

## **To all Members of the County Council**

The annual meeting of the County Council will be held at **10.30 am** on **Friday, 22 March 2024** at **County Hall, Chichester PO19 1RQ**.

### **Agenda**

1. **Election of Chairman**

To elect a Chairman of the County Council for the ensuing year (the Chairman to make a declaration of acceptance of office).

2. **Election of Vice-Chairman**

To elect a Vice-Chairman of the County Council for the ensuing year (the Vice-Chairman to make a declaration of acceptance of office).

3. **Apologies for Absence**

4. **Members' Interests**

Members are asked to disclose any pecuniary or personal interests in matters appearing on the agenda.

5. **Minutes** (Pages 7 - 20)

The Council is asked to confirm the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the County Council held on 16 February 2024.

6. **Review of Proportionality** (Pages 21 - 22)

The County Council has a statutory duty to review the proportionality on its committees each year. A table, together with an explanation of the proportionality rules and how they are applied is attached.

7. **Notification of Appointment of Cabinet Members and Advisers to Cabinet Members** (Pages 23 - 28)

The Leader is required each year to give notice to the Council of his appointments to the Cabinet and allocation of Cabinet portfolios between the Cabinet Members, together with the appointment of Advisers to Cabinet Members.

8. **Appointments**

Following the review of proportionality and in the light of the Leader's proposals at item 7, to appoint members of non-Executive

committees, to appoint the chairmen, vice-chairmen, panels and substitutes of those committees in accordance Standing Order 2.10 and to appoint the members of scrutiny committees (the chairmen and vice-chairmen will be appointed at the next meeting of each scrutiny committee). The appointments will take effect from the end of the meeting.

9. **Address by a Cabinet Member**

At the discretion of the Chairman, to receive an address by a Cabinet Member on a matter of urgency and/or significant interest to the County Council and which relates to the powers and responsibilities of the County Council or which affects the Council.

10. **Appointment of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service (To Follow)**

The Council will receive a report from the Appointing Committee recommending an appointment to the post of Chief Executive of the Council, to act as the Council's Head of Paid Service.

11. **Governance Committee: Pay Policy Statement 2024/25**  
(Pages 29 - 38)

The Council is asked to approve the Pay Policy Statement 2024/25, in the light of a report from the Governance Committee.

12. **Governance Committee: Revisions to the Constitution** (Pages 39 - 42)

The Council is asked to consider minor changes to the Constitution in relation to mandatory training requirements for the members of certain panels and committees and revisions to the terms of reference of the Governance Committee and of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee to be in line with current practice and recent legislative changes, in the light of a report by the Governance Committee.

13. **Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee: Review of Financial Regulations** (Pages 43 - 72)

The Council is asked to consider revisions to Financial Regulations, in the light of a report by the Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee.

14. **Report of Urgent Action** (Pages 73 - 76)

To note urgent action taken under regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

15. **Question Time** (Pages 77 - 80)

Questions to the Leader and Cabinet Members on matters in the

Cabinet report, written questions and any other questions relevant to their portfolios. Members may also ask questions of the Leader on anything current and relevant to the County Council. The report covers portfolio-related business since the meeting of the Council on 15 December 2023. A supplementary report may be published.

(2 hours is allocated for Question Time)

**Lunch (In the event that morning business is finished before lunch afternoon business will be brought forward.)**

16. **Notices of Motion**

(a) **Motion on Property Disposal**

To debate the following motion, submitted by Cllr Milne, notice of which was given on 29 November 2023.

'Current arrangements for declaring council assets surplus to requirement, and their subsequent disposal, are not satisfactory:

- The decision rests exclusively with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Property.
- It provides insufficient opportunity for consultation with key stakeholders such as district and borough councillors and parish councils.
- There is no co-ordination with the policies of the local planning authority and decisions may directly contradict their wishes as expressed in their District Plan.
- If a land or property asset is subsequently transferred into the Joint Venture with Morgan Sindall, the criteria for development become purely commercial which prevents a full consideration of other desirable social outcomes (such as a higher percentage of affordable housing).

This Council therefore calls on the Cabinet to:

- (1) Introduce a new approach to the declaration and disposal of assets which has a fuller set of arrangements for local member and stakeholder consultation to take account of a broader set of interests; and
- (2) Extend this revised approach to the adoption of clearer criteria to be applied when deciding whether to option a site to the JV.'

(b) **Motion on Digital Exclusion**

To debate the following motion, submitted by Cllr McGregor,

notice of which was given on 5 March 2024.

'This Council notes that there is an ever-increasing use of and reliance on the provision of services via digital media.

It is well recognised that the use of digital technology has brought many benefits. However, it also excludes those who do not have the finance, resources, skills, or devices to engage with digital services.

In June 2023 the House of Lords Communications and Digital Select Committee identified that:

- 2.4m people are still unable to complete a single basic digital task to get online;
- 1.7m households have no broadband or mobile internet access.

The Council recognises that:

- The Council ensures, through the implementation of our digital culture, the availability of non-digital alternatives to access Council services.
- The Council's libraries are helping people engage with digital services.
- The Council has an extensive programme of work to build digital skills, including free access to public computer networks, the provision of free Wi-Fi in public spaces, and through our Digital Ambassador volunteers.

However, the Council recognises that despite this programme of support, many residents continue to be digitally excluded. Furthermore, digital exclusion goes much further than engagement with the services of West Sussex County Council. We need to be supporting our residents regarding all the effects of digital exclusion.

In recognition of this digital divide, the Council commits to increasing its work to ensure that residents are not digitally excluded within the county. The Council requests that the Chief Executive and Leader:

- (1) Ensure that the County Council is best able to identify residents and particular groups of residents who are most at risk of being digitally excluded due to lack of finance, resources, skills or devices.
- (2) Work with those groups to find the most effective ways of improving digital inclusion, recognising those ways will be different, depending on the reasons for the lack of digital inclusion.

- (3) Strengthen working with all tiers of local government and the voluntary sector to address digital exclusion.
- (4) Target appropriate publicity measures to raise awareness of the alternatives to digital engagement with the Council, for those residents for whom using digital channels is not a viable option.'

### **County Council concludes**

Items not commenced by 4.15 p.m. will be deferred to the following meeting.

Director of Law and Assurance  
13 March 2024

### **Webcasting**

Please note: this meeting is being filmed for live and subsequent broadcast via the County Council's website on the internet. The images and sound recording may be used for training purposes by the Council.

Generally the public gallery is not filmed. However, by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.