

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held in the Desborough Suite - Town Hall on Tuesday, 24th May, 2022

PRESENT: The Mayor (Councillor John Story), The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Gary Muir)

Councillors Clive Baskerville, Christine Bateson, Gurpreet Bhangra, John Bowden, Mandy Brar, Catherine Del Campo, David Cannon, Stuart Carroll, Gerry Clark, David Coppinger, Jon Davey, Karen Davies, Phil Haseler, David Hilton, Maureen Hunt, Andrew Johnson, Greg Jones, Lynne Jones, Neil Knowles, Ewan Larcombe, Sayonara Luxton, Ross McWilliams, Helen Price, Samantha Rayner, Julian Sharpe, Shamsul Shelim, Gurch Singh, Donna Stimson, Amy Tisi and Simon Werner

In attendance virtually: Councillors John Baldwin and Helen Taylor.

Officers: Emma Duncan, Duncan Sharkey, Karen Shepherd, Adele Taylor, Dean Graham, Alison Singleton, Louisa Dean and Andrew Scott

81. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bond, Carole Da Costa, Wisdom Da Costa, Hill, Reynolds and Walters.

82. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received

83. ELECTION OF MAYOR FOR THE 2022/23 MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Mayor, Councillor John Story, welcomed everyone to the Annual Meeting and gave a brief résumé of his time in office.

Councillor Story began by saying a few words about Ukraine. In Ascot there was an amazing community leader called Lynda Yong, who had recently organised a very well attended welcome event for Ukrainian refugees. Councillor Story explained that he had not met a war refugee before; someone who was far from their home country, who had lost their home, who spoke no English, who was with their daughter but who had no idea where their husband or son was. He had been unsure what to say as Mayor. Through an interpreter he had said that first of all she could trust the borough and that she would be given all the support and friendship possible for as long as it was needed.

Councillor Story commented that he felt this was one of those occasions when words were inadequate. Obviously, what this lady, and all the others there that morning actually wanted, more than anything else in the world, was to be together again at home with their families. Unfortunately, there was nothing Councillor Story could have said which would give any comfort. Councillor Story explain that he wanted to raise the issue as there was a very large number of people in the borough doing a great deal for Ukraine: residents were offering their homes, lots of people and organisations were raising funds and council staff were also doing some fantastic things, including three who had come to Lynda Yong's welcome event (Dan Brookman, Jesal Dhokia and Joiy Chan-Meeson). There were not many opportunities for the Council to say

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thank you to those people for everything that was being done for Ukraine, and he therefore wanted to do so at the Annual meeting.

Councillor Story explained that the Mayor had a little team (comprising Alison Singleton, Andrew Scott, Mark Blackshaw and Ama Mitharo) who were an essential part of any Mayor's life. He thanked them, along with the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress, for the tremendous help and support they have given him over the past 17 months. He gave a special thank you to Alison Singleton for everything she had done including, willingly and enthusiastically, taking on the organisation of the borough's Garden in Bloom competition.

Councillor Story stated that he had enjoyed chairing full Council meetings and had greatly valued the advice and support he had received from Duncan Sharkey and Emma Duncan. He also thanked Karen Shepherd, not just for spending hours in the early days helping him understand the constitution, but also for arranging the virtual council meetings when covid infection rates were at their highest. With no one in the town hall, they were some of the most difficult meetings he had chaired, and Karen had ensured everyone was connected up and that he had had the officer support he needed. Looking back, he felt those virtual meetings had been a big success.

Councillor Story also thanked the Members of the Council. Whenever he had chaired large meetings in the past, he had always found it easier when he felt he had had the support, not necessarily of everyone, but of most of the people in the room. And, when chairing council meetings, he had always felt that he had.

Councillor Story referenced The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and commented it had been a great privilege to represent the Royal Borough at the service held on the anniversary of Accession Day on 6 February 2022. He thanked all those who had come to the two Platinum Jubilee fundraising events: the dinner in March in aid of The Prince Philip Trust Fund, and a reception on The Queen's Birthday itself, in aid of the Mayor's own charity. Both events had sold out very early on and had raised a great deal of money for the two charities.

