

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

**EXTRAORDINARY
MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

Held on

Wednesday, 11th January 2017

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC HALL,
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE VICE-CHAIR OF COUNCIL
(Councillor J McKenna)

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 11th JANUARY 2017

APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN

THE VICE-CHAIR OF COUNCIL: Good afternoon, Councillors and ladies and gentlemen in the gallery, and soon to be Honorary Aldermen. As you can see, I am chairing this meeting today. I am afraid the Lord Mayor has taken ill a short while before this meeting, so my briefing is rather limited. I am looking around the Chamber and saying be kind to me, please! You particularly, Andrew!

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Ditto, Lord Mayor.

THE VICE-CHAIR OF COUNCIL: Not Lord Mayor, Chair. Chair is fine. When I did it before I was getting all sorts of titles – Deputy Lord Mayor or Lord Mayor. I am the Chair of the meeting, I am not Vice-Chair, because I am sat here I am going to chair the meeting, so if you can remember. I do not want to take the honorary title away from our marvellous Lord Mayor. I have had the pleasure in the past and have no wish to revisit it.

Can I remind you all to switch your mobile phones on to silence. I do not know if the Whips have actually mentioned it, I am only doing it for today so I can actually say it but it is video recorded this meeting, as you all know, and there have been comments from people who watched it that Councillors spend an awful lot of time on their mobile devices. Obviously the insinuation is that you are not paying full attention to what is going on in here while your mind is distracted everywhere, so maybe it is something for Members to consider.

We have five soon-to-be Honorary Aldermen. I remember my old mate Eileen Moxon used to get upset, she wanted to call them Alderpersons but the title is Aldermen. We have Ann Castle, Janet Harper JP, Doreen Lewis, Ron Millet and David Schofield.

Can I ask Councillor Blake, please, to introduce.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Chair. It gives me enormous pleasure to look across the Chamber and see old friends and old colleagues coming here for this very special meeting today and it gives me great pleasure to propose the motion.

In doing so, I hope you will indulge me, I will just say a few words, if I may. Particularly, of course, we have got three former Labour Councillors sitting on the back seat – I nearly said sitting in the Dock! – it must bring back all sorts of variable memories of your time on the Council.

I am particularly delighted to see Janet Harper here, a former Lady Mayoress and esteemed Member of this Council. When I first met Janet, of course, she was representing Pudsey North but how fitting that you actually moved to Armley, because I understand that you started work with Armley Library many years ago and just to complete that circle I think is a very special thing. Of course, many will remember you, Janet, for your time in the Education Department. I think it is your reputation as a rather, I would not say fierce but very clear and determined JP that you actually brought to your work on the Council, so absolutely delighted that you are here today.

Doreen Lewis. Doreen and I both came on to the Council at very similar times. I think you were just before me and I certainly looked to you as a great support. When

you first come on to the Council it is a bit daunting, to say the very least. I will never forget that memory of the first brown envelopes coming through the door the day after the election and not quite knowing where to go with it. Doreen, you have been a personal great friend to me and I remember our time together on the Education Committee and your passion and commitment to do with education and all things to do with young people was exemplary. Also I think many of us who have been on the Council since your time will remember the work that you did on the Women's Committee as well and you have always been a real campaigner coming forward with enormous passion. I think the way you represented the people of Roundhay was exemplary. When you were in the room we always knew what the key issues were about your ward and thank you for that, so I am very pleased to see you here today getting the recognition for all of that work.

Ron, we do not really know each other, it is quite surprising given your incredible history in the Party as well as a Councillor. Clearly you were on the Council for quite a long time before I actually became an elected Member. Some of you will know that Ron had to step down from the Council for tragic personal reasons but you have kept involved and I love the recognition. I think you actually said – forgive me if I am wrong in quoting this – “I was considered a bit of an oddball because the area was so new to most people” and that is the area of the environment, so back in the day all of the issues that are so topical today – climate change etc, etc – you were there back in the 1970s and 1980s predicting what would come to pass, very prescient indeed. Thank you for all of your commitment, your ongoing contribution and I am very pleased that you are here today so that we can really recognise the work that you have done on behalf of the people of Leeds.

