

**Middlewich Town Council
Victoria Building
Lewin Street
Middlewich
CW10 9AT**

Minutes of the Five Hundred and Twelfth meeting of Middlewich Town Council, held in the Victoria Hall, Civic Way, Middlewich on Monday 16th September 2019, commencing at 7.00 pm

Part One

Present

Councillor Russell Watkinson (Chairman) and Councillors Carol Bulman, Pauline Hickey, Chris Jones, Mike Hunter, David Latham, Jonathan Parry, Vicky Perez, Helen Watkinson and Gareth Williams

Council Officers:

Denise French, Assistant Town Clerk and Nicola Antoney, Administrative Assistant

1. To approve apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received and approved from Councillor Sean Boyle (illness)

Feedback and Reports

2. To receive any announcements to be made by the Chairman

Councillor Russell Watkinson referred to the resignation of Rachel Pendleton for personal reasons and thanked her for her hard work and dedication during her time as a Member of the Town Council.

3 To appoint a Chairman of the Council

Resolved 8233

That Councillor Russell Watkinson be appointed Chairman of the Council for the remainder of the ensuing year.

4 To appoint a Vice Chairman

Resolved 8234

That Councillor Mike Hunter be appointed Vice Chairman of the Council for the remainder of the ensuing year.

At this point, the meeting was adjourned to give all present the opportunity to pay tribute to Mr Jonathan Williams, Town Clerk and RFO, who had passed away on 6th September while on holiday in Tenerife.

5. Tributes to Mr Jonathan Williams

Councillor Mike Hunter gave thanks to Jonathan. Jonathan had grown up in the town and had started his role as Clerk in 1985, straight from university. He had given the whole of his working life to serve Middlewich. Mike praised Jonathan for his 'can do' attitude and how he always had a listening ear for anyone who needed it. Jonathan was a true gentleman. He had brought people and organisations together. He was instrumental in bringing the first Roman Middlewich weekend to fruition and Middlewich was the first Town Council to employ a member of staff dedicated to heritage.

Fiona Bruce MP spoke about how she had worked with a number of Town Clerks over her 10 years as a Member of Parliament and how Jonathan had stood out. He was hard working with a sense of public duty and was always welcoming and made time for people. She had invited him to the Houses of Parliament to speak to an All Party Parliamentary Group on Democracy; Jonathan had made such a good impression that he had been invited to attend a 'Cheshire Day' where he had been selected out of 200 attendees to talk about best practice. Her abiding memory of him would be in his hi vis jacket greeting residents and visitors. She saw Jonathan as a friend. A few years ago he had been invited to the Royal Garden Party by the Lord Lieutenant in recognition of his service to the town.

Councillor David Latham reiterated the words of fellow councillors. He said his thoughts were with Jonathan's family. He expressed his fondness for Jonathan and noted how Jonathan's door was always open; his loyalty and professionalism were insurmountable. He recognised Jonathan's vast knowledge and the immense amount of work he had undertaken. He expressed gratitude to Jonathan for his service to the town.

David Roberts, Community Mayor, referred to Jonathan's predecessor Arthur Fisher, who Jonathan recognised as teaching him everything he knew. David noted Jonathan's minutes from the Roman Middlewich meetings which were littered with references to Manchester City FC! He remembered Jonathan's delight after the first Middlewich Folk and Boat Festival when Jonathan had remarked that it was as if the whole town was on holiday. He noted how Jonathan had helped to set up the arrangements for the first Community Mayor, doing a great deal of work behind the scenes.

Councillor Russell Watkinson read out a letter of condolence from the Mayor of Winsford Town Council. The Mayor gave thanks for Jonathan's help in many areas of work including the Winsford Salt Fair and the heritage work undertaken in partnership. Russell recognised Jonathan's partnership approach in working with adjoining Councils.

Councillor Gareth Williams echoed the words already spoken. He said Jonathan was kind and considerate. He had given invaluable help to the new Councillors. Events in Middlewich were defined by Jonathan in his hi vis and straw hat!

Rachel Pendleton explained how Jonathan had been the first person to talk to her when she became a Member of the Town Council. He had encouraged her in her role and advised that her opinion was as important as anyone else's.

Councillor Russell Watkinson thanked everyone for their contributions and the meeting reconvened.

PART 2

Resolved 8235: That the meeting be moved into Part 2 session and the Public and Press be excluded on the basis that the item to be discussed involved financial and staffing matters.

Finance

6. Authorised Signatories

Resolved 8236: That

- (a) Councillors MA Hunter and DJ Latham; and Mrs NA Antoney, Administrative Assistant, be approved as authorised signatories on the Town Council bank account and the necessary arrangements be progressed with Barclays Bank; and
- (b) all payments be authorised by one staff member and one Councillor unless there are exceptional circumstances.

7. Staffing Matters

Resolved 8237: That

- (a) the Assistant Clerk post be re-designated as Deputy Town Clerk;
- (b) the current postholder of this role be paid a monetary award from 1st October based on the formula outlined in the report and a backdated award for 3 months to reflect additional work and responsibility already covered;
- (c) the Administrative Assistant be paid for 60 hours owed in lieu as a one off to reflect the circumstances over the summer;
- (d) a temporary member of staff be appointed to cover finances and the RFO role based on a maximum of one day a week and salary scale as recommended by the Cheshire Association of Local Councils;
- (e) the postholder MTC3 be paid the shortfall in salary for April as soon as possible;
- (f) the Council's HR advisor be contacted regarding sick pay as outlined in the report submitted; and
- (g) the Deputy Town Clerk be authorised to approve temporary cover for the Bar and the Victoria Hall subject to consultation with the Chair of the Internal Committee; and
- (h) matters discussed at the meeting regarding CCTV, security and swipe cards be referred to the Internal Committee for consideration.

The meeting concluded at 8.26pm

Councillor Russell Watkinson

Chairman

Signed.....2019

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Middlewich Town Council

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