

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held at the Oakwood Centre on Tuesday 16 May 2023 at 8 pm

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**Present:** Councillors J. Sartorel (Chairman); J. Anderson; K. Baker; G. Bello; D. Bragg; A. Chadwick; K. Charles Bey; J. Cheng; Y. Edwards; D. Errawalla; M. Firmager; K. Gilder; M. Holmes; R. Horskins; C. Jewell; M. Kennedy; V. Lewis; M. Nagra; B. Rowland; P. Singh; D. Smith; A. Swaddle

**Officers present:** K. Murray, Deputy Town Clerk; M. Filmore, Committee Officer; A. Ransley, Communications Manager

**Also present:** 11 members of the public

1. Before the meeting commenced, the Town Mayor invited representatives from the following organisations, who were awarded a Community Grant at the Strategy & Resources Committee meeting held on 18 April 2023, to address the Council and provide details of the projects the grants will go towards funding:

- Woodley Festival of Music and Arts
- Woodley Bowling Club
- 1<sup>st</sup> Woodley Boys' Brigade
- Community Hopeline CIC

The Town Mayor adjourned the meeting to enable photos to be taken of the grant recipients.

2. A maximum of 30 minutes was set aside before the start of the meeting for members of the public to pose questions to the Council in the Town Forum. As there were no members of the public wishing to address the Council the Town Forum did not take place.

### 3. **ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR**

The existing Mayor, Councillor Sartorel, addressed the Council. Councillor Sartorel highlighted the several historical events which had taken place over her last year in office, and stated it was a huge privilege to serve the community and council as Mayor, thanking all who had helped her. She also advised members that during the year nearly £500 was raised for her chosen charity, Keep Mobile.

The existing Mayor called for nominations for the office of Town Mayor for 2023/24.

It was proposed by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor Kennedy and

### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To re-elect Councillor Sartorel to the office of Town Mayor of Woodley for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Voting: For: 16 Against: 0 Abstentions: 5 No Vote Registered: 1

4. **TOWN MAYOR'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

The Mayor stated she was honoured to be elected a Town Mayor for a third year. She welcomed all new Councillors, and asked that they join with existing Members to continue working for the people of Woodley regardless of which political party they supported.

The Mayor advised Councillors that her chosen charity for the year would be Woodley Lunch Bunch.

Councillor Sartorel confirmed that she would sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Town Mayor as soon as possible after the meeting.

5. **WOODLEY TOWN COUNCIL ELECTION 2023**

The list of Councillors elected on 4 May 2023 was noted and is attached to these minutes at **Appendix A**.

6. **DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that all Councillors elected on 4 May 2023 had made and signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office, as required by law, with the exception of:

- Councillor Linda Guttridge
- Councillor Bill Soane

Members noted that those Councillors yet to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office were aware of the requirement to do so within two months from the date of their election.

7. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Guttridge, Soane and Taylor.

8. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

9. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR**

It was proposed by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor Kennedy, and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To elect Councillor Anderson to the office of Deputy Mayor for the 2023/24 municipal year

Voting: For: 16 Against: 0 Abstentions: 5 No Vote Registered: 1

10. **COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the current composition of the Council:
  - Conservative Group – 17 Councillors
  - Labour Group - 6 Councillors
  - Liberal Democrat Group – 2 Councillors

11. **POLITICAL GROUP LEADERS**

11.1 **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillor Soane as Leader of the Conservative Group, and that no Deputy Leader would be appointed.

- 11.2 **RESOLVED:**  
♦ To note the appointment of Councillor Nagra as Leader and Councillor Bello as Deputy Leader of the Labour Group.

- 11.3 **RESOLVED:**  
♦ To note the appointment of Councillor Jewell as Leader and Councillor Rowland as Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.

## 12. **ELECTION OF THE LEADERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL**

- 12.1 It was proposed by Councillor Gilder, seconded by Councillor Kennedy and

**RESOLVED:**

- ♦ To elect Councillor Baker as Leader of the Council for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Voting: For: 14 Against: 0 Abstentions: 7 No Vote Registered: 1

- 12.2 It was proposed by Councillor Gilder, seconded by Councillor Kennedy and

**RESOLVED:**

- ♦ To elect Councillor Swaddle as Deputy Leader of the Council for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Voting: For: 14 Against: 0 Abstentions: 7 No Vote Registered: 1

## 13. **MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

### 13.1 **Strategy and Resources Committee**

It was proposed by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor Gilder and

**RESOLVED:**

- ♦ To approve the terms of reference of the Strategy and Resources Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year, which includes setting the number of places on the Committee at 10.

