

Council

Monday, 19 March 2018

MINUTES

Present:

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

Also Present:

Reverend Paul Lawlor, Mr L Beach and Ms A Drain

Officers:

Ruth Bamford, Claire Felton, John Godwin, Sue Hanley, Rachel Martin, Jayne Pickering and Amanda Singleton

Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley

82. WELCOME

The Mayor opened the meeting by welcoming all those present. In line with the Mayor's theme of mental health and wellbeing for young people the Mayor invited the Reverend Paul Lawlor, from St Stephen's Church, to speak to Council on the subject of Mindfulness.

Reverend Lawlor explained that mindfulness had arisen in the 1970s and traced back to the work of Jon Kabat-Zinn, an American Professor Emeritus of Medicine. Whilst Mindfulness was not a religious practice it was informed by Buddhist principles, particularly in respect of meditation. Those present at the meeting were encouraged to relax and to concentrate on their breathing and were advised that Mindfulness was designed to enable people to contemplate life in the present moment in a non-judgemental manner. There were benefits to be attained from practising

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Chair

Mindfulness, particularly in respect of one's mental health and wellbeing. Practitioners could follow a number of self-help books, though many people preferred to participate in group activities led by a trained teacher.

83. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Antonia Pulsford.

84. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

85. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of Council held on Monday 19th February 2018 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

86. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor announced that she had participated in the following civic events since the previous meeting of Council:

- A visit to St Augustine's High School to welcome a number of Spanish teachers.
- Attended the Showmen's Guild Annual Dinner.
- Attended the Inner Wheel Annual Fellowship luncheon.
- Visited Hilda Clulow on the occasion of her 110th birthday party.
- Attended the West Midlands Ambulance Trust's Awards.
- Hosted her civic dinner.

The Mayor took the opportunity to thank Councillor Nina Wood-Ford, in her capacity as Deputy Mayor, for her help and support.

During consideration of this matter the Mayor also announced that four Councillors would be standing down at the forthcoming local elections; Councillors Gay Hopkins, Jane Potter, Rachael Smith and David Thain, each of whom spoke in turn about their experiences as Borough Councillors.

Councillor Rachael Smith commented that she had enjoyed the four years that she had served as a Councillor, which she

described as the experience of a lifetime. She thanked officers and fellow elected Members for their support during this period.

Councillor David Thain paid tribute to the residents of Crabbs Cross, the ward that he had represented for four years. Thanks were also extended to fellow Members for their support, to the Mayor and to the Editor of the Redditch Standard.

Councillor Hopkins commented that during her time serving as a Councillor she had been proud of a number of episodes, including serving as the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism at a time when the redevelopment of the Abbey Stadium took place, her involvement in work on the introduction of the Springs Statue in the town centre and serving as Deputy Mayor of the Borough. Councillor Hopkins also noted that she had enjoyed participating in scrutiny activities and was particularly proud to have chaired the Improving Recycling Rates Task Group and a review of access for people with disabilities to taxis in Redditch as well as her participation in the LGB&T Scrutiny Task Group, which had resulted in the establishment of a local community group and recognition in an awards programme. Councillor Hopkins thanked officers and Members for their support and extended particular thanks to her family, especially her husband, for their help.

Councillor Potter commented that she had enjoyed serving the people of Astwood Bank and Feckenham. Highlights during her time on the Council had included serving as the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee. She concluded by thanking Members and Officers for their support over the four years that she had served on the Council.

Following these speeches a number of tributes were paid by all Members to those Councillors who would be standing down. In particular the hard work and dedication of the four Councillors to the Borough of Redditch was highlighted and Members noted that they would all be missed.

b) The Leader's Announcements

The Leader announced that he had participated in the following activities since the previous meeting of Council:

- The Leader had presented staff awards to those who had been commended and highly commended, including the Palace Theatre, the Planning team and Laney Walsh.

- During the LGB&T month the Leader had attended a comedy event at the Palace Theatre.
- The Leader had attended the Mayor's Civic Dinner.
- The Leader had taken part in the British Spring Clean in Church Hill as part of the Big Local project.

