

Lichfield City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Lichfield City Council held in Guildhall, Lichfield on Monday 25 July 2022 at 6.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors J Checkland (Mayor), J Anketell, H Ashton, D Baker, C Ball, J Eagland, M Field, C Greatorex, J Greaves, R Harrison, I Jackson, P Jones, A Lax, J Marks, T Matthews, P McDermott, C Rapley, P Ray, D Robertson, A Smith, J Smith, C Spruce, M Trent, M Warfield, and R Yardley.

APOLOGIES: Councillors G Boyle and D Dundas

33 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor detailed the events and functions that he had attended recently, including attending the Requiem at Lichfield Cathedral, Staffordshire College Film Night, the Swinfen Broun Bowls Match, Lichfield Folk Festival 70th anniversary event, Liberty Jamboree Awards Night, and the Civic event Mayoress at Home.

34 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

Councillor Lax declared an interest under appendix B of the City Council's code of conduct in relation to agenda item 11 - Nature Recovery declaration. Councillors C Spruce and R Yardley both declared an interest in Boley Park Hall Community Hall as City Council appointed Hall Trustees.

35 COUNCIL MINUTES

Councillor C Rapley queried minute 23 regarding the appointment end date for the LCC representative of Dr Milley's Hospital. The Mayor confirmed that this was a four-year appointment, and the end date of March 2027 was correct.

RESOLVED: *That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13 June 2022 (Nos 15-32) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.*

36 MATTERS ARISING

None

37 PLANNING COMMITTEE (DELEGATED AUTHORITY)

RESOLVED: *That comments submitted to Lichfield District Council for the period 27 May to 13 July 2022 and made in the name of LCC via delegated authority, be received.*

38 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN IMPLEMENTATION WORKING PARTY (NPIWP)

Members considered the Minutes and recommendations of the NPIWP meeting held on 11 July 2022. Members noted in particular the recommendation for a CIL contribution to the provision of plaques in memory of Anna Seward and Francis Barber.

Councillor C Ball asked members to consider larger more strategic projects which would be an appropriate use of CIL monies. Councillor M Trent commented that the action plan was looking healthy but that the projects being progressed were relatively small and reiterated Councillor Ball's comments. Councillor A Lax invited members and Officers to offer new ideas for consideration and asked officers circulate any proposals received

RESOLVED: That the Minutes and recommendations of the NPIWP meeting held on 11 July 2022 be adopted.

39 MARKETS WORKING GROUP (MWG)

Members considered the Minutes of the MWG meeting held on 20 July 2022. Members noted in particular the recommendation that Markets be established by the City Council (utilising its powers under the Food act Part III) for three dates during 2022 to facilitate the vegan markets that had been discussed with the event provider.

Councillor A Smith commented how nice it was to see the Market Traders using Pool Walk during the Jubilee weekend and asked if this area could be used more regularly. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the Markets Officer is encouraging traders to use Pool Walk when the Market Square is not available and noted that the stalls used for the Jubilee weekend were provided by C J Events. Councillor C Spruce commented that the MWG is one of the most effective committees of the Council and the general markets have improved considerably since it had been formed. Councillor D Robertson thanked officers for facilitating the recommendations of the MWG.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes and recommendations of the MWG meeting held on 20 July 2022 be adopted, including the increase in the cost payable by Traders for additional electrical items from £1.00 to £2.50 per item from 1 August 2022, and the creation by the City Council of Markets to take place on 23 October 2022, 13 November 2022, and 11 December 2022 to facilitate the first Vegan markets in the City.

40 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Members considered the agenda report which provided an update on the Community Governance Review (CGR) process being currently undertaken by Lichfield District Council (LDC). The report included the initial recommendations made by LDC, together with an alternative proposal put forward at LDC full Council which would result in a reduction of the overall spread of the Elector to Councillor ratio across City Council wards. Councillors Greatorex, Spruce, Robertson, and McDermott spoke in support of option B of the report. The retention of 6 Councillors for St John's Ward was however desired due to ongoing development in that ward.

RESOLVED:

Delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk to respond to the CGR consultation in the name of the City Council as follows:

- a) The City Council confirms its support for the incorporation of single member wards as set out in the report, thereby creating coterminous district and parish ward boundaries**
- b) The Council supports 'option b' as set out in the agenda report as it minimises the variance of the Elector to Councillor ratio in the City but requests the retention of six Councillors in St John's ward due to the ongoing development within that ward.**

41 LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL – NATURE RECOVERY DECLARATION

Members considered the agenda report and enclosure, providing detail of LDC's recent declaration and the potential implications and opportunities that the declaration presents to LCC.

