



Council

Monday, 20 November 2017

MINUTES

Present:

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

Also Present:

Mr Craig Warhurst and Mr Stuart Woolfenden

Officers:

Kevin Dicks, Claire Felton, Sue Hanley and Jayne Pickering

Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley

50. WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed all those present to the meeting and explained that she had invited Mr Stuart Woolfenden, a singer songwriter, to the meeting to perform a piece of music. Mr Woolfenden performed two songs which had been selected to correspond with the Mayor's theme of mental health and wellbeing for young people; these were entitled 'Restricted' and 'I've seen it all'.

51. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Antonia Pulsford, Rachael Smith and Paul Swansborough.

52. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

53. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 2ND OCTOBER 2017

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Chair

Members noted that the date of the previous meeting of the Council had been incorrectly recorded on the agenda. This should have been recorded as 2nd October 2017.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Monday 2nd October 2017 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

54. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor circulated a list of engagements which she and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Nina Wood-Ford, had attended since the previous meeting of Council (Appendix 1). The Mayor thanked Councillor Wood-Ford for attending the Remembrance Day event at Astwood Bank during this period.

b) The Leader's Announcements

The Leader advised that he had participated in a number of events and activities since the last meeting of Council. In addition to the areas raised by the Mayor Members' attention was drawn to the following:

- The Mayor of the West Midlands, Andy Street, had visited Redditch during this period. During this visit the economic development of the borough and opportunities available to local businesses had been discussed, alongside consideration of the potential to undertake rail improvements and timetable adjustments for express trains serving the town.
- The HS2 briefing event had been held on 15th November which had been attended by representatives from a range of organisations including the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP), the North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration Unit (NWEDR), HS2 Ltd and Wolverhampton University. During this event advice had been provided about tendering opportunities available to small businesses in Redditch as a result of the HS2 initiative.
- A jobs fair event, hosted by the 37 Signal Regiment, had taken place and had been well attended.

- The 52nd Time to Talk session, organised by UNISON, which focused on mental health and wellbeing, had taken place.
- The Leader had attended the Polish Saturday Morning School on 4th November to help celebrate Polish Independence Day.
- Remembrance Day services had taken place on 11th November at Plymouth Road which had been well attended. Thanks were extended to Ms Emily Shotblast for the buffet reception that had been provided.
- A further Remembrance Sunday service had been held on 12th November at Redditch Town Hall. Participants had been joined by a special guest, Chelsea Pensioner Simon de Buisseret. Thanks were extended to Mr Barry Tansley who had reported that this would be the last year in which he would be leading this on behalf of the Royal British Legion.
- The Leader had also attended the Church Hill Big Local Green Spaces event on 4th November and the Church Hill Scouts' bonfire on 5th November 2017.
- Finally the Leader noted that Mrs Jan Smyth, Democratic Services Officer, was due to retire from the Council after almost 30 years of service. Members joined the Leader in a round of applause in appreciation of Mrs Smyth's hard work and commitment over the years.

c) Chief Executive's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

55. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE (PROCEDURE RULE 9.2)

The Leader responded to a question that had been submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.2 by Mr Craig Warhurst.

Mr Warhurst asked the following question:

“With highly prestigious companies such as GymShark relocating out of Redditch to other nearby business parks, can the Leader of the Council concisely say what the Council is doing to encourage businesses to stay in Redditch?”

The Leader responded as follows:

“Redditch Borough Council is working hard to support local businesses to grow and to encourage new investment into the Borough.

The Council contributes and is partner to a number of programmes which aim to support both new and growing businesses and help

create new employment opportunities. Eligible and qualifying businesses in the area can also benefit from a number of grant programmes that incentivise businesses to either grow and/or relocate. Grants are available from £5,000 - £180,000 to help fund, for example, the construction of new commercial buildings, improvements to property, purchase equipment and help make existing stock suitable for use. The grants also cover such expenditure as energy efficiency measures, product innovation, fitting out of premises and the building of extensions. As at the end of September 2017, I am pleased to report that 34 Redditch based businesses have benefitted from funding from these programmes, with at least £800,000 of funding invested and 30 new jobs created. Furthermore, during the last 12 months, Redditch based Avon Freight also constructed new premises investing £3.5 million on a 50,000 sq ft unit creating an additional 10 jobs.