The Leader announced that, as requested at a previous meeting of Council, he had written to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families, the Right Honourable Nadim Zahawi MP, about care leavers. Concerns had been raised that a consistent approach had not been adopted across the country to the Council Tax liability for care leavers. A response had been received and it had been highlighted that decisions about Council Tax liabilities required a decision at a local level. The Leader promised to provide a copy of this letter for the consideration of the Transition of Young People Leaving Care in Redditch Short Sharp Review.

The Leader also led tributes to the Interim Chief Executive of Worcestershire County Council, Steven Stewert, who had passed away suddenly since the previous meeting of Council. Mr Stewert would be greatly missed.

c) Chief Executive's Announcements

The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that there were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

87. **QUESTIONS ON NOTICE (PROCEDURE RULE 9)**

The Leader responded to five questions that had been submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.2.

a) Question from Ms A Drane to the Leader

Ms Drane asked the following question of the Leader:

"I attended the Executive Committee last week. It was awe-inspiring to hear of the innovative regeneration plans for Redditch Town Centre.

A considerable amount of time and obvious networking has gone into creating that vision and document.

Having been a disability consultant and a Trustee for Scope for over 15 years how will the council ensure that seamless accessibility is achieved in all aspects of the design of the regeneration ~ thus celebrating the culture and diversity that disabled people bring to any community ~ whether their impairments be physical sensory or intellectual?"

The Leader responded as follows:

“Thank you for your question.

Let me start by saying that these are only proposals and a concept at this stage; however, having said that I can say that I do agree with you about the importance of access for all to buildings. You will be aware we have an access group in Redditch. One of the Borough’s strategic key priorities is ‘Help me to Live my Life Independently’.

The Council will ensure that seamless accessibility is achieved in all aspects of the design of the regeneration by compliance with legislation and through consultation with residents and negotiations with developers.

It should be noted that any new building developments relating to the regeneration of the town centre, like all similar developments, would be subject to the relevant requirements laid down in the building regulations.

The Council’s Building Control team will be involved in ensuring these standards are met thus providing a fully inclusive space.

In due course if there are planning applications received about town centre redevelopment proposals these will be the subject of public consultation for a minimum of three weeks.

If you would like to receive weekly details of planning applications received by the council please let Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning and Regeneration, know by emailing r.bamford@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk ”.

Ms Drane asked the a supplementary question about the Redditch Access Group which she noted met regularly at Redditch Town Hall at 10.30 am. Ms Drane expressed concerns that the timing of these meetings might prevent many interested parties from attending and she asked for consideration to be given to changing the timing of these meetings.

The Leader responded as follows by noting that the Redditch Access Group was an independent body, though was currently chaired by a Councillor. Ms Drane was advised that the Leader would notify the group of her concerns.

During consideration of this supplementary question Councillor Anita Clayton was provided with an opportunity to speak in her capacity as Chair of Disability Action Redditch. Ms Drain was

advised that this matter had been raised at a recent meeting of the group and would be reconsidered at their Annual Meeting. The outcomes of these discussions would be reported back for Ms Drain's consideration.

b) Question from Mr L Beach to the Leader

Mr Beach asked the following question of the Leader:

"Will the town centre regeneration help young people like me to get on the housing ladder and allow for housing association involvement so that young people can benefit from decent housing at affordable rents?"

The Leader responded as follows:

"Thank you for your question.

Let me start by saying that these are only proposals and a concept at this stage; however, having said that I can say that for all new housing sites of 11 or more dwellings, the Council aims to secure 30% of the housing as affordable housing. Affordable housing is defined as '*Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision*'.

The affordable housing element is usually provided by a Registered Provider (RP) (formally known as housing associations) that is very often a Registered Provider/ housing association.

Having housing in the town centre will assist with the housing supply in Redditch, and as town centre housing units are often smaller in size they could be more affordable than non town centre housing and more attractive to younger people."

Mr Beach subsequently asked a supplementary question seeking clarification about the basis on which the public would be consulted on these plans?"

The Leader responded by noting that for any planning applications there would be a public notice and the item would go before the Planning Committee. For general consultation the press would be invited to publicise opportunities to respond to the public and other stakeholders.

c) Question from Councillor Roger Bennett to the Leader

Councillor Roger Bennett asked the following question of the Leader:

“Following the failure of this Council to adequately control the contract for the annual certification of gas boilers can the Leader advise this Council and its residents the full cost incurred, in the emergency action taken in bringing this back to a Legal status, both in terms of additional resources employed and Officer time spent correcting this failure?”

