

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MEETING – 2019/08/19 – 47

MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING held in the Council Chamber, Claremont House, Lydney on Monday 19 August 2019 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs Mrs T Tremlett (Deputy Mayor), Mr R Holmes, Mr W Leach, Ms C Vaughan, Mr Z Arnold, Mr L Arnold, Mr R Kemsley, Ms J Carr, Ms A Harley, Mr A Preest, Mr J Greenwood, Mr T Legg,

ALSO PRESENT: Ms A Lapington - Minute Taker

Mrs S Holmes, Mrs A Farrant, Mr M Farrant, Mr G Brown, Mr W Hobman, Mr G Blake, Mr W Osbourne, Mr J Bevan, Mr C Legg, Mr S Sturcombe, Ms Ruth, Ms Janet, Ms N Saunders, Mr K Greening, Mr Graham, Mr G Baker (Press)

1. **CHAIR OF THE MEETING**

To note that the Deputy Mayor will preside over the meeting as Chair.

2. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies. It was noted that Cllrs Pearman & Harris had resigned along with the Chief Executive Officer Mrs J Smailes.

3. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest on items on the agenda.

4. **OPEN FORUM**

Mr M Farrant – item 6 -stated he was aware of the Councillor who leaked the information to the press and knew that two other ~~Councillors~~ in the room were also aware. He asked that the Councillor come forward. There was no response.

Mr W Osbourne –item 5 – stated that due to his love and dedication to Lydney Cllr Z Arnold should be elected as chair.

Mr J Bevan – item 8 - stated his first question had been answered re the resignation of the CEO. His second question would wait until the new Mayor has been elected.

Mr W Hobman – item asked if it is as reported that a senior officer had asked for financial recompense as reported in the press.

Cllr Tremlett responded that she was unable to answer as it was a confidential personnel matter.

Cllr Vaughan stated she would like to be made aware of which Councillor had leaked the email. Cllr Tremlett responded that was a breach of confidentiality and a breach of the Code of Conduct and the Councillor in question should come forward. There was no response.

Mr G Blake – LTC Minutes - sought clarification that the only people permitted to place adverts or issue press releases were the CEO, Mayor & Deputy Mayor.

Cllr Tremlett confirmed that this was the case and reiterated that the action taken by the culprit was a breach of the Code of Conduct.

Mr K Greening – item 6 - asked that the Councillor responsible come forward. There was no response.

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Mr Greening then asked if the Councillor would be expelled from the Council
Cllr Tremlett responded that there was a process which needed to be followed and the matter would be referred to the Monitoring Officer at the FODDC.

** Ms. R. Benson also spoke on the matter.*

Cllr Vaughan asked if the member of the public would like to name the Councillor.
Cllr Tremlett responded that this was inappropriate

The open forum was closed (Standing Orders reinstated).

5. ELECTION OF MAYOR

Cllr Tremlett called for nomination for the position of Mayor.

Cllr Leach was proposed

Proposed Cllr Preest

Seconded Cllr Vaughan

Cllr Holmes was proposed

Proposed Cllr Harvey

Seconded Cllr L Arnold

Cllr Carr proposed Cllr Tremlett who declined the request

Cllr Tremlett called for a show of hands

Cllr Leach – 11 votes

Cllr Holmes 1

Cllr Leach was duly elected Mayor and therefore took the position of Chair and signed the necessary Declaration of Office.

He stated he was proud to take on this position and hoped he would oversee a new chapter in the life of this Council: create a solid footing on which to move forward together for the benefit of Lydney and its people.

6. GRIEVANCE

To note it is no longer permissible for a grievance to be brought by a member of staff against councillors as this now has to be referred to the Monitoring Officer as a Code of Conduct' (See previously issued note on Ledbury case (sent 05/Aug/2019)).

Cllr Leach summarized the situation and referred to the information attached.

There was a wide ranging discussion where Councillors raised their concerns that ad hoc meetings of the personnel committee had been convened that apologies had failed to be recorded and that grievances had been raised and discussed about Councillors without their knowledge.

** It was agreed that a copy of the Grievance Panel Decision Notice would be sent to the Monitoring Officer at FODDC.*

Cllr Leach confirmed that all the matters raised would be resolved in a closed session and that and the correct process of referring all grievances to the Monitoring Officer should ensure this cannot happen again.

7. REVIEW OF RECENT ACTIVITIES BY THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Review the recent activities of the Personnel Committee and in the light of current circumstances propose that

a. meetings of the personnel committee are adjourned until such time as a review of the process has been conducted by Full Council.

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b. That all financial implications are brought to Full Council.

Councillors debated the matter thoroughly appreciating the need to uphold the confidentiality of personnel matters. Clarification was sought of what information could be held in the public domain, by Councillors and by committee members. Cllr Leach confirmed that this was confusing as he had had the request for a job description refused hence the need for the review of the Committee.

It was proposed that 7a be accepted

Proposed Cllr Leach

Seconded Cllr L Arnold

On being put to the vote it was unanimously agreed

It was proposed that 7b be accepted

Proposed Cllr Legge

Seconded Cllr Preest

On being put to the vote it was unanimously agreed.

8. **REVIEW AND ACTION AS NECESSARY INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS
WHILST STAFF ARE ABSENT WITH SICKNESS**

To include prioritizing work, speaking to remaining staff to identify any capacity to take on additional hours/responsibilities, locum cover etc.

Councillors debated the many options which could include asking the FODDC to appoint an officer to act as Clerk, to ask the present EO to step up to the role or to employ a locum. It was agreed that the EO job description should be studied to identify if this is part of her role. That a review of the staffing structure should be implemented to ensure that requirements of the Council are being met. The Council were informed that the EO did not feel comfortable taking on the additional tasks at this time and that the FODDC did not provide such a service.

It was proposed that a locum be appointed

Proposed Cllr Leach

Seconded Cllr Carr

On being put to the vote it was unanimously agreed.

It was proposed that the recruitment of a new Clerk be started but it was agreed that this should only occur after the structure of the staffing is agreed along with a new job specification and description for the role

Proposed Cllr Leach

Seconded Cllr Tremlett

On being put to the vote it was unanimously agreed.

9. **COMMUNICATIONS**

To propose that no statement to the press should be made at this time as this is a staffing matter and therefore confidential.

There was some discussion about keeping the community informed of the new situation in the spirit of openness and transparency.



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It was proposed that Cllr Leach issue a press release explaining the appointment of the Mayor and calling for people to come forward as Councillors as the Council now had three vacancies

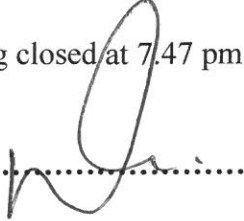
Proposed Cllr Z Arnold

Seconded Cllr Carr

On being put to the vote it was unanimously agreed.

The meeting closed at 7.47 pm.

Chairman



Date 09/09/19