

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors Juma Begum (Mayor), Joanna Kane (Deputy Mayor), Juliet Barker Smith, William Boyd, Brandon Clayton, Claire Davies, Matthew Dormer, James Fardoe, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Sharon Harvey, Chris Holz, Sid Khan, Alan Mason, Sachin Mathur, David Munro, Rita Rogers, Gary Slim, Jen Snape, Jane Spilsbury, Monica Stringfellow, Craig Warhurst, Ian Woodall and Paul Wren

Officers:

Ruth Bamford, Claire Felton, John Leach and Bob Watson

Principal Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley-Hill

1. WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed all those present to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Joe Baker, Wanda King and Gemma Monaco.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MAYOR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Mayor of the Borough of Redditch in 2024/25, Councillor Juma Begum, commented that it had been an honour and a privilege to serve as the Mayor. The year had been very busy but it represented an opportunity to give back to the local community. There had been a number of highlights during the year, including meeting the High Sheriff for Worcestershire, the Astwood Bank Carnival and a visit to Buckingham Palace. The Mayor had attended the Remembrance Sunday commemorations in November 2024, and she commented that she had received invaluable support from the Royal British Legion and the Mercian Regiment. The Mayor also highlighted that she was proud to have held the first

Chair

Bangra themed civic event attended by the Mayors and Chairmen from neighbouring authority areas as well as representatives of Redditch.

During her Mayoral year, Councillor Begum had raised £4,632 for her charities, Redditch Disability Support Project and the Primrose Hospice.

For her final civic duty, the Mayor had hosted a visit from the Mayor of Gruchet-le-Valasse, twin town of Redditch. During this visit, the Mayor of Gruchet-le-Valasse had presented a Mayoral ribbon to the Mayor of Redditch which had been a great honour.

5. ELECTION OF THE MAYOR FOR 2025/26

A nomination for the position of Mayor of the Borough of Redditch for the 2025/26 municipal year was received on behalf of Councillor Joanna Kane. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Juliet Barker Smith and seconded by Councillor Paul Wren.

There being no other nominations, on being put to the vote, Councillor Joanna Kane was elected Mayor of the Borough for the forthcoming year. She signed the statutory declaration of acceptance of office and then was invested with the Chain of Office. Councillor Kane thanked the outgoing Mayor and, on behalf of the Council, expressed gratitude for the work she had carried out as an ambassador for the town.

RESOLVED that

- 1) Councillor Joanna Kane be elected Mayor of the Borough of Redditch to serve until the next Annual Meeting of the Council; and**
- 2) the Council formally express, and record, its gratitude to Councillor Juma Begum for her excellent service to the town as Mayor in the 2024/25 municipal year.**

6. ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR 2025/26

A nomination for the position of Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Redditch for the 2025/26 municipal year was received on behalf of Councillor David Munro. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Ian Woodall and seconded by Councillor Rita Rogers.

There being no other nominations, on being put to the vote, Councillor David Munro was elected Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Redditch for the forthcoming year. He signed the statutory

declaration of acceptance of office and was then invested with the Deputy Mayor's Badge of Office.

RESOLVED that

Councillor David Munro be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Redditch to serve until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

7. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Council held on 17th March 2025 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Mayor.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were made at the meeting:

a) The Mayor's Announcements

The new Mayor commented that it was a privilege to have been appointed the Mayor of the Borough of Redditch. Members were informed that the Mayor's husband, Mr John Kane, would be her consort during her Mayoral year. Council was informed that the Mayor's charity would be the Primrose Hospice. The work of the hospice was highly valued by the Mayor, following receipt of end-of-life care by her mother-in-law at a hospice. The Very Reverend Canon Brian McGinley would be appointed as the Mayor's Chaplain for the year ahead.

All Members were invited to attend a community mass at Mount Carmel Church on 17th June 2025.

b) The Chief Executive's Announcements

The Chief Executive highlighted that all Members had been invited to attend a briefing on the subject of Local Government Reorganisation, which was due to take place on 22nd May 2025.

9. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Following the resignation of the previous Leader of the Council since the previous Council meeting it was necessary for Council to appoint a new Leader. A nomination was proposed for Councillor

Sharon Harvey to be appointed Leader of the Council for the ensuing three years. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Jane Spilsbury and seconded by Councillor Juma Begum.

