



# Council

Monday, 14th November,  
2022

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## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Ann Isherwood (Mayor), Councillor Tom Baker-Price (Deputy Mayor), and Councillors Imran Altaf, Karen Ashley, Joe Baker, J Barker Smith, Joanne Beecham, Juliet Brunner, Michael Chalk, Brandon Clayton, Luke Court, Matthew Dormer, Peter Fleming, Andrew Fry, Lucy Harrison, Bill Hartnett, Sharon Harvey, Joanna Kane, Sid Khan, Anthony Lovell, Emma Marshall, Timothy Pearman, David Thain and Craig Warhurst

### Also Present:

Dr Anita Sharma-James

### Officers:

Peter Carpenter, Kevin Dicks, Claire Felton and Sue Hanley

### Principal Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley-Hill

## 56. MOTIONS ON NOTICE (PROCEDURE RULE 11)

The Mayor advised that two Motions on Notice had been received prior to the Council meeting.

### Bulky Waste Collection

Councillor Sid Khan submitted the following Motion on Notice for Members' consideration:

“Council is concerned about the cost-of-living crisis having a new impact on fly tipping, with the cost of bulky waste collection becoming a disincentive for many residents. Council calls upon the Head of Environmental Services to bring a report to the Executive, to consider the costs, consequences and benefits of a pre-booked,

Chair

free household bulky waste collection service for those Redditch residents who are low paid, elderly, disabled or in receipt of benefits, which will enable Members to consider options and determine what action, if any, to take.”

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Sid Khan and seconded by Councillor Sharon Harvey.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Khan commented that by approving the Motion, Members would help to reduce the levels of fly tipping in the Borough. The Motion would also support efforts to address the green thread, which was one of the key priorities for the authority in the Council Plan. A similar Motion had recently been considered at a Council meeting at Worcestershire County Council, although that had requested a free Bulky Waste Collection service. By contrast, the Motion that Councillor Khan had submitted was requesting that the matter be investigated further by Officers, who could subsequently present a report on the subject at a meeting of the Executive Committee. There were a number of other Councils in the country, including Reading Borough Council, which had already made allowances for the provision of free bulky waste collection services, which demonstrated that this was possible to implement.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Harvey commented that the Motion was being proposed at a time of a cost of living crisis. Many residents, particularly those who were vulnerable or on low incomes, would struggle to pay for a bulky waste collection service, even when they had items that needed to be collected. A free service for residents in this position would help them to dispose of domestic goods. The Motion called for the potential provision of a free bulky waste collection service to be investigated further and reported back to the Executive Committee.

Members subsequently discussed the Motion and in so doing noted that the Council had a duty to provide a bulky waste collection service. Some Members questioned whether a free bulky waste collection service would deter certain residents and unscrupulous businesses from fly tipping.

Reference was made to the businesses that offered to collect bulky waste items, both from households and from companies. Members commented that many of these companies were reputable and

disposed of goods in an appropriate manner. However, there were also disreputable companies that charged to collect items and then resorted to fly tipping to dispose of those items. It was suggested that the activities of these businesses should be investigated further.

Consideration was also given to the costs involved in facilitating a bulky waste collection service. Members noted that the Council was already subsidising the service and a free service would cost the Council more to support. Fly tipping could not be eradicated altogether but action was already being taken to address fly tipping; Members were asked to note that reports of fly tipping had declined in 2022 compared to 2021. However, concerns were also raised that many residents might struggle to pay for a bulky waste collection service at a time of rising inflation and therefore might conclude that they had no alternative but to take part in fly tipping domestic goods. The suggestion was made that, if there were concerns about the potential financial costs to the Council involved in providing a free bulky waste collection service, this could be trialled for a short period and the costs could subsequently be assessed.

During consideration of this item, the Leader proposed an amendment to the Motion. The amended Motion was worded in the following way:

“Council is concerned about the cost-of-living crisis having a new impact on fly tipping, with the cost of bulky waste collection becoming a disincentive for many residents. Council *asks the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to set up a Task and Finish review*, to consider the costs, consequences and benefits of a pre-booked, free household bulky waste collection service for those Redditch residents who are low paid, elderly, disabled or in receipt of benefits, which will enable Members to consider options and determine what action, if any, to take.”

The amendment was proposed by Councillor Matthew Dormer and seconded by Councillor Karen Ashley.

In proposing the amendment, Councillor Dormer commented that a Task Group could investigate various arrangements that could be put in place for the delivery of bulky waste collection services and could bring forward recommendations on this subject that had an

evidence basis. Members were also asked to note that a Task Group could investigate the enforcement powers available to the Council to address fly tipping.

Consideration was subsequently given to the proposal to launch a Task Group investigation into the subject of fly tipping. On the one hand, Members commented that a Task Group investigation would involve elected Members, rather than Officers, reviewing the subject in detail. On the other hand, concerns were raised that there was already one Task Group due to launch and another waiting to start and it was suggested that a review of this subject was too urgent to wait. Indeed, Members commented that, should the amendment be agreed, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be asked to consider the proposal to launch a Task Group exercise at the following scheduled meeting of the Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022.

At the end of these discussions, Councillor Khan, as the proposer of the original Motion, confirmed that he would be happy to accept the amendment to the wording of the Motion.

## **RESOLVED that**

**Council is concerned about the cost-of-living crisis having a new impact on fly tipping, with the cost of bulky waste collection becoming a disincentive for many residents.**

**Council asks the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to set up a Task and Finish review, to consider the costs, consequences and benefits of a pre-booked, free household bulky waste collection service for those Redditch residents who are low paid, elderly, disabled or in receipt of benefits, which will enable Members to consider options and determine what action, if any, to take.**

## Motor Neurone Disease Charter

Councillor Joanna Kane submitted the following Motion on Notice for Members' consideration:

“That this Council adopts the Motor Neurone Disease Charter in support of local people living with this terminal disease and their carers.

