

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COUNCIL** held on 22 May 2024 at 6.00 pm

Present

Councillors

F W Letch (Chairman)
G Duchesne (Vice Chairman), C Adcock,
M D Binks, N Bradshaw, D Broom,
E Buczkowski, J Buczkowski, J Cairney,
S Chenore, S J Clist, L J Cruwys,
G Cochran, C Connor, F J Colthorpe,
A Cuddy, G Czapiewski, J M Downes,
B Fish, M Fletcher, R Gilmour, B Holdman,
M Jenkins, S Keable, L G J Kennedy,
L Knight, N Letch, J Lock, J Poynton,
R Roberts, S Robinson, L Taylor, H Tuffin,
N Woollatt, A White, J Wright and D Wulff

Apologies

Councillor(s)

C Harrower and G Westcott

Also Present

Officer(s):

Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Andrew Jarrett (Deputy Chief Executive (S151)), Maria De Leiburne (Director of Legal, HR & Governance (Monitoring Officer)), Richard Marsh (Director of Place & Economy), Laura Woon (Democratic Services Manager), Angie Howell (Democratic Services Officer), Sarah Lees (Democratic Services Officer) and David Parker (Democratic Services & Policy Research Officer)

Councillors

Online

M Farrell and A Glover

167 CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

Cllr L Taylor nominated Cllr F Letch for the election as Chairman of the District Council for the year 2024/2025: This nomination was seconded by Cllr John Downes.

Upon a vote being taken it was then:

RESOLVED that Cllr F Letch be elected Chairman of Mid Devon District Council for the Municipal year 2024/2025.

In accordance with Section 83 of the Local Government Act 1972, Cllr F Letch then made a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

168 **CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS**

The Chairman addressed the Council and thanked the Members for electing him as Chairman.

169 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors: Cllr C Harrower, G Westcott.

170 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Members were reminded of the need to declare any interests when appropriate.

None were declared under this item.

171 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 24th April 2024 were **AGREED** as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

172 **VICE CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL**

Cllr G DuChesne nominated Cllr G Czapiewski for election as Vice Chairman of Mid Devon District Council for the year 2024/2025. This nomination was seconded by Cllr S Clist.

Upon a vote being taken it was then:

RESOLVED that Cllr G Czapiewski be elected Vice Chairman of Mid Devon District Council for the municipal year 2024/2025.

In accordance with Section 83 of the Local Government Act 1972, Cllr G Czapiewski then made a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and thanked the Council for appointing him as Vice Chairman.

173 **CHAIRMAN OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Cllr B Holdman nominated Cllr L Kennedy for election as Chairman of Scrutiny. The nomination was seconded by Cllr E Buczkowski.

Cllr N Woollatt nominated Cllr R Roberts for election as Chairman of Scrutiny. The nomination was seconded by Cllr M Binks.

Upon a vote being taken, it was:

RESOLVED that Cllr L Kennedy be elected as Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for the municipal Year 2024/2025.

Those voting **AGAINST**: Councillor: M Binks, P Colthorpe, M Jenkins, R Roberts, H Tuffin and N Woollatt.

Those **ABSTAINING** from voting: Councillor: D Broom, A Cuddy and L Kennedy.

174 **APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, SUB COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS AND OTHER INTERNAL BODIES**

The Council had before it a table * setting out the revised allocation of seats on Committees and other Council bodies.

Arising thereon:

Appointment of Committees and Allocation of Seats on Committees and other Council Bodies

The Chairman **MOVED**:

(a) That the Council approved the allocation of seats on Committees and other Council Bodies as shown on the schedule;

(b) That Members be appointed to Committees in accordance with the names notified to the Chief Executive by each of the Political Groups represented on the Council, to give effect to the approved allocation of seats in (a) above;

(c) That Members also be appointed to Working Groups and other Internal Bodies in accordance with the names notified to the Chief Executive by each of the Political Groups represented on the Council, to give effect to the approved allocation of seats in (a) above;

(d) That the Chief Executive be authorised to make changes to membership of Committees, Working Groups and other Internal Bodies as may be notified to him from time to time by the relevant Political Group to which those seats had been allocated by the Council.

(e) That the appointments to seats remaining to be filled by ungrouped Members should be made at this meeting.

Upon a vote being taken, the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

Those **AGAINST** from voting on the **MOTION**: Councillor N Woollatt.

Those **ABSTAINING** from voting on the **MOTION**: Councillor: M Binks, D Broom and M Jenkins.

Note: *table previously circulated.

175 APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The following appointments to Outside Bodies were **AGREED** with the removal of Devon Historic Buildings Trust.

