
DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

19 FEBRUARY 2025

Present:

MEMBERS:

Councillors Adeleke, Allen, Anderson, Banks, Barradell, Barry-Mears, Bhinder, Bristow, Bromham, Cox, Dhyani, Douris, Elliot, England, Freedman, Gale, Greenfield, Guest, Hannell, Harden, Hobson, Johnson, B Link (Mayor), C Link, Maddern, McAreyve, Mitchell, Patterson, Pesch, Pound, Pringle, Reynolds, Riddick, Santamaria, Silwal, Smith-Wright, Stevens, Symington, Taylor, Walker, A Williams, B Williams and C Wyatt-Lowe (43)

OFFICERS:

- Claire Hamilton - Chief Executive
- Mark Brookes - Assistant Director Legal & Democratic
- Cassy O'Neil - Democratic Services Manager
- Layla Fowell - Democratic Services Assistant Manager

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

1 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 13th November 2024 were agreed.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Mayor invited declarations of interest, there were none.

3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Before commencing proceedings, the Mayor asked members to ensure they remain respectful and adhere to the rulings of the Mayor at all times and be mindful of their behaviour throughout the meeting. The Mayor also reminded members that any Standards matters or councillor complaints should be raised directly with the Monitoring Officer and not during this meeting.

- 4.1 The Mayor announced the sad passing of former Cllr John Mottershead who represented the Tring West & Rural ward from May 2023 to February 2024

The Mayor invited any reflections from members before holding a 1 minute silence.

The Mayor then announced the sad passing of former Cllr Ann Ryan, who represented the Grovehill ward from May 2007 to May 2015.

The Mayor invited any reflections from members before holding 1 minute silence.

The Mayor then advised that this is the last Council meeting for Chief Executive Claire Hamilton and invited members to join her in thanking Claire of her service to Dacorum Borough Council.

Cllr England made a presentation to Claire on behalf of all members, well wishes were also offered by Cllr Dhyani and CHamilton addressed the chamber to say a few words of thanks to her member and officer colleagues.

Full details of all items under the Mayor's announcements can be viewed via the video minutes.

- 4.2 Under Chief Executive's announcements, CHamilton advised that a by-election will take place on Thursday the 27th of February 2025 to fill a vacancy on Tring Town Council in the Bunstrux Ward.
- 4.3 The Mayor invited Group Leaders to give any announcements and submit apologies on behalf of their groups.

Cllr England addressed the Council and announced that he is to stand down as the Leader of the Liberal Democrat group and further advised of his intention stand down as Leader of the Council in due course. Cllr England advised that Cllr Sally Symington has been appointed as the Leader of the Liberal Democrat group and advised it is likely that an Extraordinary Council will be arranged to appoint the new Leader of the Council.

Cllr England went on to record apologies on behalf of Cllrs Stewart and Deacon.

Cllr Williams responded to Cllr England's announcement and thanked him for the way they have worked together over the previous months. Cllr Williams then gave apologies on behalf of Cllrs Durrant and Timmis.

Cllr Mitchell echoed the comments Cllr Williams addressed to Cllr England and also welcomed Cllr Greenfield who was recently appointed as a member of the Labour group.

Apologies were also recorded on behalf of independent Cllrs Tindall, Capozzi, Weston and Wilkie.

5 CABINET MEMBER UPDATES

The Mayor referred to the Portfolio Holder updates as published with the agenda and advised that she would take these as read and would invite questions against each update in turn.

CHAIRMAN

Before doing so, the Mayor invited Cllr England to give any verbal update as Leader of the Council; of which there were no questions.

The Mayor then introduced the People & Transformation – Climate & Ecological Emergency portfolio and invited any questions to be addressed to Cllr Smith-Wright regarding her update.

Questions were posed by Cllrs Gale, Patterson, Taylor, Barradell and Mitchell; full details can be viewed via the video minutes.

Action:

Cllr Smith-Wright to provide a written response to Cllr Barradell's question; with reference to the new staff induction process, can we please have a walk-through of exactly what has changed in that process?

Action:

Cllr Smith-Wright to provide a written response to Cllr Mitchell's question; please provide more information about the Inspire Management Training Programme.