The aim of adopting the Charter is to promote awareness and understanding of Motor Neurone Disease among elected members and staff. This will help to provide people with MND, their carers and families with appropriate support or signpost them to relevant services."

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Kane and seconded by Councillor Juliet Barker Smith.

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Kane commented that she had brought the Motion forward following a discussion with a local resident who had informed her that adopting the charter would make a big difference to people living with Motor Neurone Disease and their carers. Councillor Khan thanked Dr Anita Sharma-James, Chairman of the Worcestershire branch of the Motor Neurone Disease Association, who had provided valuable information and advice.

Council was informed that Motor Neurone Disease was a rapidly progressing disease, which had no cure and was unfortunately always fatal. The disease attacked a person's nerve endings and made it impossible for the brain to send signals to the muscles. People with Motor Neurone Disease ended up living in a shell of a body, unable to move, communicate or look after themselves and eventually became unable to breathe.

Motor Neurone Disease was difficult to diagnose, and this could typically take between nine months to a year. As a result, life expectancy after diagnosis could be very short, with one third of people dying within 12 months of a diagnosis. This short life expectancy was one of the reasons why it was so important that elected Members and frontline staff had a clear understanding of how to improve the quality of life of people living with the disease as well as their carers. In addition, because the disease progressed so rapidly, it was essential that people living with Motor Neurone Disease received adaptations to their homes as quickly and as easily as possible. The Council had an important role here, particularly in terms of supporting Council tenants with the disease.

The Motor Neurone Disease charter called for five simple rights:

- Early diagnosis and information.
- Access to quality care and treatment.

- To be treated as individuals with dignity and respect.
- The right to maximise their quality of life.
- The right for carers to be valued, respected, listened to and well supported.

Adopting the charter would send a clear message to the public that Redditch Borough Council was supportive of these five rights. If the Council agreed to adopt the charter, Redditch Borough Council would be joining 96 other local authorities, including Bromsgrove District Council, Wyre Forest District Council and Worcestershire County Council. Adopting the charter would also enable the Council to work more closely with the Motor Neurone Disease Association, which could provide support to complement the work of the authority. For example, the charity could provide information for Members and Officers about what it was like to live with Motor Neurone Disease and could also arrange both training and speakers for events.

Members were asked to note that, in Worcestershire it was estimated that there were 100 people living with Motor Neurone Disease. One in 300 people were likely to develop Motor Neurone Disease during their lifetimes. In total, six people died every day from the disease.

Councillor Kane concluded by commenting that it was vitally important that people living with the disease were able to access rapid support when they needed it, due to the quick progression of the illness. People living with the condition could quickly reach a point, post diagnosis, where they could not speak, swallow or move. In this context, the Council's support for the charter would be invaluable.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Barker Smith commented that she had been keen to second the Motion as Motor Neurone Disease was an illness that was of particular interest and concern to her. Members were reminded that Professor Stephen Hawking, the late Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at the University of Cambridge, had been diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease early in his career and had relied on advances in technology to communicate with people as the illness progressed. The husband of a friend of Councillor Barker Smith had also been diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease but, whilst her friend had recorded his speech, he had not been able to access the same advanced

technology and he had struggled to communicate before he sadly died from the disease.

In responding to the Motion, the Leader commented that by adopting the Motion and supporting the charter, the Council could help to raise awareness of the disease and its impact on those in the local community who were affected by it. The Council would, in line with the aim of the charter, endeavour to raise awareness and understanding of Motor Neurone Disease through the development of a dedicated page on the Council's website. Action would also be taken to create a Motor Neurone Disease Charter page on the website, which would explain what the charter was and provide links to the Association's website. That website was a comprehensive resource that provided easy access to further advice and support, which was available through the Association and its local branches.

Members subsequently discussed the Motion in detail and in doing so commented that, as with any diagnosis of a terminal illness, people with Motor Neurone Disease could experience fear and isolation. Reference was made to the relatively recent diagnosis of the former England Rugby International player, Mr Rob Burrows MBE, as well as the coverage of his diagnosis and the progression of his illness by the BBC Breakfast News service, which had helped to raise awareness nationally of the disease.

Reference was made by Members to their personal experiences of Motor Neurone Disease, including family members who had been diagnosed with the illness as well as Members who had cared for people with the disease during their careers. Members thanked Councillor Kane for submitting the Motion and for raising awareness of the charter at the Council meeting in a sensitive manner.

During consideration of this item, Dr Anita Sharma-James, from the Motor Neurone Disease Association, who was in attendance at the meeting, was invited to address Council. In speaking on the matter, Dr Anita Sharma-James thanked Members for their kind words and explained that she too had had personal experience of a close member of her family receiving a diagnosis of Motor Neurone Disease. The Motor Neurone Disease Association raised funding and provided support to people living with Motor Neurone Disease, their carers, social services departments and to Councils. Members were advised that carers were particularly important to people with

Motor Neurone Disease and they had often been the only people to maintain contact with those who had been diagnosed with the disease throughout the Covid-19 lockdowns.

**RESOLVED that**

**this Council adopts the Motor Neurone Disease Charter in support of local people living with this terminal disease and their carers.**

**The aim of adopting the Charter is to promote awareness and understanding of Motor Neurone Disease among elected members and staff. This will help to provide people with MND, their carers and families with appropriate support or signpost them to relevant services.**

(At the end of the debate in respect of this item there was a brief adjournment from 20.14 – 20.20.)

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and closed at 10.13 pm