

Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Lichfield City Council held in Guildhall, Lichfield on Monday 15 April 2024 at 6.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors A Hughes (Mayor), J Anketell, H Ashton, D Baker, C Ball, J Blackman, R Bragger, J Christie, J Eagland, K Farrelly, M Field, A Fox, C Greatorex, R Harvey-Coggins, P Knight, J Marshall, P McDermott, C Pinder-Smith, P Ray, D Robertson, A Rushton, S Schafer, J Smith, E Strain, M Warfield, B Watkins, and R Yardley.

APOLOGIES: Councillors A Lax and S Hollingsworth.

118 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor detailed the events and functions that she had attended, including the Easter Sunday service, Sheriff's Show at the Friary School, The Sheriffs Darwin Walk, the Kings Award for Voluntary Service ceremony and a show at the Garrick prepared by a neuro diverse group.

119 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None

120 COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED: *That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 March 2024 (Nos 104-117) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.*

121 MATTERS ARISING

The Mayor confirmed she had written to Lichfield Live following Cllr Ashton's request at the previous meeting (Minute 109).

122 PLANNING COMMITTEE (DELEGATED AUTHORITY)

RESOLVED: *That comments submitted to Lichfield District Council for the period 29 February 2024 to 29 March 2024 and made in the name of LCC via delegated authority, be received.*

123 NOTICE OF MOTION

Members considered a motion proposed by Cllr D Baker and seconded by Cllr R Yardley. Members noted the cost to the Council of the requested provision was £863.59.

In June 2023, the City Council resolved to remove the provision of Council funded replica badges of office from civic consorts. This decision was taken after the 2023/24 civics and consort had been installed at Annual Council in May.

Due to the timing of the Council decision, and the exceptional commitment to her role during 2023/24, the Council to fund the provision of the replica badge of office, bar, ribbon and case to the 2023/24 Sheriff's Consort. Such an exception to apply for 2023/24 only.

Several members spoke both in favour and against this motion, arguments in favour focusing on the possibility that not awarding the replica badge could be seen as a personal affront given the timing of the introduction of the change, and recognising the level of commitment that had been brought to the role by the current postholder despite the uncertainty of the replica badge provision. Councillor McDermott highlighted the ambiguity of the wording of the June 2023 motion which stated that the change was to be applied "for future years" and there was also concern as to the relative irregularity of introducing such a change 'in year' when compared to other matters (such as Market rents etc) that are brought to council to be considered for the forthcoming financial year.

While recognising the contribution and efforts of the Sheriff's Consort during the year, those against the motion focused mainly on the cost of the provision, the possibility of recognising such contribution in different ways, and examples of LCC grant funding of similar or lesser amounts that has been awarded to groups and organisations locally, emphasising the potential other uses of the saved sum if it was not utilised for a replica badge of office. Members also expressed significant concern as to what would be considered council appropriate spend by residents, particularly given the precept increase for 24/25.

Following discussion a vote was held, with the result being 8 in favour and 18 against; the motion was therefore declared lost.

124 CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Members considered the Minutes of the meeting of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Committee held on 3 April 2024.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Committee held on 3 April 2024 be adopted.

125 GRANTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Grants Advisory Committee held on 8 April 2024. Members' particular attention was drawn to the recommendations to Council for CIL allocations to the Hub at St Mary's and Lichfield Waterworks Trust, and the general grant award to the Soroptimists Lichfield branch. Also highlighted was the previous provision of match funding of £225 to the Lichfield Bower for prizes. Within the minutes, it was recommended that this agreement be withdrawn, with Bower representatives being asked to add any such match funding to their annual general grant application. In proposing adoption of the minutes, Cllr Ball highlighted LCC's 'Summer Grants' scheme and asked all members to publicise the provision through their channels.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Grants Advisory Committee held on 8 April 2024 be adopted.

126 OFFICERS' REPORT

The Mayor highlighted several aspects of the report, including the plaque to Anna Seward. Councillor D Robertson highlighted the increase in visitor numbers to the Birthplace Museum and the removal of asbestos from the building. Councillor C Greatorex welcomed the new market traders, then highlighted the open spaces section of the report, notably the relocated bus shelters on the Deanslade estate as being a good example of the City Council working closely with a residents association (LARA). Councillor J Smith stated he was pleased to note the low hanging branch between Kean Close to Terry Close had been removed. Councillor Smith also highlighted the new traders on the market and that nearly all markets are now at capacity.

RESOLVED: That the Report be noted.

127 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED: That payment of accounts be approved and confirmed for the periods 1 February 2024 to 29 February 2024 in the sum of £183,505.86 General Account, and £642.89 Imprest Account.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MAYOR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7.10PM

MAYOR