



## COUNCIL

**MEETING** : Thursday, 24th February 2022

**PRESENT** : Cllrs. Finnegan (Chair), Cook, H. Norman, S. Chambers, Hudson, Lewis, Hilton, Pullen, Gravells MBE, Morgan, Wilson, Bhaimia, Williams, D. Brown, Taylor, Organ, Toleman, Brooker, J. Brown, Hyman, Melvin, Bowkett, Ackroyd, Castle, A. Chambers, Chambers-Dubus, Conder, Dee, Durdey, Evans, Kubaszczyk, O'Donnell, Padilla, Radley, Zaman and Sawyer

### **Others in Attendance**

Managing Director

Monitoring Officer

Head of Communities

Head of Policy and Resources

Democratic and Electoral Services Team Leader

Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

**APOLOGIES** : Cllrs. Tracey, Field and Patel

### **73. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

73.1 There were no declarations of interest.

### **74. ADMISSION OF HONORARY FREEMAN**

74.1 The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Cook moved, and Councillor Hilton seconded the nomination. Councillor Cook outlined the report which asked Council to confer the honour and title of Honorary Freeman of the City of Gloucester upon the Very Reverend Stephen Lake, Dean of Gloucester in recognition of his significant contribution and eminent services to the City.

74.2 Councillor Cook offered his congratulations on the Dean being offered the position as the next Bishop of Salisbury. He noted that he had been 'immeasurably engaged' with the City of Gloucester, particularly regarding his work as chair of the Regeneration Advisory Board, which saw hundreds of millions of pounds of investment into the City and his work in the successful delivery of phase I of the Project Pilgrim project. He added that he would leave a gap that would be difficult to fill.

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- 74.3 Councillor Hilton offered his congratulations to Reverend Stephen Lake on his appointment to the position of the Bishop of Salisbury. He stated that during the hiring process for the Dean in 2011, it was agreed that the City would benefit by having someone who would contribute to the regeneration of Gloucester, which he had. Councillor Hilton stated that that it had been a pleasure to serve with him on the Regeneration Advisory Board. He said that he would be missed in Gloucester and that he would be welcomed in Salisbury.
- 74.4 Councillor Pullen stated that he was happy to support the nomination. He noted that the Reverend had made a significant contribution to all aspects of life in the City of Gloucester. He said that the Cathedral was not only the spiritual home of Gloucester but was also the main attraction in the City, which was helped by the efforts of the Dean and his team. He stated that the Dean had used the Cathedral for progressive, including a Skateboard festival as well as a Folk-Rock concert. He stated that on a sombre note, that he remembered when he and former Councillor Stephens attended a ceremony at the Cathedral where they listened to a list of the names of fallen soldiers in Gloucestershire. He stated that he wished the Dean well in his new role and that whilst no one was irreplaceable, the Dean would prove to be an extremely difficult act to follow.
- 74.5 Councillor D. Brown stated that the Reverend was a man of warmth, grace, humility, and humour. He added that he was very happy to support the nomination.
- 74.6 Councillor Lewis noted that he had great memories of the Dean from the time when he was mayor. He stated that the Dean had a sense of unity with the residents of Gloucester. He said that had brought compassion and fairness to the role and that he wished him good luck in his new position.
- 74.7 Councillor Morgan said that he wanted to personally thank the Dean and his staff for their courtesy and kindness, that it was a privilege to have him in the City and that he wished him future success.
- 74.8 The nomination was put to a vote and carried unanimously.
- 74.9 **RESOLVED** that, pursuant to Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Very Reverend Stephen Lake, Dean of Gloucester, be admitted as an Honorary Freeman of the City of Gloucester in recognition of his significant leadership of the social, economic, environmental and spiritual regeneration of Gloucester and for re-affirming the Cathedral as a beacon of hope for all at the heart of the city, county and Diocese.
- 74.10 The Dean stated that he had mixed feelings about the evening. He stated that Gloucester had been his home for 11 years. He stated that to leave the City did not come without a degree of pain. He stated that when he first arrived, the Country was in the midst of the recession and that he was leaving just as the COVID-19 pandemic was hopefully ending. He said that for four out of the eleven years of his service, there had been enormous

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pressure on citizens. He highlighted the great work of the urban regeneration company and the progress happening in Kings Square and how it would be a wonderful space for the City once works were complete. He stated that he believed that he was the only Dean to have blessed a bus station in England. He noted that he was happy that the first phase of Project Pilgrim had been completed and that the Council had pledged their support for Phase II of the project. He stated that it was his and his staff's role to reconnect the Cathedral to the City and have a good partnership with the Council, which was not necessarily the case in all Cathedral Cities. He stated that it was important not to allow the relationship between the Council and the Cathedral to slip and that he had made friends from all political parties during his time as Dean. He stated that the maintenance of this relationship was important. Not because of the Cathedral nor the Council but because it benefits the people, they served and shared. He stated that the bringing together of the Cathedral and Council was for the common good. He said that it was about bringing together a coalition committed to Gloucester and that he hoped that this legacy would continue.

**Time of commencement: 6.00 pm hours  
Time of conclusion: 6.25 pm hours**

**Chair**