



Council

Monday, 27th June, 2022

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Ann Isherwood, Tom Baker-Price, Salman Akbar, Imran Altaf, Karen Ashley, Joe Baker, Joanne Beecham, Juma Begum, Juliet Brunner, Michael Chalk, Brandon Clayton, Luke Court, Matthew Dormer, Peter Fleming, Alex Fogg, Andrew Fry, Lucy Harrison, Bill Hartnett, Sharon Harvey, Joanna Kane, Sid Khan, Anthony Lovell, Emma Marshall, Nyear Nazir, Timothy Pearman, Gareth Prosser, David Thain and Craig Warhurst

Also Present:

Mr A. Fieldsend-Roxborough

Officers:

Peter Carpenter, Kevin Dicks, Clare Flanagan and Sue Hanley

Democratic Services Officers:

Jess Bayley-Hill

17. WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Aled Evans.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

20. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on Monday 23rd May 2022 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Mayor.

Chair

21. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were made at the meeting:

a) The Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor advised that she had attended 36 civic engagements since the previous meeting of Council (Appendix 1).

Specific reference was made to the many events that had been held in honour of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, which the Mayor had attended in early May 2022. The Redditch half marathon, held on 26th June 2022, was also noted as a highlight, as this had been the first time it had been held in the Borough and had attracted an excellent turnout.

b) The Leader's Announcements

The Leader commented that since the previous meeting of Council he had attended meetings of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Board as well as meetings of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP).

c) The Chief Executive's Announcements

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

22. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE (PROCEDURE RULE 9)

Four Questions on Notice were considered in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.

Town Deal Bid

Councillor Sharon Harvey asked the Leader the following question:

"Can the Leader provide an update on the progress of the business case which will support the Town Deal Bid, and explain how delays at County Council might affect this?"

The Leader responded by explaining that Council officers and a team of external consultants were finalising a summary of the business cases for the Innovation Centre and Public Realm Scheme. It was anticipated, in line with Government deadlines, that these would be submitted to Government, on 29th June 2022. The matter had been considered at the Town's Deal Board the previous

week and was due to be considered by the Executive Committee at a meeting scheduled to take place on 28th June 2022. The Section 151 Officer would be required to sign off the business cases prior to submission. The summary related to the library site would not be submitted on 29th June and instead an extension had been agreed with the Government until 30th September 2022. This later agreed submission date would not impact on the evaluation of the submission by the Government.

Councillor Harvey subsequently commented that in her view the review of the library was the most contentious part of the process. The Leader was asked in a supplementary question about what plans were in place for public consultation in respect of the content of this business case.

The Leader responded by advising that there was a plan for public consultation in respect of this business case. The extension to the submission date for the business case for the library would provide more time to obtain feedback from the public about the proposals.

Council Houses

Councillor Bill Hartnett asked the Leader the following question:

“Can the Leader advise, since becoming Leader in 2018, the locations of all new council dwellings, how many have been started, and how many have been completed with keys handed over to tenants?”

The Leader responded by explaining that despite the issues caused by the pandemic, 74 new dwellings had been added to the Council’s housing stock since 2018. This included 19 properties purchased from developers in Webheath and Enfield and 55 properties purchased off the open market spread across the Borough. The Leader also confirmed that 19 units were under construction in Church Hill and had an expected handover date of January 2023. The authority would continue to work to add homes to the Council’s housing stock through all options available, including bringing forward construction of properties on the Council’s identified land.

Councillor Hartnett subsequently asked how many new houses were planned to be built in the following 12 month period.

The Leader responded by commenting that 19 units were under construction, although had not yet been completed. There were other parcels of land owned by the Council that were in the process of being reviewed and which had been identified as potentially suitable locations for future housing development.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Councillor Peter Fleming asked the Leader the following question:

“Does the Leader agree with me that all Members of Redditch Borough Council should support a vote of thanks to HM Queen Elizabeth II on her Platinum Jubilee earlier this month? For seventy years, Her Majesty has served with dignity, reverence and decorum over our United Kingdom and Commonwealth. As Councillors who are elected to serve our Borough, we can understand the sacrifices and lengths Her Majesty has made over the past 70 years. Over the Jubilee weekend, the very best of Redditch was on show. The beacon lighting event at the Arrow Valley Lake was well-attended and after the Deputy Lord Lieutenant had lit the beacon, an impromptu chorus of God Save the Queen gave a glorious ending to the evening's proceedings. It really was a 'proud to be British moment'. As the following days went on, every corner of our Borough was brought together, all ages and backgrounds united by their respect, admiration and gratitude for the Queen. It is in the vein that tonight, as the Borough's representatives, Members should join tonight to support a vote of thanks to HM Queen Elizabeth II.”