The Leader responded as follows:

“Thank you for your question.

The budget for gas heating servicing and repairs in 2015/2016 (2 years ago) was made up of service contract payments of £508k and repairs of £337k making a total budget for the year of £845k.

However, due to the early termination of the contract with the service provider, we only spent £378k on contract payments and £267k on repairs which totals £645k.

The total spends relating to the additional works undertaken for 2015/16 amounted to £207k. This included all additional costs for the compliance of gas servicing.

The grand total spent on all gas servicing and repairs in 2015/16 therefore amounted to £852k which resulted in a small overspend of £7k against the total budget.”

Councillor Roger Bennett subsequently asked a supplementary question which sought clarification about the follow up action that had subsequently been taken in terms of staff, the relevant Portfolio Holder and the contractor?”

The Leader responded by explaining that the contract was withdrawn and the Portfolio Holder remained in place.

d) Question from Councillor Jane Potter to the Leader

Councillor Brandon Clayton asked the following question of the Leader on behalf of Councillor Jane Potter:

“Housing Costs - Can the Leader advise this council and its residents whether the £1.2 million overspend in the HRA budget during the last year, and which was spent on repairs, maintenance, supervision and management, will continue to rise?”

The Leader responded as follows:

“Thank you for your question.

As requested the reasons for the £1.2m HRA variation in 2016/2017 as previously reported are:-

Reduced rental income due to an increase in the number of Right to Buy sales following relaxation of the discount rules and the government enforced 1% rent reduction regime for 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20

Repairs and maintenance:

- Extremely high demand for ad hoc and responsive property repairs.
- Debt write off of unpaid historic invoices to tenants for past repair works.
- A number of void properties requiring costly repair works.

Supervision and Management:

- Redundancy costs.
- Job Evaluation implementation salary costs funded from the Job Evaluation provision of £300k.
- An increase in the allocation split between the General Fund and the HRA for pension costs and overhead recharges following a full review of cost share.
- Agency staff costs to cover vacant posts.

With regard to the second part of the question as to whether the overspend will continue to rise, there is obviously significant pressure on the HRA income with further reductions in rent for the next two years together with inflationary pressures on things like salaries (possible 2% rises in 2018/19 and 2019/20 which is double the forecasted rate) and the additional costs of the ongoing HRA interim arrangements.

e) Question from Councillor Paul Swansborough for the Leader

Councillor Paul Swansborough asked the following question of the Leader:

“Considering there are still serious concerns by the residents of Winyates ward over the impact of increased traffic and pollution being created by the proposed Redditch Eastern Gateway, would the council leader commit to carrying out air quality monitoring in the locality of the Winyates Green Triangle and commissioning an independent traffic assessment in partnership with Worcestershire County

Council, Warwickshire County Council and Highways England?”

The Leader responded as follows:

“Thank you for your Question.

You have not provided any evidence that the level of increased traffic will result in pollution being created.

Generally it is stationary traffic and disrupted traffic flows in close proximity to residential buildings that can contribute to poor health from air pollution.

Traffic flows well in the vicinity of the Redditch Gateway site and the new development with its highway enhancements will not alter this situation.

It would be a poor use of public resources to undertake air quality monitoring or independent traffic assessments where there is no evidence that this needs to be done.”

Councillor Paul Swansborough expressed disappointment in the response and noted that the Council had a responsibility under relevant air quality management legislation to review air quality where appropriate. Councillor Swansborough also commented that a key officer at Stratford District Council has expressed concerns about the potential impact of the development on air quality. With this in mind he questioned whether the Leader would reconsider his answer?”

The Leader responded by noting that air quality had been monitored and he stood by his answer.”

88. MOTIONS ON NOTICE (PROCEDURE RULE 11)

There were no Motions on Notice for consideration at this meeting.

89. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Leisure and Cultural Services Business Case

Members noted a number of matters during a lengthy debate in respect of the Leisure and Cultural Services Business Case, including the following:

- The Options Appraisal, considered at a previous Council meeting, which had led to Members selecting a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) as the preferred model of service delivery.

