

Dudley Metropolitan Borough

Minutes of the proceedings of the Council at the meeting held on Monday, 13th April, 2015 at 6.00 pm at the Council House, Dudley

Present:

Councillor M Aston (Mayor)

Councillors A Ahmed, K Ahmed, S Ali, A Aston, M Attwood, N Barlow, C Baugh, H Bills, D Blood, R Body, P Bradley, D Branwood, P Brothwood, D Caunt, I Cooper, B Cotterill, J Cowell, W Duckworth, C Elcock, B Etheridge, S Etheridge, M Evans, A Finch, K Finch, J Foster, A Goddard, N Gregory, C Hale, M Hanif, P Harley, R Harris, D Hemingsley, S Henley, T Herbert, Z Islam, R James, L Jones, K Jordan, I Kettle, P Lowe, I Marrey, J Martin, P Martin, P Miller, M Mottram, N Neale, G Partridge, C Perks, D Perks, M Roberts, H Rogers, D Russell, R Scott-Dow, K Shakespeare, G Simms, D Sparks, A Taylor, E Taylor, H Turner, K Turner, S Turner, D Tyler, D Vickers, M Wood and Q Zada together with the Chief Executive and other Officers.

Prayers

The Mayor's Chaplain led the Council in prayer.

75 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors S Arshad, C Billingham, K Casey, S Waltho and M Wilson.

76 **Declarations of Interests**

Declarations of interests, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, were made by the following Members:

Councillor S Henley – Minute No. 56 of the Health Scrutiny Committee (Mental Health Quality and Performance Review) – Non-pecuniary interest in view of the fact that his wife works for the Black Country Partnership National Service (NHS) Trust.

Councillors R Body and K Turner – Minute No. 37 of the Adult, Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee (The Homelessness Service) – Non-pecuniary interest as a YMCA Host caring for homeless teenagers and as the Landlord of properties within the Dudley Borough respectively.

Councillor K Turner – Minute No. 41 of the Adult, Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee (The Care Act and Market Shaping) – Non-pecuniary interest as Director and Chairman of Age Concern, Stourbridge and Halesowen.

Councillor Q Zada – Minute No. 77 - of the Development Control Committee (Planning Application No. P14/1831 – 60 Hill Street, Netherton, Dudley) – Non-pecuniary interest in view of the reference made to Hillcrest School and his child's attendance at the school.

Councillor Q Zada – Minute No. 77 of the Development Control Committee (Planning Application No. P15/0005 – Hingley Anchor, Netherton, Dudley) – Non-pecuniary interest as he indicated that he had, in the past, supported the retention of the Anchor in Netherton and it was stated that he would consider the application on its merits and previous views would not prejudice his judgement.

Councillor N Neale – Dudley Health and Wellbeing Board - declared a general non-pecuniary interest in view of her employment with NHS 111.

Councillor A Aston – All matters relating to West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) – Pecuniary interest as an employee of WMAS.

Councillor M Aston – Minute No. 48 of the Health and Scrutiny Committee (reference to West Midlands Ambulance Service) – Pecuniary interest insofar as her son is employed by WMAS.

Councillor S Turner – Any references to matters concerning Dudley College – Pecuniary interest in view of his employment as a Lecturer.

Councillor G Simms – Issues relating to Looked After Children – Non-pecuniary interest in view of her employment with an independent fostering agency.

Councillor Q Zada – Issues relating to Children, Young People and Families – Non-pecuniary interest as an employee of Black Country Partnership NHS Trust.

Councillors M Evans, D Hemingsley and D Sparks – Agenda Item No. 5(a) (Capital Programme Monitoring) reference to Castle Hill Development – Non-pecuniary interests as Trustees of Dudley Zoo.

Councillor D Tyler – Agenda Item No. 5(a) (Capital Programme Monitoring) reference to Castle Hill Development – Non-pecuniary interest as a Co-opted Member in relation to Dudley Zoo.

Councillor S Henley – Any matters relating to West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service (WMFRS) – Pecuniary interest as an employee of WMFRS.

77 **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 23rd February, and 2nd March, 2015, be approved as correct records and signed.

