



Council

9th December 2013

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Wanda King (Mayor), Councillor Pat Witherspoon (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, Alan Mason, Phil Mould, Brenda Quinney, Mark Shurmer, Yvonne Smith, Luke Stephens, Debbie Taylor and Derek Taylor

Officers:

A Baker, J Carradine, J Cooper, K Dicks, C Felton, S Jones and S Hanley

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

62. WELCOME

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed those present. Councillor Joe Baker was invited to give a reading on the theme of the meaning and spirit of Christmas.

63. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

64. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

65. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 14th October 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

.....
Chair

66. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (a) The Mayor's communications and announcements were as follows:

i) Nelson Mandela

The Mayor led the Council in paying tribute to the former South African President Nelson Mandela who had died the previous week at the age of 95. The Mayor commented that Mr Mandela had truly been a very special man and an inspiration to many around the world.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bill Hartnett, added that this legend of a man had changed the world for good and that, as a mark of respect, the Borough Flag had been flown at half mast and a Book of Condolence initiated in the Town Hall to allow local residents and others to pay their respects. The Leader of the Minority Group, Councillor Juliet Brunner agreed with what had been stated previously and added that the death of Mr Mandela represented an enormous loss to the South African nation and to the world.

Other Members then went on to add their own personal reflections and tributes, commenting on the anti-Apartheid struggle of the 20th Century and on visits by a number of them to South Africa and to Robben Island, the place of Mr Mandela's incarceration. Mr Mandela's forgiveness and determination to eschew retribution was considered one of his greatest strengths.

Members observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect to the late Mr Mandela.

ii) White Ribbon Campaign

The Mayor was pleased to advise that the Council was supporting the White Ribbon campaign against domestic violence and sexual abuse for the third year running.

Councillor Rebecca Blake, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, reflected on the activities which had been undertaken locally during the course of the campaign and invited those present to view artwork which was on display in the Chamber from victims and perpetrators of domestic violence and local students. The Leader of the Council then led other Members in expressing their thanks to those from the Council and its partner organisations for the contributions they had made to this campaign and highlighted the Human Resources Policy which was being put in place to support those employees who were affected by this issue. It was also acknowledged

that the numbers of domestic violence incidents recorded nationally was still at a level which was unacceptably high.

iii) Mayoral Functions

The Mayor advised that since the last meeting of the Council she and the Deputy Mayor had attended a number of engagements including her own Skittles Evening in October, the Borough's Fireworks Display, the Armistice Day Parade and Laying of Wreaths, the County Harvest Service in Worcester, her Charity Quiz at the end of November, a service of Thanksgiving for Warrant Officer (Second Class) Ian Fisher at Lichfield Cathedral, the Blind Society Christmas Party, A Redditch Choral Society event and a Polish St Nicholas Day celebration at the Town Hall the previous day.

iv) Forthcoming events

The Mayor advised that forthcoming events included a meeting with Post Office staff, the Bromsgrove District Council Carol Concert, the Matchborough Youth Forum Christmas Lunch and a visit to the patients at the Alexandra Hospital on Christmas Day.

(b) The Leader's announcements were as follows:

i) Remembrance Sunday

The Leader reported that this year's Remembrance Sunday had seen the largest turnout for quite a number of years, both amongst the members of the public and in the Parade itself.

ii) 37th Signal Regiment Visit

The Leader advised the Council that a very interesting trip had taken place to Ness Cliff Camp involving ten Members and two Officers to see the 37th Signal Regiment taking part in a training exercise.

iii) National Children Take-Over Day

The Leader reported on activities which had taken place as part of National Children Take-Over Day, including an event put on by West Mercia Police at Redditch Police Station.

iv) Thanksgiving Service, Lichfield Cathedral

The Leader advised that, as mentioned earlier in the meeting by the Mayor, the Council had been represented at the Thanksgiving Service for Warrant Officer (Second Class) Ian Fisher of the Mercian Regiment at Lichfield Cathedral.

v) Redditch Monopoly

The Council was informed that the Leader had attended the launch of the Redditch version of Monopoly and an example of the game was circulated at the meeting.

vi) Town Carol Service

The Leader advised that he and a number of other members had attended the Town Carol Service at St Stephen's Church the previous week, an event which had been well attended.

vii) Crematorium Open Day

The Leader advised that he had attended the recent Crematorium Open Day which had been a very successful event.

viii) Alexandra Hospital

The Leader reported on the latest developments on the future of services at the Alexandra Hospital. A meeting had taken place the previous week between the Leaders of the three local Councils, three local MPs and the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust at which the Trust had advised that services at the Alex were indeed safe. Thanks were also extended to Ruth Bamford and her Local Plans team for helping to coordinate the response from the three Council Leaders to the Clinical Commissioning Group.

67. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

No questions had been submitted.

68. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

A Notice of Motion had been submitted by the Leader, Councillor Bill Hartnett. The Motion was in respect of the admission of the 37th Signal Regiment based at Kohima House in Redditch to be Honorary Freemen of the Borough. This was seconded by Councillor Juliet Brunner.

Councillor Hartnett reminded Members of the Regiment's long association with the Town and that this Regiment, which comprised members of the Army Reserve, had seen active service in war zones in recent times. Through contact with the Commanding Officer it had been very apparent that the honour of the Freedom of the Borough would be a matter of tremendous pride to the Regiment as a whole.

Councillor Brunner was delighted to have the honour of seconding this particular motion. She commented that the Regiment was made up of ordinary men and women who gave their service on a voluntary basis but who were ever able and eager to support the regular armed forces.

Members unanimously

RESOLVED that

Redditch Borough Council wishes to place on record its appreciation of the voluntary service of men and women from the Borough who serve with the 37 Signal Regiment based at Kohima House in Redditch.

We propose to confer the Freedom of the Borough of Redditch on the 37 Signal Regiment and delegate authority to the Chief Executive following consultation with the Mayor and Group Leaders to notify the Commanding Officer of the Regiment of the Council's decision and seek her view, and in the event that her view is positive:

- **Make arrangements for a Special Meeting of the Council to confer the Freedom of the Borough;**
- **Utilise existing funds within the corporate civic budget up to £1,500 to cover the costs of the associated reception and production of two copies of a commemorative framed scroll;**
- **Make arrangements for a ceremonial parade to be held in the Borough on an appropriate date.**

69. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Council considered the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee held on 15th October, 12th November and 26th November 2013. It was noted that two of the three recommendations from the meeting on 15th October had been agreed through the Council's urgent Business procedures.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 15th October 2013 be received and all recommendations adopted;**
- 2) **the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 12th November 2013 be received and all recommendations adopted; and**
- 3) **the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 26th November 2013 be received and all recommendations adopted.**

70. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

Members received the minutes of the meetings of a number of recent meetings of the Council's Regulatory Committees.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 26th September be received and adopted;**
- 2) **the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 11th November 2013 be received and adopted;**
- 3) **the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 23rd October 2013 be received and adopted; and**
- 4) **the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 24th October 2013 be received and adopted.**

71. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

The Council considered two decisions that had been taken under its urgency procedures in respect of firstly the Use of Housing Revenue Account Reserves to Fund Activity as a Syndicated Partner in the Government Mortgage Rescue Scheme within the Borough and, second, the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Programme 2014/15.

RESOLVED that

the decision be noted.

72. 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 8.14 pm

.....
Chair