

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL (ALCC) HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2020 at 7.03pm using Microsoft Teams video conferencing

PRESENT: Councillors:

Peter Adamson, Michaela Assiratti, Vanessa Bartlett, Keri Bidgood, Gill Clark (Chair), Roger Clark, Tracey Dyson, Julie Holt, Mark Lewis, Beverley Lucas, Perry Morgan, Gary Oakley, Rob Phillips, Allen Rees, Nick Simmons, Glyn Smith, Bernard Wall and Graham White

Officers: Steve Edwards, Deputy Clerk and Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk

Others: None

ABSENT: Councillor Mark Lewis

289. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOMES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mark Lewis.

290. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Roger Clark declared that he had a personal interest in agenda item 3 (Election of Chair) as his wife was the current Chair. Councillors Tracey Dyson and Keri Bidgood both declared personal interest in agenda item 4 (Election of Vice-Chair) as one was the current Vice-Chair and the other was the mother of the current Vice Chair.

No other members declared any personal interests at this stage.

291. ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2020/21 CIVIC YEAR.

- (a) There were two nominations for Chair for the remainder of the year. Councillor Gill Clark and Councillor Gary Oakley. Councillor Gary Oakley asked for all votes at this meeting to be recorded as it was difficult to ensure that all votes were counted during a virtual meeting.

There were 8 votes for Gill Clark (Michaela Assiratti, Vanessa Bartlett, Keri Bidgood, Gill Clark, Roger Clark, Tracey Dyson, Julie Holt, Beverley Lucas) and 9 votes for Gary Oakley (Peter Adamson, Perry Morgan, Gary Oakley, Rob Phillips, Allen Rees, Nick Simmons, Glyn Smith, Bernard Wall, Graham White).

- (b) Gary Oakley was elected Chair for the remainder of the Civic Year. He verbally read out the Declaration of Acceptance as he was not in the same location as the Clerk so a written acceptance could not be made at this point in time.

- (c) The new Chair took the chair for the rest of the meeting.

- (d) The previous Chair read out her retiring Chair's statement

“I can hardly say that being Chair for the past 18 months has been a pleasant experience. There have been moments when it has been enjoyable and where I have seen this Council acting in the Community’s interest but unfortunately these occasions have been overshadowed by unnecessary rudeness and challenging behaviour from some Members to myself, other Members and to our Staff. This must stop if we are to see this Council succeed, assuming that we all want this council to succeed.

It has been an embarrassment to see the ombudsman throw out so many complaints. This Council is a figure of fun to any right-minded person because of this. There are another three complaints still under investigation which proves to me that there are Members here who are happy for the Council to carry on as a dysfunctional one, which is self-serving and worthless to our Community. If it wasn’t for our Staff and Councillors who do know how to conduct themselves appropriately, we would have been in a lot of trouble by now.

I would like to thank both Richard and Steve, our excellent and knowledgeable staff, who have continued to act in a wise and professional way, whatever is thrown at them. I would also like to thank Councillor Dyson, my Vice Chair, for supporting me and our Staff through this unprecedented time.

The nonsense has gone on for too many years. Let’s all do our best to get through the STORMING phase, onto the NORMING one and finally start PERFORMING.

I hope you will support the new Chair and Vice Chair and I wish them the best of luck”

The Chair thanked the outgoing Chair for her statement and acknowledged that it had been a difficult year for Council with the added difficulties of the Covid 19 crisis.

292. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2020/21 CIVIC YEAR.

- (a) There was a single nomination for Vice-Chair for the remainder of the year, Councillor Nick Simmons. There were 9 votes for his election (Peter Adamson, Perry Morgan, Gary Oakley, Rob Phillips, Allen Rees, Nick Simmons, Glyn Smith, Bernard Wall, Graham White) and 8 votes against (Michaela Assiratti, Vanessa Bartlett, Keri Bidgood, Gill Clark, Roger Clark, Tracey Dyson, Julie Holt, Beverley Lucas)
- (b) Nick Simmons was elected as Vice-Chair for the remainder of the Civic Year. He verbally read out the Declaration of Acceptance as he was not in the same location as the Clerk so a written acceptance could not be made at this point in time.