Voting: For: 19 Against: 0 Abstentions: 2 No Vote Registered: 1

- ♦ To note the appointment of Councillors Anderson, Baker, Bello, Chadwick, Gilder, Horskins, Kennedy, Nagra, Rowland and Swaddle to the Strategy and Resources Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year.

### 13.2 **Leisure Services Committee**

It was proposed by Councillor Firmager, seconded by Councillor Horskins and

**RESOLVED:**

- ♦ To approve the terms of reference of the Leisure Services Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year, which includes setting the number of places on the Committee at 10.

Voting: For: 21 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0 No Vote Registered: 1

- ♦ To note the appointment of Councillors Charles Bey, Edwards, Errawalla, Firmager, Gilder, Horskins, Jewell, Kennedy, Lewis and Smith to the Leisure Services Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year.

14.3 **Planning and Community Committee**

It was proposed by Councillor Horskins, seconded by Councillor Cheng and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To approve the terms of reference of the Planning and Community Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year, which includes setting the number of places on the Committee at 10.

Voting: For: 21 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0 No Vote Registered: 1

- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillors Bragg, Cheng, Guttridge, Horskins, Jewell, Lewis, Sartorel, Singh, Soane and Taylor to the Planning and Community Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year.

15. **MEMBERSHIP OF SUB COMMITTEES, TASK & FINISH WORKING GROUPS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

Under Standing Orders 6.4a, 6.5a and 6.6a respectively, members of the parent standing committees considered the terms of reference as follows:

15.1 **Strategy and Resources Committee**

It was proposed by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor Gilder and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To amend the number of places to 4 for the 2023/24 municipal year on all committees for whom the Strategy & Resources Committee is the parent committee where the terms of reference currently state there are 6 places.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0 No Vote Registered: 2

It was proposed by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor Gilder and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To approve the terms of reference for all committees for whom the Strategy & Resources Committee is the parent committee, and for whom the number of places had been changed from 6 to 4, for the 2023/24 municipal year, as follows:
  - Investments Sub Committee – 4 places
  - Risk Management Sub Committee – 4 places
  - Standing Orders & Financial Regulations Sub Committee – 4 places
  - PR & Marketing Sub Committee – 4 places
  - Personnel Sub Committee – 4 places
  - Youth Services Working Party – 4 places
  - Climate Emergency Sub Committee – 4 places

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0 No Vote Registered: 2

15.2 **Investments Sub Committee:**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillors Anderson, Baker, Bello and Bragg to the Investments Sub Committee for the municipal year.

15.3 **Risk Management Sub Committee:**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillors Bello, Bragg, Guttridge and Horskins to the Risk Management Sub Committee for the municipal year.

15.4 **Standing Orders and Financial Regulations Sub Committee:**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillors Baker, Kennedy, Nagra and Swaddle to the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations Sub Committee for the municipal year.

15.5 **PR & Marketing Sub Committee:**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillors Baker, Errawalla, Swaddle and Taylor to the PR & Marketing Sub Committee for the municipal year.

15.6 **Personnel Sub Committee:**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillors Anderson, Kennedy, Singh and Soane to the Personnel Sub Committee for the municipal year.

15.7 **Youth Services Task & Finish Working Group:**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillors Bragg, Chadwick, Charles Bey and Gilder to the Youth Services Task & Finish Working Group for the municipal year.

15.8 **Climate Emergency Sub Committee:**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillors Baker, Bragg, Edwards and Firmager to the Climate Emergency Sub Committee for the municipal year.

15.9 **Woodley Town Centre Partnership:**

Councillor Baker advised Members that, due to an anomaly within the Terms of Reference of the Woodley Town Centre Partnership, inherited from when the Partnership was brought into the Town Council, the Partnership itself has autonomy over making changes to their Terms of Reference.

He explained that the Terms of Reference state that both the Town Council and the Borough Council, who provide equal funding to the Partnership, have two places each on the Partnership. However, when applying mathematical rounding to the division of places, the Council is unable to appoint two Members without breaking the Council's proportionality rules, as set out in the Standing Orders. Members noted that the Council could not amend this number of places as only the Partnership have the power to amend the Terms of Reference.

Councillor Baker further advised that the Terms of Reference for the Partnership do permit organisations to send substitutes to meetings. He also confirmed that meetings were open for anyone to attend and contribute, even if they are not appointed, although only the two formally appointed Members, or an appointed substitute, would have voting rights.

