

# Council

Monday, 30 March 2015

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## MINUTES

### Present:

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

### Officers:

Kevin Dicks, Sue Hanley and Claire Felton

### Committee Services Officer:

Sheena Jones

### 78. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joe Baker, Rebecca Blake and Juliet Brunner.

### 79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Bill Hartnett, Pat Witherspoon, Andrew Brazier and David Thain declared an other disclosable interest Item No. 10, Planning Committee Minute No. 64, as representatives on the Board of Redditch Co-operative Homes, and left the room and took no part in the discussions in respect of this item.

### 80. MINUTES

#### RESOLVED that

**The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.**

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Chair

## 81. ANNOUNCEMENTS

### a) The Mayor

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

- West Midlands Ambulance Service Long Service and Excellence Awards
- St Leonard's Church Snowdrop Weekend
- Mayor's Charity Skittle Evening
- Kingfisher Centre Chinese New Year Celebrations
- Special Olympics Redditch Swimming Gala
- Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth

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

The Mayor drew Members attention to the artwork displayed around the Council Chamber and explained that she had specifically asked for this to be brought before the Council as she had recently attended the Gallery and presentation event for Roadway Arts Project. This was an initiative which promoted the use of public space for art as a deterrent for anti-social behaviour and encouraged use of facilities. The first mural had been painted in 2007 and 9 pieces of artwork had been funded in the past year. The Mayor went on to say that she had been so impressed with the artwork that she wanted to take the opportunity to thank those involved. Special thanks were given to James Cooper and his team at the Council who were in attendance and it was also noted that apologies from the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and County Councillor John Smith had been received.

The Mayor also took the opportunity to remind Members to speak clearly and use microphones so that all those present were able to hearing the proceedings.

### b) The Leaders Announcements

The Leader explained that he had missed the previous Council meeting due to being in London meeting the Secretary of State in respect of the Alexandra Hospital problems, which had dominated his time since that meeting. He continued to press for the release of the Senate report and for a response as to why this had not been published as originally promised. It was understood that this would not be released until after the elections. He continued to raise concerns over the hospital and has sent out several press releases, met with the Save the Alex

campaign members, the local MP and Leaders of both Bromsgrove and Stratford councils.

The Leader had also attended the Chinese New Year Celebrations in the Kingfisher Centre, the LGBT History month event in the Library and the Redditch Special Olympics Swimming Gala.

The Leader took the opportunity to inform Members that the Council was now a member of the ~Dementia Action Alliance and was one of only 6 council in the West Midlands that had achieved this status. Special thanks were given to Lynn Jones for her efforts in helping to make the Council dementia friendly and it was agreed a letter of thanks would be sent to her.

The Leader went on to thank a number of Members who would be standing down at the May election, for their hard work and loyal service to the Council. Those Members were Councillor Michael Braley (who had already stood down), Councillors Carole Gandy, Phil Mould, Andrew Brazier and Rebecca Blake.

Councillor Gandy took the opportunity to thank all Members for their support over the years and said she had thoroughly enjoyed her time at the Council. There were a number of events which she was particularly proud of and these included the Abbey Stadium Leisure Centre, the innovative way in which the pool at the Leisure Centre was heated by the crematorium and the roundabout by the Alexandra Hospital/Woodrow Drive entrance. She praised fellow councillors for their hard work and thanked all officers for their assistance and support, giving particular reference to Sue Hanley, the Deputy Chief Executive and Kevin Dicks, the Chief Executive.

Councillors Brandon Clayton, David Bush, Gay Hopkins, Mark Shurmer and Andrew Fry also paid tribute to those Members that were standing down and thanked them for their support and service to the Council. Particular reference was made to Councillor Gandy for her long service and time as Leader.

c) Chief Executive's Announcements

The Chief Executive reminded Members that the Council was no in the pre-election period and highlighted that he had received a number of questions around purdah. He had therefore arranged for Members to receive an electronic copy of an LGA booklet which provided guidance on what was appropriate during this period. Hard copies of this booklet would also be placed in Group rooms.