The Mayor introduced the Housing & Property portfolio and invited any questions to be addressed to Cllr Dhyani regarding her update.

Questions were posed by Cllrs Freedman, Taylor, Hannell and Douris; full details can be viewed via the video minutes.

The Mayor then introduced the Corporate & Commercial portfolio and invited any questions to be addressed to Cllr Allen regarding his update.

Questions were posed by Cllrs Guest and Barradell; full details can be viewed via the video minutes.

The Mayor introduced the Neighbourhood Operations portfolio and invited any questions to be addressed to Cllr Bromham regarding his update.

Questions were posed by Cllrs Maddern, Guest, Gale and Mitchell; full details can be viewed via the video minutes.

The Mayor then introduced the final portfolio, Place, and invited any questions to be addressed to Cllr England regarding his update.

Questions were posed by Cllrs Stevens, Freedman and A Williams; full details can be viewed via the video minutes.

6 MOTION

The Mayor invited Cllr England to present his motion and reminded members that a written copy is included in the published agenda pack.

Cllr Guest declared a personal interest in that she is a member of a Flying Club at Dunstable Airfield and therefore will not be taking part in the debate and vote.

Cllr England introduced his motion titled 'Stop the nonsensical Luton expansion' and addressed the chamber with the reasons for it being raised.

CHAIRMAN

Cllr Douris seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

Cllrs Smith-Wright and Hannell spoke to share their views.

Cllr Douris then spoke as the seconder of the motion, advising he was seconding in place of Cllr Timmis who was unfortunately not able to be at the meeting this evening.

All discussion can be viewed via the video minutes.

The Mayor took the motion to a vote;

Those for the motion = 34

Those against the motion = 2

Those who abstained to vote = 6

The Mayor declared the motion was therefore carried.

7 BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

The Mayor advised that all updates against actions arising from the previous meeting have been published with the agenda.

The action update was agreed as noted.

8 CABINET REFERRALS

The Mayor invited Cllr England to introduce the referrals from Cabinet.

8.1 Cllr England introduced CA/103/24 from the Cabinet meeting of 25/11/2024 'Treasury Management Outturn and Performance Indicators', which was seconded by Cllr Dhyani and agreed.

Decision: Recommendations agreed

8.2 Cllr England introduced CA/111/24 from the Cabinet meeting of 10/12/2024 'Treasury Management 2024/25 Mid-Year Performance Report' which was seconded by Cllr Dhyani and agreed.

Decision: Recommendations agreed

8.3 Cllr England introduced CA/118/24 from the Cabinet meeting of 10/12/2024 'Council Tax Base Report', which was seconded by Cllr Dhyani and agreed.

Decision: Recommendations agreed

8.4 Cllr England introduced CA/08/25 from the Cabinet meeting of 28/01/25 'Review of Scrutiny by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny', which was seconded by Cllr Dhyani and agreed.

Decision: Recommendations agreed

8.5 Cllr England introduced CA/10/25 from the Cabinet meeting of 28/01/205 'Climate and Ecological Emergency Spending Proposal', which was seconded by Cllr Dhyani and agreed.

CHAIRMAN

Decision: Recommendations agreed

- 8.6 Cllr England introduced CA/11/25 from the Cabinet meeting of 28/01/2025 'Transforming Public Procurement Update & Impact – Procurement Act 2023', which was seconded by Cllr Dhyani and agreed.

Decision: Recommendations agreed

- 8.7 Cllr England introduced CA/12/25 from the Cabinet meeting of 28/01/2025 'Council Tax Setting Committee', which was seconded by Cllr Dhyani and agreed.

Decision: Recommendations agreed

- 8.8 Cllr England introduced CA/19/25 from the Cabinet meeting of 11/02/2025 'HRA Business Plan', which was seconded by Cllr Dhyani and agreed.

Decision: Recommendations agreed

- 8.9 Cllr England introduced CA/20/25 from the Cabinet meeting of 11/02/2025 'Budget 2025/26', which was seconded by Cllr Dhyani.

