

Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Lichfield City Council held in Guildhall, Lichfield on Monday 11 March 2024 at 6.30pm

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors J Blackman, J Eagland, S Hollingsworth, P Ray, A Rushton and S Schafer.

104 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor detailed the events and functions that she had attended, including the Shrovetide Pancake Races, The Michael Fabricant & Arthur Price Speaking Competition, Entertainment & Tea at Curborough Community Centre, and World Prayer Day. The Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor Cllr S Schafer for standing in for her at the Smiths Court. The Mayor also highlighted her attendance at the unveiling of the Anna Seward plaque, Women's History Walk and the networking event for women that she had organised in the Guild Room in celebration of International Women's Day.

105 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

Councillors E Strain and R Yardley declared an interest under Appendix A of the City Council's Code of Conduct in relation to agenda item 8 (Minute 110) Grants Advisory Committee.

Cllr C Greatorex declared an interest under Appendix B of the City Council's Code of Conduct in relation to agenda item 14 (minute 115) as the County Councillor for the area. Cllr Greatorex left the room during discussion and voting thereon.

Councillors H Ashton, D Baker, C Ball, J Christie, A Hughes, J Smith and M Warfield declared an interest under Appendix B of the City Council's Code of Conduct in relation to agenda item 8 (Minute 110) Grants Advisory Committee.

106 COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED: *That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 22 January 2024 (Nos 89-103) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.*

107 MATTERS ARISING

None

108 PLANNING COMMITTEE (DELEGATED AUTHORITY)

RESOLVED: *That comments submitted to Lichfield District Council for the period 4 January 2024 to 28 February 2024 and made in the name of LCC via delegated authority, be received.*

109 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 8 (2)

Councillor H Ashton asked the following question:

"Will the Mayor please express her congratulations on behalf of this Council to the publishers of the newly-published Lichfield and Burntwood Independent, thanking them for the valuable service this provides to the community, and wishing them future success with this venture?"

The Mayor responded that she would be delighted to do so, and highlighted that a printed newspaper had been missed in Lichfield for some time, notably by those who cannot access the internet.

110 GRANTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Members considered the Minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Grants Advisory Committee held on 12 February 2024, which included recommendations for grant awards from the annual funding round, and a sum of £5,000 to be set aside for 'Summer Grants'. The Minutes also asked council to favourably consider an increase in funding for grants for 2025/26.

Cllr C Greatorex asked for further information on 'The Well', an organisation he was unfamiliar with. The Mayor stated that it supports neurodiverse individuals, currently meeting at Wade Street Church but also hoping to meet at Curborough Community Centre.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Grants Advisory Committee held on 12 February 2024 be adopted.

111 MARKETS WORKING GROUP

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Markets Working Group held on 15 February 2024. The recommendations to council were as follows:

- Utilising its powers under the Food Act Part III, council through adoption of the minutes, formally establishes additional Christmas markets to take place on Wednesday and Thursday in the pre-Christmas week of any given year
- 'Free Use' arrangements continue in relation to the Chamber of Trade's use of the Market Square for its Christmas Fair
- Any Market Square booking purporting to be promoting/selling a product claiming a significant health benefit, or as a significantly healthier alternative, must have the support of the NHS.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Markets Working group held on 15 February 2024 be adopted.

112 AUDIT COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 5 March 2024. The meeting included recommendations that the Internal Audit report (as circulated as an Enclosure with the Council agenda) be noted and the recommendations and timescales therein be adopted. Also included were recommendations to council as to the annual review of the effectiveness of Internal Control, Treasury Management Policy and Statement, Reserves Policy and Audit Plan.

A draft Procurement Policy was also submitted for Council consideration, plus a recommendation to increase the limit of the Imprest Account from £2,500 to £5,000 (individual payment limits to remain unchanged).

Cllr A Fox highlighted the reduction in the capital reserve in the previous two years or so, due to the necessary work at Darwin Hall, Curborough Community Centre and the Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum. Cllr Fox stated that care needed to be taken when allocating these reserves, and that council should be considering how such reserves can be rebuilt. Councillor D Robertson stated that Cllr Fox's point was a very important one, and that initial discussions along those lines had taken place between him and the Town Clerk, with further such discussions to follow for future budget setting.

