



Council

Monday, 7 December 2015

MINUTES

Present:

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

Officers:

Kevin Dicks, Sue Hanley, Jayne Pickering, Claire Felton, Sheena Jones and Lindsey Wood

Democratic Services Officer:

Amanda Scarce

57. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Joe Baker, Juliet Brunner, Greg Chance, Pattie Hill, Yvonne Smith, Debbie Taylor, Pat Witherspoon and Nina Wood-Ford declared other disclosable interests in respect of Minute No. 63 as current or former members of the Trade Union UNISON.

59. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of Council held on Thursday 8th October 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

60. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) The Mayor

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Chair

The Mayor confirmed that she had agreed to the consideration of an item of urgent business, which was a motion in respect of the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust which would be dealt with under item no. 12.

The Mayor formally advised the Council of the sudden and unexpected death in November of Bob Foxall, the long-serving caretaker who had worked at Redditch Town Hall. The Mayor reported that condolences had been sent to Mr Foxall's family and informed Members of the funeral arrangements.

Details were also provided in respect of a young person on work experience that the Mayor had supported and who was now carrying out work experience in the Post Room at the Town Hall.

b) The Leader

Councillor Hartnett had attended a number of events and undertaken certain work in his capacity as Leader and highlighted the following:

- A vigil at the Alexandra Hospital on 5th November, following the announcement that Maternity Services would be closing at the hospital.
- Work with the MP for Redditch, Karen Lumley, and Leader of Bromsgrove District Council, Councillor Margaret Sherrey, to raise concerns regarding Worcestershire Acute Hospital Trust following the Care Quality Commission's recent report which had placed the Alexandra hospital and Worcester Royal hospital in special measures.
- The Remembrance Day Parade in the town centre in November.
- The Hereford and Worcester Sports Awards.
- Multi-faith services and letters sent in commemoration of the victims of the Paris attacks in November 2015 to Auxerre and Gruchet-le-Valasse. The Council had also flown the French flag at half-mast at the Town Hall.
- Polish Independence Day celebrations.
- The Customer Service awards for Council staff, also known as the Oscars.
- World Mental Health Week events, including The Gary and Robert Blues play at the Palace Theatre.
- A letter written to the Minister of State for Housing and Planning, Brendan Lewis MP, concerning changes to the rent cap and the impact of changes on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) locally.
- A tree planting initiative in Church Hill district as part of the Big Local project.

- The Pantomime, Jack and the Beanstalk, at Redditch Palace Theatre.

The Leader also advised that the Development Management Manager, Ailith Rutt, would be leaving the authority. On behalf of the Council he thanked her for her hard work and wished her well in the future.

61. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

There were no Questions on Notice.

62. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

There were no Motions on Notice considered under this item.

63. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 13th October 2015 and the recommendations concerning the creation of a new Energy Efficiency Fund for Homeowners in Redditch and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 – 2018/19 – Budget Assumptions.

A typographic error was highlighted in the report and it was confirmed that the recommendations should refer to section 3.7 of the report and not 3.5 as stated.

Members also considered recommendations on Job Evaluation from a special meeting of the Executive Committee held immediately prior to this Council meeting.

During the debate, reference was made to the tabling of the revised Gender Equalities Impact Assessment, which corrected omissions from the original document.

RESOLVED

- 1) **that the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 13th October 2015 be received and all recommendations adopted;**
- 2) **that with reference to job evaluation, formal consultation be commenced with the Trade Unions with a view to reaching a Collective Agreement to implement the National Joint Council Job Evaluation Scheme**
- 3) **should a Collective Agreement not be achieved, a Dismissal and Re-engagement process be commenced; and**

- 4) that:
- i) the pay and grading structure;
 - ii) the proposal to back date any pay increase for 2 years; and
 - iii) protection for 2 years for employees whose salary will decrease.

be approved.

64. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

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

In respect of the Licensing Committee minutes from the meeting held on 2nd November 2015 reference was made to the recommendations relating to the role of the Licensing Sub Committees, and in particular those convened for the purpose of assessing age appropriate vehicles. Clarification was provided on the role of the Sub Committee and it was confirmed that this would be raised at the next meeting of the Licensing Committee.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on 24th September 2015 be received and adopted;
- 2) the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 2nd November 2015, and all of the recommendations detailed within these minutes, be approved and adopted; and
- 3) the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 9th September, 14th October and 11th November 2015 be received and adopted.

65. THE GOVERNMENT'S DEVOLUTION AGENDA - WORCESTERSHIRE DEVOLUTION DEAL

The Leader introduced the report, which covered the Government's Devolution Agenda and the Worcestershire Devolution deal. The report provided an update on this and the West Midlands Combined Authority which was a fast moving process with changes occurring week by week.

The Chief Executive added that a presentation from the Chief Executive at Worcestershire County Council had been given on 6th October which had covered a number of areas and appendix 1 of

the report provided a summary of the current position. This report had also been received by Worcestershire County Council.

It was also confirmed that the West Midlands Combined Authority was currently in a period of “super clarification”. Debate was under way between all those authorities involved, which would determine the level of benefits and rights for non-constituent Members.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The report and summary document on Worcestershire’s emerging case for devolution be noted:**
- 2) The direction of travel as set out in the summary document by supported; and**
- 3) A further report in 2016 to determine the Council’s approach to devolution be received.**

66. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

Members noted one item which had been dealt with as urgent business. This referred to up to £62,000 being vired from the Repairs and Maintenance capital budget to a specific project capital budget to fund the installation of electricity generating solar panels at Abbey Stadium and Crossgates House.

67. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL

The Mayor had agreed to this being considered as an urgent item of business due to this being the first Council meeting since the announcement that Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust was being placed in Special Measures.

The following notice of motion was proposed by Councillor Bill Hartnett and seconded by Councillor Juliet Brunner:

“That Council notes the recent unacceptable events not only at the Alex but across the whole of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust and endorses the proposed action by the Leader and the Local MP, Karen Lumley, to request that the Secretary of State, NHS England and the TDA to investigate the breaking up of the WAHT as soon as possible, abandon the ongoing Acute Services Review and allow other high performing Trusts to provide healthcare services in Worcestershire.”

The Leader provided background information as to the reason for bringing forward this urgent notice of motion and highlighted that the problems with the management of the Trust been going on for a significant amount of time. The Acute Hospitals Trust service review had begun some five years ago but remained incomplete. The Leader had been working with the Leaders of both Bromsgrove District and Stratford Upon Avon District Councils and the

respective MPs to try and ensure that this matter was finally resolved. This had proved particularly challenging and it was now felt that the only option available was that suggested within the motion.

The Leader provided details of the actions which would be taken under special measures, which it was understood the Trust had now been placed in, but explained that this would not address the Acute Services Review. It was stressed that the provision of healthcare services for residents was essential and that action needed to be taken to bring this long protracted matter to a satisfactory conclusion for all concerned.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Brunner endorsed the views expressed and thanked all involved for their support in endeavouring to retain high quality acute health services in Redditch.

During the debate Members wished it to be noted that this was not a reflection on the hard work of the staff and excellent services provided at the Alexandra Hospital. The view was expressed that there had been a shortage of nursing staff for a number of years, which had not been addressed, and this impacted on the morale of the staff. The role of the Clinical Commissioning Groups was queried and the Leader agreed to notify them of the motion, if it was agreed.

RESOLVED that

Council notes the recent unacceptable events not only at the Alex but across the whole of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust and endorses the proposed action by the Leader and the Local MP, Karen Lumley, to request that the Secretary of State, NHS England and the TDA to investigate the breaking up of the WAHT as soon as possible, abandon the ongoing Acute Services Review and allow other high performing Trusts to provide healthcare services in Worcestershire.

The Meeting commenced at 7.10 pm
and closed at 8.10 pm