

**Minutes of the proceedings of the Council
Monday, 11th July, 2022 at 6.00pm
in the Council Chamber, Council House, Dudley**

Present:

Councillor S Greenaway (Mayor)
Councillor A Goddard (Deputy Mayor)
Councillors 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, J Clinton, R Clinton, R Collins, D Corfield, J Cowell, T Creed, A Davies, P Dobb, P Drake, P Dobb, C Eccles, J Elliott, M Evans, K Finch, J Foster, M Hanif, D Harley, P Harley, S Henley, A Hopwood, M Howard, A Hughes, S Keasey, I Kettle, E Lawrence, P Lee, A Lees, K Lewis, P Miller, A Millward, S Mughal, N Neale, S Phipps, M Qari, S Ridney, M Rogers, T Russon, P Sahota, S Saleem, K Shakespeare, D Stanley, W Sullivan, A Taylor, E Taylor, M Westwood, T Westwood and Q Zada together with the Chief Executive and other Officers

Prayers

Reverend Canon H Burton led the Council in prayer.

15 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors R Ahmed, S Clark, T Crumpton, L Johnson, P Lowe and L Taylor-Childs.

16 **Declarations of Interest**

Declarations of interest, 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 - Any matters relating to the Castle Hill Development and all references to Dudley Zoo - Non-pecuniary interest as a member of Dudley and West Midlands Zoological Society Limited.

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

Councillor P Miller – Any matters relating to Adult Social Care – Non-pecuniary interest as his wife was having 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 P Miller – Any references to West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority - Non-pecuniary interests 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 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 S Bothul – Minutes of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – Non-pecuniary interest as an employee of the Bishop Milner Catholic College.

Councillor A Hughes – Minutes of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – Non-pecuniary interest as the parent of two children with special educational needs.

Councillor J Cowell – Minutes of the Future Council Scrutiny Committee – Non-pecuniary interest as a Council tenant.

Councillor R Collins – Minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee – Non-pecuniary interest as a Governor for the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillors R Collins, J Foster and S Greenaway – Minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee – Non-pecuniary interest in their capacity as Ward Councillors for Brockmoor and Pensnett in relation to the High Oak Surgery.

Councillors J Clinton and J Cowell – Minutes of the Housing and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee – Non-pecuniary interest in view of their interest as Council tenants.



Councillor J Cowell – Minutes of the Appointments Committee – Non-pecuniary interest in view of her interest as Council tenant.

Councillor S Ridley – Minutes of the Children’s Corporate Parenting Board – Non-pecuniary interest as the Chair of the Management Committee of the Virtual School.

Councillor P Drake – Minutes of the Planning Committee – Non-pecuniary interest in his capacity as Ward Councillor for Coseley East.

17 **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meetings held on 19th May, 2022 be approved as correct records and signed.

18 **Mayor’s Announcements**

(a) **Mayors Chaplain**

Further to Minute No. 8(d) of the Annual Meeting of the Council on 19th May, 2022, the Mayor reported that Reverend Vanessa Tobin was unable to commit to the role of Mayor’s Chaplain during 2022/23. The Area Dean would be inviting colleagues from around the Deanery of Greater Dudley to share the role of Mayor’s Chaplain throughout the year.

(b) **Former Mayor and Honorary Alderman Mary Hill**

Further to Minute No. 8(a) of the Annual Meeting of the Council on 19th May, 2022, Members of the Council paid individual tributes to the memory of the late former Mayor and Honorary Alderman Mary Hill.

(c) **Black Country Weekender Event – 16th and 17th July, 2022**

The Mayor reported that the Ibiza Proms in the park event would take place at Himley on 16th July, 2022. The Black Country Musicom Festival would also take place at Himley on 17th July, 2022

(d) **Mayor’s Charity Cricket Match**

The Mayor reported that the Charity Cricket Match had taken place on 1st July, 2022. Thanks were extended to Councillor Hanif and everyone involved in the event, which raised over £925 for the Mayor’s Charities.

