

	<i>Meeting (No)</i>	Annual Council Meeting (1)
	<i>Time & Date</i>	21st May 2024 at 6.00pm
	<i>Location</i>	Neston Town Hall
MINUTES		

Present: Cllrs: Wastell (Retiring Mayor), Braithwaite, Davies (from 6.06pm), Doughty, Edwards, Griffiths, Hudspeth, Jones, Kynaston, Marple, and Warner.

In attendance: Z. Dean (Locum Chief Officer)

PART 1: Items considered in the presence of the press and public

The meeting was opened by retiring Mayor Cllr S. Wastell who thanked the Locum Town Clerk, the staff team and council members for their support over what had been a busy year in office.

1 Election of Chairman

- a) After a proposal from Cllr Kynaston, seconded by Cllr Braithwaite,
It was RESOLVED: To appoint Cllr Sion Jones as Chairman of Neston Town Council for the 2024/2025 Civic Year. 1 x vote against.
- b) The newly elected Chairman of Neston Town Council signed the Mayoral Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of members and the Proper Officer of the Council. Cllr Jones thanked the retiring Chair and noted that he would use the title of Mayor.

2 Election of Vice Chairman

- a) After a proposal from Cllr Warner, seconded by Cllr Wastell,
It was RESOLVED: To appoint Cllr Brenda Marple as Vice Chairman for the 2024/2025 Civic year. 1 x vote against, 1 x abstention.
- b) The newly elected Vice Chairman of Neston Town Council signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for the role of Vice Chairman (Deputy Mayor), in the presence of members and the Proper Officer of the Council.

3 Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received for this meeting.
Cllr Townsend was absent.

4 Questions and Comments from Residents

No members of the public were present.

5 Minutes of the Meeting

- a) **It was RESOLVED:** To accept and sign the minutes from the Full Council meeting held on 19th March 2024.
- b) **It was RESOLVED:** To accept and sign the minutes from the Extraordinary Full Council meeting held on 24th April 2024.

Members requested that official recognition of Cllr Hardcastle’s work as a councillor was highlighted, following Cllr Hardcastle’s recent resignation.

6 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

7 Constitution and Terms of Reference for Standing Committees 2024/25

- a) **It was RESOLVED:** To approve and adopt the Town Council’s Committee Structure.
- b) **It was RESOLVED:** To approve and adopt the updated Committee Terms of Reference and Schemes of Delegation for the following Standing Committees: Community & Environment, Finance & Administration, Human Resources and Market & Town Hall.
- c) The Locum Chief Officer noted that any remaining committee vacancies would need to be filled by newly elected/co-opted members.

It was RESOLVED: To accept the document in its entirety.

Committee	No. of Members	Membership
Finance & Administration	7	1. Carol Braithwaite 2. Sion Jones 3. Shirley Hudspeth 4. John Edwards 5. Pat Kynaston 6. Steve Wastell 7. Vacancy
Community & Environment	7	1. Brenda Marple 2. Janet Griffiths 3. Andrew Townsend 4. Simon Davies 5. Paul Doughty 6. John Edwards 7. Vacancy
Town Hall & Market	7	1. Sion Jones 2. Brenda Marple 3. John Edwards 4. Shirley Hudspeth 5. Pat Kynaston 6. Christine Warner 7. Vacancy
HR	5	1. Sion Jones 2. Steve Wastell 3. Pat Kynaston 4. Shirley Hudspeth 5. Carol Braithwaite

8 Schedule of Council and Committee Meetings for 2024/25

Members refused to accept the schedule of Council and Committee meetings in its entirety due to a disagreement about daytime meetings.

The Locum Chief Officer pointed out that the Finance & Administration Committee met in the day in order for the part-time RFO to be present, which had previously been a condition of the committee. Council was also informed that evening meetings would lead to an increase in flexi/TOIL hours needing to be taken back out of the working day by the Chief officer.

It was RESOLVED: To move the Finance & Administration committee meetings to 6pm.

It was RESOLVED: To remove HR Committee meetings from the schedule so the committee would meet on an ‘ad-hoc’ basis, when required, canvassing members for a suitable date and time each time.

9 Review of Delegated Arrangements

- a) Banking Arrangements:

	<p>It was RESOLVED: To authorise the core members of the Finance and Administration Committee, the Chief Officer and the Finance Manager/RFO to be the authorised signatories, agreeing to sign the banker’s mandate for the Neston Town Council accounts. Market & Town Hall:</p> <p>b) It was RESOLVED: To approve delegated authority to the Corporate Support & Facilities Officer as extended to other officers during a time of absence. Insurance:</p> <p>c) It was NOTED: That the Finance and Administration Committee Terms of Reference provide delegated authority to deal with the Council’s insurance requirements. Pension Authorisation forms:</p> <p>d) It was RESOLVED: To authorise the core members of the Human Resources Committee, the Chief Officer and the Finance Manager/RFO to be the authorised signatories for all pension authorisation forms. It was noted that officers would contact members when forms required signature.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Appointment of Representatives to External Organisations</p> <p>a) It was RESOLVED: That existing representatives continue, as such, until the first meeting of the reporting committee, with each delegate to report to the appointed committee or sub-committee.</p> <p>b) It was RESOLVED: To appoint representatives to the following organisations at committee level: Neston Female Society – Community & Environment Committee Neston Station Adopters – Community & Environment Committee Wrexham-Bidston Rail Users’ Association (WBRUA) – C&E Committee 1 x against.</p> <p>c) It was NOTED: That the CHALC Area Meetings no longer sits.</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Data Protection Officer</p> <p>It was RESOLVED: To renew the services and costs of JDH Services as the Council’s DPO.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Membership</p> <p>It was RESOLVED: To approve the Council’s membership of the following organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheshire Community Action (membership packages due in June) • National Association of Local Councils via ChALC and annual subscription of £1,551.66 (no VAT) 1 x abstention. • National Association of Allotments £66.00 (NAS), renewal due in November 2024 • Society of Local Council Clerks £298 • The National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) and annual subscription fee of £384 (no VAT) 1 x against. • Wrexham-Bidston Rail Users’ Association (WBRUA), and membership fee of £30.00 (no VAT)

