

Council

Monday, 22 May 2017

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Joe Baker (Mayor), Councillor Jennifer Wheeler (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Tom Baker-Price, Roger Bennett, Natalie Brookes, David Bush, Michael Chalk, Debbie Chance, Greg Chance, Brandon Clayton, Matthew Dormer, John Fisher, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Pattie Hill, Gay Hopkins, Wanda King, Jane Potter, Mark Shurmer, Yvonne Smith, Paul Swansborough, David Thain, Pat Witherspoon and Nina Wood-Ford

Officers:

Kevin Dicks, Claire Felton and Sue Hanley

Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley

1. WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed all those present to the annual meeting of Council.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Juliet Brunner, Anita Clayton, Gareth Prosser, Antonia Pulsford and Rachael Smith.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MAYOR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Mayor advised that he had experienced an enjoyable and busy tenure as Mayor. During the year acceptance, tolerance and equality had been key themes which had influenced the Mayor's activities and every effort had been made to bring people from diverse communities and backgrounds together. There had been a number of highlights of the Mayoralty including meeting the

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Chair

Archbishop of Canterbury, the Astwood Bank Carnival, the Mayor's Civic Event and various activities involving the Army Cadets. The Mayor also explained that he had been proud to serve as the first openly gay Mayor of the Borough of Redditch and he thanked the local community for the warm welcome they had extended to him and his partner.

During the course of this item the Mayor presented a number of individuals and organisations with awards including the following:

a) Army Cadets

The Mayor presented a group of Army Cadets with awards in recognition of the support that they had provided to him during the year. Particular thanks were extended for the help that the Army Cadets had provided at the Mayor's Civic Event.

b) Community Champion's Award – Ms Danuta Zdanko

The Mayor also awarded Ms Danuta Zdanko a Community Champion's Award in recognition of her work on behalf of the Polish community within Redditch. Ms Zdanko had helped the community to integrate within Redditch and had raised awareness of the valuable contribution of Polish people within the Borough.

c) Community Champion's Award – Mrs Karen Martin and Mr Oliver Martin

Mrs Karen Martin was presented with a community award in recognition of her and her husband's work at the organisation Inspire Community Training CIC. The organisation enabled Redditch residents to undertake training and learn new skills which were very valuable to the local economy.

The Mayor also presented gifts to a number of people who had provided him with support during the year including:

a) Councillor Wanda King

Councillor King was thanked for attending civic events during the year when the Mayor's consort had been unavailable.

b) Ms Irene Stickley

Ms Stickley had helped to manage Councillor Baker's business diary to enable him to attend Mayoral events during the year.

c) Sarah Carroll – Personal Assistant

Sarah was thanked for her hard work supporting the Mayor's Secretary during the year.

d) Susan Lisle – Personal Assistant to the Mayor

Susan was thanked for the hard work and support that she had provided to the Mayor throughout the year.

e) Councillor Hartnett

The Mayor thanked Councillor Hartnett for his support, noting that the Leader of the Council had attended a significant number of civic events alongside the Mayor.

f) Mr Peter Willis – The Mayor's Consort

The Mayor thanked Mr Willis for his steadfast support throughout his Mayoralty.

The Mayor advised that he had raised a total of £5,200 for his three charities. This would be shared between Charlotte and Craig's Saving Heart, who worked tirelessly to provide defibrillators throughout the Borough, Redditch Mental Health Action Group (MHAG), whose aim was to raise awareness and support those suffering from mental health problems, and the Samaritans, who provided listening and befriending support to those in need at very difficult times.

During consideration of this item the Mayor delivered a presentation, comprising visual images of civic events that had taken place in 2016/17. He concluded by quoting Gloria Gaynor's 'I am what I am' and thanking Council for the support that he had received during his Mayoral year.

5. ELECTION OF THE MAYOR FOR 2017-18

Councillor Jenny Wheeler was elected Mayor of the Borough for the forthcoming year, following which she made the statutory declaration of Acceptance of office and was then invested with the Chain of Office by the outgoing Mayor, Councillor Joe Baker. Councillor Wheeler thanked the outgoing Mayor and, on behalf of the Council, expressed gratitude for the work he had carried out as an ambassador for the town.

RESOLVED that

- 1) Councillor Jenny Wheeler be elected Mayor of the Borough of Redditch to serve until the next Annual Meeting of the Council; and**

- 2) **the Council formally express, and record, its gratitude to Councillor Joe Baker for his excellent service to the town over the last 12 months as Mayor.**

6. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

Councillor Nina Wood-Ford was elected Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Redditch for the forthcoming year, following which she made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office and was then invested with the Deputy Mayor's Badge of Office by the Mayor, Councillor Jenny Wheeler.

RESOLVED that

Councillor Nina Wood-Ford be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Redditch to serve until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Mayor's announcements

Councillor Wheeler thanked Members for providing her with an opportunity to serve as Mayor of the Borough of Redditch. She explained that her Mayoralty would be influenced by considerations in relation to mental health and wellbeing.