- The feedback that had been received from residents in relation to the different options for service delivery, which had highlighted a desire for services to meet the needs of the community and for there to continue to be some Council involvement.
- The recommendations on this subject that had been proposed at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5th March. It was confirmed that the Executive Committee had deferred making a decision on these recommendations, so these needed to be determined by Council.
- On the one hand some Members raised concerns that the recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny, particularly in relation to the Shareholders Committee, were premature and would be more suitable for discussion alongside the detailed business plan in July 2018.
- On the other hand other Members suggested that the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would enhance the Council's authority over the LATC and ensure that this operated in line with good business practices.
- The previous work undertaken by the Provision of Leisure Services Short Sharp Review in 2015, which had concluded that provision of services by a Trust, would be the most appropriate service delivery model for the Council moving forward.
- The leisure centres in other parts of the country that had been visited by the scrutiny group.
- The work that had subsequently been undertaken by relevant officers and the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism, which had included visiting further leisure centres across the country.
- The model of service delivery for Leisure and Cultural Services that had been adopted by neighbouring authorities in Worcestershire.
- The relatively recent change to rules in respect of TECKAL companies.

Council Housing Allocations Policy 2018 Update

Following the Executive Committee meeting held on 6th March 2018 Officers had, at the request of Members, undertaken some research in respect of the potential implications of the policy for kinship carers. Based on this research Officers had concluded that it would be appropriate to include reference to kinship carers in the policy and they were therefore proposing an additional amendment to paragraph 32 of the policy. The proposed additional amendment to the policy was tabled for Members' consideration at the meeting and this amendment was as detailed in the box below:

32. KINSHIP CARERS

Kinship Care is an arrangement where a child who cannot be cared for by their parent(s) goes to live with a relative or a family friend. Those applicants who are kinship carers will have the child added to their application providing that they have official parental responsibility or are confirmed Kinship carers by Children's Social Care.

There was general consensus amongst Members that this amendment to include reference to kinship carers should be included in the policy.

Polling Places Review

Members discussed the polling places review in some detail and during this debate a number of issues were raised:

- The difficulties with providing adequate parking to voters at the locations that had been identified as possible alternative polling places in polling districts CHB and WIB.
- Accessibility problems with some of the alternative venues that had been identified as potential sites for polling stations and the difficulties that this could cause for elderly and disabled voters.
- The impact of using Willow Trees Children's Centre as a dual polling station on both children and parents.
- The Motion on Notice considered and agreed by Worcestershire County Councillors at a Council meeting at County Hall on 25th May 2017 which had called for alternative sites to schools to be used wherever possible as polling stations.
- The difficulties encountered by schools when they needed to be closed on election days and the disruption that this could cause to both pupils' education and to their parents.
- The use of portacabins as polling places in other parts of the Borough and the potential to replicate this arrangement in polling districts CHB and WIB.
- The potential for residents to vote by post and the value of promoting postal votes in order to minimise the need for parking places close to polling stations.

One Public Estate

The recommendations in respect of the One Public Estate arising from the Executive Committee meeting held on 6th March 2018 were proposed by Councillor Bill Hartnett. In proposing these

recommendations Councillor Hartnett explained that this formed part of the Borough's 10 point plan for economic development. The documents provided outlined initial ideas at an early concept stage and there was much more work still to be undertaken. The initial plans had been worked up over a period of 18 months. The Place Partnership Ltd had produced initial ideas and, whilst Redditch Borough Council was taking a lead, a number of partner organisations had been engaged, including Worcestershire County Council, Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, various branches of the NHS and Homes England. Subject to approval of the proposals detailed in the report, any of the ideas that were investigated further and found to be suitable would be the subject of consultation. A range of outcomes from this work were possible but the intention would be to utilise assets in the public realm to enhance the vitality and viability of Redditch town centre.

Councillor Greg Chance seconded the recommendations arising from the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 6th March 2018. In doing so he advised Members that the proposals had received support from a wide range of partner organisations. Further investigation of the proposals detailed in the Town Centre Regeneration Prospectus and One Public Estate exercise would support work on regenerating the town and enhancing economic development in the Borough. The suggested public sector hub could serve as a civic centre, though much more work was needed before any final decisions could be taken on the regeneration package moving forward.

