

NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, 7 December 2020

PRESENT: Councillors Ansell, Ashraf, Birch, Cali, Duffy, G Eales, T Eales, Flavell, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, J Hill, Joyce, King, Lane, B Markham, Marriott, McCutcheon, Meredith Russell, Sargeant and Stone
In attendance: Mr R Walden (Acting Town Clerk), Mr G Candler and Mr L Gould (Northampton Borough Council), Dr L Sambrook-Smith (NorthantsCALC)

APOLOGIES: There were none.

The Chief Executive of the Northampton Borough Council advised that he had convened this first meeting of the new Town Council pursuant to paragraph 11 of The Northampton Borough Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) No.1 (Northampton Parish Council) Order 2020.

His Worship the Mayor of Northampton, Councillor Brian Sargeant, then opened the meeting commenting upon the historic nature of the occasion. He extended his blessings to the Councillors who would be nominated as the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Town Council and who on 1st April 2021 would succeed him as Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Birch seconded "That in this Council the Chairman and Deputy Chairman will in future be referred to and addressed as Chair and Vice Chair respectively and Councillor Rufia Ashraf be appointed as the first Chair of the Northampton Town Council."

The motion was carried unanimously and Councillor Rufia Ashraf was appointed as Chair and accepted office, delivering the Declaration of Acceptance to Office and signing the declaration during the meeting.

Councillor Ashraf then took the Chair.

2. THE CHAIR'S RESPONSE

The Chair thanked Members for the great honour of being elected as the first Chair of the Northampton Town Council, and thanked Councillors Birch and Stone for their kind words. The Chair thanked her family, friends and community for their continued support and for the hard work of all Councillors and Officers of the Borough Council with the help and support from the Northamptonshire Association of Local Councils for the creation of the new Town Council.

The Chair welcomed Past Mayors, Honorary Aldermen, Honorary Freemen and Hereditary Freemen to the first meeting of the Town Council. The Chair continued by welcoming representatives of community organisations, business partners, representatives from Northampton's faith communities, the press and Members of the public to the meeting. The Chair expressed her disappointment that the meeting was remote, as the Covid-19 restrictions prevented everyone from meeting in person. She shared that the Town Council

was keen to preserve the traditions of the Mayoralty and Northampton's rich civic heritage. She shared that she was proud of her Bangladeshi heritage, and proud to be a part of Northampton's wonderfully rich and diverse community.

3. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

Councillor B Markham proposed, and Councillor Ansell seconded "That Councillor Dennis Meredith be appointed as the first Chair of the Northampton Town Council."

The motion was carried unanimously, and Councillor Dennis Meredith was appointed as Deputy Chair and accepted office, delivering the statutory Declaration of Acceptance to Office.

4. APOLOGIES

There were none.

5. ~~TO CONFIRM THE APPOINTMENT OF THE ACTING TOWN CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER~~

It was proposed by Councillor Birch and seconded by Councillor Marriott and

RESOLVED: That Mr Richard Walden be confirmed as Acting Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer of the Northampton Town Council.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

7. ADOPTION OF THE STYLE "NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL"

It was proposed by Councillor Birch, seconded by Councillor Marriott and

RESOLVED: That the Council be styled "Northampton Town Council" and that with effect from 1st April 2021 the Chair and Deputy Chair be respectively styled the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor.

8. APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

It was proposed by Councillor Birch, seconded by Councillor Marriott and

RESOLVED: that the Executive Committee comprising Councillors Ashraf, Birch, Lane, B Markham, Marriott, McCutcheon and Russell to undertake all the business in setting up the Town Council not reserved by law to the full Town Council..

9. STANDING ORDERS, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND CODE OF CONDUCT ETC.

It was proposed by Councillor Birch, seconded by Councillor Marriott and

RESOLVED: that the key documents outlined in the report of the Acting Town Clerk be adopted subject to their formal review at the Annual Council meeting following detailed scrutiny by the Executive Committee.

10. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS.

It was proposed by Councillor Birch, seconded by Councillor Marriott and

RESOLVED: that, for the reasons set out in the report of the Acting Town Clerk, appointment of PKF Littlejohn be appointed the Council's external auditors.

11. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PENSION FUND

It was proposed by Councillor Birch, seconded by Councillor Marriott and

RESOLVED: that the Town Council approves in principle to join the Northants Pension Fund for all transferred and subsequently appointed employees subject to the Executive Committee considering and approving a report setting out the liabilities and risks of joining the Fund.

12. TRANSFER OF THE TOWN'S COAT OF ARMS

Councillor Birch proposed and Councillor Marriott seconded that Her Majesty the Queen be petitioned to grant a licence transferring the Northampton Borough Coat of Arms to the Town Council.

13. APPOINTMENT OF A PERMANENT TOWN CLERK.

Councillor Birch proposed and Councillor Marriott seconded that the terms of conditions for the appointment of a permanent Town Clerk as set out in the Appendix of the report be approved.

In addition, Councillor Birch announced that the Appointments Panel for the post will be Councillors Birch, Hibbert, B Markham and Marriott. Councillor Birch explained that candidates would individually meet three Stakeholder Panels, comprising firstly the Members of the Borough Council's Cross Party Working Group; secondly, community representatives and finally any other members of the Town Council who would be able to take part in the selection process on the afternoon of Wednesday 13 January 2021.

RESOLVED: That the motion be carried

14. DATES FOR MEETINGS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL.

RESOLVED: That future meetings be held as follows:

- Wednesday 27th January 2021 at 6.30pm (confirmation of appointment of Town Clerk; approving budget and precept for 2021/22)
- Monday 1st March 2021 at 6.30pm (approval of first tranche of transfer of assets and services)
- Tuesday 11th May 2021 at 6.30 p.m. (Informal Meeting of newly elected councillors)
- Monday 17th May 2021 at 6.30pm (Annual Council Meeting – Mayor Making ceremony)
- Monday 24th May 2021 at 7pm Annual Town Meeting (Electors' Meeting)

15. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION.

At the Chair's invitation, Councillor Birch presented for the Council's information matters relating to the Town Council under consideration by the Borough Council as set out in the report of the Acting Town Clerk.

(signed)

Chair