

COUNCIL

HELD: Wednesday, 15 May 2024

Start: 7.40 pm

Finish: 8.40 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor: M Nixon (Mayor)

J Finch (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors:

Abbott

T Aldridge

M Anderson

R Bailey

A Blundell

P Burnside

C Coughlan

V Cummins

T Devine

G Dowling

I Eccles

A Fennell

J Fillis

A Fowler

T de Freitas

N Furey

Y Gagen

J Gordon

N Hennessy

P Hennessy

P Hesketh

P Hogan

J Howard

Ingman

K Jukes

S Lawton

K Lloyd

Mrs J Marshall

J Mee

R Molloy

G Owen

A Owens

M Parlour

S Patel

E Pope

I Rigby

N Pryce-Roberts

Webster

D West

D Westley

D Whittington

J Witter

Officers:

Jacqui Sinnott-Lacey, Chief Executive

Chris Twomey, Deputy Chief Executive

James Pierce, Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
(Section 151 Officer)

Lisa Windle, Head of Corporate and Customer Services

Kathryn Sephton, Assistant Director of Environmental Services

Paul Charlson, Assistant Director of Planning & Regulatory
Services

Alan Leicester, Director of Housing & Environment

Kay Lovelady, Head of Legal & Democratic Services

Jacky Denning, Democratic Services Manager

Stephen Stephen, Mayor's Chauffeur/Civic Officer

Jill Ryan, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Thomas Lynan, Electoral Services Manager

Chloe McNally

Kim Webster, Democratic Services Officer

In attendance:

Father Godric

1 PRAYERS

The Mayor, Councillor Maureen Nixon, welcomed everyone to the Annual Meeting of

the Council, particularly the new Members, Councillor Julie Abbott and Janet Ingman and welcomed back Councillors John Mee and Adrian Owens.

In the absence of the Mayor's Chaplain, Alderman Ian Grant, led Members and officers in prayer.

2 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Marilyn Westley.

The Mayor paid tribute to Thomas Marsh-Pritchard, Jayne Rear and Adam Yates, who are no longer Members of the Council, following the local elections held on 2 May 2024, and thanked them for their service to the Council.

The Mayor advised that the election results were available to view on the Council's website.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interests.

4 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 17 April 2024, were received as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

5 **A. ELECTION OF MAYOR FOR ENSUING YEAR**

The retiring Mayor, Councillor Maureen Nixon, thanked Council Members, staff, friends and family for their part in making her year of office so enjoyable and wished the incoming Mayor a successful year of office and invited nominations for the office of Mayor for the ensuing Municipal year 2024/25.

Councillor Julian Finch was nominated, which was moved and seconded.

Councillor Finch accepted the nomination.

A vote was taken, which was CARRIED

Councillor Finch indicated his acceptance of office.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Julian Finch be elected as Mayor for the ensuing Municipal Year.

(Note, during this item:

1. The outgoing Mayor presented the outgoing Consort, Mr Laughton Wilkinson, with a gift token.

2. The new Mayor, Councillor Julian Finch:
 - (i) Was dressed in the Mayor's robes and invested in the Mayor's Chain and Badge of Office and made the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office, following which he assumed the Chair.
 - (ii) Expressed his thanks to the proposer and seconder, and to the Council for the honour conferred upon him, in electing him as Mayor, before presenting Councillor Maureen Nixon, the retiring Mayor, with her Past Mayor's engraved Shield.
 - (iii) The new Mayor, Councillor Julian Finch, presented the New Mayoress, Mrs Mary Finch, with the Mayoress' Chain and Badge of Office.)

B. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

The Mayor invited nominations for the appointment of Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Anne Fennell was nominated, which was moved and seconded.

Councillor Fennell accepted the nomination.

A vote was taken, which was CARRIED

Councillor Fennell signified her acceptance of office.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Anne Fennell be appointed Deputy Mayor for the ensuing Municipal Year.

(Note, during this item, the new Deputy Mayor, Councillor Anne Fennell:

1. Made the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office and assumed the Deputy Mayor's Chair.
2. Thanked the Council for the honour of allowing her to serve as Deputy Mayor.
3. Presented the Deputy Mayoress, Councillor Sarah Lawton, with some flowers and the Deputy Mayoress' Chain and Badge of Office.)

6 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR AND/OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The New Mayor, Councillor Julian Finch announced:

1. That his theme for the Mayoral Year would be "Children, Young People and People in Need".
2. That his Chaplains for the year would be Reverend Phil Jump of Skelmersdale Ecumenical Centre and Father Anthony Cruise, Upholland.

3. Civic Sunday would be held in September at St Teresa's, Upholland.
4. Fund raising activities will be reported at a later meeting and asked for the support of Members at the various fund raising events being held throughout the year.

7 **APPOINTMENT OF THE LEADER & DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND 'PROPER OFFICER PROVISIONS AND SCHEMES OF DELEGATION'**

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Executive, as contained on pages 17 to 24 of the Book of Reports, which sought to elect the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council until the Annual Meeting in 2025, and to confirm the 'Proper Officer Provisions and Schemes of Delegation'.

The Mayor invited nominations for the appointment of Leader.

The following nominations were moved and seconded:

- Councillor Yvonne Gagen
- Councillor David Westley

Councillors Gagen and David Westley accepted the nominations.

A vote was taken, as follows:

Councillor Yvonne Gagen – 26 (TWENTY SIX)

Councillor David Westley – 13 (THIRTEEN)

Abstentions – 5 (FIVE)

Councillor Yvonne Gagen indicated her acceptance to the position as Leader.