Early in the debate in respect of the One Public Estate report an amendment was proposed by Councillor Juliet Brunner. This amendment was seconded by Councillor Brandon Clayton.

The amendment read as follows:

"Recommendation 1

The sum of £50,000 be allocated to further explore the following established concepts for the town's regeneration.

- Develop a feasibility study to bring forward costed proposals and options for the town centre's Regeneration Prospectus*
- Ensure that the study contains plans for full consultation along the timetable with both citizens and all members*
- Authority to be delegated to the Chief Executive to manage this budget in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economy and Transport and the Leader of the Opposition*

Recommendation 2

- *Redditch local authority to be the principal means of support for the single public estate review report*

Recommendation 3

- *Any proposed business case mandated to include exploration of multiple alternative sites and uses for: the Town Hall, Council Administration Facilities, and Leisure and Culture provision. A detailed, costed business case should set out the strategic, commercial, economic, financial and management options for each proposal*
- *Final decision to be taken by Full Council following the consideration of a detailed business case by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.*
- *That further work in respect of the Town Centre regeneration prospectus and one public estate review be scrutinised to enable all members to-participate in decision making*

Recommendation 4

- *This council recognises the changing economic climate and will initiate State of the Area Debates to engage with partners, businesses and the public with a view to creating a strategic shift in the response to regeneration of the local economy and to agree the actions the council and others could put in place to drive local economic recovery. This to ensure the widest possible consultation."*

In proposing the amendment Councillor Brunner advised that she felt an amendment was needed due to her concerns about the level of consultation that had been undertaken in relation to these proposals to date, particularly in respect of elected Members' involvement. The proposals detailed in the amendment would require detailed exploration of the various options for the regeneration of the town centre and for the findings to be outlined in business cases, consultation with affected stakeholders and further exploration of the options available by a scrutiny Task Group, which would enable greater Member involvement in the process.

Councillor Brandon Clayton, in seconding the proposals detailed in the amendment, commented that this would be a measured approach to regenerating the town centre, particularly as these changes could impact for many years to come.

Members subsequently discussed the amendment in detail. During the debate Members discussed the extent to which the existing Town Centre Regeneration Prospectus and One Public Estate documentation provided sufficient detail and whether the additional work suggested in the amendment was necessary at this stage in the process. Reference was also made to the potential for Overview and Scrutiny, the Economic Theme Group and the

Planning Advisory Panel to investigate the matter and the need to avoid causing any delays to progress.

Reference was also made to the potential use of £50,000, which featured in both the original and amended recommendation 1. The amendment called for this funding to be spent on specific tasks whereas the recommendation from the Executive Committee called for this funding to be spent on exploring further the proposals outlined in the Town Centre Regeneration Prospectus.

Following further debate the amendment was put to the vote and was defeated.

Members subsequently moved to discussing the original proposals from the Executive Committee in respect of the One Public Estate. During discussions about the matter the following points were raised:

- The need for regeneration to take place in Redditch town centre.
- The concept of a public sector hub and the proposed location of this on Church Road.
- The impact that this hub could have on footfall in both this part of the town and on Alcester Street.
- The potential conversion of Redditch Town Hall into residential units. Members noted that this was only one option for the disposal of the building should a public sector hub be introduced in the future.
- The occupancy rates in the apartments located in Threadneedle House.
- The suitability of residential properties in the town centre for those who did not drive or who had mobility problems.
- The impact of more residential properties in the town centre on the availability of parking spaces.
- The extent to which elected Members and other stakeholders would be consulted about the proposals moving forward.
- The potential for the impact of the Redditch ring road on access to the town centre to be addressed as part of the work on regenerating the town centre.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.5, the recommendations from the Executive Committee meeting held on 6th March 2018 in respect of One Public Estate were the subject the following named vote:

Members voting FOR the resolutions:

Councillors Joe Baker, Natalie Brookes, Debbie Chance, Greg Chance, John Fisher, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Pattie Hill, Mark

Shurmer, Rachael Smith, Yvonne Smith, Jenny Wheeler, Pat Witherspoon and Nina Wood-Ford.

