

Council

25th March 2013

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Alan Mason (Mayor), Councillor Wanda King (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Joe Baker, Roger Bennett, Rebecca Blake, Michael Braley, Andrew Brazier, Juliet Brunner, David Bush, Michael Chalk, Simon Chalk, Greg Chance, Brandon Clayton, John Fisher, Andrew Fry, Carole Gandy, Adam Griffin, Bill Hartnett, Pattie Hill, Roger Hill, Gay Hopkins, Phil Mould, Brenda Quinney, Mark Shurmer, Yvonne Smith, Luke Stephens, Debbie Taylor, Derek Taylor and Pat Witherspoon

Officers:

E Baker, R Bamford, J Carradine, J Cooper, K Dicks, C Felton, S Hanley, S Jones and J Pickering

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

103. WELCOME

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

104. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

105. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

106. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18th February 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

.....
MAYOR, in the Chair

107. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Mayor

The Mayor's communications and announcements were as follows:

i) Mayoral Functions

The Mayor advised that since the previous ordinary meeting of the Council he had attended a number of engagements, including the opening of Café Mambo @ No.5, a West Midlands Ambulance Service function at Chateau Impney, his own charity Indian Banquet at Rily's, the 25th anniversary celebrations of Carers' Careline and a Women in Music event in Birmingham.

ii) Forthcoming Engagements

The Mayor advised that forthcoming engagements included the Wychavon District Council Chairman's Charity Dinner, a Dementia meeting at Terryspring Court, a Redditch One World Link meeting, a Polish Day at the Town Hall and his Charity Civic Dinner at the Village Inn in Beoley.

b) Leader

The Leader's announcements were as follows:

i) Redditch Apprenticeship Challenge

The Leader advised that the Council had reached its target of 50 apprentices being recruited across the Borough and congratulated the Economic Development Unit and local businesses in achieving this outcome.

ii) Save the Alex Campaign

The Leader reported that there had been a good public attendance at the recent Save the Alex public meeting, despite the poor weather.

iii) Bandstand Consultation

The Leader advised that the consultation period on the Bandstand proposals had ended and the responses would now be considered.

iv) White Ribbon Campaign

The Leader informed Members that the 'These Hands are not for Hurting' Banner, to which they had added their hand-prints at a previous meeting, had been completed and was now on display in

the Chamber. Councillors and other members of the community who had participated were thanked for their support. The Council was informed that Officers intended to design a work-place policy to provide support to those who might be suffering from domestic abuse or sexual violence.

108. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Given that the Council was meeting within the prescribed period in the run-up to an election, there were no questions to be considered.

109. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Given that the Council was meeting within the prescribed period in the run-up to an election, there were no motions to be considered.

110. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Members received the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee held on 18th February and 12th March 2013.

The meeting considered the recommendations from the Executive Committee in respect of the Redditch Growth and Local Plan No.4 Consultation, an item which had been considered at the meeting of the Council on 12th March 2013. A number of queries were raised in connection with the re-submission of this matter to the Council less than six months after it was previously considered. Members were aware that a Notice of Motion had been signed by seven Members proposing that a recommendation from the Executive Committee be considered, the effect of which would be to rescind the previous decision, but there was some discussion as to whether this should have been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. Officers replied that the Constitution had been complied with and they were confident that the measures taken were acceptable. Copies of the Notice of Motion signed by the seven Members were circulated at the meeting to all present for their information.

The view was expressed that members of the public should have had the opportunity to address the Council in respect of this matter. In response, it was explained that there was a prescribed period in the run-up to the election during which the Constitution prevented the acceptance of questions from the public. The Leader also mentioned that he had received informal deputations from both the Webheath and Bentley Action Groups prior to the meeting.

With regard to the content of the report, the argument was once again made that the consultation was deficient in that it provided no options upon which the public could comment, as it identified two preferred sites. It was also suggested that there should have been more Councillor involvement in drawing up the options for

consultation. The limit to housing growth in Redditch was also touched upon, it being noted that the Borough boundary and the current limit of housing development were coterminous to the north, east and west.

Members were once again reminded that this was the consultation documentation that was being agreed and that any future decisions on cross-boundary housing growth would follow a period of consultation and the adjudication of planning inspectors as to the appropriateness of any proposals. The Council needed to develop a defensible Local Plan and Bromsgrove District Council had made it clear that they would be going out to consultation on the options currently presented for cross-boundary growth from 1st April, irrespective of the decision taken by Redditch Borough Council.

The three recommendations before the Council were the subject of the following named vote in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.5.

Members voting FOR the recommendations:

Councillors Joe Baker, Rebecca Blake, Greg Chance, John Fisher, Andy Fry, Bill Hartnett, Pattie Hill, Wanda King, Alan Mason, Phil Mould, Mark Shurmer, Yvonne Smith, Luke Stephens, Debbie Taylor and Pat Witherspoon.
(15 votes)

Members voting AGAINST the recommendations:

Councillors Roger Bennett, Michael Braley, Andrew Brazier, Juliet Brunner, David Bush, Michael Chalk, Simon Chalk, Brandon Clayton, Carole Gandy, Adam Griffin, Roger Hill, Gay Hopkins, Brenda Quinney and Derek Taylor.
(14 votes)

Members abstaining from voting:

None.