During 2016/17 Councillor Wheeler had served as a member of the Mental Health Services for Young People Task Group. The group had discovered that there were higher levels of mental health and wellbeing problems amongst young Redditch residents than in other parts of Worcestershire, partly due to the higher levels of deprivation and a larger youth population in the Borough. There were plans to reconvene the Task Group later in the municipal year to assess the progress that had been achieved in addressing mental health and wellbeing problems within the community. In the meantime to ensure that Members and Officers remained mindful of the subject the Mayor would be supporting two charities that supported vulnerable young people. The first of these charities was the Redditch branch of St Basils, which provided supported accommodation to young people aged 16 – 25 at risk of becoming homeless. The second charity was Young Minds, which was dedicated to improving the mental health and wellbeing of young people.

The Mayor advised that she would not have a Chaplain during the course of her Mayoralty. Instead speakers would be invited to talk at the start of Council meetings throughout the year on the subject of one of the five steps to mental wellbeing, as detailed below:

- Connect with people
- Be active
- Keep learning
- Give to others
- Be mindful

The Mayor advised that her upcoming events included attending an event due to be held by Redditch MHAG on 25th May.

b) The Leader's Announcements

The Leader noted that Karen Lumley, due to stand down as the MP of Redditch, was in hospital. On behalf of the Council he wished Ms Lumley a speedy and full recovery.

The following announcements were made by the Leader:

- The Leader had written to Mr Roberts, Head teacher of St Bedes Catholic Middle School, to congratulate the Year 8 Boys' team who had won the English Schools' Football Association PlayStation Schools' Cup.
- Officers were congratulated for their hard work and for securing the Council a runner up position in the West Midlands Regional Energy Efficiency and Healthy Homes awards.
- The Leader had met with the newly elected Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority and had invited him to visit Redditch at a future date.
- The third Redditch Faith Walk had been another highlight during the period.
- Alongside other Members the Leader had also taken part in the March for Callum through the town.
- The Leader had attended the Polish Heritage weekend and taken part in the flag raising ceremony.
- The Mayor had also attended the Gurdwara at Ridgeway Academy.
- The latest Redditch Bike Race had taken place in early May and the Leader hoped to arrange for the race to take place again in the Borough in 2018.
- The Leader had attended a regional track meeting of BMX riders, involving a range of competitors in different age groups.
- The Victorian Day at RYCE had been another highlight in May.
- Finally, the Leader commented that he had attended the 1940s themed open day at Forge Mill Needle Museum earlier in the month which had been a very enjoyable day.

c) Chief Executive's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

8. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of Council held on Monday 24th April 2017 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

9. LEADER'S APPOINTMENTS

The Leader announced his appointments as set out below:

Executive Committee

Leader of the Council by office, Councillor Bill Hartnett, and Deputy Leader by Office, Councillor Greg Chance, and Councillors with portfolio Joe Baker, Debbie Chance, John Fisher, Mark Shurmer, and Pat Witherspoon.

With Councillors Juliet Brunner and Brandon Clayton sitting without portfolios.

Portfolio Holders

Community Leadership and Partnership (including Voluntary Sector and Health Services) – normally the Leader of the Council – Councillor Bill Hartnett.

Local Environment – aligned to 'keep my place safe and looking good' – Councillor Debbie Chance (covering licensing impacts, better environment, cleansing and waste management, regulatory services, climate change, landscape including trees, woodland and grounds maintenance and bereavement services).

Corporate Management – aligned to 'help me to be financially independent (including education and skills)' and enabling – Councillor John Fisher (covering internal systems, support services: administration, audit, finance, Human Resources, IT, conduct of Council, Committee business, local democracy and licensing process, revenues and benefits).

Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport – aligned to 'help me run a successful business' – Councillor Greg Chance (covering planning and land use, economic development and public transport).

Community Safety and Regulatory Services – aligned to ‘help me to live my life independently (including health and activity)’ – Councillor Joe Baker (covering children, youth, children’s centres, community safety, crime and disorder, safer communities, corporate parenting and emergency planning).

Housing – aligned to ‘help me find somewhere to live in my locality’ – Councillor Mark Shurmer (covering housing services).

Leisure and Tourism – aligned to ‘provide good things for me to do, see and visit – Councillor Pat Witherspoon (covering culture and recreation including management of facilities including sports centre, theatres and community centres, parks and open spaces strategy, including allotments, playing pitches and play areas, sports, arts and physical activity development, community training, education, learning and skills).

RESOLVED that

the appointment by the Leader of Members of the Executive Committee, as detailed in the preamble above, be noted.

10. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, PANELS ETC AND THEIR CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS

The Council considered the report setting out the proposed political balance of the Council’s Committees and lists of nominations to Committees, Sub-Committees and other bodies.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Political balance of the Committees of the Council be agreed as set out in the report;**
- 2) the arrangement where the seats on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are not allocated in accordance with the political balance requirements be continued;**
- 3) the arrangement where the seats on the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel are not allocated in accordance with the political balance requirements be continued;**
- 4) appointments by political group leaders to the places on each Committee, as attached at Appendix 1 to these minutes, be noted;**
- 5) the Council appoints the non-aligned Councillor, Paul Swansborough, to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel;**

- 6) the Council appoints Chairs and Vice-Chairs to the Committees and other bodies, as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes;
- 7) appointments to Working Groups and other bodies listed in Appendix 1 to these minutes be agreed.

11. OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED that

appointments to the places on each of the Outside Bodies, as detailed in Appendix 2 attached to these Minutes, be agreed.

12. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

There were no urgent decisions to note.

13. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

There were no additional items of urgent business.

The Meeting commenced at 6.58 pm
and closed at 8.09 pm