There were lots of other Jubilee events taking place this year, but there was one group of residents who were less likely to be able to go to them: the 1,200 residents in the borough's 39 care homes. Councillor Story had therefore taken the very easy decision that the Mayor should go to them instead. He had visited every care home in the borough and given every resident a specially produced, RBWM-branded Platinum Jubilee mug and a photograph of The Queen taken during a walkabout in Windsor. This had been one of the most enjoyable things he had ever done, to go into a care home, sit down next to a resident, either in their own room or in a communal sitting area, present them with their mug and photograph, and chat to them about their memories, including memories of The Queen, other jubilees, the coronation or anything else. These individual, one on one, unhurried chats were very special, and often they were very moving.

Councillor Story highlighted that it was Platinum Jubilee Schools Week and, to start it off, he had invited 100 children, aged 5 to 11, from every school in the borough, to one of two parties at the Guildhall in Windsor. The children were met by the excellent Town Crier, shown around the museum, and then taken upstairs to make Platinum Jubilee crowns. The crowns were then worn whilst enjoying some specially baked Platinum Jubilee cake. Councillor Story thanked Stephanie Lewis and her museum team for organising the parties. One of the children, as they were leaving, wearing

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their crown, very casually asked Councillor Story if he was going to wear his crown for real; to which he replied he would. To keep his promise, in his final act as Mayor, Councillor Story then put on the crown.

In conclusion, Councillor Story thanked his wife, Barbara, for the fantastic help and support she had given him during his time in office. He also wished Councillor Bateson good luck in the role.

THE MAYOR INVITED NOMINATIONS FOR THE ELECTION OF THE MAYOR OF THE ROYAL BOROUGH FOR 2022/23.

In proposing Councillor Christine Bateson for the role of Mayor, Councillor Johnson stated that, having got to know Christine well over the last three years, he was convinced that she possessed all of the necessary diplomatic skill, ambassadorial aplomb, and superb understanding of governance, to excel in the role of first citizen of the borough and be a true representative of all of the borough's communities.

Christine had been born in the north of England, in Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire and her early days were spent in the county before attending boarding school in North Wales and then onto Manchester University where she studied as a dietician. At University she met her future husband, Peter, and, once married, they decided they wanted to experience new horizons and emigrated to Canada where they lived for 10 years. Peter worked as an engineer and Christine as a dietician. It was in Ontario, Canada where Christine began her life of public service, serving as the equivalent of parish councillor in a role she spearheaded the build of a maternity hospital along with other community projects. They moved back to the UK in 1979 when Peter was appointed as a director at British Airways. First moving to Crowthorne, Christine became a parish councillor in Wokingham, and then in 1984 they moved with their three children to Ascot where she became a parish councillor once more.

In 1995 Christine was elected as a then Borough Councillor for Sunningdale & South Ascot. Over the next 27 years she had held a plethora of roles in the council including Deputy Leader, served on the cabinet for over 10 years and chaired numerous panels and committees, most recently the Audit and Governance Committee. In addition, Christine had represented the Royal Borough for 25 years on the Fire Authority, at the time of being appointed the only female member of the authority.

Councillor Johnson knew that Christine was honoured to represent the constituents of Sunningdale & Cheapside and finally after being elected eight consecutive times for Sunningdale would retire from the Council at the election next May. He knew that she hoped to use her last year as a Councillor, and as Mayor, to meet as many residents as she could and to give back to a place so dear to her heart. Whilst he was saddened to see her leave his political team, having benefited immensely from her wise counsel, loyalty and shrewd observation, he was delighted for her to be able to spend her final year of service to the borough as Mayor, in what was undoubtedly going to be a fantastic year.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Bhangra explained that as Mayor, Councillor Bateson would be accompanied by her son Richard Bateson as the Mayor's consort. Richard Bateson had been born in Canada but raised in the UK from the age of three.

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Raised for most of his life, and the place he called home was Ascot/Sunningdale, albeit Richard went to school in Rugby and university in Cardiff.