The Leader responded by agreeing that the whole of the Borough had enjoyed celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Members were advised that a letter would be sent to the Queen thanking her for the occasion and this would be sent on behalf of all elected Members. Members could sign this letter or have their name added to the correspondence on their behalf.

Council Tax Rebate

Mr A. Fieldsend-Roxborough asked the Leader the following question:

“Having received reports from several residents about delays to the payment of the £150 Council Tax Rebate and separate reports about a significant loss of experienced staff in the Council's Revenues Team, I would like to ask the Leader what measures are being taken to both ensure that all residents receive the payment they are eligible for and to ensure that the root cause of any delays is remedied?”

The Leader provided a very detailed response to this question in which he advised that the Council Tax Energy Rebate (CTER) was available to eligible households occupying dwellings in Council Tax valuation Bands A to D, or valuation Band E if the property was eligible for disabled band reduction.

The CTER scheme required Councils to make a payment of £150.00 to each eligible household and the process for making payments was dependant on the method by which the customer paid their Council Tax. This process was:

- a) For customers that made payments by Direct Debit: Where an eligible household made payments by Direct Debit, the Council was required to verify that the name of the bank account holder matched the name of the person liable for Council Tax and that the bank account had been used to collect at least one payment of Council Tax. Where the account passed this validation, the payment would be made automatically. Customers could fail this initial validation if they had changed their name either through marriage, reversion to an earlier name, or by deed poll. For example, if a customer created a Direct Debit for payment of their Council Tax and then changed their name, only the core Council Tax account record would be updated, the bank account name remained as it was in the initial Direct Debit instruction unless an amendment notice was provided by the bank.
- b) For customers that paid by means other than Direct Debit: The customer would be required to apply for the rebate and provide bank details for the account into which the payment should be made. The Government guidance required that every application was verified using the Government's spotlight tool – which compared the application to information provided by the banks - to ensure that the bank details provided in the application were correct and matched the name, address, and date of birth of the bank account holder.
- c) For customers that made payment by Direct Debit but failed verification at point a): The customer would be required to apply for the rebate and the bank details would be subject to the Government's verification requirements detailed in point b).

The payment of CTER to Direct Debit customers commenced on 26th April 2022. The Council was required to advise every customer of their payment, and these notifications were issued to customers shortly after their payment had been processed.

The application portal for customers that failed Direct Debit verification and those who paid by means other than Direct Debit was opened on 16th May 2022. The Council had contacted every eligible household by letter, email, or SMS message to advise that the portal was open, however, due to the risk of phishing emails, this communication did not include links to the application portal but instead advised customers to go to the relevant pages on the Council's website. These pages could be found by accessing any

internet search engine and searching for Council Tax Energy Rebate Redditch.

The Council had identified 31,143 households that were eligible for the grant. To date payments had been made to 79.53% of eligible households – this was 24,769 households.

From 30th June 2022 the Council would issue further reminder letters to households that had not applied for the rebate, and this reminder process would be supported with messaging on social media channels. If rebate payments were still outstanding after 31st July 2022, then the Council would send a final communication to the customer advising that they had 21 days to claim, after which time the payment would be credited to their Council Tax account and applied as payment towards their Council Tax liability.

A technical issue - resulting from actions the Council had taken on advice from the authority's software suppliers to inhibit recovery action on Council Tax accounts which held an available energy rebate payment - resulted in applications submitted over a three-day period in May 2022 failing to process. It was not possible to contact these customers and therefore some applications had had to be resubmitted. Any impacted customers who had not re-applied would be written to from 30th June 2022 and asked to apply again.

The external verification of bank details, which was a Government requirement of the scheme, had required some development and review and therefore the initial applicants were advised that verification could take up to 21 days. The Council had subsequently reduced this to seven days and the authority's communications would be updated to reflect this improvement.

