



CHICHESTER CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICHESTER HELD IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, NORTH STREET, CHICHESTER ON WEDNESDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 2.00PM

PRESENT: The Mayor (Councillor J Hughes)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Joy)
Councillors Apel, Barrie, Bell, Carter, Corfield, Gaskin, Gershater, C
Hughes, K Hughes, Plowman, Quail, Scicluna and Sharp

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk, Member Services Support Officer, The Mayors Chaplain,
West Sussex County Councillor Simon Oakley, Chichester District
Councillor Bill Brisbane

Councillor Lishman attended via Zoom

A member of the press attended via Zoom

57. APOLOGIES AND RECORD OF ABSENCE

Apologies with a supporting reason were received from Councillor Dignum.

Councillor Harry was absent from the meeting.

It was noted that West Sussex County Councillor Jeremy Hunt had sent apologies.

58. MINUTES OF COUNCIL

Councillors Bell and Plowman clarified a point under minute 50(a) and informed Members that the YMCA was looking to provide space for a medical facility at the Whitehouse Farm development but not any medical services that might occupy that space.

Councillor Sharp asked to clarify that, also under minute 50(a), she was responsible for running the noise issues meetings.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 8 December 2021 (pages 127 – 132) having been printed and circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

59. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) The Mayor welcomed his new secretary, Mary Ambrose, and wished her well at the City Council.
- b) He advised that he had attended several appointments relating to the twinning associations and that these groups were currently taking steps to improve recruitment, particularly among younger people.
- c) The Mayor informed Members that, due to the Covid pandemic; there would be no Mayor's At Home in the current Mayoral year and that the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk had been asked whether the funds set aside for this event could be transferred to the Mayor's charities for 2021-2022.

60. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No questions were received.

61. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

a) Planning and Conservation Working Group

It was moved by Councillor Plowman, Chairman of the Committee, that the minutes of the meetings held on 9 December 2021, 6 January 2022 and 3 February 2022 be approved and adopted.

Councillor Plowman mentioned the following:

- i) A briefing for all Councillors had been arranged for Thursday 3 March 2022 at 3pm and at which Members would be updated on the Southern Gateway and Chichester Vision projects.
- ii) The Whitehouse Farm phase two outline planning application had not yet been received. Members were reminded that among the ongoing issues was the southern access route.
- iii) The Whitehouse Farm developers had agreed to name the new country park area the "Platinum Jubilee Country Park" and that the Mayor would be opening it on 22 April 2022 and planting a tree to celebrate the Jubilee and the country park opening.
- iv) The new Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had started making positive progress and that several PLACE studies had commenced as part of their work.

Councillor Bell referred to minute 91 (Whitehouse Farm) and advised Members that Chichester District Council, under IBF877, had allocated £420,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money to support the expansion of Langley House doctors' surgery to accommodate residents of Whitehouse Farm where no provision had been included. He reminded Members that the City Council had raised a strong objection to the planning application for this expansion project.

Councillor Bell congratulated Councillor Apel for her work in trying to arrange public meetings to enable the public to discuss the issues around Whitehouse Farm and medical provision. He also reminded Members that, while there were plans and funds available to provide the necessary space at Whitehouse Farm, the NHS Care Commissioning Group (CCG) had declined to consider providing clinical services at that site.

Councillor Apel advised Members that she had arranged space for the public meetings at Chichester Baptist Church. She reminded Councillors that the issue now was not the provision of the space for medical facilities but finding GPs, who are self-employed and in short supply, to commit the resources to providing face to face clinical services at Whitehouse Farm.

In response to a question from Councillor Scicluna, Councillor Bell advised that the Langley House planning application had not been discussed at the District Council's Planning Committee and that he was not aware of the reason for the delay.

Councillor Apel responded that, while the District Council Planning Committee had not seen the application, the District Council's cabinet had agreed that the Langley House extension should proceed.

Councillor Gershater informed Members that he would shortly become a Governor for the Sussex Community NHS Trust. He advised Members that he had been discussing

the scope of the activities of the Trust and that he would be happy to receive comments and concerns from Councillors that he could raise in his new role.

After a short further debate, Members agreed that the overall provision of GP services in Chichester needed review with reference to the future plans for GP surgery locations relative to new housing developments.

Referring to minute 93, Councillor Gershater asked whether the noise action group had started to define its objectives and targets, how it would assess if these had been achieved and whether the group was aligning itself with the “20’s plenty” speed limit initiative.

