

WEST DEVON COUNCIL



West Devon
Borough
Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Council** held on **Tuesday, 21st April, 2020 at 2.00 pm via Skype**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Leech
Vice Chairman Cllr Mott

Cllr Bolton	Cllr Bridgewater
Cllr Cheadle	Cllr Coulson
Cllr Crozier	Cllr Davies
Cllr Daniel	Cllr Edmonds
Cllr Ewings	Cllr Heyworth
Cllr Hipsey	Cllr Jory
Cllr Kemp	Cllr Kimber
Cllr Moody	Cllr Moyse
Cllr Musgrave	Cllr Pearce
Cllr Ratcliffe	Cllr Renders
Cllr Ridgers	Cllr Samuel
Cllr Sellis	Cllr Southcott
Cllr Vachon	Cllr Wood
Cllr Yelland	

In attendance:

Officers:
Deputy Chief Executive
Monitoring Officer
Deputy Monitoring Officer
Senior Specialist – Democratic Services

66. **Welcome and Introductions**

CM 66

As this was to be the inaugural remote meeting of the Council, the Mayor highlighted the protocol that had been circulated to all Members in advance. In so doing, the Mayor informed that he intended for this protocol to underpin how this meeting would operate.

67. **Mr Dennis Bater**

CM 67

Since this was the first Council meeting since Mr Dennis Bater (Borough Council Mayor in 1998/99 and 2007/08) sadly passed away,

the Mayor paid tribute to him and, as a mark of respect, Members proceeded to observe a minute's silence in his memory.

68. **Apologies for Absence**

CM 68

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs K Ball and J Spettigue.

69. **Declarations of Interest**

CM 69

The Mayor invited Members to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting but there were none made.

70. **Confirmation of Minutes**

CM 70

It was moved by Cllr N Jory, seconded by Cllr L Samuel and upon the motion being submitted to the Meeting was declared to be **CARRIED** and **"RESOLVED** that the Council agree the Minutes of the 18 February 2020 as a true and correct record."

71. **Remote Meetings: Draft Procedure Rules**

CM 71

The Council considered a report that proposed the adoption of a set of Remote Meeting Procedure Rules that modified the application of its existing procedure rules to ensure that the Council could make decisions by remote means. The report emphasised that, unless the Council adopted a set of Remote Meeting Procedure Rules, then any decisions it might make would not be in accordance with its Constitution and would therefore be unlawful.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

(a) the absence of an Annual Council meeting. When questioned, officers confirmed that, in the absence of an Annual Council meeting, the status quo would be retained in respect of the Member appointments to Council Bodies, Working Groups and Outside Bodies;

(b) support for the proposed Procedure Rules. In expressing their support, Members commented that the draft Rules recognised the impact of the Covid-19 Crisis on the Council and reflected the fact that, as a consequence of officer resource being dedicated to the Crisis, then the Council had insufficient officer capacity to support the monthly Member meeting cycle at this present time.

It was then moved by Cllr N Jory, seconded by Cllr R Cheadle and upon being submitted to the Meeting was declared to be **CARRIED** and **"RESOLVED** that the Remote Meetings Procedure Rules (as set out at Appendix A of the presented agenda report) be adopted, subject to inclusion of the following revision:

- Paragraph 6.2:

'On a motion being put to the vote, the Mayor/Chairman *or the clerk to the meeting* will ask each member, taking each in alphabetical order, to say if they are for or against the motion or whether they abstain. The Mayor/Chairman or the clerk to the meeting will announce the numerical result of the vote immediately the result is known. For the avoidance of doubt, there shall not be any voting by ballot'."

72. **Appointment of Head of Paid Service**

CM 72

Members were presented with a report that set out the recommendations of the Appointment Panel for the appointment of a new Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service for the Council and South Hams District Council.

It was then moved by Cllr N Jory, seconded by Cllr R Cheadle and upon being submitted to the Meeting was declared to be **CARRIED** and **"RESOLVED** that

1. the appointment of the recommended successful candidate for the position of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service (as detailed in Exempt Appendix A to the presented agenda report) be approved; and
2. the interim appointment of the Deputy Chief Executive as the Interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, for the period until the new Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service commences employment with the Council, be approved."

73. **Mayor's Concluding Remarks**

CM 73

In closing this first remote formal Member meeting, the Mayor made the following points:

- On behalf of the Council, he wished Her Majesty The Queen a very Happy Birthday;
- He thanked officers and his fellow Members for their conduct and support; and
- He encouraged any Member feedback (both positive and negative) on the operation of this remote meeting to be given to officers in an effort to make further improvements moving forward.

The Meeting concluded at 2.25 pm

Signed by:

Mayor