The external verification confirmed that the bank details submitted were for an open bank account, that the address held on the bank account matched the Council Tax account and that the account holder's name and date of birth were correct. Where an account failed verification, the Council was required to take further steps to evidence that the payment was correct. The Government's advice was to:

- a) Ask the applicant to provide a bank statement evidencing that the account address and name matched the Council Tax records.
- b) Ask the applicant to make a new application using a bank account that would pass verification (one where their details were correct, and the address was for the eligible property).

- c) To make a payment using a cash out voucher scheme which required the applicant to attend a post office with photographic ID and proof of their address.

The Council had contacted applicants who had failed verification and asked for bank statements to be provided so that the authority could manually process their payments.

23. MOTIONS ON NOTICE (PROCEDURE RULE 11)

The Mayor advised that two Motions on Notice had been received for consideration at the meeting.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

Councillor Sharon Harvey submitted the following Motion on Notice for Council's consideration:

"We move that a full climate change impact assessment is carried out for work proposed in the Town Deal Bid, paying particular attention to the proposed Library demolition."

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Harvey and seconded by Councillor Juma Begum.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Harvey commented that there was a need for the Council to consider the environmental consequences of all the actions that were taken by the authority. This supported work to address the green thread, as detailed in the Council Plan, and corresponded with the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in 2019. However, Councillor Harvey expressed concerns that there had been limited focus on the climate implications of the proposed town's deal redevelopment plans in the recent report about the business cases for the town's deal, which had been considered at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23rd June 2022. In this context, she suggested that further consideration needed to be given to the potential climate change implications of the redevelopment of Redditch town centre, potentially at a meeting of the Climate Change Cross Party Working Group.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Begum noted that there was a need for the Council to ensure that the local decision-making process was transparent. As part of this process, consultation needed to be undertaken with the public on plans for the redevelopment of the town centre. Residents needed to be fully informed about all the facts and a climate change assessment would assist with this process.

In response to the Motion, the Leader highlighted that environmental impact assessments took place as part of the planning process. There was a risk that an environmental impact assessment undertaken at this stage could interfere with the planning process. A full assessment would be undertaken, however, at the appropriate stage.

The Motion was debated in some detail and Members commented on the potential for a climate change impact assessment to be undertaken in respect of the redevelopment of Redditch town centre. On the one hand it was noted that there were various tools available to enable a climate change impact assessment to be undertaken. Members also commented on the need for Councillors to set an example in tackling climate change, which could include cycling to Council and Committee meetings, which would also have a beneficial impact from a leisure and health perspective. On the other hand, concerns were raised about the potential for interference in the planning process. Reference was also made to the inclusion of a section referring to the climate change implications of any proposals in the standard report template.

Consideration was given to the carbon footprint of the existing building in which the library was located. Members commented that there was the potential to retrofit old buildings to make them more energy efficient. However, there was also the potential, through the redevelopment of the town centre in the library quarter, to use modern, energy efficient building techniques when developing the site.

On being put to the vote the Motion was lost.

Redditch Market

Councillor Joe Baker submitted the following Motion on Notice for Council's consideration:

“Due to the success of the recent Food Festival, and the continuing public calls to return the outdoor market to Church Green, Council asks the Executive to consider the reinstatement of the outdoor market with a clear and positive vision of support and sustainability for market traders.”

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Baker and seconded by Councillor Joanna Kane.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Baker commented that Redditch was a market town. There had been various changes made to the market over the years but there was a need for a clear vision to be developed about the future for the market. This vision needed to be

developed by the Executive Committee. Prior to submitting the Motion, Councillor Baker explained that he had spoken to some of the existing market stall holders, some of whom had expressed concerns about the impact of operating from inside the Kingfisher Shopping Centre on trade.

During consideration of this Motion, an amendment was proposed by Councillor Brandon Clayton. This amendment was as follows:

“Due to the success of the recent Food Festival, and the continuing public calls to return the outdoor market to Church Green, Council asks the Executive to consider the reinstatement of the outdoor market, *working with the traders and stakeholders to fully understand how best to ensure support, sustainability and viability.*”

The amendment was proposed by Councillor Clayton and seconded by Councillor Emma Marshall.