Councillor Sharp responded and offered to resend the terms of reference and meeting minutes of the noise action group.

She advised members that the noise action group aimed to bring together volunteers from a number of organisations to review the problem of traffic noise, bring together best practice from elsewhere in the country, gather data about noise hot spots and work with the relevant agencies to tackle the issue in Chichester, the areas to the south of the city and the A27 corridor.

Councillor Corfield clarified the difference between the noise action group and the “20’s plenty” group. She advised Members that the 20mph issue related to the city roads while the noise issue largely revolved around the A27 which would not be considered as part of the 20mph project.

Councillor Plowman, as Chairman of the Planning and Conservation Committee, drew the debate to a close and advised Members that he would be asking for regular updates at that Committee which was the appropriate place for this discussion.

It was then RESOLVED that the original motion put by Councillor Plowman, that the minutes of the meetings held on 9 December 2021, 6 January 2022, and 3 February 2022; be approved and adopted.

b) Community Affairs Working Group

It was moved by Councillor Apel, as Chairman of the Committee, that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2022 be approved and adopted.

Referring to minute 59(a), Councillor Apel asked whether, given the number of events coming up in 2022, including the Jubilee celebrations and Culture Spark season; other Councillors and their constituents were having difficulty understanding what was happening and whether this would create problems with sponsorship and attendance.

In response to a question from Councillor Apel asking for an update on the Jubilee Gala being organised by the City Council, the Town Clerk informed Members that an update had been sent out a few days previously by the Front of House Supervisor and that he would resend this information after the meeting.

Councillor Sharp agreed with Councillor Apel’s Culture Spark concerns and highlighted the TikTok video project that had been included in the season. She reminded Members that the aim was for Councillors to nominate young ward residents to take part, but that further information appeared to be lacking.

Councillor Plowman also agreed with the comments being made and advised Members that he had put together a “flash diary” to outline all the upcoming events to try to provide a clearer picture of what was happening.

Referring to minute 61, Councillor Sharp asked if there was an update from the Mayor about the Sussex Police Inspector's Big Data presentation.

The Mayor advised Members that the presentation had not yet happened and that he would update Councillors accordingly.

It was then RESOLVED that the original motion put by Councillor Apel, that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2022; be approved and adopted.

c) Finance Working Group

It was moved by Councillor Scicluna, as Chairman of the Committee, that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2022 and the Special Meeting held on 10 February 2022, be approved, and adopted.

Council was asked to consider the following recommendations:

i) Bognor Road bus shelter – **Minute 84(c) refers**

It was AGREED TO RECOMMEND to Full Council on 23 February 2022 that the Bognor Road bus shelter installation proceed subject to the availability of S106 funding.

After a short discussion it was RESOLVED that the Bognor Road bus shelter installation go ahead subject to the availability of S106 funding.

ii) West Street project – **Minute 84(d) refers**

It was AGREED TO RECOMMEND to Full Council on 23 February 2022 that the City Council contribute to the West Street feasibility study in the amount of £3,590.70, to be funded from the Public Realm budget.

Councillor Carter expressed concerns about the quality of the papers that had been distributed for a recent meeting (Property Working Group – 10 January 2022) as part of a presentation on the West Street project.

It was RESOLVED that the City Council contribute to the West Street feasibility study in the amount of £3,590.70, to be funded from the Public Realm budget.

Councillor Carter voted against and Councillors Barrie and Gaskin abstained

iii) Platinum Jubilee Gala – request for additional funding – **Minute 93 refers**

It was AGREED TO RECOMMEND to Full Council on Wednesday 23 February 2022 that an additional £5,000 be added to the Events budget bringing the total to £11,000 for 2022-23.

Councillor Scicluna advised Members that, in addition to the Jubilee Gala currently being planned, other upcoming events, including a Freedom Parade in the autumn; meant that an increase in the Events budget was being recommended.

In response to a question about the planned St George's Day parade from Councillor Bell, the Town Clerk clarified that April 23 2022, St George's Day, there would be a parade involving the Mayors of other Sussex towns and cities that had given Honorary Freedoms to the Royal Sussex Regiment to celebrate the centenary of the Regiment's first attendance at St George's Chapel.

After a short further debate, it was RESOLVED that an additional £5,000 be added to the Events budget bringing the total to £11,000 for 2022-23.