The Mayor invited nominations for the appointment of Deputy Leader of the Council.

The following nominations were moved and seconded:

- Councillor Gareth Dowling
- Councillor David Whittington

Councillors Dowling and Whittington accepted the nominations.

A vote was taken, as follows:

Councillor Gareth Dowling – 26 (TWENTY SIX)

Councillor David Whittington – 13 (THIRTEEN)

Abstentions – 5 (FIVE)

Councillor Gareth Dowling indicated his acceptance to the position as Deputy Leader of the Council.

A Motion to move recommendations 2.3 to 2.4 in the report was moved and seconded.

A copy of the Labour nominations had been circulated prior to the meeting.

- RESOLVED:
- A. That Councillor Yvonne Gagen be elected as the Leader of the Council for the Municipal Year 2024/25.
 - B. That Councillor Gareth Dowling be elected as the Deputy Leader of Council for the Municipal Year 2024/25.
 - C. That the Role and Powers of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, attached as an Appendix to the report, be endorsed.
 - D. That the 'Proper Officer Provisions and Scheme of Delegation to Chief Officers', be confirmed.

8 TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP

The Council noted that Councillor David Westley had been appointed Leader of the Conservative Group and that Councillor David Whittington had been appointed as the Deputy Leader of the Group. Details of the Shadow Lead Members and Spokespersons would be circulated after the meeting.

9 TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF THE LEADER & DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OUR WEST LANCASHIRE (OWL) GROUP

The Council noted that Councillor Ian Rigby had been appointed Leader of the OWL (Our West Lancashire) Group and that Councillor Paul Hesketh had been appointed as the Deputy Leader of the Group. Details of the Shadow Lead Members and Spokespersons would be circulated after the meeting.

10 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES ETC 2024/25

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Executive, as contained on pages 25 to 35 of the Book of Reports, which set out the appointment of Committees etc. and their terms of reference and allocation of seats thereon to the political groups for the Municipal Year 2024/25.

The political balance on Committees and the Labour nominations had been circulated prior to the meeting, together with the Conservative appointments to Committees.

Three Amendments had also been circulated prior to the meeting.

A Motion to approve recommendations 2.1 to 2.4 in the report was moved and seconded.

The first Amendment, in relation to the Leisure Procurement Working Group, was moved and seconded.

A vote was taken on the First Amendment, which was LOST.

The second Amendment, in relation to the Drainage & Flooding Working Group, was moved and seconded.

A vote was taken on the Second Amendment, which was LOST.

The third Amendment, in relation to the Local Plan Working Group, was moved and seconded.

A vote was taken on the third Amendment, which was LOST.

A vote was taken on the original Motion, which was CARRIED.

- RESOLVED:
- A. That, for the period ending with the next Annual Meeting of the Council, or such lesser period should the political balance or allocation to political groups change during the year requiring a review under the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Committees, Sub-Committees etc be appointed as detailed in the revised Appendix circulated prior to the meeting and that the allocation of seats to the political groups be as indicated.
 - B. That the representatives of the political groups on the Committees etc now appointed shall be as indicated on the revised Appendix and the appointment of the Independent Persons & the 2 Parish Council Representatives on the Standards Committee, be as detailed and any changes or vacancies be notified to the Democratic Services Manager in accordance with the wishes of the group.
 - C. That the terms of reference for the Committees etc now appointed be agreed as set out in Constitution Part 2 – Responsibility for Functions, as agreed at Council in February 2024.
 - D. That it be noted that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, will appoint representatives to the Outside Bodies, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation to Officers.

11 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSONS AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONS OF COMMITTEES

Nominations for the appointment of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees for the ensuing year were submitted by the Labour Group as contained in the Appendix circulated prior to the meeting, to the report considered at agenda item 10, which were moved and seconded.

A vote was taken on the appointments, which was CARRIED.

RESOLVED: That Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees for 2023/24 be appointed as follows:

A. Policy & Resources Committee

Chairman: Councillor Yvonne Gagen
Vice Chairman: Councillor Gareth Dowling

Lead Members

Councillor:	Portfolio:
Yvonne Gagen	Legal & Democratic and Human Resources
Gareth Dowling	Planning & Community Safety
Nicola Price-Roberts	Housing
Melissa Parlour	Economic Regeneration & Green Growth
Mark Anderson	Finance
Carl Coughlan	Leisure
Kerry Lloyd	Health & Wellbeing
Neil Furey	Clean & Green
Vickie Cummins	Communities
(From largest opposition group)	Rural Affairs

B. Planning Committee

Chairman: Councillor Gaynar Owen
Vice Chairman: Councillor Andy Fowler

C. Licensing & Appeals Committee

Chairman: Councillor Patricia Burnside
Vice-Chairman: Councillor Terry Devine

D. Licensing & Gambling Committee

Chairman: Councillor John Fillis
Vice-Chairman: Councillor Gaynar Owen

E. Standards Committee

Chairman: Councillor Yvonne Gagen
Vice Chairman: Councillor David Westley

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F. Investigating & Disciplinary Committee

Chairman: Councillor Yvonne Gagen

Vice-Chairman: Councillor Nikki Hennessy

G. Chief Officers Committee

Chairman: Councillor Yvonne Gagen

Vice-Chairman: Councillor Gareth Dowling

H. Audit & Governance Committee

Chairman: Councillor Nikki Hennessy

Vice Chairman: Councillor Rob Molloy

I. Polling Districts & Polling Places Review Committee

Chairman: Councillor Gareth Dowling

Vice-Chairman: Councillor M Anderson

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THE MAYOR