In proposing the amendment, Councillor Clayton explained that in the 1980s Redditch had been a busy market town with approximately 70 market stalls. During the 1990s and 2000s, shopping habits had changed and the location of the market had moved at a time when supermarkets had also moved out of the Kingfisher Shopping Centre to surrounding areas in the Borough. Following this change, there had been a reduction in the number of stallholders in Redditch market. In the 2010s, management of the market had been contracted out to an external company, which had subsequently withdrawn from the arrangement. By the date of the Council meeting, the market was located inside premises in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre and there remained a need to take action to enable the market to be vibrant and sustainable moving forward.

In seconding the amendment, Councillor Emma Marshall commented on the work that the Redditch Business Improvement District (BID) had been undertaking in order to improve the resilience and vibrancy of Redditch town centre. There were opportunities available to improve footfall at the market but this needed to take into account modern retail habits. For example, food festivals and pop-up market stalls were likely to appeal to customers. Increasingly, people visited the town centre to socialise, rather than to shop, and this needed to be taken into account when developing public spaces. The market also needed to be recognised as providing a useful opportunity for new entrepreneurs to gain experience working in business.

Councillor Baker, as the proposer of the original Motion, confirmed that he would be happy to accept the amendment to the wording of the Motion.

Members subsequently discussed Redditch market in detail and in doing so commented on the potential to accommodate new and pop-up market stalls alongside traditional market stalls in an outdoor market located in Redditch town centre. Members also commented on the benefits of attaching a timeline to the action proposed in the Motion alongside clarification about the stakeholders who would be involved in the process.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 17.5 a recorded vote was taken and the voting was as follows:

Members voting FOR the Motion:

Councillors Salman Akbar, Imran Altaf, Karen Ashley, Joe Baker, Tom Baker-Price, Joanne Beecham, Juma Begum, Juliet Brunner, Michael Chalk, Brandon Clayton, Luke Court, Matthew Dormer, Peter Fleming, Alex Fogg, Andrew Fry, Lucy Harrison, Bill Hartnett, Sharon Harvey, Joanna Kane, Sid Khan, Anthony Lovell, Emma Marshall, Nyear Nazir, Timothy Pearman, Gareth Prosser, David Thain and Craig Warhurst. (27)

Members voting AGAINST the Motion:

No Councillors (0).

Members ABSTAINING in the vote:

No councillors (0).

On being put to the vote the Motion was therefore carried.

RESOLVED that

due to the success of the recent Food Festival, and the continuing public calls to return the outdoor market to Church Green, Council asks the Executive to consider the reinstatement of the outdoor market, working with the traders and stakeholders to fully understand how best to ensure support, sustainability and viability.

(During consideration of this item, there was a brief adjournment from 19.51 to 19.57 to provide Members with time to consider the amendment proposed to the Motion in respect of Redditch market).

24. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Bromsgrove and Redditch Duty to Co-operate

Members commented that the report had been discussed in detail at a recent meeting of the Planning Advisory Panel (PAP). There was general consensus that meetings of PAP provided Members with a useful opportunity to consider the content of planning policies in detail and that these meetings should continue to take place moving forward.

Council Plan (Including Restoration and Recovery Plan)

The content of the Council Plan, including the Restoration and Recovery Plan, was considered.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 14th June 2022 be received and all recommendations adopted.

25. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

Members considered recommendations that had been made on the subject of the Capital Strategy 2022/23, incorporating the Treasury Management Strategy, at a meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on 14th April 2022.

Council was informed that there was a statutory requirement for the Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy to be considered and agreed on an annual basis. The Deputy Section 151 Officer was thanked for having attended the meeting and provided a detailed report on the subject for the consideration of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Capital Strategy as an appropriate overarching strategy for the Council be approved;**
- 2) the Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23 and the associated MRP policy be approved;**
- 3) the policy for Flexible use of Capital Receipts be approved; and**
- 4) the Investment Strategy be approved.**

26. SECTION 151 OFFICER APPOINTMENT

Council considered a report in respect of the appointment of an interim Section 151 Officer, following the resignation of the Council's Executive Director for Resources, who was the existing Section 151 Officer.

Members requested that they be notified of new appointments to the Financial Services team moving forward. A request was also made for former members of staff to be notified of Members' gratitude for their hard work over the years.

