

Council

Monday, 26th July, 2021

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors Gareth Prosser, Ann Isherwood, Salman Akbar, Imran Altaf, Karen Ashley, Tom Baker-Price, Michael Chalk, Debbie Chance, Brandon Clayton, Luke Court, Matthew Dormer, Aled Evans, Peter Fleming, Alex Fogg, Andrew Fry, Julian Grubb, Lucy Harrison, Anthony Lovell, Emma Marshall, Gemma Monaco, Timothy Pearman, Mike Rouse, David Thain, Craig Warhurst and Jennifer Wheeler

Officers:

Kevin Dicks, Clare Flanagan and James Howse

Senior Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley-Hill

15. WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed all those present to the meeting and explained that it would proceed in a socially distanced manner, with attendees strongly encouraged to wear face coverings unless speaking.

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Joanne Beecham, Juliet Brunner, Wanda King and Nyear Nazir.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

18. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 24th May 2021 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Mayor.

Chair

19. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) The Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor announced that he had attended the following civic engagements since the previous meeting of Council:

- He had visited Moon's Moat following the donation of a defibrillator by the Lear Corporation.
- The Arrow Valley Country Park for the opening of the new play area.
- Crabbs Cross to open additional facilities at Bright Kids nursery.
- The opening of Tommy Wilson's fayre.
- The opening of an art gallery in the town.
- Attended the Morrison's Supermarket event supporting the Drop the Knife campaign.
- The Raising the Flag event for Armed Forces Day.
- A fundraising event at Callow Hill for Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.
- A production of Jimmy Elliott at the Palace Theatre.

b) The Leader's Announcements

The Leader announced that the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling would be taking on responsibility for 5G in the Borough, as part of his portfolio.

Members were advised that the national review of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) was drawing to a conclusion. It was anticipated that the outcomes of this review would be reported shortly.

c) The Chief Executive's Announcements

The Chief Executive advised that he had no announcements to make on this occasion.

20. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE (PROCEDURE RULE 9)

There were no Questions on Notice on this occasion.

21. MOTIONS ON NOTICE (PROCEDURE RULE 11)

Arrow Valley Country Park – Tovey Corner

Councillor Mike Rouse proposed a Motion in respect of officially naming a location in the Arrow Valley Country Park 'Tovey Corner'. This Motion was seconded by Councillor Gemma Monaco.

Councillor Rouse explained that he was proposing the Motion with a slight alteration to the wording that had been printed in the agenda. This had referred to "Tovey's Corner" and the alteration amended this to refer to "Tovey Corner". This alteration was seconded by Councillor Monaco.

Councillor Rouse explained that the Motion had been proposed to pay tribute to Mrs Lizzie Tovey who had sadly died in December 2020 aged 47 following a battle with cancer. Lizzie had been a member of several running groups and had raised thousands of pounds for charity, including during the time of her illness. In 2019, Lizzie had participated in the London Marathon, and she had later participated in a run from the Birmingham Mailbox to Redditch to help raise funds for charity. Lizzie had managed to do all this in spite of sight difficulties. The dedication of a section of the Arrow Valley Park as Tovey Corner would be a fitting tribute to a lady who had made such a significant contribution to her local community.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Monaco commented that she supported all of the comments that had been made about Lizzie. Tovey Corner would provide a peaceful place for reflection that could be enjoyed by all local residents.

Members subsequently discussed the Motion and in doing so noted that Lizzie had made both a significant contribution to the community and had been a valued former member of staff at the Council.

During consideration of this item the Chief Executive spoke on behalf of staff about Lizzie Tovey. Council was informed that Lizzie had worked for the Council for many years in the Elections team before moving on to a career at the Electoral Commission. Lizzie had been lovely to work with and had continued to send supportive messages to senior officers after she left the organisation on election day. She had been a friend and colleague to many staff employed by Redditch Borough and Bromsgrove District Councils and was admired for her charity fundraising activities.

Members were asked to note that the proposal in respect of Tovey Corner had been accepted for consideration at the Council meeting as an exception. Officers were formulating a policy that would help to shape the Council's approach to similar requests in the future.

RESOLVED that

this Council hereby recognises and declares the area within the Arrow Valley County Park that has hitherto been informally dedicated to the memory of Lizzie Tovey to be officially named and shall henceforth be known as ‘Tovey Corner’ in perpetuity.

22. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Bomford Hill Pathway

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure presented a report detailing proposals in respect of the introduction of a pathway to a peace memorial at Bomford Hill, Church Hill. Members were informed that funding had been provided by Church Hill Big Local which would be used to pay for the works required to introduce the pathway. Consequently, this action could be taken without financial risk to the Council.

Members subsequently discussed the proposals detailed in the report and noted that it would be helpful to the community to introduce a pathway to the peace memorial, particularly for people with physical disabilities. In addition, the benefits for the community in terms of the authority working with local groups, such as Church Hill Big Local, on projects was highlighted as a positive way of working. The debate concluded with Members thanking Church Hill Big Local for the group's hard work in respect of this matter.

Covid-19 Grant Funding – Delegations

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling presented a report which outlined proposals for Officers to receive delegated authority to utilise Covid-19 grant funding received from the Government. The Financial Services team was thanked for their hard work throughout the pandemic and it was noted that the proposed delegation would enable Officers to respond to circumstances in a timely manner without having to wait for prior authorisation by Council.

During the debate about this report, reference was made to the grant funding that had been provided to local businesses that had been impacted by Covid-19 and questions were raised about the number of businesses that had been unsuccessful in securing this funding. Members were advised that the report did not relate to the Covid-19 grant funding that had been provided to businesses, though it was noted that stringent checks were undertaken in respect of all applications and, where possible, funding was granted.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday, 13th July 2021 be received and all recommendations adopted.

23. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

Council considered one urgent decision that had been taken since the previous meeting of Council. This urgent decision extended the delegation to the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) in respect of Taxi Licensing arrangements at the Council to 30th September 2021.

24. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

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

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 7.36 pm