Ann Castle and David. Of course, Ann and I got to know each other particularly on election night in 1996 when I had the great honour of being elected by the people of Weetwood to be their Councillor but, of course, that meant that Ann would no longer be there Councillor, so we have always had this great relationship as a result. *(laughter)*

As you know in politics things come and go, ebb and flow, and we have followed each other's careers with great interest connected to the political mood of the citizens of our great city. A former Lord Mayor as well and just has served the city with distinction.

David, I had not realised you actually started off in Garforth and Swillington. I always had you down as Halton and then latterly Temple Newsam, so that was a revelation to me. Absolutely committed and I know the great work that you did on all of the committees that you served. I think you found your niche in Scrutiny and many of us will remember some very close analysis of the work that we had been doing in administration.

Chair (I had better get it right) on behalf of everyone it gives me great pleasure to move the motion that all five of these wonderful people are admitted to the office of Alderman for the City of Leeds. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR OF COUNCIL: Thank you, Councillor Blake. Can I call on Councillor Andrew Carter to second, please.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, Chair. I am delighted first of all to second the resolution proposed by Councillor Blake in connection with all five of the about-to-be-recipients of this honour. I would also like to associate myself with the comments that Councillor Blake has made thus far and just add a few of my own.

First of all, Ron Millet. Only, I suspect, Elizabeth Nash will remember back in 1973, to start with, when this Authority was in its transition year that the three of us were, of course, Members of that Authority. Ronnie Millet – it says here Ron but we always said Ronnie in those days, it is more polite to say Ron – was a major spokesman for the Labour Group, both in opposition and in control. It is a long time since I have seen him actually look extremely well. I am delighted and it must be long overdue that this honour was given to Ron Millet, so I am delighted to support it.

Ann Castle, actually, Judith, she went on to become Councillor for Harewood with a majority that most of us could only dream on, including a lot of Members in Parliament, so a lot less shaky, if I may say to you, than Weetwood turned out to be for both of you! *(laughter)* I have a long memory.

Ann was an extremely distinguished Member of this Council and I am delighted that so soon after her retirement we are able to vote on this award. Not only Lord Mayor but former Deputy Lord Mayor. I think really Graham, who is here somewhere, should be getting the award for all the support through two years of civic duties he gave you, two tremendous years, both as Deputies and as Lord Mayor and Lord Mayor's Consort, but also all the work you did particularly on Planning over a number of years and serving your constituents with great diligence.

Doreen I do not know particularly well but I know she was an extremely hard worker when she was elected for Roundhay ward as you have said, so again, very well deserved and it is good to see that we recognise Councillors - Councillors actually from all parties but also Councillors who have not necessarily been Front Bench spokesmen but actually have worked extremely hard for their constituents and for the area that they served, and I think that is one of the splendid things about this particular honour.

Janet Harper, of course, was a ward colleague of mine – not for long, but she was a ward colleague of mine. I have known Janet for many years and for many years before she was a Councillor when she worked for the Local Authority. I know how hard she always worked not only when it was in Pudsey North but after that in Armley. Also then when she was off the Council as Lady Mayoress and what a splendid job she did. I am absolutely delighted again to be able to support the nomination of Janet Harper.

David – I first met David in 1979 when he very kindly, him and his family, hosted a house meeting for me in the General Election campaign where I had the cheek to oppose the Right Honourable Dennis Healy MP, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer. All I will say about that is, I had a thoroughly enjoyable time, thoroughly enjoyable – actually probably more enjoyable than other elections. It was David and his family who gave me tremendous support then. Also after that, when he joined the Council for Garforth and for Temple Newsam, he worked extremely hard for his constituents and always has been prepared to fight again when he has not been successful, and that is a very difficult thing for people to continue to do and continue to play an active role in the community, which David has always done. Again, delighted to lend my support to the nomination for David as well.

