

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Susan Eacock (Mayor), Councillor James Aston (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Joe Baker, Juliet Barker Smith, Roger Bennett, William Boyd, Brandon Clayton, Matthew Dormer, James Fardoe, Simon Farmer, Andrew Fry, Sharon Harvey, Joanna Kane, Wanda King, Nicola Lloyd, David Meredith, Ashley Monk, Nic Pioli, Rita Rogers, Gary Slim, Jen Snape, Jane Spilsbury, Monica Stringfellow, Craig Warhurst and Ian Woodall

Officers:

Claire Felton, Claire Green, John Leach and Guy Revans

Democratic Services Officers:

Jess Bayley-Hill

1. WELCOME

The outgoing Mayor welcomed all those present to the meeting.

2. MAYOR'S OPENING REMARKS

The outgoing Mayor, Councillor Joanna Kane, thanked Members for the opportunity to serve as Mayor of the Borough of Redditch during the 2025/26 municipal year.

Council was advised that during the year, the Mayor had raised £4,417 for her Mayoral charity, the Primrose Hospice. She thanked her consort and chaplain for their support as well as the other Mayors and Chairmen of neighbouring authority areas who she had met during the year.

The outgoing Mayor noted that there had been a number of highlights to her year as Mayor:

- The Holocaust Memorial Event held in January 2026 when the community had come together to commemorate victims of genocide across the world.
- The Astwood Bank Carnival.
- Switching on the Redditch Christmas lights at an event that had also been attended by Gareth Gates.

Chair

- Visiting the Sea Cadets and observing the valuable life skills developed and contributions made by young people in these roles.
- Meeting the Queen at a Buckingham Palace Garden Party held in 2026.
- Welcoming visitors from Gruchet-Le-Valasse, one of Redditch's twin towns.
- Hosting representatives from the Kerala community who made a valuable contribution to Redditch society, including through employment in various medical occupations.

3. ELECTION OF THE MAYOR FOR 2026/27

A nomination for the position of Mayor of the Borough of Redditch for the 2026/27 municipal year was received on behalf of Councillor Gary Slim. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Sharon Harvey and seconded by Councillor Jen Snape.

A further nomination for the position of Mayor of the Borough of Redditch for the 2026/27 municipal year was received on behalf of Councillor Susan Eacock. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Nic Pioli and seconded by Councillor Nicola Lloyd.

On being put to the vote Councillor Susan Eacock 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 Eacock 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 Susan Eacock 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 Joanna Kane for her excellent service to the town as Mayor in the 2025/26 municipal year.**

4. ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR FOR 2026/27

A nomination for the position of Deputy Mayor for the 2026/27 municipal year was received on behalf of Councillor Andrew Fry. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Jane Spilsbury and seconded by Councillor Sharon Harvey.

A further nomination for the position of Deputy Mayor for the 2026/27 municipal year was received on behalf of Councillor James

Aston. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Nic Pioli and seconded by Councillor Nicola Lloyd.

On being put to the vote, Councillor James Aston 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 James Aston be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Redditch to serve until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

5. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Bill Hartnett and Gemma Monaco.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

7. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 2nd March 2026 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Mayor.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) The Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor advised Members that she would be supporting the following charities during her mayoral year:

- The Homeless Foundation
- Isaac's Food Bank
- Pete Martin's Knife Awareness Group
- Redditch Nightstop
- Touchstones Child Bereavement Support

b) The Leader's Announcements

The Leader welcomed the Councillors who had been elected at the local elections held in May 2026. In addition, the Leader

thanked former Members who had either stood down or had not been returned to office at the local elections.

During consideration of this item, Council was advised that it had been agreed that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16 and powers available under Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, given that the local election results created exceptional circumstances effecting the political composition of the Council and in turn the position of the executive Leader, that a Motion to Council had been accepted as urgent business. Members were informed that in the event that this Motion was carried, it would automatically result in there being a subsequent item to elect a new Leader of the Council.

On this basis, the following urgent Motion was submitted for Members' consideration at the meeting:

"The Council consider and determine a resolution to remove the Leader from office following the recent local elections."

This Motion was proposed by Councillor Matthew Dormer and seconded by Councillor Craig Warhurst.

In discussing the Motion, the following points were considered:

- The outcomes of the local elections held in May 2026.
- The need for stable leadership during a period of transition arising from Local Government Reorganisation.
- The need for Members to work proactively to protect the authority's assets prior to the completion of Local Government Reorganisation in Worcestershire.
- The importance of the role of Leader of the Council.

On being put to the vote the Motion was carried.

Consequently, Councillor Sharon Harvey was removed as Leader of the Council.

A nomination was subsequently received for Councillor Matthew Dormer to be appointed as Leader of the Council. The nomination was proposed by Councillor Craig Warhurst and seconded by Councillor Brandon Clayton.

