian Roberts that two seats be allocated to the Labour group, one seat to the Independent group and one seat to the Liberal Democrat group. Councillor Attridge subsequently withdrew his motion as he felt this was a more representative proportion of seats. He seconded Councillor Roberts’ proposal and on being put to the vote, this was 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. PETITIONS RECEIVED AT COUNCIL

The Chief Officer (Governance) presented the report on outcomes of petitions which had been submitted during 2022/23.

Councillor Glyn Banks asked that officers be thanked for their excellent responses to the petitions submitted by him and Councillor Maddison. He clarified

that the last petition in the report had been submitted on behalf of residents in Gwaenysgor.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Paul Cunningham and seconded by Councillor Sean Bibby.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

9. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

The Chief Officer (Governance) presented the schedule of meetings for 2023/24 following consultation. He advised that various requests made by Members had been accommodated where possible and that more provisional slots for Council meetings had been scheduled to allow more flexibility.

Councillor Sean Bibby moved the recommendation and was seconded by Councillor Mared Eastwood.

RESOLVED:

That the draft Schedule of Meetings for 2023/24 as appended to the report be approved.

10. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 2pm and ended at 2.55pm)

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Chair