

**Minutes of the proceedings of the Council
Monday, 12th July, 2021 at 6.00pm
in the Town Hall, St James's Road, Dudley**

Present:

Councillor A Millward (Mayor)
Councillor S Greenaway (Deputy Mayor)
Councillors K Ahmed, R Ahmed, S Ali, A Aston, M Aston, P Atkins, N Barlow, C Barnett, C Bayton, D Bevan, I Bevan, R Body, D Borley, P Bradley, R Burstons, R Buttery, B Challenor, S Clark, J Clinton, R Clinton, R Collins, D Corfield, J Cowell, T Crumpton, A Davies, P Dobb, P Drake, C Elcock, M Evans, A Finch, K Finch, J Foster, B Gentle, A Goddard, M Hanif, D Harley, P Harley, S Henley, A Hopwood, Z Islam, L Johnson, S Keasey, I Kettle, E Lawrence, P Lee, A Lees, K Lewis, P Lowe, P Miller, S Mughal, C Neale, N Neale, S Phipps, S Ridney, J Roberts, M Rogers, P Sahota, S Saleem, K Shakespeare, D Stanley, W Sullivan, A Taylor, E Taylor, D Vickers, S Waltho, M Westwood, T Westwood and Q Zada together with the Chief Executive and other Officers

Prayers

The Mayor led the Council in saying the international prayer for peace. Councillor D Stanley led the Council in saying the Lord's Prayer.

15 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors K Razzaq and L Taylor.

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.

Councillors M Evans and D Vickers - Any matters relating to the Castle Hill development and all references to Dudley Zoo - Non-pecuniary interests as members of Dudley and West Midlands Zoological Society Ltd.

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

Councillor R Burston - Capital Programme Monitoring (Metro Complementary Measures and Dudley Interchange) and any references to West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) - Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment.

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 Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust or health issues generally - Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment.

Councillors N Barlow 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 S Waltho - Minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee - Non-pecuniary interest as a nominated Member of the Council of Governors on the Dudley Group of Hospitals.

Councillor C Neale - Minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee - Non-pecuniary interest in view of his wife's employment.

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 Z Islam – Matters relating to Children's Services – Non-pecuniary interest due to his daughter's employment with Fort Advocacy Services Ltd. who were occasionally commissioned by Children's Services to provide independent advocacy services and her involvement with the Dudley Advocacy Charity as an independent parent advocate.

In relation to Minute No. 21 below (Independent Remuneration Panel – Review of the Members' Allowances Scheme) it was noted that, in accordance with dispensations set out in the Members' Code of Conduct, Members did not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of this item.

Councillor S Henley – Minutes of the Housing and Public Ream Scrutiny Committee – Overview of Safe and Sound (Dudley’s Community Safety Partnership) and Focus on Community Cohesion Strategic Group – Non-pecuniary interest due to his employment with the West Midlands Fire Service.

Councillor P Lee – Minutes of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee - Non-pecuniary interest as a foster carer.

Councillor P Miller – Minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee - Non-pecuniary interest as he was a patient of the Diabetic Screening System.

Councillor P Lowe - Minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee - Non-pecuniary interest in view of his employment as the National Officer - Managers in Partnership.

Councillor P Atkins - Minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee - Non-pecuniary interest in view of his employment with the NHS Trust in Shropshire.

Councillor P Drake - Minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee - Non-pecuniary interest in view of his wife’s employment with the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust.

17 **Minutes**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meetings held on 20th May, 2021 be approved as correct records and signed.

18 **Mayor’s Announcements**

(a) **Ena Blood**

The Mayor referred in sympathetic terms to the death of former Councillor Ena Blood. The Council observed a period of silence as a token of respect to her memory. Condolences were extended to Alderman David Blood and his family. Members of the Council paid individual tributes.

(b) Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

The Mayor reported that Black Country Radio and the Friends and Residents of Buffery Park had received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. The Council extended congratulations to the recipients of this award for their outstanding services to the community, particularly throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

(c) Programme of Events

The Mayor reported on the following events:-

- Members and Officers Charity Cricket Match - 30th July, 2021
- Black Country Musicom Festival - 12th September, 2021
- Dudley Multicultural Day – 17th July, 2021
- Freedom of the Borough Garden Party - 27th July, 2021

19 **Capital Programme Monitoring and Amendment to the 2021/22 Revenue Budget**

A report of the Cabinet was submitted.

