**MINUTES** of the **ANNUAL MEETING OF STANLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held at **Stanley Civic Hall** on **Tuesday 24th May 2022** at **6.30pm**

**PRESENT**: C Bell G Binney A Clegg\* D Fall L Ferry C Hampson A Hanson A Jones C Marshall J McMahon S McMahon J Nicholson J Stephenson M Thompson D Tully

\*Chairman

**OFFICERS**: Helen Richardson (Town Clerk)

Ann Barry (Finance Officer)

Peter Burns (Facilities & Events Support Officer)

Michelle Robertson (Events & Admin Support Officer)

Joeseph Rooney (Finance Apprentice)

**1** **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members **ACCEPTED** apologies from Cllr. H Clark, Cllr. O Milburn, Cllr. J Kane and Cllr. K Coulson. Cllr. M Martin Absent.

**2** **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**3** **ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR AND DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR**

(i) It was proposed by Cllr C Hampson, seconded by Cllr A Jones and **RESOLVED**  that Cllr Alex Clegg be **ELECTED** as Town Mayor for the Civic Year 2022/23.

Cllr A Clegg signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took his place as Chairman for the meeting.

(ii) It was proposed by Cllr J Stephenson, seconded by Cllr Gordon Binney and **RESOLVED** that Cllr O Milburn be **ELECTED** as Deputy Town Mayor for the Civic Year 2022/23.

Cllr O Milburn was not present to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office but has accepted the nomination.

Cllr C Bell raised the question as to whether this could be accepted given Cllr O Milburn is not present.

The Town Clerk has checked this and confirmed that the position can be nominated and accepted in their absence as long as they agree to that nomination.

**4** **CORE GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS**

It was proposed by Cllr. J Stephenson, seconded by Cllr. C Marshall and **RESOLVED** that the following core governance documents were **APPROVED**, including the amendment proposed in the agenda to (i) The Constitution, section 5.8.

Financial Regulations, the new reporting regime will be monitored by Finance and General Purposes committee.

Documents approved:

1. The Constitution

*Amendment – 5.8 Remove reference to a Deputy Clerk being employed as this is currently not the case.*

(ii) Standing Orders

(iii) Financial Regulations

(iv) Community Engagement & Communications Policies

(v) Publications Scheme

(vi) Publicity Policy

**5** **LEADER & DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

1. It was proposed by Cllr S McMahon, seconded by Cllr Carl Marshall and **RESOLVED** that Cllr J Stephenson be **ELECTED** as Leader of the Town Council.
2. It was proposed by Cllr S McMahon, seconded by Cllr J Stephenson and **RESOLVED** that Cllr C Hampson be **ELECTED** as Deputy Leader of the Town Council.

**6 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

1. It was proposed by Cllr A Hanson, seconded by Cllr C Hanson and **RESOLVED** that Cllr Gordon Binney is **ELECTED** as Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee.
2. It was proposed by Cllr G Binney, seconded by Cllr C Hampson and **RESOLVED** that Cllr A Hanson is **ELECTED** Vice Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee.
3. The committee will be made up with members, Cllr J Kane, Cllr J McMahon, Cllr S McMahon, Cllr A Jones, Cllr D Fall, plus 3 Derwentside Independent Councillors to be nominated from their group.

**7 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE TOWN MAYOR**

The Town Mayor welcomed everybody to the meeting, but had no announcements to make.

The Town Clerk apologies for issues with ICT documents over last week, working with provider to resolve the issues. Telephone issues are also being looked into, if people were trying to contact the Civic Hall it was requested that people remain patient but their call would be answered.

The Town Clerk confirmed all Coucillors would receive an email in the next couple of weeks to establish what council equipment they had and what issues, if any they have with the items as a number of members have expressed concerns about the equipment they are using as it is not fit for purpose and so we are looking at options for this to be resolved or updated.

Council members were advised we have now filled the two apprentice positions and this is going well. An advert for the position of Events & Admin Support Officer (Fixed Term) is now live and closes 5th June 2022. The job proposal for a Project & Grant Officer is with Durham County Council HR for evaluation before being advertised. Town Clerk will keep members updated on the outcome of both roles as the process progresses.

**8 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE OUTGOING TOWN MAYOR**

The outgoing Town Mayor Cllr O Milburn, made the following statement:

Good Evening Fellow Councillors:

Can I start by apologising for my absence. Unavoidable, as this holiday was booked before I became a Town Councillor.

