

Council

Monday, 24 June 2019

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Roger Bennett (Mayor), Councillor Gareth Prosser (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Salman Akbar, Joe Baker, Tom Baker-Price, Joanne Beecham, Michael Chalk, Debbie Chance, Greg Chance, Brandon Clayton, Matthew Dormer, John Fisher, Peter Fleming, Andrew Fry, Julian Grubb, Bill Hartnett, Pattie Hill, Ann Isherwood, Wanda King, Anthony Lovell, Nyear Nazir, Mike Rouse, Yvonne Smith, David Thain, Craig Warhurst and Jennifer Wheeler

Also Present:

Mr M. Bennett

Officers:

Kevin Dicks, Claire Felton, Chris Forrester and Sue Hanley

Senior Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley

16. WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed all those present to the meeting.

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Juliet Brunner, Gemma Monaco and Mark Shurmer.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

19. MINUTES

The Mayor advised that his son had retired from the Armed Forces some years previously and this should have been reflected in the record of his opening remarks at the annual Council meeting.

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Chair

RESOLVED that

subject to the amendment detailed in the preamble above, the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 20th May 2019 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Mayor.

20. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) The Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor circulated a list of the civic engagements that he and the Deputy Mayor had attended since the previous meeting of Council (Appendix 1). The highlight of this period had been the garden party at Buckingham Palace, which the Mayor had attended with his consort on 21st May 2019.

In June 2019 the Mayor had been on holiday. He thanked the Deputy Mayor for attending a number of civic engagements during his period of absence.

Members were advised that there would be an Armed Forces Day service at St Stephen's Church on 29th June 2019 starting at 10.30 am. All would be welcome to attend. Members were also invited to attend a Magical Midsummer Evening on 13th July 2019. This evening would have a country and western theme and tickets would cost £25, the proceeds from which would go to the Mayor's charities.

b) The Leader's Announcements

The Leader advised that the review of the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) remained ongoing. A further update in respect of this matter would be provided in due course.

c) The Chief Executive's Announcements

The Chief Executive advised that the barrier between the Council Chamber and Committee Room Two had broken. As a consequence it had not been possible to provide seating for the public in Committee Room Two for the Council meeting. Officers were anticipating that the fault would be fixed by the next Council meeting. Apologies were offered for any inconvenience that this might cause.

21. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE (PROCEDURE RULE 9)

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

Mr Bennett asked the following question of the Leader:

“Climate Change is the defining issue of our time and we are at a defining moment. From shifting weather patterns that threaten food production, to the increased risk of flooding and localised extreme weather - the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale.

Without drastic action today, adapting to these impacts in the future will be more difficult and costly.

More alarmingly, there is evidence that important tipping points, leading to irreversible changes in major ecosystems and the planetary climate system, may already have been reached or passed.

In October 2018, The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) issued a report based on updated research around the impacts of global warming. While previous estimates focused on estimating the damage if average temperatures were to rise by 2°C, this report shows that many of the adverse impacts of climate change will come at the 1.5°C mark.

With clear benefits to people and natural ecosystems, the report found that limiting global warming to 1.5°C compared to 2°C could go hand in hand with ensuring a more sustainable and equitable society.

Since the IPCC report was published, 85 local authorities have passed motions declaring a Climate Emergency and proposed steps to cut emissions. This has happened in councils ruled by all the major parties and has often been organised on a cross-party basis.

Is it not time that Redditch Council acted to protect the lives and property of Redditch residents by declaring a Climate Emergency and committing to a series of concrete measures designed to reduce carbon emissions to net zero as soon as possible?”

The Leader responded as follows:

“We absolutely agree with Mr Bennett that the IPCC state with high confidence that a manmade carbon dioxide increase is causing rising global temperatures, the results of which we are starting to witness.

In light of this, it is entirely appropriate for Redditch Borough Council to declare a Climate Emergency and commit to working towards the IPCC report global requirements.

The IPCC report recognises however, that this is a significant challenge, which requires action and co-operation at every level. Redditch Borough Council cannot rise to the challenge alone.

The more that Redditch Borough Council can achieve prior to 2030, the lower the risk of being locked into carbon-emitting infrastructure, having assets which become useless or devalued and having less options, with higher costs.

I have therefore asked officers to set out a Sustainability Action Plan for the council showing short medium and long-term measures to reduce emissions from our own operations, estate and contracts. Where we have no direct control, we will look at how we can work with residents and businesses through our services to help them to reduce their emissions.

Redditch Borough Council has been working on this agenda for many years and more detail can be provided to Mr Bennett after the meeting.”

