



COUNCIL

26th January 2015

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Pat Witherspoon (Mayor) and Councillors Pattie Hill (Deputy Mayor), Joe Baker, Roger Bennett, Rebecca Blake, Michael Braley, Andrew Brazier, Natalie Brookes, Juliet Brunner, David Bush, Greg Chance, Brandon Clayton, Andrew Fry, Carole Gandy, Bill Hartnett, Gay Hopkins, Wanda King, Alan Mason, Phil Mould, Jane Potter, Mark Shurmer, Rachael Smith, Yvonne Smith, Debbie Taylor, John Witherspoon and Nina Wood-Ford

Officers:

Kevin Dicks, Sue Hanley, Claire Felton, Amanda Scarce and Kelly-Louise Johnson

Democratic Services Officer:

Amanda Scarce

59. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors John Fisher, Paul Swansborough and David Thain.

60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

61. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 8th December 2014 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

62. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Mayor

The Mayor invited the Reverend Paul Lawlor, her chaplain for her year in office to speak.

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Chair

Former Mayor Dot Dudley

The Mayor formally advised the Council of the death of the former Mayor Dot Dudley and Members observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect. Members were then invited to say a few words in memory of her.

The Leader commented that former Mayor Dot Dudley, who had 2 daughters and 2 sons, had been a councillor for 11 years and had represented Batchley, where she had lived all her life. She had not courted publicity but had worked tirelessly for her community. A letter of condolence had been sent to the family.

The Leader of the Opposition passed on condolences to former Mayor Dot Dudley's family, friends and Labour colleagues.

Councillors Fry, Gandy and Shurmer also paid tribute to the work the former Mayor had done for her community and Redditch as a whole.

The Mayor gave a summary of some of the events she had attended since the previous meeting:

- The Alexandra Hospital on Christmas Day
- Wychavon District Council Civic Service
- Headless Cross Golden Age Club
- ROWL – AGM
- Holocaust Memorial Event – this had been well attended and a very interesting and moving service.
- Redditch Special Olympic Awards
- Touchstones Charity Talk – this was a counselling service for bereaved children.

The Mayor's forthcoming engagements included:

- Mayoral Charity Indian Banquet Evening
- RBC Play Rehearsal re Debt
- Wyre Forest Winter Supper Evening
- Stourport Council Talent Show
- Worcester City Civic Service
- Worcestershire County Civic Dinner
- Mayoral Charity Skittle Evening
- Kidderminster Council Charity Ball

The Mayor also thanked Councillor Pattie Hill for standing in for her on those occasions when she had been unable to attend an event.

b) Leader's Announcements

The Leader paid tribute to Ken Banks, the husband of former Mayor Kath Banks and confirmed a letter of condolence had been sent by the Leader and Mayor.

The Leader of the Opposition acknowledged the tribute and passed on the former Mayor's thanks for the kind thoughts.

Since the last meeting the Leader had attended the following events:

- Various Christmas community events
- The pantomime, Cinderella at the Palace Theatre
- Pride of Redditch Awards organised for the second year by Councillor Rebecca Blake and Ian Dipple from the Redditch Standard. It was noted that local businesses had attended for the first time.
- Polish School Nativity Play
- Redditch Guru Nanak Gudwara, a Sikh temple held at Ridgeway School.
- Holocaust Memorial Day Event – this was the 70th anniversary year and the Council had been awarded one of the 70 candles which was lit by the 91 year old holocaust survivor, Iby Knill. The event had included a talk by Iby, together with a performance from the Polish Saturday School, the Kerela Cultural Association and Astwood Bank First School.

The Leader had also written to both the local mosque (a letter of thanks had been received) and Pakistan High Commissioner in light of the recent events in Pakistan. He also thanked Tanweer Dean for arranging a gathering outside St Stephen's Church in order for residents to pay respects if they so wished.

The Leader welcomed Laura Marries, Zoe Gardner and Fiona Davidson to the meeting and explained that Laura, with the support of her manager, Zoe, had arranged various fund raising events, including having her head shaved, for a Cancer charity, raising in total £3,100. Laura had raised the funds on behalf of Fiona and she was invited to say a few words of thanks.

Paul Mitchell was also welcomed and the Leader explained that Paul was an Aerospace Engineer who had won a regional apprentice award for advanced apprenticeship Graduate of the Year Award, which had taken place at a ceremony in Coventry. The Leader congratulated Paul and said that the Council were keen

to promote and support apprenticeships in the town. Paul was invited to say a few words.

Bella Williams, who was 6 years old, was welcomed to the meeting and the Leader explained that she had, of her own instigation, spent the Christmas school holidays collecting litter in her local road. The Leader and Mayor thanked her for her hard work and presented her with a goody bag and encouraged her to keep up the good work.

Finally, the Leader presented Councillor Wanda King with a number of gifts from the Redditch Special Olympic Awards, which he and the Deputy Mayor had collected on her behalf at the recent Awards evening. He explained that Councillor King's chosen charity had been the Special Olympics when she had been Mayor the previous year and they had been most grateful for the funds they had received.

63. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The Leader responded to a question submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 9.2 from Councillor Juliet Brunner.

Councillor Brunner asked the following question:

“What advice would the Leader of the Council give to any Councillor who was contacted by a resident who did not live in their ward and asked to deal with an issue?”

The Leader referred Members to the relevant section of the Council's Constitution and advised that this matter would be raised at the Constitutional Working Party meeting to be held on 27th January 2015 and if Members of that Working Party agreed it was appropriate, the necessary amendments would be made.

Councillor Brunner raised a number of points within her supplementary question including “what would the Leader suggest if a resident requested their matter be dealt with by a Councillor from the Political Party they had voted for or they preferred to deal with a female Councillor? And how would matters be dealt with which were raised during political campaigns?”

In response the Leader reiterated that this was a matter that would be discussed at the Constitutional Working Party meeting.

64. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

No motions had been submitted.

65. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of 16th December 2014.

Members consider the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of 20th January 2015.

Independent Remuneration Panel Report

It was highlighted that the IRP had not proposed an increase in the level of allowances compared to the previous year and the Council continued to pay less than that recommended by the Panel. This had been debated at Executive Committee and it was felt that in the current times of austerity it would not be appropriate for these allowances to be increased.

Housing Revenue Account Initial Estimate

The Executive Committee had received a report which presented the initial estimates for the Housing Revenue Account and proposed dwelling rents for 2015/16 and Council was requested to endorse the recommendations in order for the relevant teams to continue the good work which had been carried out to date.

RESOLVED that

- (a) The Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 16th December 2014 be received and adopted; and**
- (b) The Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 20th January be received and all recommendations adopted.**

66. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

The Council received the minutes of the recent meetings of the Licensing Committee and the Planning Committee.

RESOLVED that

- (a) The minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 3rd November 2014 be received and adopted; and**
- (b) The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 10th December 2014 be received and adopted.**

COUNCIL

Committee

26th January 2015

67. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

There were no urgent decisions to note.

68. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL

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

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 7.50 pm