One of my first duties must be to thank the Officers of the Council both past and present for the help and support I have received throughout the year. Being new to the ways of Town Councils and the protocol around receiving and issuing invitations and the schedule of events during the year, I would have been lost without Nicola and later Alan chivvying me and reminding me (sometimes at very short notice) where I was expected to be. Since Helen and Michelle took over the roles it has been much less frenetic and for that I thank them.

Whilst I am on the subject of help and support, I must say a special thank you to Alex (Councillor Clegg) for his help in attending functions on behalf of the Council that I was unable to attend. I know he has done it before but I'm sure he will be a good mayor for the coming year.

One of the events in the Councils year that I very much enjoyed was the presenting of the prizes for the Blooming Good Fun competition, which not only highlighted the great gardening that goes on in the area but also shone a spotlight on James and his incredible workforce whose work on the In Bloom competition is nothing short of breath taking, and whose day to day efforts make Stanley and the surrounding area a better place to live. Thank you lads.

This year has been an especially challenging one for the Council and its staff. It has seen all members of staff undertake tasks that were very far removed from their job descriptions, (I'm sure floor mopping etc is not a pre-requisite for a Finance Officer is it Ann?) For that I thank you all.

My fellow Councillors, thank you for your support and co-operation in meetings which makes the job of chairing so much easier, we can disagree (and indeed do) but I would say that for the most part we can work together for the good of Stanley.

And finally thanks to Helen, for not only reading this on my behalf, but for taking over the reins of the Council and hopefully stopping the horses in full flight to destruction.

Best Wishes to you all.

Olga

**9 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The event was being live streamed via the Town Councils Youtube channel.

There were no members of the public present and no questions had been received in writing.

**10 CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES**

It was proposed by Cllr J Stephenson, and **AGREED** by all that the minutes from Ordinary Council Meeting on 26th April 2022 were **APPROVED** as a true record.

**11 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS & GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

It was proposed by Cllr J Stephenson to **ACCEPT** all documents as a whole, and **AGREED** by all members that the Council:

1. **APPROVE** the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22
2. **APPROVE** the Annual Accounts for 2021/22
3. **RESOLVE** that the Council has in place an effective system of internal control
4. **CONFIRM** that the Council has arrangements in respect of all insurable risks in place; and
5. **AUTHORISE** the Town Mayor to sign the Annual Governance Statement and the Annual Accounting Statement for 2021/22 on behalf of the Council.

**12 REVIEW OF EXPENDITURE UNDER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972,**

**s.137**

Council **NOTED** the report.

Members were advised by the RFO that the report is brief compared to previous years as the Strategic Grants was removed for 2021/22 which would normally make up a lot of the Section 137 spend.

**13 APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES & WORKING GROUPS**

It was proposed, **AGREED** and **RESOLVED** by all members the following appointments to outside bodies would remain the same.

1. Area Action Partnership, Cllr Jeanette Stephenson, Town Clerk is also a co-opted board member
2. CDALC Executive, Cllr Alex Clegg
3. Larger Local Councils Forum (CDALC) Cllr O Milburn and Cllr A Clegg
4. PACT House, Cllr Dean Fall
5. Stanley Fund, Cllr A Clegg, Cllr O Milburn, one Derwentside Independent Member to be nominated from their group
6. Love Beamish and Stanley, Cllr A Jones
7. Armed Forces Champion, Cllr A Jones

It was proposed by Cllr J Stephenson that a review of the Working Groups take place, this is something that has been discussed before, to ensure the right people are in these groups. To ensure the groups are actually what we need now, as things have moved on and new issues present themselves. Council may need groups which were not needed in the past, such as a Civic Hall Working Group in particular and how that can be managed going forward, possibly also reviewing the committee structure.

It was **AGREED** a review would take place.

**14 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

It was **AGREED** the schedule of meetings for the Civic Year 2022/23 would be reviewed by members.

**15 SUBCRIPTIONS TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

It was proposed by **AGREED** and **RESOLVED** that the Council subscribe to the following organisations.

1. National Associations of Local Councils (NALC)
2. County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC)
3. Society of Local Council Clerk (SLCC)
4. North East Regional Employer’s Organisation (NEREO)

**16 DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

TBC following proposed review of schedule – see item 14.

The Town Clerk confirmed an email would be sent to all members, requesting their availability to meet for full council to establish a Schedule of meeting for the year.

It is proposed a meeting on Tuesday 28th June 2022, 6.30pm unless this changes following the review.