

**Minutes of the proceedings of the Council  
Monday, 17th April, 2023 at 6.00pm  
in the Town Hall, St James's Road, Dudley**

**Present:**

Councillor S Greenaway (Mayor)  
Councillor A Goddard (Deputy Mayor)  
Councillors R Ahmed, S Ali, A Aston, M Aston, P Atkins, C Barnett, C Bayton, D Bevan, I Bevan, H Bills, R Body, D Borley, S Bothul, P Bradley, R Buttery, K Casey, B Challenor, S Clark, R Clinton, R Collins, D Corfield, J Cowell, T Creed, T Crumpton, A Davies, P Dobb, P Drake, C Eccles, J Elliott, M Evans, K Finch, J Foster, M Hanif, D Harley, P Harley, S Henley, A Hopwood, M Howard, A Hughes, L Johnson, S Keasey, I Kettle, E Lawrence, P Lee, A Lees, K Lewis, P Lowe, J Martin, A Millward, S Mughal, N Neale, S Phipps, K Razzaq, S Ridney, M Rogers, P Sahota, D Stanley, W Sullivan, A Taylor, E Taylor, L Taylor-Childs, M Westwood, T Westwood and Q Zada together with the Deputy Chief Executive and other Officers

**Prayers**

The Mayor's Chaplain led the Council in prayer.

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64 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors J Clinton, P Miller, T Russon, S Saleem and K Shakespeare.

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65 **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 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.

Councillor I Kettle – Any references to West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority - Non-pecuniary interest as a Member 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 N Neale - Minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee or health issues generally - Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting her employment with Dudley Group of Hospitals (NHS) Foundation Trust.

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

Councillor K Lewis – Minutes of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee - Pecuniary interest as an Early Years Provider.

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66 **Minutes**

**Resolved**

That the minutes of the meetings held on 27<sup>th</sup> February and 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2023 be approved as correct records and signed.

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67 **Mayor's Announcements**

(a) **Councillors Not Standing for Re-Election**

The Mayor reported that Councillors K Finch, S Saleem, K Shakespeare and T Westwood were not standing for re-election at the municipal elections on 4<sup>th</sup> May, 2023. The Mayor placed on record the Council's appreciation of the dedicated public service given by those Members and expressed best wishes for the future. Members then made individual comments and paid tributes to the retiring Councillors.

(b) **Live Broadcast of Coronation – 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2023**

The Mayor reported that a live broadcast of the Coronation would take place at Himley on 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2023.

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68 **Capital Programme Monitoring**

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

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

Following the debate, Councillor P Harley exercised his right of reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9. In response to a question concerning the Towns Fund Project, a briefing would be provided to the Shadow Cabinet Member for Highways and Public Realm (Councillor K Casey).

The motion was put to the meeting and it was

## **Resolved**

- (1) That the progress with the 2022/23 Capital Programme, as set out in Appendices A and B to the report, be noted.
  - (2) That the expenditure for additional Changing Places toilets, funded by additional grant, be included in the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 5 of the report.
  - (3) That the decision to authorise the Director of Finance and Legal to increase loan support to Black Country Innovative Manufacturing Organisation (BCIMO) by up to £712,000, in view of the cash flow issues outlined, and to amend the Capital Programme to include the City Regional Sustainable Transport Strategy (CRSTS) grant as set out in paragraph 6 of the report, be noted.
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## 69 **Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2022/23**

The annual overview and scrutiny report for 2022/23 was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor P Bradley, seconded by Councillor S Clark and

## **Resolved**

That the annual overview and scrutiny report for 2022/23 be received and noted.

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## 70 **Notices of Motion**

### (a) **Levelling Up**

At the Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2023, the following motion had been moved by Councillor P Sahota and seconded by Councillor J Foster.

“On Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2022, a report was presented to the Cabinet describing progress with levelling up bids made on behalf of the Borough's 5 MPs.

It was disappointing to note that the two opportunities - in the form of 2 rounds of bidding - have yet to produce any confirmed investment from Government.

It is particularly disappointing and of concern that for the two most deprived constituencies - Dudley South and Dudley North - there is even less detail about the steps being taken to address this and the success of levelling up investment arising from bids in a 'potential' round 3 is uncertain.

One reason given for this failure relates to the level of information and evidence required to justify each bid. Four of the 5 MPs belong to the party in Government, and include those holding party and Government positions, which would suggest they have significant access to information and guidance. Therefore, it is unclear why the criteria for successful bids was not known or foreseen.

The people of Dudley have been seriously let down by this failure and, instead of levelling up Dudley, it risks further decline in those areas badly in need of this investment.

This Council undertakes to write to the Government outlining our concerns and to seek an urgent meeting with Government representatives leading on the levelling up agenda for advice and support to ensure that any round 3 bids made are successful.”

Councillor L Taylor-Childs moved a closure motion pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.11, which was duly seconded, to the effect that the motion be now put to the vote.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14.11(b) the Mayor, being of the opinion that the original motion had been sufficiently discussed, put the closure motion to the vote and it was

### **Resolved**

That the question be now put.