RESOLVED that

Councillor Sharon Harvey be appointed the Leader of the Council for the ensuing three years.

10. LEADER'S APPOINTMENTS

The Leader thanked Members for appointing her to the position of Leader of the Council for the ensuing three years. A detailed list of the Leader's appointments were tabled at the meeting (Appendix 1) and the Leader confirmed the following portfolio appointments:

- Councillor Sharon Harvey – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Environmental Services (in addition to her role as Leader)
- Councillor Jane Spilsbury – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Performance, Engagement and Governance
- Councillor Juliet Barker Smith – Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Recreation
- Councillor Juma Begum – Portfolio Holder for Community Spaces and the Voluntary Sector
- Councillor Bill Hartnett – Portfolio Holder for Housing
- Councillor Jen Snape – Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity
- Councillor Monica Stringfellow – Portfolio Holder for Community Services and Safeguarding Responsibilities
- Councillor Ian Woodall – Portfolio Holder for Finance

11. APPOINTMENTS OF COMMITTEE, PANELS ETC AND THEIR CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS (INCLUDING POLITICAL BALANCE) (REPORT TO FOLLOW)

The Leader presented a report which detailed the political balance and proposed nominations to Committees that had been made by group leaders in accordance with the political balance.

The recommendations detailed in the report were proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Jane Spilsbury.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Political balance of the Committees of the Council be agreed as set out at Appendix 2 to the minutes;**

- 2) appointments by political group leaders to the places on each Committee etc. be noted;
- 3) the Council appoints Chairs and Vice-Chairs to the Committees and other bodies as set out in Appendix 3 to the minutes;
- 4) appointments to Working Groups and other bodies listed in Appendix 3 be agreed; and
- 5) the terms of reference for the Committees be confirmed.

12. OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENTS

Members considered a report detailing proposed appointments to outside bodies for the 2025/26 municipal year.

The nominations were proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Jane Spilsbury.

RESOLVED that

the nominations to outside bodies for 2025/26 be approved.

13. CONSTITUTION REVIEW

Council considered a report concerning the Scheme of Delegations in the constitution. Members were advised that there was a constitutional requirement for Council to review the Scheme of Delegations each year and this took place at the Annual Council meeting. However, Members were advised that there were no changes proposed to the Scheme of Delegations on this occasion.

The report was briefly debated and Members commented that there was support for the proposal detailed in the report. However, it was also noted that some of the delegations to officers included in the Scheme of Delegations would be reviewed during the year to ensure that these supported the priorities that had been included in the new Council Plan.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Jane Spilsbury.

RESOLVED that

the current version of the Officer Scheme of Delegations be agreed.

14. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Executive Committee Minutes – 11th March 2025

The Mayor explained that there was a typographical error at Minute Item No. 97 – Members' Ward Budget Scheme - in the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 11th March 2025. The decision for this minute had been incorrectly recorded as a recommendation when in fact the decision had been resolved by the Executive Committee, in accordance with the proposals detailed in the report for the item that had been considered by the Committee. This decision could be taken by the Executive Committee because the funding for the Members' Ward Budget Scheme had been incorporated into the budget in February 2025 and therefore no change was required to be made to the Budget Framework by the Council. For this reason, the subject was not due to be debated at the Council meeting.

Future Cemetery Provision

The report in respect of future cemetery provision in the Borough was presented for Council's consideration. Members were asked to note that the report proposed that the incorporation of burial plots should be taken on board as part of work on the new Local Plan, which was in the process of being developed.

The report had been pre-scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to discussion at the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 11th March 2025. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was thanked for their hard work in reviewing the matter.

Consideration was given to the content of the report and reference was made to the proposed location of burial spaces and the exploratory work that would be undertaken in respect of this matter. Members were advised that the recommendation to Council was solely in respect of the incorporation of burial site provision into the Local Plan process as all other items had been previously resolved by the Executive. Questions were subsequently raised about how Members could influence discussions regarding the potential location of burial sites through the Local Plan process and the suggestion was made that this could be raised by Members at meetings of the Planning Advisory Panel (PAP). Council was also asked to note that the sites that had been addressed in the report to the Executive Committee were at an early exploratory stage and there would be a need for further reports to the Executive Committee, which could be pre-scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee where required by Members.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Jane Spilsbury.