Members voting AGAINST the resolutions:

No Members voted against the resolutions.

Members ABSTAINING on the resolutions:

Councillors Tom Baker-Price, Roger Bennett, Juliet Brunner, David Bush, Michael Chalk, Anita Clayton, Brandon Clayton, Matthew Dormer, Gay Hopkins, Jane Potter, Gareth Prosser, Paul Swansborough and David Thain.

Accordingly the resolutions were approved.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Monday 19th February 2018 be received and adopted;
- 2) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Monday 6th March 2018 be received and all recommendations adopted subject to:

in respect of Minute 115 (Leisure and Cultural Services Business Case) the recommendations proposed on this subject by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at a meeting held on 5th March 2018 be rejected; and

in respect of Minute 118 (Council Housing Allocations Policy 2018 Update) the inclusion of information about Kinship Carers, as detailed in the box provided in the preamble above, be added at paragraph 32 to the policy.

90. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

The Council considered minutes from meetings of the Planning Committee held on 17th January and 14th February 2018 and the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on 1st February 2018.

Officers confirmed that the recommendations detailed in the minutes of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee had already been resolved at meetings of Council, on 19th February 2018, and the Executive Committee, on 6th March 2018 respectively.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 17th January and 14th February 2018 be received an adopted; and
- 2) the minutes of the meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on 1st February 2018 be received and adopted.

91. GRANTS PANEL - RECOMMENDATIONS

RESOLVED that

the Grants for 2018/19 Help Me Run a Successful Voluntary Sector Business - £50k Relaunch be awarded to the Bromsgrove and Redditch Network to the value of £5,600.

92. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

Due to the late hour the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Annual Report was considered in the absence of the Chair of the Committee.

RESOLVED that

the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18 be received and noted.

93. REVIEW OF THE PLACE PARTNERSHIP

Officers presented a report in respect of a review of the Place Partnership and highlighted the following.

- The report needed to be presented at Council for Members' consideration as a decision needed to be taken on this matter before the end of the financial year and there were no further Executive Committee meetings scheduled to take place in March.
- It had not been possible to present a report on this subject for Members' consideration prior to this date as meetings with the Place Partnership had continued to be held to discuss this matter until very recently.
- Redditch Borough Council had transferred all of the expert Property Services staff to Worcestershire County Council under shared service agreements in 2010.
- These employees had subsequently been transferred to the Place Partnership in 2015 when the company was established.
- The original business case for the Place Partnership had had a number of key objectives including cost reduction, service transformation and business growth.

- The partnership had initially been established to operate in line with a three year business plan and all partners had been required to commit to the partnership for that length of time. Organisations could subsequently sign up to receive services from the partnership on a rolling annual basis.
- The Managing Director had presented an updated business plan covering a five year period up to 2020/21 which all partners were being asked to sign up to.
- The Place Partnership was aiming to make savings over the five year period covered by the new business plan.
- To achieve the proposed savings the Place Partnership Ltd would need to develop the business and achieve significant levels of efficiency savings.
- The Place Partnership Ltd had recognised there were some problems and had published an Improvement Plan in January 2018.
- Correspondence received from the Managing Director of the partnership in respect of the Council's future working relationship with the partnership had been provided for Members' consideration.

Following presentation of the report a number of matters were discussed in detail by Members:

- The fact that Worcester City Council was also considering its relationship with the Place Partnership Ltd.
- The financial implications of remaining a member of the partnership and the length of time that the Council would be contractually obliged to work with the partnership should the authority sign the five year business plan.
- The role of the Council as a shareholder and representation at shareholder meetings.
- The work that had been undertaken by the Place Partnership Ltd in respect of the One Public Estate exercise. Members were advised that the technical expertise of the staff was very good.
- The one day a week of officer time allocated by the Council to the Place Partnership and what this entailed. Officers explained that this Officer provided support to the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support to enable the Council to manage the authority's working relationship with the partnership.

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 discussion of the Review of the Place Partnership on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt

information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended.

(During consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated the 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 the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information).)

94. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

There were no urgent decisions to note.

95. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

There were no separate items of urgent business to consider at this meeting.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 11.01 pm