

## Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday, 14th July, 2021.

**Present:** The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr Kevin Faulks); Cllr Helen Atkinson, Cllr Chris Barlow, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Jacky Bright, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Evaline Cunningham, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr Lisa Evans, Cllr Dan Fagan, Cllr Luke Frost, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Niall Innes, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Steve Matthews, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr David Minchella, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Lauriane Povey, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Lee Spence, Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Laura Tunney, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Steve Walmsley, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Alan Watson, Cllr Sally Ann Watson, Cllr Paul Weston, Cllr Julia Whitehill and Cllr Bill Woodhead MBE.

**Officers:** Julie Danks (MD); Nigel Hart, Michael Henderson, Peter Bell (DS); Beccy Brown, Jonathan Nertney (HR,L&C).

**Also in attendance:** None.

**Apologies:** Cllr Louise Baldock, Cllr Clare Gamble, Cllr Tina Large, Cllr Ted Strike and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

### 1 Welcome

The Worshipful the Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the arrangements for the meeting.

### 2 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Pauline Beall declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 10 – Motion to Council – Special Constabulary as George Kane was a close friend of her late parents.

Councillor Evaline Cunningham declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 7 - 2023 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies as her husband was the MP for Stockton North. Councillor Evaline Cunningham did not take part or vote on the item when it was considered.

### 3 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings held on 24 March and 26 May 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 March and 26 May 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### 4 Public Question Time

The Chief Solicitor informed Members that no Public Questions had been received.

### 5 Ward Boundary Review - Warding Patterns Consultation

Consideration was given to a report on the Ward Boundary Review - Warding Patterns Consultation.

Council noted the outcome of consultation held by the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) on warding patterns as part of the Stockton on Tees Electoral Review 2020 Ward Boundary Review.

The Local Government Boundary Commission had responded to the Council Size submission on the Stockton on Tees Electoral Ward Boundary Review 2020 and had confirmed that they had approved our future Council Size of 56 Members; a decision which would then be applied when considering the next phase of the consultation. Phase 2 – Consultation on Warding Patterns had commenced with all elected members from 24th September – 29th October 2020 and the results from this consultation were noted by Council and submitted to The Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

Draft recommendations had now been received from the Boundary Commission which confirmed that Stockton-on-Tees should be represented by 56 councillors, the same number as there were presently and that Stockton-on-Tees should have 26 wards, again the same number as at present.

The Boundary Commission had since commenced consultation on the draft recommendations illustrated with accompanying maps for a 10-week period, commencing from 11 May 2021 to 19 July 2021.

Consultation with elected members and political groups of the Council had commenced at the same time and the results from this consultation to date were summarised. Ward Members present at the meeting representing the Fairfield Ward affected significantly by the proposals, spoke out reiterating their objections outlined in the report. Cabinet were advised that the comments submitted as part of the report were for noting and subsequent consideration by Council; and would then be forwarded to the Boundary Commission on the basis that they represented the views of political parties as indicated.

The deadline for submission of comments as part of this consultation ends on 19th July 2021 and comments could be submitted direct to LGBC via their website [r.views@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:r.views@lgbce.org.uk).

The Commission's decision on council size would not be formalised until the Final Recommendations were agreed and would be published in October this year.

RESOLVED that the comments received as part of the consultation on the Local Government Boundary Commission draft recommendations be noted and they be submitted to the LGBC by the 19th July 2021.

## **6 2023 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies**

Consideration was given to a report on the 2023 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies.

Council noted that the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) had been tasked to conduct a review of the parliamentary constituencies in England

based on the updated rules in the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 2020. The BCE must complete the current review and make a formal report to the Speaker of the House of Commons before the 1 July 2023.

Parliamentary Boundaries reflected the area where the electorate vote for their MP, and the review will examine these areas and make proposals for a new set of boundaries. The Act requires there to be a fixed number of 650 constituencies.