As a professional, Richard had worked for Unilever, Fujitsu, and Camelot and today worked for an Australian lottery business called Jumbo Interactive. Over the past 20 years, Richard had carved out a role within the lottery industry having set up EuroMillions (becoming its President for five years) and performing various director-level roles within the UK, Europe, and North America. Today Richard split his time between Dallas Texas, and London. Richard's interests ranged from golf, rugby, and travel, through to mentoring and professional development of young professionals. When Richard was working abroad and not available, Christine's daughter Mrs Sarah McKechnie, may be available to accompany her.

Councillor Bhangra concluded that Councillor Bateson would be an outstanding Mayor for the Royal Borough, fully committed to her duties across the Royal Borough in the special year of The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

It was moved by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Bhangra and:

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Councillor Christine Bateson be elected Mayor of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the ensuing Municipal Year.

The Chief Executive declared Councillor Bateson duly elected Mayor.

Councillor Bateson made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, witnessed by Councillors Johnson and Bhangra.

THE MAYOR (COUNCILLOR BATESON) IN THE CHAIR

Councillor Story presented the Mayor with the Mace, the Borough seal and the keys to the Mayor's Parlour.

In making her speech of acceptance, Councillor Bateson thanked Councillor Johnson and Councillor Bhangra for their kind words of support. She paid tribute to her predecessor, Councillor Story, who had been an excellent Mayor in what had been a difficult year. He would be a hard act to follow. She thanked her family and friends for supporting her over the years, especially her son Richard and daughter Sarah, for agreeing to support her at engagements throughout the year as the Mayor's Consort.

Councillor Bateson stated that it had been a pleasure to represent the residents of Sunningdale for 27 years. In those years, she had held many positions, from Deputy Leader of the Council to Cabinet Member and also Chairman of many Panels. However, being appointed Mayor was a very special honour and indeed a privilege. Over the next 12 months she hoped to meet as many residents as possible and support the many organisations and groups within the borough that were so vital to local residents, in particular the many local charities that provided much needed support to the borough's most disadvantaged residents. One of the great privileges as Mayor was to nominate one or more charities to support; this she would do in the next month.

The Mayor presented Councillor Story and Mrs Barbara Story with their Past Mayor's and Past Mayoress' badges

84. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE 2022/23 MUNICIPAL YEAR

In nominating Councillor Muir for the office of Deputy Mayor, Councillor Cannon stated that Gary was originally from Blackpool but had been educated at Henley College, before becoming the youngest ever Area Manager for the Association of Retailers of America. After that he spent a decade working in Saudi Arabia. He moved back from the Middle East in 1989. He had been elected to the Royal Borough since 2007, representing the residents of Datchet for 12 years and for 2019 the residents of Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury. Councillor Muir was heavily involved in the Royal British Legion and had been the Datchet Chairman for several years. He had worked tirelessly for numerous charities in his role as Deputy Mayor and was a prominent supporter of the Blue Acre Horse Charity at which he also worked with his partner Caron.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Johnson commented that despite the undoubted challenges of the last few years there had been one constant in the borough's civic life: Councillor Gary Muir as Deputy Mayor. He had served with undoubted commitment and dedication since May 2019. Councillor Johnson was always impressed when he attended events with the Deputy Mayor's warmth and personal style and tenacity in continuing to champion the charitable causes close to his heart. Throughout this time, Councillor Muir had been supported by Caron North. Caron had moved to Old Windsor in 1985 to study equestrian science and husbandry and had then formed the Blue Acre charity. In addition, Caron worked with a number of community organisations helping disadvantaged people across the borough. Together they had the ability to connect with all sections of the community. In conjunction with Councillor Bateson, he believed there would be a very strong civic team in place.

It was moved by Councillor Cannon, seconded by Councillor Johnson, and:

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Councillor Gary Muir be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the ensuing Municipal Year.

The Chief Executive declared Councillor Gary Muir duly appointed Deputy Mayor. Councillor Muir made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, witnessed by Councillors Cannon and Johnson.