Councillors Gershater and K Hughes abstained.

The minutes of the meeting of the Property Working Group held on 10 January 2022 were noted.

Councillor Sharp asked for an update on minute 47 of the Property Working Group meeting (Florence Park floodlights). Members were advised that the Property Manager was currently on holiday and an update would be given at the next Property Working Group meeting.

It was the RESOLVED that the original motion put by Councillor Scicluna, that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2022 and the Special Meeting held on 10 February 2022; be approved and adopted.

62. REVIEW OF CURRENT CITY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

The Town Clerk reminded Members that he had previously distributed a briefing note regarding the City Council's current meeting arrangements and the prevailing legal situation that applied since the repeal of the temporary arrangements that the Government had put in place at the start of the Coronavirus pandemic.

He advised Councillors that due to a lack of response to that briefing note, he was not in a position to move forward and sought guidance from Members.

Councillors were further advised that, legally, the situation was clear and that all Council and decision-making Committee meetings must be held in person.

Members were also reminded that the recent Away Day had demonstrated that hybrid meetings were technically possible should the regulations allow this.

The Town Clerk informed Members that he would recirculate the briefing and asked all Councillors to respond.

63. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS – 2022 – 2023

The Town Clerk presented the proposed calendar of meetings for 2022-2023 and thanked the Member Services Support Officer for his work on it.

He advised Members that, in compiling the calendar, efforts had been made to limit clashes between City, District, and West Sussex County Council meetings. Members were further advised that this was rarely reciprocated by the other authorities.

Councillor Sharp also thanked the Officers for their work on the calendar and reminded Members that the times of meetings had been changed during the pandemic from evenings to afternoons. She expressed the opinion that holding the meetings during the daytime might affect participation by those with jobs as well as employed people who might potentially stand as candidates at elections.

Members debated the positive and negative aspects of afternoon meetings as opposed to evening meetings at length with the Deputy Mayor and Councillors Quail, Barrie, Bell and K Hughes agreeing with Councillor Sharp's comments about participation.

Councillor Scicluna supported the calendar of meetings as presented but suggested that, following the elections in May 2023, the new Council might wish to revisit the meeting times. She also reminded Members that the District and County Councils held their meetings in the daytime and that a previous experiment by the District Council to move to

evening meetings had not been successful with a low attendance at those meetings by Members.

The Deputy Mayor agreed that, as a working person with commitments around the country, attending afternoon meetings in person would prove difficult. He also emphasised that the Members of the City Council had volunteered to stand and did not receive remuneration so that should be taken into account when discussing meeting times and locations.

The Town Clerk reminded Members that the outcome of the call for evidence by the Government regarding remote meetings was still awaited. He expressed the hope that this would result in a change to the regulations to allow full Council and Committee meetings to be held via Zoom or as a hybrid combination of Zoom and in person.

Councillor Bell supported the previous comments and suggested that, while it might not be possible to publish the full calendar of meetings for the next year far in advance, a declaration by the Council ahead of the May 2023 elections to advise of any changes to meeting times might help persuade potential candidates to stand.

The Mayor expressed the opinion that, while Zoom had been a useful tool during the pandemic, his preference was for face to face meetings as the interaction and the ability to read emotions during discussions was much better.

Councillor Barrie informed Members that she felt it was important to distinguish between the location of the meetings and the timings of the meetings.

Councillor K Hughes agreed with the Town Clerk's comments about hybrid meetings and expressed the hope that this would be something that could happen after the call for evidence was announced.

Councillor Plowman supported the suggestion that the new council from 2023 might wish to revisit the meeting times. He informed Members that statistics showed that the average age of councillors meant that they did not have the same constraints on their time as those who still worked.

In response to a question from Councillor Plowman about a date for the traditional Charter Dinner, the Mayor agreed that a date could be identified before the elections in May 2023.

Councillor Carter suggested that UK Harvest be approached to cater this event.

64. NOTICE OF MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR CORFIELD

The Mayor asked Councillor Corfield to introduce the Notice of Motion.

Further to the successful 20s Plenty-for-us campaign to reduce the speed limit of certain roads in Chichester City to 20mph, it is proposed that Chichester City Council supports an extension to the existing 20mph speed limited areas, and for it to apply to all other roads in Chichester City Council Wards, and calls on West Sussex County council to implement 20mph across the City, with 30mph as the exception on any of these roads only after full consideration has been given to the needs of vulnerable users.