Councillor A Lax commented that LCC would be able to achieve more by working with LDC noting that the two Councils already share expertise and resources. Councillor D Robertson added that it was good to see a Parish Council taking the lead in such a scheme and welcomed the cross-party support. Councillor M Trent added his support to this initiative, noting that one of the challenges

was to overcome conflicting priorities, for example the need for affordable housing with the need to consider nature recovery. Councillor A Lax replied that the Environment Act 2022 now details how developers should be considering biodiversity net gain and offered to circulate relevant information to members.

RESOLVED: The City Council supports Lichfield District Council's Nature Recovery Declaration and will support its aims where the City Council considers it within its powers and proportionate resources to do so.

42 OFFICERS' REPORT

Councillor C Greatorex drew members attention to articles which had appeared in both the Guardian newspaper and National Geographic praising the Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum and the City of Lichfield, noting that this was as a result of the Council maintaining and improving the City. Councillor J Smith asked whether the Museum structural investigation had been completed, the Deputy Town Clerk replied that investigations were still ongoing, and members would be kept updated throughout the summer. Councillor Field asked if other uses for Market square could be explored on non-market days, the Deputy Town Clerk replied that there were plans to hold a community day in September but would welcome any further suggestions for use of the Market square. Councillor Lax commented on the appropriateness of the wildflowers at Festival Gardens as opposed to random planting noting how LCC and LDC had worked together to achieve this sharing expertise and resources.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

43 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED: That payment of accounts be approved and confirmed for the period 1 April 2022 to 30 April 2022 in the sum of £128,279.71 General Account and £260.91 Imprest Account.

44 EXCUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, by reason of the confidential nature of the business next to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the Meeting.

45 DARWIN HALL

Members considered the Town Clerk's update regarding remedial work being programmed, planned, and undertaken at Darwin Hall, together with an update on discussions with the original contractor.

Members were advised that the independent report regarding the roof issues had been received on the day of the Council meeting and had been circulated to all group leaders and the Council's advisors for comment.

RESOLVED:

a) That the report be noted

b) The Town Clerk to communicate with the Leader of the Council primarily, and Group Leaders generally during the summer break regarding developments, notably the professional advice received from LCC's architects following release and consideration of the specialist contractor's report, the proposed 'action plan', timescales, costs, and

nature of any work within that action plan that is to fall to LCC, implications for possible hall closure, LCC budgets etc

- c) Council supports the view that the primary factors behind any decision made will be the safety of the hall users and the desire to avoid any lengthy hall closure due to conditions**
- d) Council acknowledges the possibility that retrospective permission for next steps – including the instruction of potentially costly (to LCC) remedial work - may need to be sought at the Council's September meeting in order to ensure progress is made in a timely manner; such work not to be instructed without consultation as set out at (b) above**

46 MAYOR AND SHERIFF CHARITY EVENTS – FREE USE OF GUILDHALL

Members considered the agenda report, setting out the reduction from five supported charity events to three in any given Civic year. At its meeting of 5 February 2009, the City Council resolved that no further free use of Guildhall be given, and all applicants apply for a monetary grant to cover the prevailing costs instead.

As the five charity events supported by LCC staff enjoy free use of the Guildhall by virtue of being City Council events, it was proposed that the principle of that free use remain for two further charity events (to be organised by the Mayor and Sheriff) should the number of LCC staff supported events be reduced to three.

Such events to be jointly agreed by the Mayor and Sheriff and for the benefit of their charities, and to be bound by the broader terms and conditions of hire and to exclude any staff support over and above that which would be provided to another similar hire.

At its meeting of 5 February 2009, the City Council resolved that no further free use of Guildhall be given, and all applicants apply for a monetary grant to cover the prevailing costs instead. Councillor Robertson sought to clarify that there would be no personal cost to the Mayor and Sheriff and that the budget for this would come out of incumbent Civics Allowances noting that this would be an appropriate way of accounting as the allowance was always underspent.

RESOLVED:

- a) That Council endorses the reduction in the number of supported Civic charity events from five to three in any given Civic year**
- b) The Council approves the use of Guildhall on two occasions annually (in addition to the three supported charity events) for incumbent Civics to host events to raise funds for their chosen charities, with any prevailing hire costs to be met from the incumbent Civic allowance.**

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MAYOR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7.27PM

MAYOR