Agenda Item 5 (Minutes) was moved to Agenda Item 8

293. COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS AND OUTSIDE BODIES FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE CIVIC YEAR.

- (a) Council **RESOLVED** with 9 votes for (Peter Adamson, Perry Morgan, Gary Oakley, Rob Phillips, Allen Rees, Nick Simmons, Glyn Smith, Bernard Wall, Graham White) and 8 votes against (Michaela Assiratti, Vanessa Bartlett, Keri Bidgood, Gill Clark, Roger

Clark, Tracey Dyson, Julie Holt, Beverley Lucas) to defer any changes to Committees or work groups to the December meeting of Council, except for changes to the HR Committee, as the membership had to change because of New Chair and Vice Chair who automatically sit on the HR Committee.

- (b) A debate ensued in increasing the number of the HR Committee from 5 to 7 members to be elected, the lack of gender equality was discussed. that Councillor Gill Clark and Councillor Julie Holt had the opportunity to be members of the HR Committee but they withdrew, and that no women were accepted on the HR Committee as Councillor Gill Clark felt that having 7 members increased the risk of breach of confidentiality

Council **RESOLVED** with 9 votes for (Peter Adamson, Perry Morgan, Gary Oakley, Rob Phillips, Allen Rees, Nick Simmons, Glyn Smith, Bernard Wall, Graham White) and 8 votes against (Michaela Assiratti, Vanessa Bartlett, Keri Bidgood, Gill Clark, Roger Clark, Tracey Dyson, Julie Holt, Beverley Lucas) to increases the size of the HR Committee to 7 members, the Chair of Council, Vice Chair of Council and 5 other nominated Councillors.

- (c) Council **RESOLVED** with 12 votes for (Peter Adamson, Michaela Assiratti, Vanessa Bartlett, Keri Bidgood, Perry Morgan, Gary Oakley, Rob Phillips, Allen Rees, Nick Simmons, Glyn Smith, Bernard Wall, Graham White) and 2 votes against (Gill Clark and Roger Clark) with 3 Councillors abstaining (Tracey Dyson, Julie Holt, Beverley Lucas) that the three nominees, Rob Phillips, Allen Rees and Graham White be elected to serve on the HR Committee, and therefore be two vacancies on the HR Committee.

- (d) Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to agree the dates of future Council meetings as per the attached meeting papers.

294. ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHAIR'S CHARITY APPEAL FOR 2020/21

The Chair deferred his announcement to a future meeting

295. CHEQUE SIGNATORIES

Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to increase the number of authorised Councillors to sign cheques from 3 to 4.

Council **RESOLVED**, with only one objection from Gill Clark to appoint Peter Adamson as an authorised cheque/payment signatory.

At this point Beverly Lucas left the meeting as she was having difficulty in hearing all of the discussions that were taking place.

296. MINUTES COUNCIL MEETING OF 21ST OCTOBER 2020

Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 21st October 2020 be confirmed as a correct record, for signature by the Chair.

297. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 3(x)

Council RESOLVED to suspend standing order 3(x) to enable the meeting to continue beyond the normal two-hour limit.

There was a discussion concerning the Chair of the Finance and Grants Committee as Gary Oakley had now been made Chair of Council so therefore could not hold the position as Chair of the Finance and Grants Committee. The matter was deferred to a later date.

298. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR ALLEN REES

Deferred

299. MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR JULIE HOLT

Deferred

300. TOWN IN BLOOM

Deferred

301. ADOPTING BT TELEPHONE BOXES

Deferred

302. CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

303. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS, RELEVANT CORRESPONDENCE AND CELEBRATING SUCCESS

No announcements were made.

304. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Council RESOLVED: that the next meeting be held on Wednesday 16 December 2020 at 7.00pm.

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.

Signed as a correct record by the Chair

NB these minutes are a summary of the proceedings and record of the decisions taken. They are not intended to be a verbatim record.

Minutes produced by Steve Edwards, Acting Clerk