(e) Summer Business Awards

The Mayor reported that Dudley had been shortlisted for two awards at the Nachural Summer Business Awards. One for the £1 billion regeneration programme and the other for the new booking system introduced at the household waste and recycling centre. Dudley had won the business innovation award for the ongoing regeneration work. The Leader commented positively on the award in recognition of the innovation and work carried out throughout the Dudley Borough.

(f) Heidi Marsh-Geyton

The Mayor invited Councillor K Shakespeare to express thanks to H Marsh-Geyton for her long and dedicated service and wished her well upon leaving the Council's employment.

19 **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 Phipps.

During the debate, comments and questions were raised concerning the development of new leisure facilities at the Coseley Technology Primary School, the installation of solar panels or electronic vehicle charging points at the Duncan Edwards Leisure Centre and whether the Merry Hill Centre would contribute to the complementary measures associated with the Brierley Hill Metro extension. The Leader replied to the debate and written responses would be provided as appropriate.

Following the debate, the motion was put to the meeting and it was

Resolved

- (1) That the outturn position for 2021/22, as set out in paragraph 4 and Appendix A to the report, be noted.
- (2) That progress with the 2022/23 Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be noted.
- (3) That the budget of £150,000 for the installation of three Changing Places toilets in the borough, as set out in paragraph 8 of the report, be approved.
- (4) That the additional spend for the Very Light Rail National Innovation Centre project to be funded by Coventry City Council be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 9 of the report.

- (5) That the Very Light Rail additional project overspend in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 9 of the report, be noted.
 - (6) That the additional spend for the Towns Fund project funded by grant be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 10 of the report.
 - (7) That a capital budget of £15.6m and consequent revenue budget of £375,000 in 2024/25 rising to £750,000 per year in 2025/26 be approved in respect of the reconstruction of Pens Meadow School, as set out in paragraph 11 of the report.
 - (8) That in respect of Coseley Technology Primary School, the request from the Department for Education to provide a capital contribution of £3m towards the development of the new Coseley School and Leisure Facilities be approved and that the Council's capital and revenue budgets be amended appropriately, as set out in paragraph 12 of the report.
-

20 **Development of Community Forums**

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

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

Concerns were expressed that the proposals might be perceived as a return to the former Area Committee system. There was a need for further clarity on the details and financial implications. Issues were also raised concerning the proposals for pre-meetings and the need for clarity on the decision-making process for grants. A view was expressed that funding should be maintained at ward level with appropriate flexibility for Forums to make decisions based on local circumstances.

Reference was made to the online pilot Community Forum meetings and that further opportunities should be explored for alternative ways of holding hybrid meetings to increase community participation and engagement.

The Leader responded to the debate and indicated that the proposals for Community Forum meetings and the grants process would be the subject of ongoing review.

Following the debate, the motion was put to the meeting and it was

Resolved

- (1) That the reduction in Community Forums moving from 10 to 5 Forums, as set out in paragraphs 4 to 7 of the report, be approved.

- (2) That the pooling of ward funding allocations in line with the change to 5 Forums and the discussion of grant applications in advance of the meetings, as set out in paragraphs 8 to 9 and paragraphs 11 to 12 of the report, be endorsed.
 - (3) That the Lead for Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) be authorised to make any necessary or consequential changes to the Council's Constitution.
-

21 **Audit and Standards Committee - Annual Report 2021/22**

A report of the Audit and Standards Committee was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor A Lees, seconded by Councillor D Borley and

Resolved

That the annual report of the Audit and Standards Committee for 2021/22 be received and noted.

22 **Notices of Motion**

The Mayor reported that, following consultation with the Group Leaders, it had been agreed that the notices of motion previously submitted would be deferred for future consideration.

23 **Questions under Council Procedure Rule 11**

The Mayor reported that, following consultation with Group Leaders, the Question Time session would be deferred until the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

Any questions that could not reasonably be deferred could be sent by email to the Leader, Cabinet Members or Committee Chairs.

24 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business for consideration at this meeting.

The meeting ended at 7.00 pm

MAYOR



CL/21