To resolve this issue, Councillor Baker proposed that the Council should appoint three Members to the Partnership and that, following the naming of those Members, a vote should take place to appoint one of those Members as a substitute, therefore satisfying the Terms of Reference which stipulate the Town Council only has two places on the Partnership.

Following a query it was confirmed the Council could, in future, change the number of substitutes appointed, whether this be to increase or decrease the number, but any change would need to comply with proportionality rules.

Councillor Gilder seconded the proposal and, following a vote, it was

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To approve the appointment of three Councillors for the two places to the Woodley Town Centre Partnership for the 2023/24 municipal year, with a vote to follow as to which Member would be the named substitute.

Voting: For: 10 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0 No Vote Registered: 0

- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillors Baker, Holmes and Singh to the Woodley Town Centre Partnership for the municipal year.

Following a vote, it was

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To appoint Councillor Singh as a named substitute on the Woodley Town Centre Partnership for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Voting for named substitute: For Councillor Baker: 0  
For Councillor Holmes: 0  
For Councillor Singh: 8  
Abstentions: 1  
No Vote: 1

15.9 **Leisure Services Committee**

**Community Youth Partnership:**

It was proposed by Councillor Jewell that the number of places on the Community Youth Partnership be increased from 6 to 8 Members. The proposal was not seconded so was dismissed.

It was proposed by Councillor Firmager, seconded by Councillor Kennedy and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the number of places on the Community Youth Partnership be decreased from 6 to 4 Members for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 1 Abstentions: 2 No Vote Registered: 0

It was proposed by Councillor Firmager, seconded by Councillor Kennedy and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To approve the terms of reference of the Community Youth Partnership for the 2023/24 municipal year, including that there be 4 places on the partnership.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 3 No Vote Registered: 0

- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillors Bragg, Edwards, Gilder and Holmes to the Community Youth Partnership for the municipal year.
- ◆ To note the appointment of the following voluntary sector representatives to the Community Youth Partnership for the municipal year:
  - Paul Cassidy (ARC)
  - Graham Sumbler (Woodley Baptist Church)
  - Trina Farrance (Bulmershe Gymnastics)
  - Steve Outen (Woodley United FC)

15.10 **3G Pitch Steering Group Sub Committee:**

It was proposed by Councillor Firmager, seconded by Councillor Kennedy and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To approve the terms of reference of the 3G Pitch Steering Group Sub Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year, including that there be 4 places on the partnership.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 2 No Vote Registered: 1

- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillors Bragg, Firmager, Lewis and Taylor to the 3G Pitch Steering Group for the municipal year.

15.11 **Planning and Community Committee**

**Cycling in Woodley Sub Committee:**

It was proposed by Councillor Horskins, seconded by Councillor Cheng and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the number of places on the Cycling in Woodley Sub Committee be decreased from 6 to 4 Members for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Voting: For: 5 Against: 1 Abstentions: 1 No Vote Registered: 0

It was proposed by Councillor Horskins, seconded by Councillor Cheng and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To approve the updated terms of reference of the Cycling in Woodley Working Party for the 2023/24 municipal year, including that there be 4 places on the working party.

Voting: For: 5 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1 No Vote Registered: 1

- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillors Bragg, Chadwick, Edwards and Gilder to the Cycling in Woodley Working Party for the municipal year.

Following a query regarding how many of those Members were regular cyclists, it was commented that the term 'regular' was subjective. The Committee Officer clarified that the Terms of Reference for the Sub Committee requires that no more than three of the appointed members be interest parties, which is defined as either a highways engineer, cycling expert or cyclist, but that there was nothing to stipulate a minimum number of interested parties on the committee.

#### 15.12 **Full Council**

##### **Bulmershe Site of Urban Landscape Value (SULV) Joint Working Party**

Councillor Baker highlighted that the Bulmershe SULV Joint Working Party Terms of Reference stipulate that the Council appoints two Members and substitute to the Working Party. Both Earley Town Council and Woodley Town Council have the same number of places.

Similar to the process for appointing to the Woodley Town Centre Partnership approved earlier in the meeting, Councillor Baker proposed, seconded by Councillor Swaddle, and following a vote it was

##### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To approve the appointment of three Councillors for the two places on the Bulmershe SULV Joint Working Party for the 2023/24 municipal year, with a vote to follow as to which Member would be the named substitute.

Voting: For: 19 Against: 0 Abstentions: 2 No Vote Registered: 1

##### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the terms of reference of the Bulmershe SULV Joint Working Party.
- ◆ To note the appointment of Councillors Charles Bey, Errawalla and Gilder to the Bulmershe SULV Joint Working Party for the municipal year.