Outside Body	Current representative/s	Representative/s for 2024/2025	Appointment Length
Blackdown Hills National Landscape	Cllr N Bradshaw	Cllr N Bradshaw	Annual
Broadpath Landfill & Hillhead Liaison Committee	Cllr A Glover	Cllr A Glover	Annual
Building Control Joint Committee	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing & Property Services Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing & Property Services Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Annual
Business Forum Mid Devon	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Annual
Culm Garden Village Delivery Board	The Leader Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	The Leader Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Annual
Cullompton Town Team (2 Members)	Cllr L Knight Cllr S Robinson	Cllr L Knight Cllr S Robinson	Annual
Devon Districts Forum	The Leader	The Leader	Annual

Devon Historic Buildings Trust	Cllr G DuChesne		Annual
Devon Rail Forum	Cllr J Downes	Cllr J Downes	Annual
Devon & Somerset Metro Board	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration	Annual
Gypsy and Traveller Forum	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration Cabinet Member for Housing & Property Services Cllr A Glover	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration Cabinet Member for Housing & Property Services Cllr A Glover	Annual
INVOLVE – Voluntary Action in Mid Devon	Cllr S Robinson	Cllr S Robinson	Annual
OkeRail Forum	Cllr J Downes	Cllr J Downes	Annual
South West Councils	The Leader	The Leader	Annual
South West Councils Employers Panel	Cabinet Member for the Working Environment and Support Services	Cabinet Member for the Working Environment and Support Services	Annual
Team Devon	The Leader	The Leader	Annual

176 SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Chairman **MOVED** that the Council agree the existing scheme of delegations as set out in Part 3 of the Constitution.

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

Those voting **AGAINST** the **MOTION**: Councillor: M Binks, R Roberts and N Woollatt.

177 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS

The Chairman **MOVED** that the following programme of ordinary meetings of the Council for the year 2024/25 be approved:

- 17th July 2024
- 4th September 2024
- 30th October 2024
- 18th December 2024
- 19th February 2025
- 23rd April 2025

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have be **CARRIED**.

178 THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL UPDATE

- The effort and delivery across all areas of the Council from Members of all parties and Officers with the annual reports to show the facts and figures shortly at the Cabinet meeting.
- The Liberal Democrat commitment to the financial responsibility of the Council, since last May had closed the failing 3 Rivers project and increased the social housing stock with the purchase of the St Georges Court Site and created much needed homes for local residents at affordable rents.
- The new administration had reduced the level of subsidy to the 3 leisure centres and made them more efficient;
- The annual budget for leisure had been reduced by over £400,000.
- The 2024/25 budget was set without any use of reserves, was fully balanced and was unanimously supported across the political spectrum.
- The collection rates of 97.5% for Council Tax, 99.4% for business rates and 98.9% for corporate debt recovery, these were some of the best in the country.
- The State of the District Debate was the first of its kind at this Council. There had been engagement and honest conversation with over 70 attendees from across the Town and Parish Councils.
- The creation of a new Cabinet portfolio dedicated to Community and Parish Engagement. This would create a direct link between Parishes, Cabinet and Officers. Cllr Gwen DuChesne had agreed to take on this role and anyone who knew Gwen would fully appreciate how her compassion, empathy and drive to empower people to succeed would be essential in this role.

- This Council was the first in Devon to introduce a Council Tax exemption for Care Leavers and agreed to support them further with access to our leisure facilities.
- The reduction of the senior management by removing 2 senior posts and for the senior staff to work more effectively.
- The commitment to Climate Change, to understand and plan to mitigate the effects that the communities felt and to reduce the ongoing contribution to Climate Change.
- The roll-out of 3 weekly waste collections had seen the recycling rate increase by 5% and the Council had been placed in the top 10% nationally and second best in Devon.
- As a key part of the Liberal Democrat administration's commitment to openness and transparency, the Council provide regular detailed financial information to Council meetings. A new performance/risk monitoring dashboard for a number of the Council meetings had been created to ensure all Councillors and the public understood how the performance had been throughout the year.
- The Cabinet team were already in discussions with senior officers about the shape/scope of the 2025/26 budget and how this could align to the delivery of the new Corporate Plan; a plan that will be put before all the Policy Development Groups shortly for Members' consideration.
- Thanked all of the Members and officers who had helped to deliver all the impressive achievements over the past 12 months and looked forward to continuing to work closely in order to navigate Members through the next set of challenges and opportunities that the Council faced.

(The meeting ended at 18.52pm)

CHAIRMAN