

## Minutes

### Present:

Councillor J Field (Mayor, in the Chair) and Councillors M Hall, P Anderson, K Banks, K Boyd-Carpenter, M Braley, J Brunner, M Chalk, A Clayton, B Clayton, J Cookson, D Enderby, R J Farooqui, A Fry, C Gandy, W Hartnett, N Hicks, D Hunt, R King, W King, P Mould, W Norton, J Pearce, M Shurmer, D Smith, D Taylor and D Thomas

### Also Present:

Mr M Collins (Vice Chair of the Standards Committee).

### Officers:

K Dicks, H Halls, S Mullins, S Skinner, C Smith, J Smith and J Staniland

### Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

#### 44. MAYOR'S WELCOME

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

#### 45. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor MacMillan.

#### 46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hicks declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in Item 11 (West Lothian Motion) as detailed separately at Minute 54 below.

#### 47. MINUTES

##### RESOLVED that

**the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 30th of June 2008 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.**

#### 48. BOROUGH DIRECTOR - CHRIS SMITH

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Chair

The Council took the opportunity of his final meeting in attendance to pay tribute to the outgoing Borough Director, Chris Smith.

Members were fulsome in their praise of Mr Smith, both in respect of the support that he had provided them during his period in post and also in recognition of his service to the Borough as Borough Director over the previous seven years.

#### **49. COMMUNICATIONS AND MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor's communications and announcements were considered under the following headings:

a) Mayoral Engagements

The Mayor advised that since the previous meeting of the Council he had attended various functions, including: a photo call with an Enfield "Flying Flea" Motorbike for a Redditch Heritage Event (Redditch Art Gallery), the official opening of the new West Midlands Division of JEX Engineering, the "Eye of a Needle" production at the Palace Theatre, the Alexandra Hospital Fete, the City of Worcester Mayor's Inaugural Banquet, the Green Fair at Arrow Valley Countryside Centre and the Diamond Bus launch in Redditch Town Centre.

b) Forthcoming engagements

The Mayor advised that forthcoming events included the Civic Reception in honour of His Excellency Burchell Whiteman OJ, the Jamaican High Commissioner, the unveiling of new Olympic flag in Redditch to celebrate the handover of the Olympic flag to London, judging a Scarecrow competition at Arrow Valley Countryside Centre, and a Civic reception for the Mayor and guests from Setubal, Portugal

The Mayor also thanked Councillor Hall for stepping in to take on engagements that he was unable to do but for which he felt a Mayoral presence was appropriate.

c) Urgent Business

The Mayor advised that he had accepted no additional items of "Urgent Business" this evening. However, he had accepted two late reports:

Constitution – Annual Review.

Executive Committee – Upper Norgrove House – Initial Options Appraisal – Update

**50. FOUNDATION TRUST STATUS CONSULTATION - WORCESTERSHIRE ACUTE HOSPITALS NHS TRUST**

The Council discussed the information presented to it by the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust regarding that organisation's bid for Foundation Trust status. A countywide consultation over the proposal was ongoing.

Members were in favour of the move to Foundation Trust status. The benefits of this development in respect of the opportunities for greater involvement locally for the public, Members and young people were recognised. It was hoped that local people would embrace this opportunity to determine the policies and targets that were being worked towards within their local hospitals. The possibility for securing advantage for Redditch Borough in equal measure to other parts of the County was seen as a positive factor. Members were mindful of the need to ensure that substantial and meaningful local public involvement did occur. It was recognised that, without this, the new status would be a major opportunity missed for the town and Borough.

**RESOLVED that**

**the Council supports the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust's bid for Foundation Trust status, providing, as it does, the opportunity for enhanced public and Member involvement in the provision of healthcare locally.**

**51. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 8 - MATCHBOROUGH MATTERS - YOUTH ART EVENT**

The Leader responded to a question which had been submitted in accordance with Standing Order 8A, namely:

- a) "Matchborough Matters" – Youth Art Event  
(Cllr J Brunner)

Councillor Brunner's question related to a successful recent Youth Art Event in Matchborough and the possibility of rolling out similar types of projects in other areas of Redditch, thereby significantly reducing the risk of anti-social behaviour.