Cllr J smith congratulated the Internal Auditor on an extremely clear and detailed report.

RESOLVED: That the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 5 March 2024 be adopted.

113 NOMINATIONS FOR CIVIC OFFICE 2024/25

a) Mayor Elect

It was proposed by Councillor E Strain, seconded by Councillor D Robertson and

RESOLVED: That Councillor Sam Schafer be nominated Mayor Elect for the year 2024/25.

b) Deputy Mayor Elect

It was proposed by Councillor R Harvey-Coggins, seconded by Councillor P Knight and

RESOLVED: That Councillor Claire Pinder-Smith be nominated Deputy Mayor Elect for the year 2024/25.

c) Sheriff Elect

It was proposed by Councillor P Knight, seconded by Councillor and R Bragger and

RESOLVED: That Cathy Wood be nominated Sheriff Elect for the year 2024/25.

114 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024/25

Members noted the financial progress report for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 November 2023. Two amendments were included to the originally circulated dates.

RESOLVED: That the calendar of meetings for 2024/25 be as follows:

Calendar of Meetings 2024/2025

DATE	TIME	MEETING
2024		
WEDNESDAY, 15 May	6.30pm	ANNUAL COUNCIL
Wednesday 22 May	7.30pm	ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Thursday 6 June	6.30pm	Audit Committee
Monday 10 June	6.30pm	COUNCIL (year-end accounts)
Thursday, 13 June	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Wednesday 17 July	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Wednesday 24 July	6.30pm	COUNCIL
Thursday, 29 August	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
TUESDAY, 1 October	6.30pm	COUNCIL
Thursday, 3 October	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Tuesday, 5 November	10.30am	Johnson Birthplace Advisory Committee
WEDNESDAY 6 November	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Thursday, 7 November	6.30pm	Staffing Committee
Wednesday, 4 December	6.30pm	Audit Committee
Monday, 16 December	6.30pm	COUNCIL
Thursday, 12 December	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)

2025		
Thursday, 23 January	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Monday, 27 January	6.30pm	COUNCIL
Monday, 24 February	6.30pm	Grants Advisory Committee
WEDNESDAY 26 February	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Wednesday, 5 March	6.30pm	Audit Committee
Monday, 10 March	6.30pm	COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, 26 March	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Monday, 14 April	6.30pm	COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY 30 April	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)
Thursday, 1 May	10.30am	Johnson Birthplace Advisory Committee
WEDNESDAY, 14 May	6.30pm	ANNUAL COUNCIL
Wednesday, 21 May	7.30pm	ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Thursday, 5 June	6.30pm	Planning Committee (if called)

115 OFFICERS' REPORT

Councillor C Ball highlighted the Shrovetide Pancake Races and stated he was pleased to have been a Steward at the event and saw firsthand how it was enjoyed by the public. Cllr A Lax commended the improved security measures that had been put in place. Cllr A Hughes thanked the City Council staff for their support.

RESOLVED: That the Report be noted.

116 CANAL LAND AT CRICKET LANE

Further to minute 82 of the City Council's meeting of 11 December 2023, members considered the outcome of the consultation to dispose of approximately 105m² of land at Cricket Lane to Staffordshire County Council to facilitate junction improvements and the restoration of the canal.

RESOLVED:

a) Following completion of the legally required advertisement of proposals to dispose of land at Cricket Lane, Council notes that no objections to the proposal have been received.

b) Council confirms the land to be transferred to Staffordshire County Council as Highway Maintained at Public Expense as outlined in red on the plan within the report, and that the land be transferred for nil consideration.

c) Delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Leader of the Council to progress the transfer of land to its legal conclusion.

117 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED: That payment of accounts be approved and confirmed for the periods:

- 1 December to 31 December 2023 in the sum of £316,736.21 General Account, and £354.72 Imprest Account.**
- 1 January to 31 January 2024 in the sum of £116,454.75 General Account, and £268.42 Imprest Account.**

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MAYOR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 6.55PM

MAYOR