RESOLVED that

the arrangements for an Interim Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer for Redditch Borough Council for a period of 12 months (with any extension subject to review) be approved.

(Prior to consideration of this item, the Interim Head of Financial and Customer Services, Peter Carpenter, left the room. He was therefore not present during the debate or vote in respect of this item.)

27. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

The Mayor confirmed that there had been no urgent decisions taken since the previous meeting of Council.

28. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

The Mayor advised Members that she had accepted a Motion on the subject of bus services for consideration as urgent business at the meeting due to the timeframes concerned in respect of the potential changes to bus services which would occur in some cases prior to the following Council meeting.

Bus Services

Councillor Bill Hartnett submitted the following Motion on Notice for Council's consideration:

"Council notes the email sent by Diamond Buses to all Members dated 7th June and the attached letter to the Department for Transport dated May 2022.

Council is also concerned at the announcement issued by Diamond Buses dated 16th June 2022 which contains details of proposed withdrawal of services across Redditch from July and August 2022.

Council notes that the services on the withdrawal list will affect many Redditch Residents who rely on public transport to attend school, the Alexandra Hospital, the Town Centre and the wider cross Worcestershire area.

Council opposes the withdrawal of these services and believes that only a fully integrated and publicly subsidised transport service that

meets the needs of our Community and meets it's obligations towards a cleaner, greener and sustainable travel plan designed to reduce the reliance on car journeys.

Council, therefore, instructs the Leader of the Council to write to Diamond Buses outlining the Council's opposition to the service cuts and further, convenes a Redditch wide public transport forum to include representatives of all political groups of the Council, Worcestershire County Council Cabinet Member responsible for Transport and invites members of the public with an interest in public transport."

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Hartnett and seconded by Councillor Sid Khan.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Hartnett commented that the withdrawal of bus services would have a detrimental impact in the local community. A range of people used bus services in the Borough, including people travelling to work, school children and people attending medical appointments. Use of public transport, instead of a reliance on using cars, helped to reduce carbon emissions in the Borough. Demand and use of bus services in Redditch was the second highest in the county, when compared to other districts. Concerns were raised about how people would undertake essential journeys should services be removed. Council was also asked to note that this was likely to impact on residents living across the Borough and Councillor Hartnett drew Members' attention to all of the wards through which the routes concerned travelled in order to highlight this point.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Khan noted that local residents needed the Council's support in relation to resisting the proposed changes to bus services. A letter, setting out the concerns of all elected Members, would help to highlight the extent to which the Council took this situation seriously. In seeking to resolve this issue, there was the potential to learn from other parts of the country, including Manchester. Councillor Khan expressed the view that failure to act on this issue would result in Members failing local residents. Unfortunately, some of the most vulnerable residents would be particularly negatively impacted by the proposals, including residents with physical disabilities who used bus services to attend medical appointments.

In responding to the Motion, the Leader commented that he had already written to Diamond Buses regarding this situation. In addition, a forum, to be co-ordinated by Worcestershire County Council as the responsible lead authority for public transport, had already been established to review the proposed changes to bus services. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways

and Transport would be inviting representatives of a range of partner organisations, including Redditch Borough Council, to participate in the work of this forum. In the meantime, Members were urged to approach their County Councillors to highlight any concerns about changes to bus services that had been raised by local residents.

Members subsequently discussed the Motion in detail and in doing so noted that changes had been proposed to bus services on a number of occasions over the years and representatives of Redditch Borough Council had engaged in discussions with bus companies on previous occasions. Concerns were raised that, under recent proposals that had been made about changes to bus services in the Borough, 60 per cent of services to the Alexandra Hospital would be cut. It was also suggested that changes to local bus services would have a negative impact on the local economy as well as on people's ability to participate in leisure and social activities, which could impact on people's mental health and wellbeing.

Reference was made to the scale of the proposed changes to bus services in Worcestershire and the extent to which the services in the Borough had been particularly impacted by these proposals. Members noted that changes were being proposed to bus services across the region and this subject had been discussed at a recent meeting of the WMCA's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

During consideration of this item, an amendment was proposed to the wording of the Motion by Councillor Baker. The amended wording of the Motion was as follows:

"Council notes the email sent by Diamond Buses to all Members dated 7th June and the attached letter to the Department for Transport dated May 2022.