The Council also supports the Worcestershire Wide Investing in Growth Programme which funds an Inward Investment Manager for Worcestershire whose role includes assisting businesses to find suitable sites and premises. Part of this role is to support the Local Enterprise Partnerships and neighbouring local authorities in bringing forward more land for employment use. The Redditch Gateway is an example of this where over 75 acres of land is proposed to be developed for new commercial and industrial business space and it is expected that 2,500 new jobs will be created.

We are also working pro-actively help local businesses win new business, particularly from major opportunities such as HS2. I organised and led a special HS2 briefing session at Heart of Worcestershire College on 15th November to promote HS2 supply chain opportunities and 45 local businesses came along to find out how they could compete for the billions of pounds of investment that HS2 will create.”

Mr Warhurst subsequently asked a supplementary question in which he noted that if major companies relocated to the Eastern Gateway this could have a detrimental impact on Redditch business rates and the Leader was asked to clarify what plans he had in place to manage this.

The Leader responded by noting that the Eastern Gateway was the subject of an application which had not yet been considered by the Planning Committee. As such no decisions had yet been made in respect of this matter.

56. MOTIONS ON NOTICE (PROCEDURE RULE 11)

There were no Motions on Notice to consider at this meeting.

57. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31ST OCTOBER 2017

Leisure and Cultural Services Options Review

Members discussed the Leisure and Cultural Services Options Review and in so doing noted the following:

- The involvement of both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Committee in October in reviewing the report.
- The findings of the Abbey Stadium Task Group in 2014 and the Leisure Provision Services Scrutiny review in 2015, which had highlighted the potential benefits of a trust model of service delivery.
- The changes to the rules in respect of trusts since 2015 and the timescales in which the benefits of a trust model, such as in relation to taxation, might apply.
- The work undertaken by independent advisers V4 to review Leisure and Cultural Services.
- The different models of service delivery that had been considered by V4 which had all been scored. The option with the highest score in this process had been the Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) model.
- The 1,669 residents who had completed copies of the Council's survey in respect of Leisure and Cultural Services.
- The potential for staff to secure improved career opportunities and the possible impact that the various operating arrangements might have on the quality of services.
- The length of time it had taken to review the future operating model for Leisure and Cultural Services.
- The level of savings that could be achieved from an LATC approach to service delivery and how this compared to other forms of service delivery.
- The need for the model of service delivery that was selected to support the authority's strategic purposes.
- The level of control that would be retained by the Council through the use of the LATC model.

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During consideration of the minutes Councillor Shurmer noted that he had submitted his apologies to a colleague in advance of the meeting and these should have been noted in the minutes of the meeting. Members agreed that this amendment should be made to the minutes.

RESOLVED that

subject to the amendment detailed in the preamble above the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 31st October 2017 be received and all recommendations adopted.

58. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

The Council considered the minutes from meetings of the Audit, governance and Standards Committee held on 21st September 2017 and the Planning Committee held on 13th September and 11th October 2017.

Audit, Governance and Standards Committee minutes

Clarification was requested in respect of the Committee's Lead Fraud Member for the municipal year. Councillor David Thain confirmed that he had been contacted about this matter and he was willing to continue in this role for the remainder of the municipal year.

Planning Committee minutes

Members noted that there were two typographical errors in the minutes of the Planning committee meeting held on 11th October 2017. The minutes had suggested that Mr John Bonham had been born in 2048 when in fact he was born in 1948. The title of Mr Bonham's band, Led Zeppelin, had also been incorrectly recorded in the minutes.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on 21st September 2017 be received and adopted; and**
- 2) subject to the amendments detailed in the preamble above, the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 13th September and 11th October 2017 be received and adopted.**

59. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Council was informed that there had been a slight change to the membership of outside bodies which needed to be resolved by the Council.

RESOLVED that

- a) Councillor Pat Witherspoon be appointed to Redditch Highways Forum in place of Councillor Pattie Hill;**

- b) **Councillor Michael Chalk be appointed to the vacancy on the Redditch Highways Forum; and**
- c) **Councillor Mark Shurmer be appointed to the newly formed West Midlands Combined Authority Housing and Land Delivery Board, as relevant Portfolio Holder.**

60. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

There were no urgent decisions to note.

61. 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 8.07 pm