Following a vote, it was

##### **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To appoint Councillor Charles Bey as a named substitute on the Bulmershe SULV Joint Working Party for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Voting for named substitute: For Councillor Charles Bey: 13  
For Councillor Errawalla: 1  
For Councillor Gilder: 2  
Abstentions: 3  
No Vote: 3

#### 16. **APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

To speed up the item, the Mayor proposed that nominations would initially be sought for each outside body. Where there were more nominations than places then an individual vote would take place on that specific appointment. Otherwise, at the end of all nominations being made, an overall vote would be taken on all uncontested appointments. No concerns were raised with regards to this proposal.

Following the nominations, Councillor Baker proposed, seconded by Councillor Gilder, and following a vote it was

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To appoint the following Council representatives to outside bodies:

Voting: For: 19 Against: 0 Abstentions: 2 No Vote Registered: 1

- 16.1 **ARC – 2 places**  
Councillor Gilder and Mrs S. Flower.
- 16.2 **Citizens Advice Wokingham – 1 place**  
Councillor Lewis
- 16.3 **Friends of Woodford Park Committee – 1 place**  
Councillor Soane
- 16.4 **Highwood Management Conference – 2 places**  
Councillors Gilder and Holmes
- 16.5 **Keep Mobile – 1 place**  
No Member appointed
- 16.6 **ReadiBus – 1 place**  
No Member appointed
- 16.7 **Sonning & District Welfare & Education Trust – 1 place**  
Councillor Smith
- 16.8 **The Bulmershe School – 1 place (Governor)**  
Councillor Cheng
- 16.9 **Wokingham Borough Council Climate Emergency Working Group – 1 place**  
Councillor Edwards
- 16.10 **Wokingham Borough/Parish Working Group – 1 place**  
Councillor Kennedy
- 16.11 **Woodley Bowling Club Management Committee – 1 place**  
Councillor Gilder
- 16.12 **Woodley Volunteer Centre – 1 place**  
Councillor Kennedy
- 16.13 **Poor's Land Charity – 1 place to serve until 2026**  
Councillor Holmes
- 16.14 Representation on the following outside bodies was noted:
  - Poor's Land Charity – 2 places**  
Councillor Cheng and Mrs S. Flower serving until 2024  
Councillor Gilder serving until 2026
  - Robert Palmer Almshouse Charity – 1 place**  
Councillor Bragg serving until 2024

17. **CHEQUE SIGNATORIES**

It was proposed by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor Swaddle and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To appoint Councillors Baker, Bragg, Kennedy and Swaddle as signatories to sign cheques and transfers on behalf of the Council for the municipal year.

Voting: For: 15 Against: 0 Abstentions: 4 No Vote Registered: 3

18. **MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY 2023**

The Town Mayor presented the minutes of the Council meeting held on 7 February 2023.

**RESOLVED**

- ◆ To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 7 February 2023 and that they be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

Voting: For: 12 Against: 0 Abstentions: 8 No Vote Recorded: 2

19. **MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 28 FEBRUARY 2023**

The Town Mayor presented the minutes of the extraordinary Council meeting held on 28 February 2023.

**RESOLVED**

- ◆ To approve the minutes of the extraordinary Council meeting held on 28 February 2023 and that they be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

Voting: For: 10 Against: 0 Abstentions: 10 No Vote Recorded: 2

As there was no simple majority, and there was an equality of votes for and not for approving the minutes amongst those in attendance and voting, the Mayor exercised their right to cast a deciding vote and voted for the approval of the minutes.

It was highlighted that the reason there was no majority vote was that a number of Members who were not in attendance at the previous meeting felt they should abstain from the vote. It was suggested this issue should be raised with the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations Sub Committee for consideration.

20. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

20.1 **Minutes of the Planning and Community Committee: 7 March 2023**

Councillor Cheng presented the minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 7 March 2023.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 7 March 2023.

20.2 **Minutes of the Planning and Community Committee: 28 March 2023**

Councillor Cheng presented the minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 28 March 2023.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 28 March 2023.

20.3 **Minutes of the Leisure Services Committee: 11 April 2023**

Councillor Smith presented the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting held on 11 April 2023.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting held on 11 April 2023.

20.4 **Minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee: 18 April 2023**

Councillor Baker presented the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting held on 18 April 2023.