Cllrs A Williams, Allen, Guest, Freedman, Barradell, Bromham and England offered their comments on the proposed budget; full discussion can be viewed via the video minutes.

The Mayor then took the recommendations as set out in the referral from Cabinet under item CA/20/25 'Budget 2025/26' to a recorded vote;

The recorded vote is as follows;

Voters:	Result:
Cllr A Williams	abstain
Cllr Adeleke	abstain
Cllr Allen	for
Cllr Anderson	abstain
Cllr B Williams	abstain
Cllr Banks	abstain
Cllr Barradell	abstain
Cllr Barry-Mears	abstain
Cllr Bhinder	abstain
Cllr Bristow	for
Cllr Bromham	for
Cllr C Link	for
Cllr C Wyatt-Lowe	abstain
Cllr Cox	for
Cllr Dhyani	for
Cllr Douris	abstain
Cllr Elliot	abstain
Cllr England	for

CHAIRMAN

Cllr Freedman	for
Cllr Gale	for
Cllr Greenfield	abstain
Cllr Guest	abstain
Cllr Hannell	notVoted
Cllr Harden	abstain
Cllr Hobson	abstain
Cllr Johnson	abstain
Cllr Maddern	abstain
Cllr McAreyve	for
Cllr Mitchell	abstain
Cllr Patterson	for
Cllr Pesch	notVoted
Cllr Pound	abstain
Cllr Pringle	abstain
Cllr Reynolds	for
Cllr Riddick	abstain
Cllr Santamaria	for
Cllr Silwal	abstain
Cllr Smith-Wright	for
Cllr Stevens	for
Cllr Symington	for
Cllr Taylor	for
Cllr Walker	abstain
Mayor (Cllr B Link)	for

Total voting 'for' the recommendations: 18
Total voting 'against' the recommendations: 0
Total who abstained to vote: 23
Total who did not cast a vote: 2

Decision: The Mayor announced that the vote carried and the recommendations are agreed.

9 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REFERRALS

The Mayor advised that there are no referrals for consideration from the Overview & Scrutiny committees.

10 POLLING DISTRICT & POLLING PLACE ORDER

The Mayor invited Cllr England to introduce the report.

Full details can be viewed via the video minutes.

Decision: recommendations agreed

CHAIRMAN

11 WAIVER OF 6 MONTH COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE RULE (SEC.85 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972)

The Mayor invited Cllr England to introduce the report.

Full details can be viewed via the video minutes.

Decision: recommendation agreed

12 CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Mayor invited the Group Leaders to give any changes to committee membership.

Cllr England advised that Cllr Freedman will replace Cllr Deacon on the Housing & Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Cllr Allen will be joining the Development Management Committee.

Cllr England also confirmed the membership of the newly formed Council Tax Setting Committee as; The Leader of the Council along with Cllrs Stevens, A Williams, Elliott and 1 x vacancy for an independent.

Cllr Mitchell advised that Cllr Greenfield will replace Cllr Silwal on the Finance & Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Cllr Williams advised that Cllr Harden will replace Cllr B Williams on the Housing & Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

13 CHANGE TO COMMITTEE DATES

The Mayor addressed Cllr England to seek any changes to committee dates.

Cllr England advised that the next meeting of the Full Council will move from 23rd April to a new date of 2nd April 2025.

Decision: agreed

14 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The Mayor advised that the final item on the agenda tonight will be Item 15, the appointment of Interim Chief Executive.

The Mayor reminded members that the report associated to this item is Part 2 and so is excluded from the public. The Mayor however noted that, unless any confidential information needs to be discussed, she propose the meeting remain in Part 1 to confirm this appointment.

The Mayor requested that if anyone should have anything of a confidential or personal nature to discuss, to please advise now so she could consider passing the resolution to exclude the public?

Decision: It was agreed that the meeting remain in Part 1 unless otherwise requested during discussion.

CHAIRMAN

15 APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Mayor invited Cllr England to introduce the report.

Cllr England set out the proposal to appoint Darren Welsh as the Interim Chief Executive.

Full details can be viewed via the video minutes.

Decision: agreed

The Mayor advised that this concludes the business of the meeting.

The Meeting ended at 9.20 pm