Councillor Corfield summarised the Notice of Motion as presented and gave Members some background information on the "20's Plenty" campaign and progress to date on actions that had been taken.

Issues highlighted included residents' safety concerns and effects on the environment and their quality of life.

Members were advised that wide area 20mph default speed limits had become increasingly common in other towns and cities in the UK and elsewhere in the world and Councillor

Sharp highlighted Wales and some large county authorities who were in the process of implementing this type of default speed limit.

Councillor Corfield clarified that the intention was to include the A-roads in the city but exclude the A27 itself.

She reminded Councillors that she had sent out an evidence paper in support of the Notice of Motion and highlighted some of the potential benefits of implementing the wide area 20mph default speed limit scheme. She also informed Members that the schemes were very popular with residents across the country and that, locally, students had indicated they would be more willing to use alternative, active forms of transport if the 20mph zone was introduced.

Members were further advised that the myths surrounding wide area default speed limit zones were not supported by evidence. These included the perception that slower speeds meant longer journey times and more traffic jams. Members were informed that it had been shown that lowering the speed limit reduced the stop-start nature of urban driving and helped with overall traffic flow with Councillor Bell citing the example of the variable speed limits in place on the M25.

Councillor Corfield reported that concerns had also been raised about enforcement of the limit.

She expressed the opinion that this was an issue regardless of the speed limit but that it had been shown that introducing such a scheme had the effect of changing the mindset of the drivers and reducing the overall speed of travel.

She then suggested that the City Council could create a new Working Group to look at road safety issues.

Members voiced their strong support for the Notice of Motion and the implementation of the wide area 20mph default speed limit.

Councillor Quail summarised road traffic accident statistics and the effect of different speed limits on fatality rates for pedestrian-motor vehicle accidents.

Councillor Bell reminded Members that Councillor Sharp had been involved in the original project to implement 20mph speed limits in Chichester's residential areas. He further reminded Members that doubt had been expressed at the time about including the main A roads within the city as well as doubts about the ability of the Police to resource enforcement of the limits.

Councillor Gershater advised Members that upcoming changes would mean that cars would be fitted with speed limiting devices which would help address the enforcement issues.

The Deputy Mayor informed Members that the 20mph limit was part of a multi-layered strategy that included overall urban design aimed at restricting driving speeds using layouts that were better suited to the lower limits. He also informed Members that implementation of cycle and pedestrian routes was simplified in lower speed limit areas.

Councillor Gaskin expressed support for the project. She also highlighted concerns about expending resources on such schemes if enforcement did not happen.

Councillor Corfield confirmed that expense had been raised as an issue but responded that the reduced costs of dealing with accidents and injuries meant that these costs were generally recouped in a short period of time. She also advised Members that, in this case, costs were reduced as there were already 20mph limits across the city and it would be

relatively easy to amend the signs in the new zones should the wide area default be adopted.

In answer to a question from Councillor Apel, Councillor Corfield advised Members that she had been in discussion with West Sussex Police PCSO Jason Lemm who had expressed support as well as suggesting the creation of a Speed Watch group in the north of the city.

Councillors Gershater and K Hughes highlighted the importance of integrating any default speed limit zone with the wider public transport and traffic calming schemes and the aim of getting people out of their cars when travelling around the city.

After a short further debate, it was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that the City Council adopt the Notice of Motion as outlined in support of the creation of a wide area default 20mph speed limit for the city of Chichester.

65. COMMUNITY HIGHWAYS SCHEME – LIDL/STORY ROAD FOOTPATH

Councillor Plowman reminded Members that the footpath in question needed a proper surface installed to make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists to use. He advised Members that it was proposed that the City Council apply to the West Sussex County Council Community Highways Scheme for funding to enable this work to be undertaken.

The proposal was supported by the Mayor and seconded by Councillor Cherry Hughes.

It was then unanimously RESOLVED that the City Council apply to the West Sussex County Council Community Highways Scheme for funding to improve the footpath between Story Road and the Lidl carpark.

66. REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Apel, as the City Council's representative on the Chichester Welfare Trust; informed Members that the Trust had now helped Syrian refugees with 10-15 families being supported. She further informed Members that the Trust had agreed to support 10 refugee families from Afghanistan.

