

Dear Sir,

I noted with interest your report following the recent Council meeting held on 15th may.

In this report Councillor Watson said he hopes to break away from "point scoring politics". Well there was little evidence of this in the Council Chamber with labour members having to be brought into order by the Chair.

Councillor Watson is reported as stating he had invited Councillor Martin to "meet with him on a regular basis" and "things had a chance of changing in the future". This after dismissing amendments, out of hand, sometimes simply opposing an amendment without speaking on it. More conciliation in the chamber would have made Councillor Watson's comments more credible.

Many of the nominees put forward from the Conservatives were long serving experienced Councillors and some of the new Councillors had experience brought from the business and commercial world.

Councillor Watson's statement of "I think council members are elected by the people of the city and working together would just be of benefit to the city" did not sit well with his rejecting out of hand all amendments attempting to place conservative and independent Councillors as chairs of committees. Changing the time of the Council meeting from the traditional and long established time of 6.00 pm to 4.00 pm also demonstrated the lack of a enthusiasm by Councillor Watson for working together. This was done to frustrate the large number of conservative members who work or run businesses and prevent them from attending.

Councillor Lee Martin had made the point well several times that conservative and independent Councillors being given chairs of committees would enhance democracy and provide essential checks and balances in the management of the city. This has worked well in Newcastle.

Yours faithfully

Cllr Alan Wright