Mayor’s Initial & Date:

14	<p>Standing Orders and Financial Regulations</p> <p>a) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the updated Standing Orders for Neston Town Council.</p> <p>b) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the updated Standing Orders for Contracts Neston Town Council.</p> <p>c) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the updated Financial Regulations for Neston Town Council.</p>
15	<p>Policies and Procedures</p> <p>a) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Social Media Policy.</p> <p>b) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Cash Handling Policy.</p> <p>c) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Approved Scheme of Delegation for the Market & Town Hall Manager.</p> <p>d) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Website and Social Media Privacy Notice.</p> <p>e) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised IT Policy.</p> <p>f) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Cookie Policy.</p> <p>g) The revised Complaints Procedure, Complaints and Vexatious Policy was discussed. The Chair asked for this policy to be reviewed and formally brought back to Council, following indication from some members that there was no independent input.</p> <p>h) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised General Privacy Notice.</p> <p>i) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Personal Data Complaints Policy.</p> <p>j) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Privacy Notice: Councillors, Staff and Role Holders.</p> <p>k) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Privacy Policy for NTC Website.</p> <p>l) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Data Breach Notification Policy.</p> <p>m) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Guest Wi-Fi Policy 1 x against.</p> <p>n) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Council Mobile Phones Policy.</p> <p>o) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Publication Scheme Information Guide.</p> <p>p) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Recording & Photography at Council Meetings Policy.</p> <p>q) It was RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Procurement Policy.</p> <p>r) It was RESOLVED: To review remaining policies after the start of the Council year, as per the attached table.</p>
16	<p>Chairman's Allowance</p> <p>It was RESOLVED: To confirm an allowance of £1,250 to the Chairman to defray the expenses of office in the ensuing year. 1 x against.</p>
17	<p>To Approve the Minutes of the following Committee Meetings</p> <p>a) It was RESOLVED: To accept the minutes of the Community & Environment Committee meetings held on 09/04/24, 16/04/24, 07/05/24.</p> <p>b) It was RESOLVED: To accept the minutes of the Finance & Administration Committee held on 16/04/24.</p>

c)	It was RESOLVED: To accept the minutes of the Market & Town Hall Committee held on 23/04/24.
18	Finance
a)	It was RESOLVED: To approve current account expenditure of £68,647.89 net authorised by the RFO from 01/03/2024 to 31/03/2024 and Equals card payment of £159.44 net from 01/03/2024 to 31/03/2024.
b)	It was RESOLVED: To note the current account income of £2,003.10 net from 01/03/2024 to 31/03/2024.
c)	It was RESOLVED: To agree the reconciliation of the Council's three bank accounts to 31/03/2024. The Chair signed all of the financial papers.
19	Annual Return for Financial Year 31st March 2024 (AGAR)
a)	It was RESOLVED: To receive and approve the Annual Internal Audit Report to 31/03/24.
b)	All of the individual statements were read out by the Proper Officer and each one was agreed by Council in turn. It was RESOLVED: To approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement 2023/24. The report was signed by the Chair and the Proper Officer of the Council.
c)	It was RESOLVED: To approve Section 2 of the Annual Accounting Statement 2023/24. The report was signed by the Chair.
20	Year End Internal Auditor's Report It was RESOLVED: To receive the Year End Internal Audit Report and note that there are no actions for 2023/2024. 1 x abstention.
21	Noticeboard Monitors It was agreed to appoint the following noticeboard monitors: Town Hall – Council staff Parkgate – Cllr Doughty Ness – Cllr Kynaston in the interim Little Neston – Cllr Kynaston Westvale – Cllr Wastell
22	Locum Chief Officer's Report A question was asked about the FOI's which had been received. The Locum Chief Officer confirmed that two FOI requests had been received over the last two months appertaining to the funding of the dipping platform at Park Fields and the traffic calming chicane installation in Ness. The Chief Officer was commended on securing a portrait of King Charles III for the Main Hall. It was RESOLVED: to receive the report.
	Exclusion of the Press and Public
	To consider that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt

	information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.
PART 2: Items considered in the absence of the press and public	
	There was no confidential business to consider.

Meeting closed at 18:38

Signed: _____ **Dated:** _____