Councillor Plowman, as the City Council representative on the Goodwood Motor Circuit and Aerodrome boards; advised Members that a new event called the Eroica Cycle Event, that had been dubbed the Revival for Bicycles, would be taking place from Friday 5 to Sunday 7 August 2022. He further advised that this was aimed at pre-1987 bicycles and that the Sunday would see a large group cycle ride around the area with an anticipated 5000 participants.

He assured Councillors that the event would not follow in the footsteps of a previously arranged event, Velo South, which had caused concerns for residents when it had been announced.

Councillor Quail, as the City Council representative on Chichester BID, informed Members that the recent ballot on the future of the BID had been successful and the BID term had been renewed for a further five year period. She also informed Members that the BID's Christmas programme had been considered a success.

Members were advised that the current Chichester BID Chairman would be standing down shortly with the existing Vice-Chairman being recommended to fill that position.

As a City Council representative with the Friends of Ravenna, Councillor Quail reported that the Friends had almost finalised their 2022-23 activity plans and that there would soon be a Zoom meeting between the Friends of Ravenna and their counterpart organisation in Ravenna itself.

67. WARD REPORTS FROM CHICHESTER CITY COUNCILLORS

The Mayor reminded Members that he had asked that written reports should be submitted well in advance of the meeting to allow Councillors to review the reports and ask questions as appropriate.

68. REPORTS FROM CHICHESTER DISTRICT AND WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S WARD MEMBERS

The Mayor drew Members' attention to the report that had been submitted by Councillor Sharp in her roles as Chichester District Councillor and West Sussex County Councillor for Chichester South.

The Mayor drew Members' attention to the report that had been submitted by the Deputy Mayor in his role as West Sussex County Councillor for Chichester West.

Councillor Scicluna thanked the Councillors for their reports.

Chichester District Councillor and West Sussex County Councillor for Chichester East, Simon Oakley, advised Members that there would be a meeting to discuss the West Sussex Transport Plan (2022-2036) on 24 February 2022 which would include proposals for improvements to the A286 ring road, the A285 (Westhampnett Road) and the A259 (Bognor Road).

He also advised that a public consultation regarding proposals for walking and cycling infrastructure improvements would start on 8 March 2022 and run until 5 April 2022.

Councillor Oakley reported that the West Sussex County Council budget would be debated on 28 February 2022 and that there would be a public forum for West Sussex residents to meet their County Councillors at The Grange, Midhurst, on 1st March 2021

In response to a question from Councillor Bell about the roadworks being undertaken at the Oving Road junction with the A27, Councillor Oakley assured Members that temporary facilities for pedestrians and cyclists had been installed while the works continued. He also advised that, in the longer term, a foot and cycle bridge would be installed to connect the Shopwyke estate with Portfield, south of the roundabout, and potentially an additional footbridge to connect the Shopwyke estate to Coach Road in the north-east.

Councillor Lishman, in her capacity as Chichester District Councillor (Chichester East) informed Members that she had recently joined the City Centre Community Warden on patrol. She advised that she had found the experience very useful and had noted some of the issues affecting the city centre including the increased presence of graffiti since the District Council had stopped funding its removal, as well as problems with missing and broken bricks in the pedestrianised areas.

Councillor Scicluna agreed that the increased graffiti was concerning due to its impact on the look of the city as, historically, Chichester had not suffered from a significant graffiti problem. She advised Members that it was her understanding that, currently, graffiti that appeared on private property was the responsibility of the property owner to remove.

Councillor Bell expressed concern at the comments being made and agreed to contact Chichester District Council Contract Services to discuss the matter.

Councillor Sharp responded to Councillor Lishman's comments about the missing bricks in the pedestrian precinct.

She informed Members that, further to ongoing discussions on this issue, West Sussex County Council Area Highways Manager had now received three quotes for resurfacing the precincts using a bonded surfacing material. She also informed Members that discussions

would be taking place shortly between the County, District and City Councils to look at the options for financing this work.

Members welcomed this news and Councillor Gaskin strongly urged those involved in the project to consider using surfaces that included recycled materials subject to cost and durability considerations.

69. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

No questions were received.

70. COMMON SEAL

RESOLVED that the Common Seal be affixed to any documents necessary to give effect to the resolutions passed at this meeting.

Members were advised that, further to the agenda being circulated, the confidential business matter regarding the Market House had been withdrawn due to a change in circumstances.

The meeting closed at 3.50pm