The North East region had been allocated 27 constituencies (currently it had 29). The BCE's initial proposals aimed to wholly contain each of these constituencies in the North East region.

The BCE is also required by the Act to ensure that each proposed constituency had an electorate as at the 2 March 2020 that was no less than 95% and no more than 105% of the UK electoral quota. This quota had been calculated at 73,393. Accordingly, each constituency must have an electorate that was no smaller than 69,724 and no larger than 77,062.

Taking these requirements and other statutory factors into account, the BCE published its initial proposals for England, including the North East on the 8 June 2021 for an 8 week consultation period ending 2nd August 2021. Other statutory factors taken into consideration were:

- Special geographical considerations e.g. mountains lakes rivers;
- Local Government boundaries as they exist or were in prospect on 1 December 2020;
- Boundaries of existing constituencies;
- Any local ties;
- The inconveniences attendant on such changes.

The BCE was required to consider all written representations made to it during the consultation period and representations would be published alongside the initial proposals. The BCE would be encouraging all interested parties to contribute views through their consultation website by the 2nd August 2021.

The results to date from consultation with elected members and political groups of the Council were summarised.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The report be noted.
2. Responses received to date on the initial proposals be noted and be submitted to the Boundary Commission for England by 2 August 2021.

## **7 Appointments/Amendments to Committee and Outside Body for 2019/23**

At its Annual Meeting, held on Wednesday 22 May 2019, the Council approved appointments to its Committees, Panels and Joint/Outside Bodies for 2019/23.

RESOLVED that Councillor Louise Baldock be removed as Vice Chair of the Place Select Committee.

Place Select Committee – Vice Chair Position

Council noted the following nominations had been received:

Councillor Luke Frost  
Councillor Stefan Houghton  
Councillor Mohammed Javed

Council noted that Councillor Stefan Houghton had withdrawn his nomination.

Moved by Councillor Sylvia Walmsley, seconded by Councillor Ray Godwin that Councillor Luke Frost be appointed Vice Chair of the Place Select Committee for the Municipal Years 2021 – 2023.

Moved by Councillor Norma Stephenson, seconded by Councillor Eileen Johnson that Councillor Mohammed Javed be appointed Vice Chair of the Place Select Committee for the Municipal Years 2021 – 2023.

At this point a vote took place.

RESOLVED that Councillor Mohammed Javed be appointed Vice Chair of the Place Select Committee for the Municipal Years 2021 – 2023.

Standing Advisory Council of Religious Education (SACRE).

RESOLVED that Councillor Carol Clark be removed from SACRE.

As there was already 1 vacancy on SACRE there were now 2 seats available.

RESOLVED that Councillor Evaline Cunningham and Councillor Lynn Hall be appointed to SACRE.

## **8 Motion**

The following motion had been submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3.40 moved by Councillor Lynn Hall, seconded by Councillor Stefan Houghton:-

“In the interests of democracy, transparency and to achieve improved Governance:

We the Conservative Group propose the leader of the main opposition party to act as Chairman of Executive Scrutiny Committee.

In light of the generous £118 million in support from our Government during the pandemic and with this sum still increasing; it is essential to have accountability and a clear focus to achieve the best for our Borough.

We must have a healthy level of scrutiny, avoid cancelled meetings and in accordance with the Council Leader's wishes put this vote to the opposition members to decide who will be Chair of this important committee.

Our Group seek to undertake a vote this evening and therefore propose the following motion:

"I propose that Council remove the current Chair of Executive Scrutiny Committee and that Councillor Tony Riordan be appointed as her replacement with immediate effect."

Following a debate a vote took place.

The motion was not carried.

## **9 Motion**

The following motion had been submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3.40 moved by Councillor Stephen Matthews, seconded by Councillor Stephen Richardson:-

"Steve Turner, the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland, has proposed that the Special Constabulary receive a Council Tax reduction in recognition of their service.