Councillor P Sahota was afforded and exercised his right of reply to the debate pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9.

The motion was put to the vote and lost.

### **(b) Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III and Her Majesty The Queen Consort**

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12, Councillor P Dobb had given notice of the following motion on 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2022:

“His Majesty King Charles III and Her Majesty The Queen Consort will celebrate their Coronation on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

Dudley Council has an important role to play in facilitating the celebrations that will take place associated to this historic occasion, much like it has done for previous events such as Jubilees. Therefore, this Council resolves to once again support the waiver of temporary road closure license fees to enable communities to celebrate together with traditional street parties.

Additionally, the Leader of the Council is requested to explore opportunities for a large-scale event to take place to mark the occasion within the Dudley Borough, enabling borough residents to gather and celebrate this occasion in a similar fashion to other events throughout the year, such as Armed Forces Day.”

Councillor P Dobb made a statement and indicated that he now wished to withdraw the motion in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 13(g). With the consent of the meeting, the motion was withdrawn.

(c) Dropped Kerb Funding for Disabled Residents

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12, Councillor S Phipps had given notice of the following motion on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2023:

“Dropped kerbs can be very costly for local residents who wish to ensure that they can access their driveways legally and safely or convert existing gardens into driveways. With costs regularly exceeding £2,000 and only increasing, the financial burden on those who have no choice but to use a driveway is excessive.

Dudley Council currently charges local residents for the installation of dropped kerbs regardless of their circumstances. Whilst it is noted that providing this service free of charge would be unduly costly to the taxpayer, it is also noted that many residents who need a dropped kerb to ensure they can fully use disability adapted vehicles safely are priced out of doing so.

Therefore, this Council resolves to instruct the Deputy Chief Executive to prepare proposals for a dropped kerb disability support scheme trial to be submitted to Cabinet. The scheme would provide either the full funding for the installation of a dropped kerb, or a percentage depending on the applicant's financial circumstances. As assessment process would be carried out for applicants to determine the following:

- That the primary reasons for the residents requiring the installation of a dropped kerb is linked to their disability and will enable them to become more mobile;
- That the applicant does not have the financial means to afford the installation without causing undue financial hardship;
- Any other criteria as deemed necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the funding available.”

The motion was moved by Councillor S Phipps and seconded by Councillor P Dobb.

During the debate on the motion, an amendment was moved by Councillor S Ali and seconded by Councillor J Foster in the following terms:

“The Council also resolves to instruct the Deputy Chief Executive:

- That the introduction of a £100 charge for the assessment of disabled parking bays be reviewed by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Legal with a view to removing and rescinding the charge.
- That a review of the charges for drop access be undertaken for all areas.
- That these reviews be reported to the Cabinet and the Council for decision in due course.”

The meeting was adjourned at 7.35pm and reconvened at 7.44pm.

The amendment was put to the meeting and carried. The motion, with the incorporation of the amendment, thereupon became the substantive motion.

Councillor S Phipps was afforded and exercised his right of reply to the debate pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9.

The substantive motion was put to the meeting and it was

## **Resolved**

That dropped kerbs can be very costly for local residents who wish to ensure that they can access their driveways legally and safely or convert existing gardens into driveways. With costs regularly exceeding £2,000 and only increasing, the financial burden on those who have no choice but to use a driveway is excessive.

Dudley Council currently charges local residents for the installation of dropped kerbs regardless of their circumstances. Whilst it is noted that providing this service free of charge would be unduly costly to the taxpayer, it is also noted that many residents who need a dropped kerb to ensure they can fully use disability adapted vehicles safely are priced out of doing so.

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The Council also resolves to instruct the Deputy Chief Executive:



- That the introduction of a £100 charge for the assessment of disabled parking bays be reviewed by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Legal with a view to removing and rescinding the charge.
  - That a review of the charges for drop access be undertaken for all areas.
  - That these reviews be reported to the Cabinet and the Council for decision in due course.
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## 71 **Questions under Council Procedure Rule 11**

Following consultation between the Group Leaders and with the consent of the meeting it was

### **Resolved**

That in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.1 the time period allowed for questions be reduced to 20 minutes for this meeting of the Council only.

### **Written Questions**

No written questions were submitted in advance.

### **Verbal Questions to the Leader, Cabinet Members and Chairs**

The Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee (Councillor P Bradley) responded to a question from Councillor R Collins concerning the progress made by Children's Services in recent years and the implications of the scrutiny call-in of the restructure of Children's Services.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor P Harley) responded to questions from Councillor Q Zada concerning the Council's attendance at the MIPIM conference.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise (Councillor D Stanley) responded to a question from Councillor S Ali concerning the planning and impact of major regeneration works affecting Dudley Town Centre.

At this juncture the Mayor announced that the time period allowed for questions had expired and any Members indicating to ask a question could either submit it in writing or raise the question at the next appropriate meeting.

(The meeting was adjourned at 8.10pm and reconvened at 8.23pm)

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72 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business for consideration at this meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.24 pm

MAYOR