

Council

Monday, 23 May 2016

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, 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, Claire Felton and Sheena Jones

Democratic Services Officer:

Amanda Scarce

1. WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the annual meeting of the Council. She then asked all everyone to observe a minute's silence in memory of former Councillor Adrian Bedford Smith.

2. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Anita Clayton.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

4. MAYOR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Mayor commented that this was both a happy and sad occasion for her as she had taken great pleasure in representing the Council on over 200 occasions at both local and county wide events throughout the last year. During her year in office she had been accompanied by both friends and family and thanked those concerned for that support and in particular her husband, Graham. She had fond memories of many events and in particular made

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Chair

reference to both the recent Faith Walk and the Queen's 90th Birthday celebrations which had been attended by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant, who had been greatly impressed. The Mayor also highlighted that Redditch was the third longest twinning town in England and she had enjoyed her visit to Auxerre.

Special thanks were also given to her Chaplain for the year, the Reverend Paul Lawler of St Stephens Church, her deputy, Councillor Joe Baker, the Sea and Army Cadets together with all the Scouts, Guides, Cubs and Brownies of the borough. Thanks were also given to Redditch Recovery through Arts group who had kindly provided a reclaimed, recycled box for both the mayoral and consort's chain.

a) Award for Outstanding Service to the Community

The Mayor's Annual Award for outstanding contribution to the community which had been instituted in 2010 was this year awarded to Margaret Mountford. The Mayor explained that Margaret was the voice of the talking newspaper service which was a greatly valued by those with sight impairments within the town.

b) Mayoral Charities

The Mayor announced that she had raised a total of £7,500 throughout the year for her 3 chosen charities, which were Redditch First Responders who worked on behalf of West midlands Ambulance Service, Redditch Cat Rescue who helped to ensure the safety and wellbeing of animals in the Borough and Touchstones who provided a bereavement services for children and young people in Redditch and Bromsgrove.

5. ELECTION OF THE MAYOR FOR 2016-17

Councillor Joe Baker was elected Mayor of the Borough for the forthcoming year, following which he made the statutory declaration of Acceptance of office and was then invested with the Chain of Office by the outgoing Mayor, Councillor Pattie Hill. Councillor Baker thanked the outgoing Mayor and, on behalf of the Council, expressed gratitude for the work she had carried out as an ambassador for the town.

Councillor Baker informed the Council that he was privileged to take on the role of the Mayor and that he would serve the town and its residents to the best of his ability. His aim was for his year of service to be a diverse and multi-cultural one, the emphasis being on openness, inclusion and acceptance and a Mayor who would be available for everyone. The new Mayor had asked Steve Lovett to be his Chaplin and he would be supported by the Army Cadets during his mayoral year.

The Mayor announced that his chosen charities would be the Mental Health Action Group whose aim was to raise awareness and support those suffering from mental health problems, Charlotte and Craig's Saving Heart, who worked tirelessly to provide defibrillators throughout the Borough and the Samaritans who provided listening and befriending support to those in need at very difficult times.

RESOLVED that

- 1) Councillor Joe Baker be elected Mayor of the Borough of Redditch to serve until the next Annual Meeting of the Council; and**
- 2) The Council formally express, and record, its gratitude to Councillor Pattie Hill for her excellent service to the town over the last 12 months as Mayor.**

6. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

Councillor Jennifer Wheeler was elected Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Redditch for the forthcoming year, following which she made the statutory declaration of Acceptance of office and was then invested with the Deputy Mayor's Badge of Office by the Mayor, Councillor Joe Baker.

RESOLVED that

Councillor Jennifer Wheeler be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Redditch to serve until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Mayor

The Mayor said he looked forward to seeing everyone at the forthcoming events that would be held throughout his year of office and highlighted a particular event, his Civic Celebration, which would be held on 11th September.

b) Leader

The Leader paid tribute to former Councillor Adrian Bedford-Smith and in so doing highlighted some of the work which he had carried out. He had a particular interest in both planning and housing and had continued to be in contact with the Leader as recently as the week prior to his passing. The Council's condolences were sent to former Councillor Adrian Bedford-Smith's wife and daughters and the flag at the Town Hall had been lowered as a sign of respect.

Councillor Juliet Brunner also took the opportunity to thank the outgoing Mayor and new Mayor and also paid tribute to former Councillor Adrian Bedford-Smith. She highlighted the work which he had carried out, his long service with the Council and his work within the community and the Astwood Bank and Feckenham ward which he had represented. Councillor Mike Chalk and Antonia Pulsford also paid tribute to him and his work.