78 **Mayor's Announcements**

(a) **Council's Planning and Regeneration Team**

The Mayor reported that the Council's Planning and Regeneration Team had received the National Place Making in the Midlands Award. Following remarks by Councillor J Foster, the Mayor presented the award and the Council expressed congratulations regarding this outstanding achievement.

(b) **Annual Charity Cricket Match**

The Mayor reported that the Members and Officers Charity Cricket Match would be held on 12th June, 2015 at 6.00pm at the Memorial Ground in Amblecote, Stourbridge.

(c) **St George's Day Events**

The Mayor reported on the St George's Day celebrations and events in Halesowen Town Centre on Saturday 25th April, 2015.

(d) **Mayor's Ball**

The Mayor thanked Members for supporting the Mayor's Ball and all contributions to her charity funds.

(e) **Councillors Not Seeking Re-election**

The Mayor reported that Councillors Safeena Arshad, Cheryl Billingham, David Caunt, Bob James, Ian Marrey, Pat Martin and Ken Turner were not seeking re-election on Thursday 7th May, 2015. Tributes were paid to the retiring Members and the Council expressed best wishes for the future.

79 **Capital Programme Monitoring**

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor P Lowe, seconded by Councillor S Turner and

Resolved

- (1) That current progress with the 2014/15 Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be noted.
- (2) That the Integrated Transport funding allocation be noted, and the associated expenditure included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 5 of the report.
- (3) That the project to reline the cremators at Stourbridge Crematorium be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 6 of the report.
- (4) That the Schools Condition allocation for 2015/16 be noted and the associated expenditure included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 7 of the report.
- (5) That the Schools Devolved Capital allocation for 2015/16 be noted and the associated expenditure included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 8 of the report.
- (6) That the Schools Basic Need allocations for 2015/16 – 2017/18 be noted and the associated expenditure included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 9 of the report.
- (7) That the Priority Schools Building Programme Phase 2 funding be noted and that subject to confirmation of detailed allocations the relevant associated expenditure be included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 10 of the report.

80 **Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board 2014/15**

A report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor D Tyler, seconded by Councillor A Finch and

Resolved

That the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for 2014/15 be received and noted.

81 **Notices of Motion**

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12, Councillor D Perks had given notice of a motion on 26th March, 2015.

Proposed amendments to the motion had been circulated around the Council Chamber. Councillor D Perks indicated that he was content with the wording of the proposed amendments. With the consent of the Council, Councillor D Perks altered his original motion in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14.7 to incorporate the amended wording.

The motion was moved by Councillor D Perks and seconded by Councillor P Brothwood.

Following a debate, Councillor D Perks exercised his right of reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9.

The original motion, as altered by Councillor D Perks, was thereupon put to the meeting and it was

Resolved

That the Council makes provision in the municipal calendar for 2015/16 onwards to book the Council Chamber for three or four sessions per municipal year for the sole purpose of open non partisan debates.

Councillors can register items for debate given a suitable notice period. The Council as a whole will make the decision as to whether or not to accept the proposal to go forward for debate. Examples of possible topical issues for debate are the Hippodrome and the Combined Authority.

This will not only demonstrate clear transparency and democratic process but will act as an informative measure for elected members. There need not be a vote following the debates, but the relevant members and officers should be present for clarification and advice.

It is our job as elected members to be the conduit between the Council and the people we represent. The proposed debates will be a mechanism to improve this. It will also help progress with all members having an input into debated subjects allowing more opinions and ideas to be put forward. These debates will not be formal Council meetings and therefore Council Procedure Rules will not apply. The Strategic Director (Resources and Transformation) will be asked to develop informal protocols to assist in the smooth organisation and operation of the proposed debates.

The debates will provide a mechanism for more members to be engaged and informed on future policy development and give their opinions on future items being reported to the Cabinet and Council. If no items arise, then the pre booked dates can be cancelled by agreement with the Group Leaders.

The Council therefore resolved to refer this matter to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to consider this proposal within the framework of the scrutiny function of the Council.

Questions under Council Procedure Rule 11

During questions asked under Council Procedure Rule 11, there were no decisions that the Leader, Cabinet Members or Chairs agreed to have reconsidered.

The meeting ended at 7.02pm

MAYOR