The Leader responded that those who had visited Matchborough to see the outcomes of the project could not fail to be impressed by what had been achieved. The project had assisted in giving young people in Matchborough a sense of ownership of their community

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and Councillors from other parts of the Borough were encouraged to seek to emulate this project within their own Wards.

## 52. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) **the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on the 11th and the 30th of June 2008 be received and adopted.**
- 2) **the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on the 2nd of July 2008 be received and adopted and all recommendations approved.**
- 3) **the decision notice of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on the 23rd of July 2008 be received and all recommendations approved, subject to:**

**in respect of Minute 44 (Upper Norgrove House – Initial Options Appraisal – Update), it being further**

**RESOLVED that**

**the update be noted.**

(In relation to Minute 44 of the Executive Committee meeting held on the 23rd of July, an update report on Upper Norgrove House – Initial Options Appraisal 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 Chair, 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 information, which was not available at the time of the agenda going to print, was required to be considered at the present meeting in order that Members might have before them the necessary financial implications pertaining to this decision and thereby ensure that the timetable for closure and disposal of this asset was complied with).

## 53. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

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The Council received the minutes of recent meetings of the Audit, Planning and Standards Committees.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on the 10th of June 2008 be received and adopted, subject to:

in respect of Minute 1 (Apologies), it being noted that apologies for absence from Councillor Hartnett had subsequently been added at the following meeting of the Committee;

- 2) the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on the 17th of June 2008 be received and adopted; and
- 3) the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on the 10th of July 2008 be received and adopted.

**54. RETURNING OFFICER'S REPORT - BATCHLEY BY-ELECTION**

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) the Returning Officer's report in respect of the Batchley By-Election held on the 17th of July 2008 be received and noted;
- 2) the following appointments be made as a result of the subsequent re-allocation of seats:

Councillor Quinney to replace Councillor Boyd-Carpenter on the Standards Committee

Councillor Fry to fill the vacancy on the Standards Committee;

Councillor Hartnett to replace Councillor Hunt on the Standards Committee;

Councillor R King to fill the vacancy on the Planning Committee;

Councillor Cookson to fill the vacancy on the Housing Advisory panel;

Councillor Shurmer to fill the vacancy on the Joint Health Consultative Committee; and

Councillor Hunt to fill the vacancy on the Holocaust Memorial Steering Group.

**55. 'WEST LOTHIAN MOTION' - FUEL DUTY AND VAT REVENUES**

The Council considered the most appropriate response to a Motion received from the West Lothian Council regarding Fuel Duty and VAT Revenues.

It was generally acknowledged that this was a complex issue and there was some debate as to the accuracy of the assertions within parts of the motion. Following discussion it was agreed that the principle underpinning the motion was sound and that the motion was supported by the Council.

**RESOLVED that**

**The Council supports the West Lothian Council in calling on the Government to act decisively to protect the interests of families, public services and industry by immediately introducing a Fuel Duty Regulator which will use the increasing revenues from VAT to reduce Fuel Duty and so the price per litre of petrol and diesel.**

(During consideration of this item, and in accordance with the requirements of Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000, Councillor Hicks declared a personal interest, in view of the fact that his employer was engaged in the business of energy generation through the use of renewable energy resources.)

**56. CONSTITUTION - ANNUAL REVIEW**

The Council received the Constitution and associated documents as amended to take account of changes made during the preceding year.

A proposal to increase the size of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by one member, thereby providing Groups other than the Leading Group with a majority on the Committee, was agreed, there being no dissenting voices at this course of action which was not in accordance with rules on the political proportionality of Committees.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) the Council's current Constitution and associated documents (Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Scheme of Delegation to Officers, Scheme of Members' Allowances, Codes and Protocols etc.) as now issued be endorsed; and**

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- 2) **the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be increased in size by one member, this vacancy being offered to the Minority Group.**

(This report 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 Chair, 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 information, which was not available at the time of the agenda going to print, was required to be considered at the present meeting in order that Members might approve this key document in a timely manner).

**57. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS**

There were no Urgent Business decisions under Standing Order 36 for consideration at this meeting.

**58. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)**

There were no separate items of Urgent Business for consideration at this meeting.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and closed at 8.35 pm