

Council

28th March 2011

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Kath Banks (Mayor), Councillor Anita Clayton (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Peter Anderson, Michael Braley, Andrew Brazier, Juliet Brunner, Michael Chalk, Greg Chance, Brandon Clayton, Jack Cookson, Andrew Fry, Carole Gandy, Adam Griffin, Malcolm Hall, Bill Hartnett, Nigel Hicks, Roger Hill, Gay Hopkins, Robin King, Wanda King, Jinny Pearce, Mark Shurmer, Debbie Taylor, Derek Taylor and Diane Thomas

Also Present:

Mrs Deborah Andrews (Chair, Standards Committee), Mr Michael Collins (Vice-Chair, Standards Committee)

Officers:

M Craggs, C Felton, J Godwin, S Hanley, J Pickering, J Staniland and A Walsh

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

107. WELCOME

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed all present. The Mayor's Chaplain, the Reverend Jo Musson, led the Council in prayer.

108. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Simon Chalk, William Norton and Brenda Quinney.

109. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

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MAYOR, in the Chair

110. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

subject to the inclusion of Councillor Diane Thomas in the list of those abstaining in the vote on Minute 105 (Council Tax – Year ending 31st March 2012), the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 7th and 21st February 2011 be confirmed as correct records and signed by the Mayor.

111. COMMUNICATIONS AND MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor's communications and announcements were considered under the following headings:

a) Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor advised that since the last meeting of the Council she had attended various functions, including: the Wyre Forest District Council Chairman's Charity Dinner, a Valentine Dinner with the Mayor of Evesham, a meeting with the Asian Women's Community, the installation of the Reverend Richard Harding at Matchborough, an Older People's Forum event, the Redditch One World Link AGM, a street collection which raised approximately £170 for her charities, a Chinese New Year celebration, a Charity Concert by the Bel Canto Singers, to whom she extended her grateful thanks, the Student Council AGM, a lunch with the Inner Wheel Club, a lecture at Worcester University and the Droitwich Spa Mayor's Charity Ball. The Mayor thanked Councillors Juliet Brunner and Malcolm Hall for stepping in to attend a number of functions at which she had been unable to be present.

b) Forthcoming Events

The Mayor advised that forthcoming events included: the launch of the new website for Woodrow Library, a production of Fiddler on the Roof at the Palace Theatre and, that coming Saturday, her own Civic Charity Dinner.

c) Urgent Business

The Mayor advised that she had accepted one item of urgent business, an urgent Notice of Motion in respect of a Bus Service Consultation being undertaken by the County Council. She also advised that she had accepted one set of late papers, Item 10, the minutes for the meeting of the Shared Services Board on 22nd March 2011.

112. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members were advised that the Council's Lifeline Service had successfully gained accreditation to the Code of Practice of the Telecare Services Association. Members congratulated the staff concerned.

113. NOTICE OF MOTION - BUS SERVICE CONSULTATION RESPONSE

An urgent Notice of Motion had been submitted by Councillor Carole Gandy too late to meet Standing Order deadlines but had been accepted by the Mayor for consideration at the meeting on the basis of its broad public interest and in view of the time constraints pertaining to the review which was the subject of the Motion. The Motion was in respect of a Bus Service Consultation being undertaken by the County Council. This was seconded by both Councillors Malcolm Hall and Bill Hartnett.

The Council was advised that there were a number of issues which were particular to Redditch and which the County Council should be strongly encouraged to take into account when taking decisions on the future configuration of the bus service across the County. Amongst these was the design of the new town which had been developed very much with public transport in mind, a number of areas of significant deprivation in the town, lower than average rates of car ownership and much greater rates of bus use as a means of travelling to and from work. In addition, the needs of elderly and disabled travellers were raised as key issues, as was the need for the County Council to support measures that would enhance the creation of an environmentally sustainable transport system.