## 82. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL

Council noted that Councillor Michael Braley had resigned from the Council with effect from 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

## 83. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

There were no questions on notice on this occasion.

## 84. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

No motions had been submitted.

## 85. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015. It was highlighted that were recommendations at Minute No. 116 on Health and Safety Policies and at Minute No. 118 on the Pay Policy Statement.

Councillors Brandon Clayton and Roger Bennett asked for clarification on the following points and officers agreed to provide the relevant information outside of the meeting:

- With reference to First Aid boxes there was no reference as to whether these would be checked and maintained on a regular basis and records kept.
- The changes to the working height regulations with effect from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2015 and whether the new procedures would include these updates.
- Minute No. 117 Land at Kingham Close/Far Moor Lane – a point of clarification as it was believed that not all the pieces of land had been discussed at PAP and a decision had therefore been made without the full information being available.

### **RESOLVED that**

**The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015 be received and all recommendations adopted.**

## 86. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

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

In presenting the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee minutes Councillor Roger Bennett, highlighted a typographically

error at minute no. 36 (v) Action - the date should have read April 2015.

**RESOLVED that**

- (a) The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 14<sup>th</sup> January and 1<sup>st</sup> February 2015 be received and adopted: and**
- (b) The minutes of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2015 be received and adopted.**

(Prior to the consideration of the Planning Committee meeting minutes of 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015, Councillors Bill Hartnett, Pat Witherspoon, Andrew Brazier and David Thain declared an other disclosable interest in respect of Minute No. 63 and as such withdrew from the meeting and did not take part in discussions.)

**87. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15**

Councillor Jane Potter, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, introduced its Annual Report and in doing so highlighted some of the work which had been carried out by the Committee in 2014/15. Whilst the Committee had not been able to carry out as many task and finish groups as in previous years, due to a reduction in support, the Committee had still carried out some important work and established a monitoring report to ensure that recommendations were implemented in a timely manner. The scrutiny of the budget had not been as successful as had been hoped, but this had already been addressed and improvements made to ensure it was more robust for the coming year.

The following work of the Committee was highlighted:

- Worcestershire Regulatory Services Joint Scrutiny Task Group – the Committee had taken part in this, which had included all but one of the partner authorities.
- Abbey Stadium – one of the key recommendations had been in respect of the leisure provision being provided through a Leisure Trust and it was anticipated that as this progressed the Committee would be involved in further work covering this area.
- Voluntary Sector – a key recommendation from this group was in order to make the application process more user friendly for those wishing to apply for grants was to review and streamline the application forms.
- Tudor Grange – this group had been successful in receiving a positive response from the Department of Education and the Education Team at Worcestershire County Council.

- Tackling Obesity – the group had been disappointed with the response from the Executive Committee to its recommendations, as it was imperative that this subject was taken seriously. Further consideration would be given to this at the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.
- Crime and Disorder Panel – the Panel had held one meeting when it had looked at the important issue of domestic violence in detail.
- There was currently one task and finish group in progress, the Provision of Support networks for the LGBT community and their final report was expected in July.
- Councillor Pat Withespoon as the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee had also provided regular update reports on the work being carried out.

Finally, Councillor Potter thanked the Members of the Committee for their hard work and support throughout the year. She also gave her personal thanks to officers, making particular reference to Jess Bayley for her hard work and support throughout the year.

Councillor Hartnett thanked Councillor Potter for the report and the work carried out by the Committee. He was particularly pleased that the work of the Tudor Grange Short Sharp Review had received such positive feedback. He also took the opportunity to thank those Members who were not on the Committee but gave up their time to participate on task and finish groups.

## **88. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS**

Members were informed that there were two items which had been dealt with as urgent business and were for noting. In respect of the Grant re-advertisement the Leader informed Members that there had been a meeting of the Executive Committee immediately prior to this Council meeting when it had been agreed that the £75,000 grant money be awarded to Bromsgrove Citizens Advice Bureau in line with the decision made by the Grants Panel and it was also agreed that the underspend for 2014/15 of £13,332 be allocated to the Council's Framework Agreement.

## **89. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)**

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