

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL
Annual Council
Tuesday, 21 May 2024
Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth
(7.30 - 8.45 pm)

Present: Councillors Christopher Alley, Matthew Bedford, Sara Bedford, Oliver Cooper, Stephen Cox, Harry Davies, Andrea Fraser, Elinor Gazzard, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Rue Grewal, Philip Hearn, Lisa Hudson, Tony Humphreys, Khalid Hussain, Raj Khiroya, Joan King, Stephen King, Chris Lloyd, David Major, Keith Martin, Abbas Merali, Chris Mitchell, Debbie Morris, Ian Morris, Sarah Nelmes, Louise Price, Kevin Raeburn, Reena Ranger, David Raw, Ciaran Reed, Andrew Scarth, Narinder Sian, Tom Smith, Jonathan Solomons, Cheryl Stungo, Jon Tankard, Chris Whately-Smith and Anne Winter

Apologies: Councillor Steve Drury

Officers in Attendance:

Stephen Rix, Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive

CL1/24 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

It was moved by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst and seconded by Councillor Matthew Bedford that Councillor Raj Khiroya be elected Chair for the ensuing year. There being no further nominations, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that Councillor Raj Khiroya be appointed as the Chair of Three Rivers District Council for the 2024/25 municipal year.

Councillor Raj Khiroya made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chair and was invested with the Chair's Chain of Office

COUNCILLOR KHIROYA IN THE CHAIR

CL2/24 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

It was moved by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst and seconded by Councillor Matthew Bedford that Councillor Tony Humphreys be appointed Deputy Chair for the ensuing year. There being no further nominations, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that Councillor Tony Humphreys be appointed Vice-Chair of Three Rivers District Council for the 2024/25 municipal year.

Councillor Tony Humphreys made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Deputy Chair and was invested with the Deputy Chair's Chain of Office

CL3/24 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A query was raised in relation to the resolution in respect of the polling place review not being fully recorded. It was agreed that approval of the minutes would be deferred to enable this to be clarified.

CL4/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

CL5/24 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair thanked Council for the honour of investing him as Chair of the Council for the ensuing municipal year and welcomed newly elected councillors.

CL6/24 APPOINTMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

It was proposed by Councillor Sarah Nelmes, and seconded by Councillor Matthew Bedford, that Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst be appointed as the Leader of the Council for the 2024/25 municipal year. There being no other nominations the proposal was agreed by general assent.

RESOLVED that Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst be appointed as Leader of the Council for the 2024/25 municipal year.

NOTE

Councillor Sara Bedford left the room at 19:43

CL7/24 APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND LEAD MEMBERS

Council considered proposed appointments to the positions of Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Members.

Councillor Stephen Cox moved an amendment to the proposal, that all the tabled names for the positions of Lead Members were to be accepted with the exception of the nomination of Councillor Sara Bedford and that the Majority Group be asked to submit an alternative nomination for the position of Lead Member for Housing and Public Health. The amendment was seconded by Councillor Chris Mitchell and duly debated.

Before the start of the debate, Councillor Keith Martin informed Council that he had an ongoing conduct complaint against Councillor Sara Bedford and as a consequence it would be inappropriate for him to participate in the debate and he left the room for the duration.

In moving his amendment Councillor Stephen Cox expressed the view that the decision was not a party political one and was a considered view based on history, precedence and facts including two complaints with the Group's party head office about the behaviour of the member in question, complaints from officers about the member, the regular submission of questions to Full Council that were hostile in their nature towards the administration, inappropriate and hostile behaviour towards other councillors in public meetings and incidents of bullying behaviour towards other councillors, which the Liberal Democrat group had failed to condemn. Concern was also expressed about the way that Councillor Bedford had claimed that she had chosen to resign as Leader of the Council when in reality she had lost a vote of no confidence and been forced to step down. As a result of these concerns, it was considered unconscionable that someone of this character should be placed in a position of leadership within the council.

Speaking in support of the amendment Councillors Chris Mitchell, Narinder Sian, Ciaran Reed, Joan King and Ian Morris all expressed the view that the allegations covered a substantial period of time and that by supporting the nomination of Councillor Sara Bedford it would signal to officers and the public that the Council condoned bullying.

The debate having concluded the amendment was put to the vote and lost. The voting was For the amendment 18, Against the amendment 19, abstaining none.

