

MINUTES  
OF A MEETING OF THE  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WOKING**

held on 18 May 2023

Present:

Cllr S Hussain (Mayor)  
Cllr M I Raja (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr H Akberali	Cllr D Jordan
Cllr T Aziz	Cllr A Kirby
Cllr A-M Barker	Cllr R Leach
Cllr A Boote	Cllr L Lyons
Cllr J Brown	Cllr C Martin
Cllr A Caulfield	Cllr L Morales
Cllr G Cosnahan	Cllr J Morley
Cllr K Davis	Cllr S Mukherjee
Cllr S Dorsett	Cllr E Nicholson
Cllr W Forster	Cllr S Oades
Cllr P Graves	Cllr L Rice
Cllr S Greentree	Cllr D Roberts
Cllr A Javaid	Cllr T Spenser
Cllr I Johnson	Cllr M Sullivan

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Mayor informed the Council that Paul Russell, former Chief Executive of Woking Borough Council, had recently passed away. On behalf of the Council and all those who had worked with Paul, the Mayor extended condolences to Paul's family.

Paul had been appointed to the role of chief executive of Woking Borough Council in September 1983, eventually retiring in 2005, having played a key role in the transformation of Woking's town centre.

Outside of work, Paul had enjoyed a wide range of interests, with a keen interest in sports, including rugby, cricket and Formula 1 and in particular the McLaren Team. Above all, Paul had enjoyed spending time with his family, passing on his interest in sport to his children and grandchildren.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

No apologies for absence had been received.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

No declarations of interest were received.

**3. MINUTES.**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 30 March 2023 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

**4. URGENT BUSINESS.**

No items of Urgent Business were considered.

**5. PRESENTATION OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S CIVIC AWARDS 2023.**

The Mayor presented awards to the winners of the 2023 Young People's Civic Awards Scheme. The Scheme aimed to reward young people who made an outstanding contribution to the life of the community in Woking and whose work or achievements might not normally be recognised.

Each winner received a certificate, a trophy and a voucher from The Ambassador Theatre Group which had sponsored the Award Scheme.

**James Howell – Outstanding Contribution to the Community**

The winner in the first category, Outstanding Contribution to the Community, was James Howell, a Year 11 student at Woking High School.

James was an active member of both his school and local community and had a passion for improving the town's sustainability for future generations.

**Annabelle MacAlister – Outstanding Achievement**

The winner in the second category – Outstanding Achievement – was Annabelle MacAlister, a young carer from Goldsworth Park who cared for her parents alongside her two older siblings.

As a valued member of Woking Young Carers, Annabelle supported the younger members and was involved in activities such as bingo sessions at Brockhill Care Home and supporting community events in Sythwood. In 2022, Annabelle completed her Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award.

**Chloe Harding – Triumph Over Adversity**

The winner of the Triumph Over Adversity category was Chloe Harding, a remarkable young lady who deserved true recognition for her exceptional resilience and determination to overcome enormous challenges.

Chloe had joined Hoe Valley School five years previously and had suffered the tragic loss of her parents during her time at secondary school. With the support of her family, her school and the Hope Service, Chloe had slowly managed to rebuild her life in the face of adversity. Since achieving her GCSE's, Chloe had started a new college to pursue her wish to work with young children.

**6. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2023 EMINENT CITIZEN.**

Each year, the outgoing Mayor selected a resident who had provided an 'eminent service' to the community and appointed them Eminent Citizen. The Mayor announced that this year's honour would be bestowed on Julia Hopkins from Knaphill, an outstanding resident who had worked tirelessly to support local communities and various charities.

In 2019, Julia had opened Woking's first community fridge. What had started as a shed in the grounds of Holy Trinity Church in Knaphill, was now a purpose-built cabin that supported hundreds of families each week. Aside from her work at the community fridge, over the years Julia had also raised money for mental health and pancreatic cancer charities.

In recognition of her work for the Community, Julia had also been awarded the British Empire Medal in December 2022.

**7. THE MAYOR'S END OF YEAR SPEECH.**

The Mayor spoke of the many events he had attended throughout the past year, including spectacular live performances, fundraising events and award ceremonies. However, it was the chance to meet individuals that stood out, including Margaret Ripley, a local resident aged 99 years and 10 months who had recently fulfilled her dream of walking her great granddaughter down the aisle.

The Mayor stated that it had been the greatest honour and privilege to meet so many Woking residents, volunteers, businesses and entrepreneurs, all of whom did so much to make Woking a truly special place.

**8. ELECTION OF MAYOR 2023/24.**

Councillor Aziz moved and Councillor Lyons seconded that Councillor Raja be elected Mayor.

RESOLVED

That Councillor M Ilyas Raja be elected Mayor of the Borough for the ensuing year.

The Mayor signed the Statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**9. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.**

The Mayor thanked all those present for attending and for the honour bestowed on him by the Council.

**Past Mayor's Badge**

The Mayor thanked Councillor Saj Hussain for his service to the Borough over the past year as Mayor and presented him with a Past Mayor's Badge. The Mayor further presented Faaria Sahi, daughter of Councillor Hussain, with a Past Mayoress' Badge.

### **The Mayoress**

The Mayor was pleased to announce that his wife, Nargis Ilyas Khan, would support him as Mayoress for the coming year.

### **The Mayor's Charity**

The Mayor had chosen to support and raise funds for the Friends of Woking Community Hospital, supporting the diagnostic centre on Heathside Road. The charity had been founded in 1970 and had since raised a million pounds for the hospital.

### **Forthcoming Events**

The Mayor reported that his diary had already been filled with a wide range of engagements, including an event being organised by Woking Park Bowling Club for 9 July 2023 to support the Mayor's Charity. The event would be open to the whole community.

## **10. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR 2023/24.**

Councillor Forster moved and Councillor Davis seconded that Councillor Morales be appointed Deputy Mayor.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Louise Morales be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Borough for the ensuing year.

The Deputy Mayor signed the Statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

## **11. LOCAL ELECTIONS 2023 WBC23-019.**

The Council received a report on the names of those who had been returned as Borough Councillors at the Elections on 4 May 2023.

RESOLVED

That the report be received.

## **12. PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES TO PAST MEMBERS.**

In recognition of their service to the community as Borough Councillors, the following individuals were presented with a certificate by the Mayor.

- James Sanderson. Ward Councillor for Goldsworth East (2015 – 2016) and Goldsworth Park (2019-2023).
- Mohammad Ali. Ward Councillor for Canalside (2016 – 2023).
- Colin Kemp. Ward Councillor for Horsell West (2014 – 2016) and Horsell (2016 – 2023).

- Ayesha Azad. Ward Councillor for Mayford and Sutton Green (2014 – 2016) and Heathlands (2016 - 2023).
- Gary Elson. Ward Councillor for West Byfleet (2008-2016) and Pyrford (2016 – 2023)
- Melanie Whitehand. Ward Councillor for Knaphill (2007 – 2023).

**13. SEATING ARRANGEMENTS 2023/24.**

The Council had before it a plan showing the proposed seating arrangements for Members at Council meetings for the ensuing year.

RESOLVED

That the seating plan be approved.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and ended at 8.15 pm

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_