

**Minutes of the proceedings of the Council
Monday, 10th July, 2023 at 6.50pm
in the Town Hall, St James's Road, Dudley**

Present:

Councillor A Goddard (Mayor)
Councillor P Lee (Deputy Mayor)
Councillors S Ali, A Aston, M Aston, P Atkins, C Barnett, C Bayton, D Bevan, I Bevan, H Bills, D Borley, S Bothul, P Bradley, R Buttery, K Casey, B Challenor, S Clark, J Clinton, Dr R Clinton, R Collins, D Corfield, J Cowell, T Crumpton, A Davies, K Denning, P Dobb, P Drake, M Dudley, C Eccles, J Elliott, M Evans, J Foster, M Hanif, D Harley, P Harley, S Henley, A Hopwood, A Hughes, L Johnson, S Keasey, I Kettle, E Lawrence, A Lees, K Lewis, W Little, P Lowe, J Martin, P Miller, S Mughal, S Phipps, A Qayyum, S Ridley, M Rogers, P Sahota, D Stanley, C Sullivan, W Sullivan, A Taylor, E Taylor, A Tromans, M Webb, K Westwood, M Westwood and Q Zada together with the Chief Executive and other Officers.

23 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors T Creed, M Howard, N Neale, K Razzaq, T Russon and L Taylor-Childs.

24 **Declarations of Interest**

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

Councillor A Aston – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment by the West Midlands Ambulance Service.

Councillor M Evans and A Taylor - Any matters relating to Castle Hill development and all references to Dudley Zoo - Non-pecuniary interests as Members of Dudley and West Midlands Zoological Society Limited.

Councillors D Stanley and A Taylor - West Midlands Combined Authority – Transport Delivery Committee - Non-pecuniary interest as Members of the Committee.

Councillor P Miller - Any matters relating to adult social care - Non-pecuniary interest as his wife had visits from Gateway Dementia Centre in Brettell Lane.

Councillor K Casey – Any references to West Midlands Combined Authority – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment with West Midlands Combined Authority.

Councillor I Bevan – Any references to Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust/Russells Hall Hospital – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment.

Councillor Q Zada – Any references to health issues and any matters affecting his portfolio of property investments. Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment or his portfolio of property investments.

Councillors I Kettle and W Little – Any references to West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority - Non-pecuniary interest as Members of the Authority.

Councillor E Taylor - Minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee - Non-pecuniary interest as her daughter was employed at Russells Hall Hospital.

Councillor P Lee – Minutes of the former Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee - Pecuniary interest as he was engaged as a Dudley Foster Carer.

Councillor J Cowell – Matters relating to Council housing - Non-pecuniary interest as a Council tenant.

25 **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the annual meeting held on 18th May and the extraordinary meeting held on 20th June, 2023 be approved as correct records and signed.

26 **Mayor's Announcements**

(a) **Black Country Day and Dudley Grand Prix Cycling Event**

The Mayor reported that 14th July, 2023 was Black Country Day. The inaugural Dudley Grand Prix cycling event would take place in Dudley Town Centre.

(b) **Black Country Musicom**

The Mayor reported that the Black Country Musicom event would take place at Himley Hall on 15th and 16th July, 2023.

(c) **Councillor Ian Brookfield – Wolverhampton City Council**

The Mayor reported on the recent death of Councillor Ian Brookfield the Leader of Wolverhampton City Council. Sincere condolences were extended to Councillor Brookfield's family, friends and colleagues at this time.

27 **Capital Programme Monitoring and Medium Term Financial Strategy**

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

The recommendations of the Cabinet were moved by Councillor P Harley and seconded by Councillor P Bradley.

Following the debate, Councillor P Harley exercised his right of reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9.

The motion was put to the meeting and it was

Resolved

- (1) That the outturn position for 2022/23, as set out in paragraph 5 and Appendix A to the report, be noted.
- (2) That progress with the 2023/24 Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be noted.
- (3) That the parks development budget of £200,000 be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 8 of the report.
- (4) That the reallocation of car park infrastructure capital budgets of £130,000 to CCTV works at car parks be approved, as set out in paragraph 9 of the report.
- (5) That the transfer of capital budgets for Telecare services from Private Sector Housing to Adults Social Care be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 10 of the report.
- (6) That the new project of £25,000 funded by the Connected Services digital grant be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 11 of the report.
- (7) That the Family Hubs capital grant and expenditure of £47,000 and estimated values for future years be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 12 of the report.
- (8) That the additional budget of £60,000 for solar panels at Duncan Edwards Leisure Centre be approved and included in the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 13 of the report.
- (9) That a budget of £250,000 be approved and included in the Capital Programme for work on Dudley Town centre as set out in paragraph 14 of the report.
- (10) That the urgent amendment to the Capital Programme to improve tennis facilities in parks across Dudley for £284,000 be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 15 of the report.