Accordingly, the recommendations were agreed, and it was consequently

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 18th February 2013 be received and adopted;**
- 2) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 12th March 2013 be received and adopted;**

- 3) the consultation document, Housing Growth Consultation (Appendix 1) and the supporting background evidence report (Appendix 2) and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal (Appendix 3) (as enclosed with the signed minutes of this meeting) be approved for public consultation by Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council between 1st April 2013 and 13th May 2013;
- 4) the Draft Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal be approved for public consultation at a deferred date to align with the Housing Growth consultation which is between 1st April 2013 and 13th May 2013; and
- 5) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport, to consider the recent letter received from Birmingham City Council regarding the Duty to Cooperate and acknowledge that the duty will also apply to Birmingham City Council and other neighbouring authorities in relation to the Redditch Growth and Local Plan No.4 Consultation.

(The meeting was adjourned at 7.52pm and reconvened at 7.58pm.)

111. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

The Council received the minutes of recent meetings of the Planning Committee and Standards Committee and an urgent referral from the Audit and Governance Committee.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 16th January and 13th February 2013 be received and adopted;
- 2) the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 12th December 2012 be received and adopted; and

Audit and Governance Committee

- 3) the Treasury Management Strategy, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2013/14 be approved.

(This referral had been accepted as a matter of Urgent Business – not having met the publication deadline – and was considered at the meeting as such, with the approval of the Mayor, in accordance with the Council’s constitutional rules and the powers vested in the Chair by virtue of Section 100 (B) (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 to agree to matters of urgency being discussed by reason of special circumstances.

In this case the special circumstances were that the referral, which was not available at the time of the agenda going to print, had arisen from a meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee that had occurred following dispatch of the agenda and the matter needed to be resolved prior to the next meeting of the Council.)

112. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Juliet Brunner, presented the Annual report of her Committee to the Council. Councillor Brunner was able to report that the Committee’s work during the past year had encompassed all aspects of scrutiny. A number of reviews had been completed during the year, including those on Redditch Market and an Arts and Culture Review, and the Executive had accepted the majority of the recommendations put to it.

A new approach had been adopted to pre-Scrutiny which involved a short period of intense work by small groups of non-Executive Members and thanks were expressed to those involved in this venture. Thanks were also expressed to those Members involved in all the reviews undertaken, the Vice-Chair, Councillor Simon Chalk, the Redditch Standard and the Overview and Scrutiny Support Officers for their support and guidance.

Members commended the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the end of another interesting and positive year. There ensued some discussion about the recommendations arising from the work of the Task Groups. It was suggested that, on occasions, fewer recommendations would be preferable and that the Executive would be better placed to agree such recommendations should there be a fuller account of the implications and should the recommendations be less dependent on the actions of third parties. The scope of the consultations carried out during the course of the reviews was also discussed. A number of Members pointed to the extensive consultation with the public that had been undertaken during recent reviews and the Leader commented on the format of recent Task Group reports which clearly set out the implications of recommendations where these could be ascertained. The numbers of recommendations were put down to Members’ enthusiasm for the subjects under consideration.

RESOLVED that

the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2012/13 be noted.

113. FEES AND CHARGES 2013/14 - UPDATE

The Council received a report in respect of the one outstanding charge not agreed at the previous meeting, that for Junior Swimming Lessons. The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism provided an update to the meeting detailing a change to the printed recommendations, the effect of which was to increase the charge for this service by 3% from 1st April 2013 and add an additional £15,000 to the savings which the Council needed to achieve during 2013/14.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the increase in fees and charges for junior swimming lessons from 1st April 2013 be agreed as set out below:**

General -	£52.20;
Reddicard -	£34.80;
Concession -	£26.20; and
- 2) the additional £15k savings to be made as a result of this revised increase be added to the general savings to be achieved in 2013/14.**

114. POLITICAL BALANCE

The Council was formally notified of the resignation of Councillor Michael Braley from the Conservative group on the Council. The Council was informed that the Conservative Group intended to offer one seat allocated to the Group on the Standards Committee to Councillor Braley until the next Annual Meeting of the Council. Councillor Braley had previously represented the Group on the Standards Committee.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the resignation of Councillor Michael Braley from the Conservative Group on the Council be noted; and**
- 2) the appointment of Councillor Michael Braley to the Standards Committee until the next Annual Meeting of the Council be reaffirmed.**

115. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

The Council discussed the decision that had been taken under its urgency procedures in respect of the surrender of the lease on Threadneedle House by Barclays.

RESOLVED that

the decision be noted.

(During consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information), disclosure of which might prejudice the Council's position in relation to negotiations over terms of disposal of the lease.

116. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL

There were no additional items of urgent business other than that previously considered at minute 111, above.

117. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that

under S.100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended."

Item 13 – Urgent Business – Record of Decisions (Lease Surrender for Threadneedle House by Barclays)

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.50 pm

.....
MAYOR, in the Chair