The Leader's announcements were as follows:

- The Leader had attended the second Redditch Faith Walk which had also been attended by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant, who had been impressed with the event. The pledge banners were displayed in the Chamber and the Leader was pleased to report that a number of schools had requested similar banners for use by staff and students.
- The Leader had also attended the Mayor's civic dinner and along with the Mayor and Deputy Lord Lieutenant had also attended the Beacon Lighting Celebrating the Queen's 90th Birthday. He had also attended a community litter pick in Church Hill.
- The Council, together with Bromsgrove District Council, had hosted a delegation of senior officers and Members from Great Yarmouth and North Norfolk Councils in respect of shared services.
- The Leader provided an update in respect of Worcestershire Devolution and advised that a constructive meeting had been held with Lord Heseltine at Westminster. The Worcestershire delegation had included local Government, Enterprise Partnership, Health and Police partners.
- The Leader also provided an update in respect of the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme and was delighted to report that the first 3 families (comprising 8 refugees) would be resettled in Redditch and should arrive at the end of June. A further 4 families were expected in mid-July who would be resettled in Kidderminster and Redditch. The Council was working closely with a number of agencies to ensure those families were well supported upon their arrival. A joint welcoming statement, from the local MP and the Leader had been sent to those families expected to arrive in June. A public meeting, arranged by the Bromsgrove and Redditch Welcome Refugee Group, was also due to take place at St Stephen's Church on 24th May 2016 at 7.30 pm.
- The Leader highlighted a number of future events including the return of the bike race on 26th May and Armed Services Day which would take place on 25th June.

c) Chief Executive

The Chief Executive had no announcements.

8. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 4th April 2016 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

9. RETURNING OFFICER'S REPORT

The report of the Returning Officer in respect of the recent elections was received by the Council.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

10. ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Council appointed Councillor Bill Hartnett to the position of Leader for the ensuing four year period.

RESOLVED that

Councillor Bill Hartnett be appointed Leader of the Council for the ensuing four years.

11. LEADER'S APPOINTMENTS

The Leader announced his appointments as set out below:

Executive Committee

Leader of the Council by office, Councillor Bill Hartnett and Deputy Leader by Office, Councillor Greg Chance and Councillors with portfolio John Fisher, Mark Shurmer, Yvonne Smith, Debbie Taylor and Pat Witherspoon.

With Councillors Juliet Brunner and Brandon Clayton sitting without portfolios.

Portfolio Holders

Community Leadership & Partnership inc Voluntary Sector and Health Services – normally the Leader of the Council – Cllr Bill Hartnett

Local Environment – aligned to Keep my Place Safe and Looking Good – Cllr Debbie Taylor

Licensing impacts*, better Environment, Cleansing & Waste management, Regulatory Services, Climate Change, Landscape

including trees, woodland and grounds maintenance and bereavement services.

Corporate Management – aligned to Help me to be financially independent (including education & skills) & enabling – Cllr John Fisher

Internal systems, support services: Administration, Audit, Finance, Human Resources, IT, Conduct of Council, Committee business, Local Democracy and Licensing process*, Revenues and benefits.

Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport – aligned to Help me run a successful business – Cllr Greg Chance
Planning & land use, Economic Development, Public Transport.

Community Safety and Regulatory Services – aligned to Help me to live my life independently (including health and activity) – Cllr Yvonne Smith
Children, Youth, Children's Centres, Community Safety, Crime & Disorder, Safer Communities, Corporate Parenting and Emergency Planning.

Housing – aligned to Help me find somewhere to live in my locality – Cllr Mark Shurmer
Housing Services

Leisure and Tourism – aligned to provide Good things for me to see, do & visit – Cllr Pat Witherspoon
Culture & Recreation including management of facilities including sports centre, theatres and community centres, parks and open spaces strategy, including allotments, playing pitches and play areas, Sports, Arts & Physical Activity Development; Community Training, Education, Learning & Skills.

RESOLVED that

the appointment by the Leader of Members of the Executive Committee as detailed in the preamble above be noted.

12. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, PANELS ETC AND THEIR CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS

The Council considered the report setting out the proposed political balance of the Council's Committees and lists of nomination to Committees, Sub-Committees and other bodies.

RESOLVED that

- a) **the Political balance of the Committees of the Council be agreed as set out in the report;**

- b) the arrangement where the seats on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are not allocated in accordance with the political balance requirements be continued;
- c) the arrangement where the seats on the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel are not allocated in accordance with the political balance requirements be continued;
- d) appointments by political group leaders to the places on each Committee etc. as attached at Appendix 1 to these minutes be noted;
- e) the Council appoints the non-aligned Councillor, Paul Swansborough, to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Crime and Disorder Panel;
- f) the Council appoints Chairs and Vice-Chairs to the Committees and other bodies as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes;
- g) appointments to Working Groups and other bodies listed in the appendix to these minutes be agreed.

13. OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED that

Appointments to the places on each of the Outside Bodies as detailed in Appendix 2 attached to these Minutes be agreed.

14. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

There were no urgent decisions to note.

15. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

There were no additional items of urgent business.