Redditch Council Plan

The Leader presented the Redditch Council Plan for Members' consideration and in doing so highlighted that the content of the plan, including identification of Council priorities, had been considered over a number of months. Included within the Redditch Council Plan was an overview of the Council's priorities which included:

- Economy, Regeneration and Prosperity
- Green, Clean and Safe Redditch
- Community and Housing

In considering the report, Members were asked to note that the Council Plan was designed to outline ambitions for the future of the Borough. There were a number of key issues underpinning the success of the plan, which included public consultation, community engagement and good governance.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Jane Spilsbury.

Quarter 3 Revenue and Performance Monitoring 2024/25

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the Quarter 3 Revenue and Performance Monitoring Report 2024/25 and in doing so highlighted that there had been a decrease in the level of anticipated overspend when compared to the Quarter 2 Revenue and Performance Monitoring 2024/25 report. There remained budget pressures, including in respect of financial costs associated with the Council's vehicle fleet. There were also overspends recorded for Financial and Customer Services.

The Council was owed funding as a member of the former Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP). Members were informed that the Council would be submitting a business case, in line with the required process, in order to access these funds to support work on the Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (DMIC).

Confirmation was provided that the Revenue and Performance Monitoring Reports were due to be updated and therefore this was the last occasion on which this report would be presented in this format for Members' consideration. In future, it was anticipated that the report would more clearly outline the basis for any variances as well as the action being taken to reduce any deficits.

There was a legal requirement for the Treasury Monitoring Report to be reported to Council. The quarterly revenue and performance monitoring report provided an opportunity for this to occur in accordance with the proper process.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Ian Woodall and seconded by Councillor Juma Begum.

Redditch Local Plan

The Leader presented the Redditch Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation 2025 for Members' consideration. Council was informed that the purpose of the report was to commence the process of consultation on the content of the next Local Plan for the Borough of Redditch. The timeframes for the consultation process corresponded with the timetable that had been agreed by Members in the Local Development Scheme, which had been considered in February 2025.

In preparing the report, it was noted that the content had been considered at meetings of both PAP and of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Members in attendance at those meetings were thanked for their hard work. At these meetings, Members had highlighted an ambition to consult with as many groups as possible within the local community. Elected Members would also have an opportunity to raise any concerns that they might have in respect of the Local Plan during this consultation period. The Council had invested in new consultation software and it was hoped that this would have a positive impact on consultation outcomes.

During consideration of this item, Members noted that recent PAP meetings had been held in person, with no opportunities having been provided for Councillors to attend these meetings remotely. As PAP meetings were informal, private meetings at which no decisions were taken, the suggestion was made that there could be greater flexibility to enable Councillors to attend the meetings remotely.

Reference was made to the consultation period and questions were raised about whether this could be extended to continue until a certain proportion of the local population and other stakeholders had responded. The suggestion was made that this could be set at a minimum 5 per cent response rate. In response, Officers suggested that instead of amending the proposed consultation period at this stage, the idea could be discussed at a forthcoming PAP meeting when Members considered the responses to the consultation. The Council would then be able to proceed in accordance with the timetable for the Local Plan that had already been agreed with the Government.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Bill Hartnett.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **subject to the amendment detailed in the preamble above, the minutes of the Executive Committee held on 11th March 2025 be approved and all recommendations adopted; and**
- 2) **the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 13th May 2025 be approved and all recommendations adopted.**

15. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

Primate Keeper Licences

Members considered a recommendation that had been made on the subject of Primate Keeper Licences at a meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 18th March 2025.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Sachin Mathur and seconded by Councillor Sharon Harvey.

RESOLVED that

the fees applicable to Primate Keeper Licence applications, as detailed below, be approved by Council.

Application for the grant of a licence	£366.00
Application for renewal of a licence	£300.00
Application for variation of a licence	£267.00
Inspections fees	£182.00

16. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

Members were informed that no urgent decisions had been taken since the previous meeting of Council.

17. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

There was no urgent business for consideration on this occasion.

Council

Monday, 19th May, 2025

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.16 pm