The amendment having fallen, the substantive motion was then debated.

In moving the substantive motion, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst expressed his confidence in the abilities of all the nominated Lead Members to perform the allocated duties to the best of their abilities and that they would respect both offers and members. Any Lead Member not doing so would be held to account.

Speaking against the motion Councillors Stephen Cox, Oliver Cooper, Chris Mitchell and Ciaran Reed all expressed the view that as they did not agree with the appointment of one proposed lead member then it would be inappropriate for them to vote for the proposed Lead Members as a block.

The debate having concluded the substantive motion was put to the vote and carried. The voting was For the proposed appointments 20, Against the proposed appointments 18, Abstaining none.

RESOLVED that:

- i. Councillor Matthew Bedford be appointed Deputy Leader of the Council for the 2024/25 municipal year.
- ii. The following be appointed as Lead Members for the 2024/25 municipal year:
 - Councillor Matthew Bedford, Lead Member Resources
 - Councillor Louise Price, Lead Member for Infrastructure and Economic Development
 - Councillor Sarah Nelmes, Lead Member General Public Services
 - Councillor Sara Bedford, Lead Member Housing and Public Health
 - Councillor Chris Lloyd, Leda Member Leisure
 - Councillor Andrew Scarth, Lead Member Community Safety and Partnerships
 - Councillor Jon Tankard, Lead Member Sustainability and Climate Change

NOTE

Councillor Rue Grewal arrived at 19:45

Councillor Keith Martin left the meeting at 19:51

Councillor Sara Bedford returned to the meeting at 20:09

Councillor Reena Ranger left the meeting at 20:11

Councillor Andrew Scarth left the meeting at 20:13

Councillor Keith Martin returned to the meeting at 20:15

CL8/24 REVIEW OF POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY AND ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES

The Council was required by law to allocate seats in proportion to the political composition of the Council, with the aggregate membership of all the committees also being proportionate. The Council received a report setting out a proposed scheme of proportionality.

It was moved by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor Matthew Bedford and

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the committees as set out at Annex A of the agenda report be appointed with the committee sizes shown; and

- (ii) the scheme of proportionality as set out at Annex A of the agenda report be adopted for the ensuing municipal year.

NOTE

Councillors Rue Grewal, Andrea Fraser and Reena Ranger left the meeting at 20:19
Councillor Narinder Sian left the meeting and then returned at 20:20

CL9/24 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

Council considered proposed nominations to the standing committees of the Council. It was also proposed that the General Public Services and Economic Development Committee and the Climate Change, Leisure and Community Committee be renamed to General Public Services, Community Safety and Infrastructure Committee and the Climate Change, Leisure and Housing Committee respectively so that they better reflected the subjects covered by each committee's terms of reference.

It was moved by the Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor Matthew Bedford, and

RESOLVED that:

- i. The General Public Services and Economic Development Committee and the Climate Change, Leisure and Community Committee be renamed as the General Public Services, Community Safety and Infrastructure Committee and the Climate Change, Leisure and Housing Committee respectively; and
- ii. the membership of the standing committees of the Council for 2024/25 be as follows:

Policy and Resources Committee

Councillors Matthew Bedford, Sara Bedford, Oliver Cooper, Stephen Cox, Andrea Fraser, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Philip Hearn, Chris Lloyd, Chris Mitchell, Sarah Nelmes, Louise Price, Reena Ranger, Andrew Scarth and Jon Tankard.

Planning Committee

Councillors Matthew Bedford, Sara Bedford, Harry Davies, Elinor Gazzard, Philip Hearn, Stephen King, Chris Lloyd, Chris Mitchell, Debbie Morris, David Raw, Chris Whately-Smith

Named substitutes

Councillors Christopher Alley, Stephen Cox, Andrea Fraser, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Khalid Hussain, Raj Khiroya, Abbas Merali, Sarah Nelmes, Louise Price and Narinder Sian.

Licensing Committee

Councillors Stephen Cox, Harry Davies, Andrea Fraser, Rue Grewal, Tony Humphrey, Raj Khiroya, David Major, Sarah Nelmes, Ciaran Reed, Andrew Scarth and Narinder Sian.

Regulatory Committee

Councillors Stephen Cox, Harry Davies, Andrea Fraser, Rue Grewal, Tony Humphrey, Raj Khiroya, David Major, Sarah Nelmes, Ciaran Reed, Andrew Scarth and Narinder Sian.