In his speech of acceptance, Councillor Muir commented that he had really enjoyed working with the previous Mayor and looked forward to working with the new one. He explained that he undertook the role of Deputy Mayor to help residents and local charities. The Mayor's team had provided excellent support to him in this respect. It was his passion to publicise and raise money for charities during such difficult times, including the Royal British Legion and Blue Acre. He would continue with this passion during the Jubilee year. He also wanted to spend more time in his ward. He thanked everyone who had supported him.

Councillor Bateson then presented Councillor Muir and Caron North with their past Deputy Mayor's and past Deputy Mayoress's badges.

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85. POLITICAL BALANCE AND APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE/PANEL/FORUM MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRMEN/VICE CHAIRMEN FOR THE 2022/23 MUNICIPAL YEAR

Members considered the political balance in accordance with the duty in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to review and determine the representation of the different political groups on bodies appointed by the council.

Councillor Johnson highlighted that the proposed changes to panel structure followed the Local Government Association Peer Review recommendation to reconfigure the Overview and Scrutiny Panels to increase the membership and improve the focus. The recommendation had been supported by Cabinet and subsequently discussed in detail by the Constitution Working Group. He highlighted the proposal to appoint a Councillor from the non-majority Group to Chair a vitally important committee: Councillor L. Jones on the Audit and Governance Committee.

Councillor Johnson also confirmed the executive arrangements for the municipal year:

CABINET	
Member	Portfolio
Councillor Johnson	Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Growth & Opportunity
Councillor Rayner	Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Business, Corporate & Residents Services, Culture & Heritage, & Windsor
Councillor Carroll	Deputy Chairman of Cabinet & Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation
Councillor Cannon	Cabinet Member for Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime, and Public Protection
Councillor Coppinger	Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Parks & Countryside & Maidenhead
Councillor Hilton	Cabinet Member for Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot
Councillor Haseler	Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport
Councillor McWilliams	Cabinet Member for Digital Connectivity, Housing Opportunity, & Sport & Leisure
Councillor Stimson	Cabinet Member for Climate Action & Sustainability

Cabinet Transformation Sub Committee:

Councillors Carroll (Chairman), Haseler, Hilton, Johnson, McWilliams and Rayner.

Other Member appointments under Executive functions for noting:

LGA General Assembly Representatives: Councillors Johnson, Rayner, Carroll, Hilton

Desborough Development Partnership Board (Cala Homes) Member: Councillors Hilton, Johnson, Rayner, Stimson - *appointed under the governance arrangements detailed in the Joint Venture agreement ('Council representatives should have the suitable seniority, skill and expertise in the context of the role of the Project Board')*

Royal Borough Development Partnership Board (Countryside Properties) Council Representative: Councillors Hilton, Johnson, Coppinger, Rayner - *appointed under the*

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governance arrangements detailed in the Joint Venture agreement ('Council representatives should have the suitable seniority, skill and expertise in the context of the role of the Project Board')

Achieving for Children Stakeholder Ownership Board Council representatives – Councillors Johnson, Carroll and Hilton - *appointed under the governance arrangements detailed in the Members/Inter Authority Agreement (Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and one other Member)*

Optalis Ltd Non-Executive Director – Councillor Carroll - *appointed under the governance arrangements detailed in the shareholders agreement (Cabinet Member for Adult Services)*

It was proposed by Councillor Johnson, seconded by Councillor Rayner, and:

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Full Council notes the report and:

- i) Notes the political balance of the council detailed in Table 1.**
- ii) Approves the recommendation of the Constitution Working Group to amend the terms of reference for Overview and Scrutiny Panels as detailed in Appendix B and delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer to update the constitution appropriately.**
- iii) Approves the membership of the committees, panels and forums for the Municipal Year as detailed in Appendix C.**
- iv) Appoints the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen for the Municipal Year as detailed in Appendix C.**
- v) Delegates authority to the Head of Governance to amend/make further appointments on the nomination of the relevant Group Leader.**

In closing the meeting, the Mayor invited George and Jemima McKechnie to present bouquets to the Mayor, immediate past Mayoress and the Deputy Mayoress.

The meeting, which began at 7.00pm, ended at 7.51pm.

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....