On being put to the vote, the nomination was carried.

c) The Chief Executive's Announcements

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

RESOLVED that

- 1) **Councillor Sharon Harvey be removed as Leader of the Council with immediate effect; and**
- 2) **Councillor Matthew Dormer be appointed as Leader of the Council.**

9. LEADER'S APPOINTMENTS

The Leader advised that he was making the following appointments to the Executive Committee:

Leader of the Council – Councillor Matthew Dormer

Responsibility for regeneration, economic development, strategic partnerships, Town Deal and Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (DMIC), corporate leadership, external relations, overall strategic leadership of the authority, strategic health, Regulatory Services, leisure and recreation (including parks) and planning.

Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance – Councillor Craig Warhurst

Responsibility for finance, governance, performance, constitutional matters, audit and efficiency and transformation programme.

Portfolio Holder Environment and Local Services – Councillor Brandon Clayton

Responsibility for Environmental Services, waste and street scene, Operational Services, Parking and Neighbourhood Management (including Environmental Services).

Portfolio Holder Climate and Biodiversity - Councillor Gemma Monaco

Responsibility for climate change, biodiversity, sustainability initiatives and green infrastructure.

Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities – Councillor Ashley Monk

Responsibility for housing, homelessness, Tenant Services, Family Hubs, community safety and safeguarding.

Executive Committee member without Portfolio – Councillor Wanda King.

10. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, PANELS ETC AND THEIR CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS (INCLUDING THE POLITICAL BALANCE)

The political balance arising following the local elections held in May 2026 was tabled for Members' consideration, as attached at Appendix 1 to the minutes.

During consideration of this item, Members considered the proposed allocation of Chair and Vice Chair positions on the Committees forming part of the political balance. Nominations received from political group leaders to the Committees were tabled at the meeting for Members' consideration (Appendix 2).

There were a number of positions for which multiple nominations had been received and these were voted on separately in the following manner:

Chair of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee

Nominations for the position of Chair of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee were received on behalf of Councillors David Meredith and Jane Spilsbury respectively.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Meredith's appointment as Chair of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year was carried.

Chair of the Licensing Committee

Nominations for the position of Chair of the Licensing Committee were received on behalf of Councillors Nic Pioli and Gary Slim respectively.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Pioli's appointment as Chair of the Licensing Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year was carried.

Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Nominations for the position of Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were received on behalf of Councillors Sharon Harvey and Nicola Lloyd respectively.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Lloyd's appointment as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year was carried.

Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee – Redditch Borough Council Representatives

Members noted that Redditch Borough Council had been allocated two seats on the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee. Members were informed that under the terms of the agreement between partner authorities for the shared service, one of these members had to be the relevant Portfolio Holder, which was Councillor Matthew Dormer.

Two nominations had been received for the other seat on this Committee, on behalf of Councillors Sharon Harvey and Nic Pioli.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Nic Pioli was appointed to serve alongside Councillor Matthew Dormer on the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year.

Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel

In addition, Members noted that no nominations had been received prior to the meeting from group leaders for the position of Vice Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel. During the meeting, it was proposed that Councillor Jane Spilsbury should be appointed as Vice Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel for the 2026/27 municipal year and as there were no other nominations for this position, the nomination was carried.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Political balance of the Committees of the Council be agreed as set out at Appendix 1;**
- 2) appointments by political group leaders to the places on each Committee etc, as detailed in Appendix 2, be noted;**
- 3) subject to the amendments detailed in the preamble above, the Council appoint Chairs and Vice-Chairs to the Committees and other bodies as set out in Appendix 2;**
- 4) appointments to Working Groups and other bodies listed in Appendix 2 be agreed; and**
- 5) the terms of reference for the Committees be confirmed.**

11. OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENTS 2026/27

A list of nominations (as detailed at Appendix 3 to the minutes) that had been received from group leaders for appointments to outside bodies for the 2026/27 municipal year, was tabled at the meeting.

Officers highlighted that there were a number of positions where multiple nominations had been received from group leaders and these nominations were voted on separately in the following manner:

WM Temps Partnership Board

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Matthew Dormer and Joanna Kane respectively to be appointed to the Board. In addition, nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Nicola Lloyd and Bill Hartnett to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Matthew Dormer to the WM Temps Partnership Board for the 2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Nicola Lloyd as his substitute were carried.

Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Brandon Clayton and Monica Stringfellow respectively to be appointed to the Board. In addition, nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Nicola Lloyd and Juliet Barker Smith to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Brandon Clayton to the Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board for the 2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Nicola Lloyd as his substitute were carried.

West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Audit Risk and Assurance Committee

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Roger Bennett and Joanna Kane respectively to be appointed to the Committee. In addition, nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Nicola Lloyd and Jane Spilsbury to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Roger Bennett to the WMCA Audit Risk and Assurance Committee for the

2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Nicola Lloyd as his substitute were carried.

WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Nicola Lloyd and Andrew Fry respectively to be appointed to the Committee. In addition, nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Roger Bennett and Ian Woodall to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Nicola Lloyd to the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Roger Bennett as her substitute were carried.

WMCA Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Nic Pioli and Bill Hartnett respectively to be appointed to the Committee. In addition, nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Simon Farmer and James Fardoe to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Nic Pioli to the WMCA Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Simon Farmer as his substitute were carried.

Citizens Advice Bureau – Bromsgrove and Redditch

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Brandon Clayton and Sharon Harvey respectively to be appointed to the Bromsgrove and Redditch branch of the Citizens Advice Bureau. In addition, nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Nic Pioli and Jane Spilsbury, the latter of which was confirmed as a nomination at the meeting, to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Brandon Clayton to the Citizens Advice Bureau – Bromsgrove and Redditch for the 2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Nic Pioli as his substitute were carried.

PATROL - Traffic Penalty Tribunal

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Matthew Dormer and William Boyd respectively to be appointed to the PATROL Traffic Penalty Tribunal. In addition, nominations were

received on behalf of Councillors Roger Bennett and Bill Hartnett to be appointed as their respective substitutes.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillor Matthew Dormer to the PATROL Traffic Penalty Tribunal for the 2026/27 municipal year and of Councillor Roger Bennett as his substitute were carried.

Redditch One World Link Executive Committee

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Brandon Clayton, Sharon Harvey, Nicola Lloyd and Joanna Kane respectively to be appointed to the Redditch One World Link Executive Committee.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillors Brandon Clayton and Nicola Lloyd to the Redditch One World Link Executive Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year were carried.

Where Next Association

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors Matthew Dormer, Nicola Lloyd, Gary Slim and Ian Woodall to be appointed to the Where Next Association.

On being put to the vote, the appointments of Councillors Matthew Dormer and Nicola Lloyd to the Where Next Association for the 2026/27 municipal year were carried.

Worcestershire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership

Nominations were received on behalf of Councillors James Aston and Monica Stringfellow to be appointed to the Worcestershire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership.

On being put to the vote, the appointment of Councillor James Aston to the Worcestershire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership for the 2026/27 municipal year was carried.

Change to Nominations

In addition to the votes on these appointments, during consideration of this item it was confirmed that Councillor Brandon Clayton's nomination to the Redditch Highways and Transportation Forum Members Discussion Group was being withdrawn. Therefore, as there was no competition for the positions, it was agreed that Councillors Andrew Fry and David Meredith be appointed to serve

on the Redditch Highways and Transportation Forum during the 2026/27 municipal year.

RESOLVED that

Subject to the amendments detailed in the preamble above, the nominations to the Outside Bodies for the 2026/27 municipal year, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the minutes, be approved.

12. CONSTITUTION REVIEW (INCLUDING SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS)

A report detailing proposed updates to the content of the Council's constitution was considered at the meeting.

Members noted that the Scheme of Delegations was reviewed every year at the Annual Council meeting. This review ensured that the content of the Scheme of Delegations was kept up to date and reflected changes in Officers' job titles and national legislation. There were additional changes that Members suggested might be required at a later date.

The Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Procedure Rules had both been reviewed following legislative changes. The content was considered to be more robust than previously and the proposed amendments had both been considered at a meeting of the Constitutional Review Working Party held earlier in the calendar year.

A further recommendation, in addition to those included in the main agenda, had been published in a supplementary pack for the meeting pertaining to the work of the Audit Governance and Standards Committee. The suggested changes to the Committee Terms of Reference for the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee as well as to the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee's Procedure Rules to clarify the Committee's role in the consideration of the annual strategy and the Treasury Management Strategy. It was suggested that these changes would enhance governance arrangements at the authority.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Matthew Dormer and seconded by Councillor Craig Warhurst.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The current version of the Scheme of Delegations be agreed;**
- 2) The updated Contract Procedure Rules be approved;**

- 3) The updated Financial Procedure Rules be approved;
- 4) An update to the Scheme of Members' Allowances 2026/27, to incorporate reference to Members' eligibility to join the Local Government Pension Scheme be approved; and
- 5) the Committee Terms of Reference and Procedure Rules for the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee be updated to reflect the Committee's role in consideration of the annual strategy and Treasury Management Strategy.

13. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

The Mayor confirmed that four urgent decisions had been taken since the previous meeting of Council on the following subjects:

- Approval of a new kitchen supplier for the Council's housing stock after the previous supplier went into administration.
- The Arrow Valley Solar Project.
- The Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) Round 4.
- The appointment of a permanent Section 151 Officer for the Council.

14. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

Members noted that urgent business had been discussed during consideration of Minute Item No. 8.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.15 pm