**Minute 89: VAT changes for sports facilities**

In response to a query regarding whether there was an update on the issue of changes to VAT charges applies to sports facilities, the Deputy Town Clerk advised that further information would be provided to the next meeting of the Strategy & Resources Committee in June.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Strategy & Resources Committee meeting held on 18 April 2023.

20.5 **Minutes of the Planning and Community Committee: 25 April 2023**

Councillor Cheng presented the minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 25 April 2023.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To receive the minutes of the Planning and Community Committee meeting held on 25 April 2023.

21. **LEADER'S STATEMENT**

Councillor Baker, as Leader of the Council, read out a statement, included at **Appendix B**.

22. **OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members noted the following written reports which had been included in the agenda:

- Poor's Land Charity by Mrs S Flower, Councillor Cheng, and Councillor Smith
- Sonning & District Welfare & Educational Trust by Councillor Smith
- ARC by Mrs S Flower
- Readibus by Mr A Heap

23. **TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

The Town Mayor advised Members to note the details of the events which the Town Mayor had attended since the last Full Council meeting, as provided in the agenda.

24. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no suggestions for future agenda items.

25. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**

Councillor Smith stated that the Poor's Land Charity would soon be getting an updated website and requested, if there is the capability to do so, that a link be included on the Town Council's website.

Meeting closed at 9:45 pm

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**WOODLEY TOWN COUNCIL – PARISH ELECTION RESULTS MAY 2023**

<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Party</b>
CHARLES BEY, Kester Roger	Bulmershe	Labour Party
EDWARDS, Yvonne	Bulmershe	Labour Party
KENNEDY, Mike	Bulmershe	The Conservative Party Candidate
TAYLOR, June Teresa	Bulmershe	Labour Party
ANDERSON, Juliet Ann	Coronation Central	The Conservative Party Candidate
BRAGG, David William	Coronation Central	The Conservative Party Candidate
BAKER, Keith James	Coronation East	The Conservative Party Candidate
HORSKINS, Robert John Charles	Coronation East	The Conservative Party Candidate
SMITH, Darren Paul	Coronation East	The Conservative Party Candidate
CHADWICK, Anne Frances	Loddon Airfield	The Conservative Party Candidate
NAGRA, Majid	Loddon Airfield	Labour Party
SWADDLE, Alison Claire	Loddon Airfield	The Conservative Party Candidate
BELLO, Greg	Loddon South	Labour Party
SARTOREL, Janet Iris	Loddon South	The Conservative Party Candidate
SOANE, Bill	Loddon South	The Conservative Party Candidate
GUTTRIDGE, Linda Mary	Loddon West	The Conservative Party Candidate
SINGH, Parvinder	Loddon West	Labour *
CHENG, Jenny	South Lake North	The Conservative Party Candidate
ERRAWALLA, Danny	South Lake North	The Conservative Party Candidate
HOLMES, Mary Iris	South Lake North	The Conservative Party Candidate
GILDER, Kay Margaret	South Lake South	The Conservative Party Candidate
JEWELL, Carol Ann	South Lake South	Liberal Democrat
ROWLAND, Beth	South Lake South	Liberal Democrat
FIRMAGER, Michael John	Warren	The Conservative Party Candidate
LEWIS, Vin	Warren	The Conservative Party Candidate

*\*Stood as Independent at the election*

# LEADERS STATEMENT

Annual Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Cllr Keith Baker

Good evening and welcome to this brand new Council. There are 9 brand new councillors for this 4 year term and I welcome all of them to what I believe is a great council with a fabulous team of officers. I also welcome the return of 16 former councillors and I hope you will allow your experience and dare I say wisdom to be passed onto the new councillors.

Can I stress that this town council can only deal with issues that they have control of. The council therefore have difficulty in dealing with anything outside of this. So can I urge you all to concentrate on addressing local issues as your priority. There is a lot of work to do in this thriving town and a large budget to manage. So, the officers will need a lot of help and direction from councillors. Can I urge you to dedicate your time to providing that help.

A well run council is one that operates smoothly and that is where the Standing Orders come in. These are the rules we operate all our committees on and it is important that we all councillors familiarise themselves with that document. I know it is a large number of pages but I think it is well segmented and has a good index. I know some of you might be uneasy for some of the content. So can I urge you to use the change mechanism to suggest amendments or additions. The Standing Orders & Financial Regulations Sub Committee meet regularly to review such suggestions and make recommendations to their parent committee.

Finally, can I congratulate the Labour group for displacing the Liberal Democrats as the opposition. I believe this is the first time in living memory that this has occurred. So well done. I look forward to working with you in the future for the good of all woodley residents.