General Public Services, Community Safety and Infrastructure Committee

Councillors Christopher Alley, Oliver Cooper, Steve Drury, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Lisa Hudson, Joan King, Sarah Nelmes, Louise Price, Kevin Raeburn, Andrew Scarth and Narinder Sian.

Climate Change, Leisure and Housing Committee

Councillors Sara Bedford, Andrea Fraser, Stephen King, Chris Lloyd, Jon Tankard, Reena Ranger, Ciaran Reed, Tom Smith, Jonathan Solomons, Cheryl Stungo and Anne Winter.

Audit Committee

Councillors Rue Grewal, Lisa Hudson, Tony Humphreys, Khalid Hussain, Raj Khiroya, Keith Martin, Ian Morris, Ciaran Reed, Tom Smith and Jonathan Solomons

Council Tax Setting Committee

Councillors Matthew Bedford, Oliver Cooper, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Philip Hearn and one further Liberal Democrat nominee to be advised if required.

CL10/24 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

Council considered proposed nominations to the positions of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the committees and sub-committees of the Council.

It was noted that the General Public Services, Community Safety and Infrastructure Committee and the Climate Change, Leisure and Housing Committee would each be co-chaired by their three respective Lead Members.

RESOLVED that councillors be appointed to the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair of the committees of the Council as set out below:

Policy & Resources Committee

Chair - Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst
Vice-chair - Councillor Matthew Bedford

General Public Services, Community Safety & Infrastructure Committee

To be co-chaired by the three respective lead members

Climate Change, Leisure & Housing Committee

To be co-chaired by the three respective lead members

Planning Committee

Chair - Councillor Chris Whatley-Smith
Vice-chair - Councillor Sara Bedford

Licensing Committee

Chair - Councillor Harry Davies
Vice-chair - Councillor Tony Humphreys

Regulatory Services Committee

Chair - Councillor Harry Davies
Vice-chair - Councillor Tony Humphreys

Audit Committee

Chair - Councillor Tony Humphreys
Vice-chair - Councillor Tom Smith

Constitution Sub-Committee

Chair - Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst
Vice chair - Councillor Matthew Bedford

Equalities Sub-Committee

Chair - Councillor Anne Winter
Vice-chair - Councillor Kevin Raeburn

Local Plan Sub-Committee

Chair - Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Vice chair - Councillor Louise Price

Shareholder and Commercial Ventures Scrutiny Panel

Chair - Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Vice-chair - Councillor Matthew Bedford

CL11/24 APPOINTMENT OF WORKING GROUPS AND OTHER BODIES OF THE COUNCIL AND THE MEMBERSHIP FOR 2024/25

Council considered proposed appointments to the Sub-Committees of the Council and other Council bodies for the ensuing municipal year.

RESOLVED

- i. that appointments be made to the Sub Committees and other Bodies of the Council as set out below:

Constitution Sub-Committee

Councillors Matthew Bedford, Sara Bedford, Oliver Cooper, Stephen Cox, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Chris Lloyd, Debbie Morris, Louise Price and Narinder Sian

Equalities Sub-Committee

Councillors Stephen Cox, Lisa Hudson, Khalid Hussain, Raj Khiroya, Abbas Merali, Kevin Raeburn, Tom Smith, Cheryl Stungo and Anne Winter

Local Plan Sub-Committee

Councillors Christopher Alley, Matthew Bedford, Oliver Cooper, Stephen Cox, Steve Drury, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Philip Hearn, Chris Mitchell, Sarah Nelmes, Louise Price and Andrew Scarth.

Shareholder and Commercial Venture Scrutiny Panel

Councillors Matthew Bedford, Sara Bedford, Stephen Cox, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Philip Hearn, Abbas Merali, Chris Mitchell, Sarah Nelmes and Louise Price.

Three Rivers Community Safety Partnership Board

Councillor Andrew Scarth

Three Rivers Local Strategic Partnership

Councillors Stephen Giles-Medhurst and Andrew Scarth. Substitute Councillor Sarah Nelmes.

Community Safety Board (Police and Crime Commissioner Board)

Councillor Andrew Scarth

Environmental Forum

Councillors Raj Khiroya, Stephen King, Chris Lloyd, Louise Price, Kevin Raeburn, Cheryl Stungo and Jon Tankard.