Council is also concerned at the announcement issued by Diamond Buses dated 16th June 2022 which contains details of proposed withdrawal of services across Redditch from July and August 2022.

Council notes that the services on the withdrawal list will affect many Redditch Residents who rely on public transport to attend school, the Alexandra Hospital, the Town Centre and the wider cross Worcestershire area.

Council opposes the withdrawal of these services and believes that only a fully integrated and publicly subsidised transport service that meets the needs of our community and meets its obligations towards a cleaner, greener and sustainable travel plan designed to reduce the reliance on car journeys.

Council, therefore, instructs the Leader of the Council *and the leader of the opposition* to write to Diamond Buses outlining the Council's opposition to the service cuts and further, convenes a Redditch wide public transport forum to include representatives of all political groups of the Council, Worcestershire County Council Cabinet Member responsible for Transport and invites members of the public with an interest in public transport."

The amendment was proposed by Councillor Baker and seconded by Councillor Sharon Harvey.

Councillor Hartnett, as the proposer of the original Motion, confirmed that he would accept this amendment.

A further amendment was subsequently suggested to the wording of the Motion by Councillor Matthew Dormer, as detailed below:

"Council notes the email sent by Diamond Buses to all Members dated 7th June and the attached letter to the Department for Transport dated May 2022.

Council is also concerned at the announcement issued by Diamond Buses dated 16th June 2022 which contains details of proposed withdrawal of services across Redditch from July and August 2022.

Council notes that the services on the withdrawal list will affect many Redditch Residents who rely on public transport to attend school, the Alexandra Hospital, the Town Centre and the wider cross Worcestershire area.

Council opposes the withdrawal of these services and believes that only a fully integrated and publicly subsidised transport service that meets the needs of our community and meets its obligations towards a cleaner, greener and sustainable travel plan designed to reduce the reliance on car journeys.

Council, therefore, instructs the Leader of the Council and the leader of the opposition to write to Diamond Buses outlining the Council's opposition to the service cuts."

The amendment was proposed by Councillor Dormer and seconded by Councillor Brandon Clayton.

In proposing the amendment, Councillor Dormer explained that he would be happy to endorse a letter sent on behalf of himself, as the Leader, as well as the leader of the opposition, to Diamond Buses. However, given Worcestershire County Council had already established a forum to consider the proposed changes to bus services, he commented that it would not be appropriate to support

the proposal to establish another forum with the same focus to be co-ordinated by Redditch Borough Council.

Councillor Hartnett, as the proposer of the original Motion, confirmed that he would accept this amendment.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 17.5 a recorded vote was taken and the voting was as follows:

Members voting FOR the Motion:

Councillors Salman Akbar, Imran Altaf, Karen Ashley, Joe Baker, Tom Baker-Price, Joanne Beecham, Juma Begum, Juliet Brunner, Michael Chalk, Brandon Clayton, Matthew Dormer, Peter Fleming, Alex Fogg, Andrew Fry, Lucy Harrison, Bill Hartnett, Sharon Harvey, Joanna Kane, Sid Khan, Anthony Lovell, Emma Marshall, Nyear Nazir, Timothy Pearman, Gareth Prosser, David Thain and Craig Warhurst. (26)

Members voting AGAINST the Motion:

No Councillors (0).

Members ABSTAINING in the vote:

No councillors (0).

On being put to the vote the Motion was therefore carried.

RESOLVED that

Council notes the email sent by Diamond Buses to all Members dated 7th June and the attached letter to the Department for Transport dated May 2022. Council is also concerned at the announcement issued by Diamond Buses dated 16th June 2022 which contains details of proposed withdrawal of services across Redditch from July and August 2022.

Council notes that the services on the withdrawal list will affect many Redditch Residents who rely on public transport to attend school, the Alexandra Hospital, the Town Centre and the wider cross Worcestershire area.

Council opposes the withdrawal of these services and believes that only a fully integrated and publicly subsidised transport service that meets the needs of our community and meets its obligations towards a cleaner, greener and sustainable travel plan designed to reduce the reliance on car journeys.

Council, therefore, instructs the Leader of the Council and the leader of the opposition to write to Diamond Buses outlining the Council's opposition to the service cuts.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 9.07 pm