The Notice of Motion was the subject of the following named vote in accordance with Standing Order 16:

Members voting FOR the motion:

Councillors Peter Anderson, Kath Banks, Michael Braley, Andrew Brazier, Juliet Brunner, Michael Chalk, Greg Chance, Anita Clayton, Brandon Clayton, Jack Cookson, Andrew Fry, Carole Gandy, Adam Griffin, Malcolm Hall, Bill Hartnett, Nigel Hicks, Roger Hill, Gay Hopkins, Robin King, Wanda King, Jinny Pearce, Mark Shurmer, Debbie Taylor, Derek Taylor and Diane Thomas.
(25 votes)

Members voting AGAINST the motion:

None.

Members abstaining from voting:

None.

Accordingly, the Motion was approved in the following terms:

“We call on members to join with me and the [Leader of the Labour Group](#) and the [Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group](#) in calling on the County Council to acknowledge the needs of the residents of Redditch. Redditch is a town that was designed very specifically around the transportation needs of its communities and the vision that public transport would play a pivotal role in the day to day lives of its residents. We have dedicated bus-only routes serving our communities which were all designed on the basis that this would remain a dedicated and exclusive bus infrastructure that services district centres within the Borough and provide a lifeline to those persons who reside there.

The removal of the bus services that operate within these areas would significantly undermine both the purpose of this vision and the independence of the residents who live there, particularly those with disabilities.

Both the residents and elected members of Redditch Borough acknowledge the challenge that all Councils are facing in these very difficult financial times – indeed we have been forced to examine difficult decisions ourselves – but I would ask for all Members to support us in calling on the County Council to consider, when making their decision on the bus services, the very special character and history of Redditch Borough and the disproportionate impact that these proposals will have on our residents. We would also ask them to meet with representatives of this authority to discuss how these changes can be minimised and that they make the impact assessments that have been carried out on these reduced services available for public inspection.”

114. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Members received the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee held on 21st February and 15th March 2011.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 21st February 2011 be received and adopted; and**
- 2) the minutes of the Executive Committee held on 15th March 2011 be received and all recommendations approved.**

115. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

The Council received the minutes of recent meetings of the Planning Committee.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 2nd February and 1st March 2011 be received and adopted.

116. SHARED SERVICES BOARD

The Council received the minutes of the meeting of the Shared Services Board on 22nd March 2011.

Members considered a proposal to shorten the overall Programme timeline for shared services and the transformation of services from three years to eighteen months. In response to concerns that the Councils might be over-reaching themselves it was stressed that the timelines did allow for a degree of flexibility in order that significant developing issues might be addressed.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the revised Programme timeline for the delivery of Shared Services and Transformation between the two Councils be approved.**

(During consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed relating to contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with labour relation matters arising between the authority and employees of the authority.)

117. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT

The Council received the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Diane Thomas, provided an overview of the contents of the report. The gaining of a commendation in the Centre for Public Scrutiny Good Scrutiny Awards 2010 for the Neighbourhood Groups review had been a significant achievement. Public attendance at scrutiny meetings had increased and had been complemented by a massive increase in press coverage.

The numbers of recommendations to the Executive Committee which had subsequently been approved was highlighted in demonstrating the effectiveness of the Scrutiny process. Continued improvement was also demonstrated through the addressing of those areas for development which had been identified in the previous year's report. The Chair listed those areas which were to be focussed upon during the coming year to make them more effective still, including constructive pre-scrutiny and budget scrutiny. Members and Officers involved in the Scrutiny process were thanked, as were a number of other individuals and bodies who had contributed to the successful operation of the Committee during the course of the year.

The Leader of the Council commended the Committee for their report and the work that had been carried out in 2010/11. The Chair of the Committee received praise for her efforts and for marshalling the resources at the Committee's disposal to an effective end. Consequently it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be received and noted.

118. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

The Council noted an Urgent Business decision which had been approved in accordance with Standing Order 36, namely:

Housing Act 2004 – Delegated Authority to Officers to Act
(UB Reference 489)

RESOLVED that

the matter be noted.

119. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

There were no separate items of Urgent Business for consideration at this meeting, other than the Notice of Motion which had been considered previously under Minute item 113.

120. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that

under S.100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter on the grounds that it involves the likely

disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended:

Shared Services Board (Item 5 – Business Case for a shared Leisure and Cultural Service between Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council)

The Meeting commenced at 7.01 pm
and closed at 9.23 pm

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MAYOR, in the Chair