- (11) That the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting on 6th July, 2023, concerning amendments to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, be confirmed as referred to in paragraphs 16 to 20 of the report.
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28 **Energy Development Fund**

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

The recommendations of the Cabinet were moved by Councillor Dr R Clinton and seconded by Councillor P Bradley.

Following the debate, Councillor Dr R Clinton exercised his right of reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9.

The motion was put to the meeting and it was

Resolved

- (1) That up to £1m of Climate initiatives be included within the Capital Programme which are self-financing over the life of the projects.
 - (2) That, subject to the above, the Director of Finance and Legal be authorised, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Deputy Chief Executive, to approve individual schemes which have a business case incorporating a payback of less than 7.5 years.
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29 **Annual Report of the Audit and Standards Committee 2022/23**

The annual report of the Audit and Standards Committee for 2022/23 was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor A Lees, seconded by Councillor P Bradley and

Resolved

That the annual report of the Audit and Standards Committee for 2022/23 be received and noted.

30 **Constitution and Related Matters**

A report of the Lead for Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) was submitted.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor P Harley and seconded by Councillor P Bradley.

Following the debate, Councillor P Harley exercised his right of reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9.

The motion was put to the meeting and it was

Resolved

- (1) That the updated Cabinet portfolios, as incorporated in Part 3 of the Constitution, be noted.
- (2) That the Overview and Scrutiny arrangements be submitted to the Council for approval following further consideration at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- (3) That the Monitoring Officer undertake a review of Council Procedure Rule 11 (Questions by Members), following consultation with the Group Leaders, and recommendations be presented to the Council as part of the Annual Review of the Constitution.
- (4) That, in accordance with statutory requirements, the Council establish an Independent Remuneration Panel comprising the three Independent Persons, namely Revd Adam Hadley, Richard Phillips and William Read.
- (5) That the Cabinet be authorised to consider and determine any matters in connection with West Midlands Combined Authority Devolution Deals and that Part 3 of the Constitution be amended accordingly.
- (6) That Councillor L Johnson be elected as the Chair and Councillor J Elliott be elected as the Vice-Chair of the Adult Social Care Select Committee for the remainder of the 2023/24 municipal year.

31 **Notice of Motion**

Bring Dudley Town Football Club Back Home

Following a speech by Councillor S Ali, the motion was withdrawn in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 12.4.

32 **Questions under Council Procedure Rule 11**

Written Questions

No written questions were submitted in advance.

Verbal Questions to the Leader, Cabinet Members and Chairs

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services (Councillor D Corfield) responded to a question from Councillor H Bills on matters concerning Halesowen in Bloom and Hurst Green Park.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor P Harley) responded to questions from Councillor J Cowell concerning the level of employee turnover and the publication of the MIPIM report.

The Chair of the Public Health Select Committee (Councillor J Clinton) and the Cabinet Member for Public Health (Councillor I Bevan) responded to a question from Councillor K Westwood concerning General Practitioner services at High Oak and a meeting to discuss health inequalities in the Brockmoor and Pensnett ward.

The Cabinet Member for Public Health (Councillor I Bevan) responded to a question from Councillor R Collins concerning the library service.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor P Harley) responded to a question from Councillor E Lawrence concerning the Black Country Plan and progress in relation to the local Dudley Plan.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor P Harley) responded to questions from Councillor P Sahota concerning the implications of the Council's vacancy rates, staff turnover levels, agency employees and comparisons with other Councils.

The Cabinet Member for Public Health (Councillor I Bevan) responded to a question from Councillor D Bevan concerning the Council's commitment to the future of the library service.

The Cabinet Member for Public Health (Councillor I Bevan) responded to questions from Councillor C Eccles concerning cuts that had been proposed to the library service.

The Cabinet Member for Public Health (Councillor I Bevan) responded to a question from Councillor M Westwood concerning cuts in hours relating to library services, with specific reference to Gornal library.

The Cabinet Member for Public Health (Councillor I Bevan) responded to questions from Councillor Q Zada concerning the importance of libraries as a community facility and the social value of library services.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services (Councillor D Corfield) responded to questions from Councillor A Hughes concerning facilities for the disposal of brake pad oil, engine oil, filters and similar materials.

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Legal and Human Resources (Councillor S Clark) responded to questions from Councillor S Ali concerning proposed cuts to libraries and archives services included in the budget considered by the Council in March, 2023.

33 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business for consideration at this meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm

MAYOR