A copy of the Leader’s response was circulated at the meeting, together with a list of actions that the Council was already taking to address climate change (Appendix 2).

Mr Bennett subsequently added a supplementary question which asked the Leader whether the Council would be willing to engage with concerned residents about actions that could be taken to mitigate climate change.

The Leader responded by suggesting that the Council would probably be open to engaging with concerned residents but that he would ask Officers to respond to Mr Bennett about this matter.

22. MOTIONS ON NOTICE (PROCEDURE RULE 11)

There were no Motions on Notice for consideration at this meeting.

23. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Civil Penalty Notices Powers – Private Sector Housing

Members noted that the introduction of civil penalty notices would provide the Council with an opportunity to address problems with rogue landlords, without having to go through a lengthy legal process. The civil penalty notices would only be used as a last resort in cases where landlords were not compliant with standard requirements. There was the potential for this to have a beneficial impact on the quality of housing provided to residents living in the private rented sector in the Borough. The maximum penalty that would need to be paid by a landlord would be £30,000.

High Quality Design – Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The Mayor advised that he had agreed that a limited number of copies of the Additional Papers Pack 1, which contained the full report for this item, should be printed to keep the amount of paperwork generated for the item to a minimum. The report had already been considered by Members at meetings of the Planning Advisory Panel (PAP) and Executive Committee and copies had been available in the political party group rooms and could be accessed electronically on the Council's website and the Redditch modern.gov app.

The report added to existing planning policies and would help to provide clearer direction to housing developers in respect of the Council's design requirements for planning applications.

Upper Norgrove Site, Webheath – Development of Land

Members noted that during the Executive Committee an amendment had been proposed to one of the resolutions which would have specified a need to consider social housing for development on the site. This amendment had been defeated but the type of housing at that location would be considered in line with the Council's planning policies should a planning application for the site be submitted at a later date.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 11th June 2019 be received and all recommendations adopted.

24. MEMBERSHIP CHANGES TO VARIOUS COMMITTEES

Members noted changes to the membership of the Audit, Governance and Standards, Licensing and Planning Committees and to the Constitutional Review Working Party.

RESOLVED that

- 1) Councillor Tom Baker-Price's appointment to the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee to replace Councillor Craig Warhurst be noted;**
- 2) Councillor Tom Baker-Price's appointment to the Constitutional Review Working Party to replace Councillor Mike Rouse be noted;**
- 3) Councillors Brandon Clayton and Julian Grubb's appointments to the Licensing Committee to replace Councillors Tom Baker-Price and Roger Bennett be noted; and**

- 4) **Councillor Anthony Lovell's appointment to the Planning Committee to replace Councillor Roger Bennett be noted.**

25. MEMBERSHIP CHANGE TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Members noted amendments to the appointments to the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP (GBSLEP), the GBSLEP European Structural and Investment Fund Strategy Committee (ESIF), the Worcestershire LEP Board, the Worcestershire LEP ESIF Committee, the Worcestershire Local Transport Board and the Worcestershire Health and Well-Being Board. These appointments on behalf of north Worcestershire were shared with Bromsgrove District Council and Wyre Forest District Council.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the appointment of Councillor Karen May, Bromsgrove District Councillor, as lead representative on the GBSLEP Board to replace Councillor David Thain be noted;**
- 2) **the appointment of Councillor Fran Oborski, Wyre Forest District Councillor, to the GBSLEP ESIF Committee be noted;**
- 3) **the appointment of Councillor Matthew Dormer as lead representative on the Worcestershire LEP Board to replace Councillor Karen May be noted;**
- 4) **the appointments of Councillors Karen May and Fran Oborski as substitutes on the Worcestershire LEP Board be noted;**
- 5) **the appointment of Councillor Fran Oborski to the Worcestershire LEP ESIF Committee be noted;**
- 6) **the appointment of Councillor Adam Kent, Bromsgrove District Councillor, and Councillor Fran Oborski to the Worcestershire Local Transport Board, to replace Councillor Julian Grubb, be noted;**
- 7) **the appointment of Councillor Shirley Webb, Bromsgrove District Councillor, as the lead representative on the Worcestershire Health and Well-Being Board be noted; and**
- 8) **the appointment of Councillor Julian Grubb as a substitute on the Worcestershire Health and Well-Being Board be noted.**

26. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

There were no urgent decisions to note at this meeting.

27. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

There was no general urgent business for consideration on this occasion.

The Meeting commenced at 7.05 pm
and closed at 7.27 pm