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

During the debate, comments and questions were raised concerning the Council House refurbishment project and disability access issues, the CCTV upgrade programme, the Portersfield scheme and highway infrastructure works. The Leader replied to the debate and responded to the issues raised.

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

Resolved

- (1) That the outturn position for 2020/21, as set out in paragraph 4 and Appendix A to the report, be noted.
- (2) That progress with the 2021/22 Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be noted.
- (3) That extra spend on the Quarry Bank Park project up to the value of the grant be approved and the capital element included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 7 of the report.
- (4) That the footpath works at Marlborough Gardens and Ascot Gardens be approved and included in the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 8 of the report.

- (5) That the project to install Solar Panels at the new Dudley Leisure Centre be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 9 of the report.
- (6) That the revised budget of £1,079,000 be approved for the Town Hall/Bistro, as set out in paragraph 10 of the report.
- (7) That a budget of £4m be approved for the refurbishment of the Council House, as set out in paragraph 11 of the report.
- (8) That Phase 3 of the CCTV upgrade programme be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 12 of the report.
- (9) That the extra expenditure of £90,000 on the Stourbridge Crematorium renovation project be approved and included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 13 of the report.
- (10) That the urgent amendment to the Capital Programme be noted, as set out in paragraph 14 of the report.
- (11) That an additional £50,000 budget allocation be approved for 2021/22 to develop a cultural programme to support the Commonwealth Games, as set out in paragraph 15 of the report.

20 **Annual Report of the Audit and Standards Committee 2020/21**

A report of the Audit and Standards Committee was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor A Taylor, seconded by Councillor J Roberts and

Resolved

That the annual report of the Audit and Standards Committee for 2020/21 be received and noted.

21 **Independent Remuneration Panel – Members’ Allowances Scheme**

A joint report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Legal was submitted.

It was moved by Councillor P Harley, seconded by Councillor D Vickers and

Resolved

That the Members' Allowances Scheme, as attached to the report submitted, be approved and adopted and that the appropriate provision be made in the Council's revenue budget for 2021/22 and future years.

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

Written Questions

No written questions were submitted in advance.

Verbal Questions to the Leader, Cabinet Members and Chairs

The Leader of the Council (Councillor P Harley) responded to questions raised by Councillor J Cowell relating to the Housing Board.

The Cabinet Member for West Midlands Combined Authority (Councillor I Kettle) undertook to respond to Councillor K Ahmed concerning a delegated decision on the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund extension to contract and the additional funding from the 'Welcome Back' fund.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise (Councillor S Phipps) responded to questions from Councillor E Lawrence concerning the draft Black Country Plan.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor P Harley) responded to questions from Councillor T Crumpton concerning the Housing Board, as previously raised above, and the Black Country Plan consultation process. A report on issues concerning the Housing Board would be considered by the Housing and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee in September, 2021.

The Cabinet Member for Public Realm (Councillor K Shakespeare) undertook to provide clarification to Councillor E Taylor concerning a question on the delegated decision on road naming off St Peter's Road, Netherton.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise (Councillor S Phipps) responded to a question from Councillor P Atkins concerning the draft Black Country Plan and implications for sites in the Kingswinford North and Wall Heath ward.



The Leader of the Council (Councillor P Harley) responded to a question from Councillor K Ahmed concerning major regeneration projects in the Borough.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor P Harley) responded to a question from Councillor S Keasey congratulating the England national football team for its achievements in the Euro 2020 tournament and condemning racist abuse that had been directed at specific players. The Leader also responded to a question from Councillor Z Islam concerning the rejection of racism in society.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor P Harley) responded to a question from Councillor R Ahmed concerning the need to expedite a response to the points raised previously concerning the Housing Board. The matter would be raised with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Services.

24 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business for consideration at this meeting.

The meeting ended at 7.10 pm

MAYOR