Special Constables are dedicated to their public office and undertake the full range of duties of a regular officer. They put their lives, physical and mental wellbeing on the line to protect our residents. When they attend incidents the public simply think how glad they are that the police have arrived. The distinction between Regular and Special Constables would go unnoticed by most of us.

To put this dedication into context, last year Special Constabulary Superintendent George Kane, then aged 70 years, clocked up 50 years of service, far exceeding the National requirement of 16 hours a month, or 192 per year.

Not every Special Constable wants to undertake the role on a full-time basis. They receive no pay, or allowance as an incentive. They undertake the role to serve their local community.

The other comparable volunteer positions are the Armed Forces Reservists and retained Firefighters – both of whom are rewarded financially for carrying out their roles.

The Conservative Group supports the Commissioners proposal, and it would also help raise the profile and recruitment of the Special Constabulary.

I propose that members of this Council support the Commissioners' initiative by rewarding the officers of the Special Constabulary, who reside in our Borough, a

20% reduction of their Council Tax. Providing they undertake the minimum hours identified in the National requirement. ”

Moved by Councillor Steve Nelson, seconded by Councillor Norma Stephenson that the substantive motion be amended as follows:-

“I propose that members of this Council support the rewarding of officers of the Special Constabulary, who reside in our Borough, by writing to the Commissioner and inviting him to ensure that:-

1. the existing national allowances and expenses scheme is fully utilised,
2. he considers the paying of Special Constables as has recently been done by the PCC's in the West Midlands and Devon & Cornwall
3. should he be unable to achieve this outcome under existing regulations that he writes to the Home Secretary to request that legislative changes be made as necessary.”

Following a debate a vote took place and it was agreed that the amendment be carried and therefore the amendment became the substantive motion.

No further amendments were moved so a vote then took place on the substantive motion.

The substantive motion was carried as follows:-

“I propose that members of this Council support the rewarding of officers of the Special Constabulary, who reside in our Borough, by writing to the Commissioner and inviting him to ensure that:-

1. the existing national allowances and expenses scheme is fully utilised,
2. he considers the paying of Special Constables as has recently been done by the PCC's in the West Midlands and Devon & Cornwall
3. should he be unable to achieve this outcome under existing regulations that he writes to the Home Secretary to request that legislative changes be made as necessary.”

## **10 Members' Question Time**

The Chief Solicitor informed Members that no Member Questions had been received.

## **11 Forward Plan and Leader's Statement**

The Leader of the Council gave his Forward Plan and Leader's Statement.

This was the first full meeting of Council since the Annual Meeting on the 26 May. Since then Cabinet had met once on the 24 June when it considered the following matters:

- The Council Plan annual report
- A report on the start of consultation of the Local Council Tax Reduction

### Scheme

- An update on the development of Adult Services
- A report on the 2021-23 Local Area SEND Strategy
- A report on an amendment to the 2020/21 school term and holiday dates
- A report on a nine-month extension to the current waste disposal contract
- A report on Levelling Up
- Reports on the comments received on the Local Government Boundary Commission ward and parliamentary boundary reviews

Looking ahead, Cabinet would next meet on 15 July 2021 and consider :

- 3 Scrutiny Review reports from Select Committees on:
  - Carbon Monoxide Awareness
  - Education, Employment and Training outcomes for Care Leavers and,
  - Hospital Discharge
- The March 2021 MTFP out-turn report
- A report on a Strategic Framework for Reducing Inequalities in the Borough
- A report on tackling food poverty in the Borough
- The Xentrall Annual report
- The Procurement Plan for higher value contracts
- A report on School Term and Holiday Dates for 2022/2023 and 2023/2024

Cabinet would then meet on the 29 July to consider a report on the Stockton Town Centre redevelopment and then on the 16 September to consider reports on:

- The annual Local Government Ombudsman's report
- The Private Landlord Led Membership Scheme evaluation
- The Best Start strategy and
- The Tees Valley Waste project

After that the Leader of the Council looked forward to seeing Members at the next meeting of Council on 22 September 2021.