Chair – Councillor Jon Tankard

Vice-chair – Councillor Chris Lloyd

Seniors' Forum

Councillor Keith Martin

Youth Council

Councillors Ciaran Reed, Narinder Sian and Jonathan Solomons

- ii. Appointments to the following bodies would be made on an ‘as-required’ basis:
 - Standards Regime
 - Appointments Committee
 - Appeals Committee
 - Investigatory and Disciplinary Committee
 - Internal Complaints Panel
 - Staff Employer Forum

NOTE

Councillors Andrea Fraser and Reena Ranger returned at 20:25

CL12/24 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS FOR EACH OF THE LOCAL AREA FORUMS

Council considered the proposed appointments to the positions of Chair and Vice-chair of the Local Area Forums for the ensuing municipal year.

It was proposed that the Local Area Forums’ Terms of Reference were revised so that forums were to meet no more than four times a year on dates agreed by the Chair and Vice-chair and with the consent of the majority of members in that area. In addition the positions of Chairs and Vice-chairs were to be shared across the political groups. It was noted that these changes would need to be ratified by the Full Council at their next meeting.

RESOLVED that:

- i. the following appointments be made to the Chair and Vice Chair positions on the Local Area Forums

	<u>Chair</u>	<u>Vice-chair</u>
Abbots Langley	Councillor Sara Bedford	Councillor Elinor Gazzard
Chorleywood and Sarratt	Councillor Harry Davies	Councillor Ciaran Reed
Croxley Green	Councillor Steve Drury	Councillor Chris Mitchell
Rickmansworth	Councillor Sarah Nelmes	Councillor Debbie Morris
Watford Rural	Councillor Ian Morris	Councillor Andrew Scarth

- ii. The proposed changes to the Forums’ terms of reference would be brought to the next meeting of Full Council for consideration.

CL13/24 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Council considered a report setting out its proposed appointments to Outside Bodies for the 2024/25 municipal year.

It was noted that representation on the Moor Park Mansion Heritage Foundation Trust to be increased from 3 to 4 with one representative from each group to be appointed and one representative from each group would be appointed to the South Oxhey Community Board.

RESOLVED that the Council appoints representatives to outside bodies as set out below:

East of England Local Government Association

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Chilterns Conservation Board

Councillor Louise Price

Denham Aerodrome Consultative Committee

Councillor Raj Khiroya

Herts Waste Partnership

Councillor Sarah Nelmes

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst (Substitute)

LGA General Assembly

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Councillor Matthew Bedford (Substitute)

Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust

Councillor Elinor Gazzard

Herts County Council Health Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Tony Humphreys

Substitute vacancy

Three Rivers Museum Trust

Councillor Keith Martin

Moor Park Mansion Heritage Foundation Trust

Councillor Stephen King

Councillor Reena Ranger

Councillor Narinder Sian

Councillor Andrew Scarth

New Agreement Traffic Management Act 2004 Adjudication Joint Committee

Councillor Sarah Nelmes

Substitute vacancy

Abbots Langley Community Centre Management Committee

Councillor David Major

Hertfordshire Police and Crime Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Andrew Scarth

Substitute vacancy

Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant

Councillor Sarah Nelmes

Herts Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership

Councillor Jon Tankard

Councillor Chris Mitchell

Herts Growth Board

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Councillor Matthew Bedford (Substitute)

South West Herts Strategic Planning Members Group

Councillor Stephen Giles Medhurst

Councillor Louise Price (Substitute)

Watford and Three Rivers Trust

Councillor Sara Bedford (Observer)

South Oxhey Community Board

Councillor Rue Grewal

Councillor Joan King

Councillor Andrew Scarth

CL14/24 APPOINTMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT PERSON

Council considered a report setting out a proposal to appoint a third person to the Council's pool of Independent Persons. The recommendation to appoint Mrs Lucy Richards to the pool of Independent Persons was proposed by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor Matthew Bedford, and carried by general assent.

RESOLVED that pursuant to the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 Mrs Lucy Richards is appointed to the position of Independent Person for a four year period ending 31 May 2028.

NOTE

Councillor Anne Winter left the meeting at 20:40

Councillor Anne Winter returned at 20:42

CL15/24 SUMMARY OF DISTRICT ELECTION RESULTS

Council received and noted a summary of the election results following the District Elections on 2 May 2024.