I have pleasure in seconding the motion proposed by Councillor Blake. Thank you, Chair. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR OF COUNCIL: Thank you, Andrew. Can I call on Councillor Golton now, please.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Chair. I also would like to add my support to the adoption of five fine Aldermen to the city and just resonate the point that when you get elected a lot of the time it is an honour from your Party to begin with for being selected, your electorate, secondarily for actually getting elected by them but being an Alderman is the City recognising your achievements and your impact and I love these ceremonies. We have a researcher who has come today and one of our staff said "Come down to the Alderman ceremony because it makes you feel good."

It is not just about us feeling good about ourselves, do not under-estimate the impact it has on the recipients. I went to see Penny Ewens last week, she is now in a nursing home on Harrogate Road, in her 90s. She was going on about what her duties were as an Alderman and she was still trying to tell me what policies we needed to enact on behalf of this city! Do not under-estimate the impact it has on the individuals.

I was a child when some of these Members were in the Council Chamber (*laughter*) so I cannot add many anecdotes, and if you will forgive me I will concentrate on one in particular because Ann Castle was in that fulcrum that spawned quite a few political personalities in Leeds North West in the 1990s and she had a particular effect on me. I will mention Penny Ewens again, she was my agent when I stood in Weetwood and we were talking about our strategy as to what we would do and what we would target and whatever and she goes, "Oh, don't even bother with Ann Castle, she's lovely. You can't touch her!" So we just went for Eileen Moxon, Judith Blake and Graham Platt (*laughter*) and it worked!

That legacy that people leave behind when they are an elected Member and through their manner in which they fulfil their role is significant and the Aldermanship officially recognises that and puts a stamp of approval on it. I can say that Ann, particularly for me personally, having worked with her politically for such a long time, has left a mark, an imprint, and I am very pleased that Ann in particular, as well as Councillor Harper and the others, are getting the Aldermanship today. Thank you, Chair. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR OF COUNCIL: Thank you, Stewart. Can I call on Councillor Gettings, Bob, please.

COUNCILLOR GETTINGS: Mr Chairman, following on from what the previous speakers have said, the Morley Borough Independents wish to support Ann Castle, Janet Harper, David Schofield, Doreen Lewis, Ron Millet, former Councillors of Leeds City Council, to be Honorary Aldermen of the City of Leeds in recognition and appreciation of the long a distinguished public service that has been rendered by them. Thank you, Chair. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR OF COUNCIL: Thank you, Bob. Councillor Blackburn, Ann, please.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Chair. I served on the Plans West Panel with Ann Castle and remember many a pleasant chat we had on the bus in between the site visits. I know Janet Harper, she served as Councillor for Armley, which is next to my ward. I do not know personally Doreen Lewis as she left the Council before I was elected but I understand she was quite a good Councillor for Roundhay in the 1990s.

Ron Millet, again I do not know personally but I do remember him as I got involved with politics when I was very young, I started at 18, so I do remember him as a Councillor in the 1970s.

David Schofield I know was been one of the Temple Newsam Councillors but I also remember him from the election trail in the Temple Newsam by-election, we kept bumping into one another.

I would like to support all the above people to be Honorary Alderman for this great city of ours and I do hope that they enjoy the role. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR OF COUNCIL: Thank you, Ann. Can I now call for the vote from Members. *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Can I call on the newly appointed Honorary Aldermen, then, to come down to the well of the Chamber where you can sign the Roll of Honour and be presented with your medal. You will also have your photograph taken. If you could do that, thank you. *(Applause)*

The Honorary Aldermen, Vic-Chair of Council and Chief Executive proceeded to the well of the Chamber.

The Honorary Aldermen were presented with their insignia of office.

The Honorary Aldermen, Vice-Chair of Council and Chief Executive signed the Roll of Honorary Aldermen.

(Photographs)

THE VICE-CHAIR OF COUNCIL: The good thing about being Chair is you are the first person to congratulate the newly appointed Honorary Aldermen and I have that honour today. It is good to see so many people here. Of course, the Civic Hall is open to you and you can always come and sit in on meetings. We do get them occasionally from time to time, as you know yourself, but it would be nice to see you.

Can I now officially close this part of the meeting. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

(The meeting closed at 1.30pm)
